

Bugle Calls



SAN JOAQUIN VALLEY CIVIL WAR ROUND TABLE

Volume 20 Number 1

P. O. Box 5695 Fresno CA 93755 JANUARY 2012

SAN JOAQUIN VALLEY CIVIL WAR ROUND TABLE

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PRESIDENT'S REPORT

My goodness, so much has happened since my last report. The most important thing that happened was that Walt Schulze seems to have passed his medical crisis and is on the mend. Walt had a couple of very close calls and, with this last operation, he is being able to do things that he hasn't been able to do for some time. I know that all of us are very happy and relieved that our friend is on the mend. I know that we all want to say "Walt, STAY WELL."

After the above, everything else seems to be anticlimactic. But we continue with our report anyway.

After our last meeting, many of us traveled to Sacramento for the West Coast Regional Civil War Round Table Conference. The program had the theme of the Civil War in 1861. I am sure that Ron Vaughn will do a good job of going over the program so I will hold off talking about it. The conference committee allowed me to make an announcement about our special December program. Because of that announcement, I was given a total of \$110.00 for our program. This really helped our cause. I requested that Jonathon send thank you notes to the people that made the contribution.

While we were at the meeting, the Orange County Round Table said that they would be willing to take on the responsibility of putting on the 2012 conference and I indicated that we were going to put on the 2013 conference. I also indicated that we were looking at doing the conference on a cruise ship. We had a show of hands as to whether people would be interested in going on the cruise and a fair percentage of the people in attendance were interested in attending. After the announcement, I had several people come up to me and indicate that they though the idea of a cruise was an excellent idea.

While I was at the conference, I made the acquaintance of a gentleman that was a member of the San Francisco Round Table. I was going to be in San Francisco after the conference

and was invited to attend the San Francisco Civil War Round Table meeting and was given the opportunity to announce our special December meeting. The word of our meeting was getting around the state.

I don't intend to talk about the presentation for our December meeting. I am sure that Ron has presented an excellent "after action report" that will have covered all of the important details of that meeting. I will give my opinion as to what went on. First, I have known General Hills for some time and have had the privilege of seeing many of his power point presentations. What we got at our meeting is just an example of what excellent work the General put out. I know that many of the 40 or so people that attended the presentation were blown away with his presentation. Now you know what I have been talking about when I have talked about General Hills. Second, the panel presentation, moderated by Dr Clague, was very interesting and got some good questions from the audience. I think it went over quite well. I want to thank in particular Patty Spencer, Mike Spencer, Jonathon Schulze and Lisa Peters for doing a great job of running the table outside the meeting. Without their effort, the program would not have been as successful. I want to thank Brian and Linda Clague, Henry Howison, and Alex Fabros for their more than generous contributions to make this program a success. They went above and beyond the call of duty in their efforts and generosity. Thank you. Thank you. Thank You. Without the help of General Markarian, we would not have had the opportunity to use the facilities and we would not have been honored with the presentation of the colors. I want to also point out the panel of Evan Jones, Parker Hills, Henry Howison, and Fred Bohmfalk who did such a great job of making the discussion interesting and alive. Finally, this program would not have been nearly the success that it was without the extra effort of Evan. He did so much to make this program an outstanding success.

How much of a success? Well we were looking to achieve the goal of getting \$3,000.00 to present to "The Friends of Raymond" for the purchase of a new tube for the cannon line on the battlefield. At last count, we are a little north of \$2,500.00. This is an outstanding achievement. I was talking to Fred and he told me that we made more money toward Civil War Preservation than the whole West Coast Conference that took place in Sacramento this year. To all of you in the Round Table I want to offer you a very big WELL DONE, and THANK YOU.

Now for some of the other activities that took place outside of the meeting. General Hills came into the Fresno Air Terminal on Tuesday evening and he was meet by Evan Jones and me. We took him to his hotel and then went down the street for dinner.

We were hoping to have the General on some media events on Wednesday but ended up striking out on that account, so I came up with some other activities to show him around the area. I drove up from Tulare and picked him up in the midmorning. We went over to the Clovis Veterans' Memorial building and went over what the room looked like and what we were going to have to do with his presentation. The staff of the Memorial District was more than accommodating and the General was impressed with the facilities. I then took him up to the Grant Grove area of Sequoia Park. I figured that if Parker was going to be talking about General Grant, that it was only reasonable for him to meet the General up close and personal. Of course I am referring to the tree not the man. Grant Grove is located above the 7000 foot level, which is about 10 times higher than the highest point in Parker's home state of Mississippi. He was impressed with the area. That evening we had a dinner with the leadership of the Round Table and spent some time talking about all kinds of topics.

I drove up from Tulare on Thursday and picked up Parker and took him over to Walt Schulze's house. As you know, Walt was recovering from his second operation in less than a month. Gail met us at the door and we went in to see Walt. I presented Walt with a get well gift of a copy of "Receding Tides" which Parker autographed for Walt. We spent some time talking to Walt and Gail and then headed down to Tulare County. I took Parker around some places in Visalia

and Tulare and then we headed back to Clovis for the meeting. After the meeting, Parker and I drove back to my house in Tulare where Parker got to meet my wife Carolyn.

After a good breakfast on Friday, the two of us headed north for Yosemite. This was the first time that Parker had been in the valley since he was five years old. It was a bit cold for a boy from Mississippi, but we had a good time and headed to San Francisco just at dark.

On Saturday Parker and I accepted the generous invitation of Fred Bohmfalk to travel to and have a private tour of Alcatraz. We got to the pier and Fred meet us in his National Park Service Volunteer uniform. We sailed over to the island and then Fred led us on a great tour of the island. This included the prison and the Civil War structures that are still to be seen on the island. It was a great time and Fred was a fountain of information. The afternoon was taken up by a tour of Fort Point. I showed Parker around the fort and we both enjoyed the wonderful opportunity of traveling back in time. The evening was taken up by a trip to hear and see the San Francisco Symphony. The major piece on the program was excerpts from Wagner's Gotterdammerung. It was a breathtaking performance.

We got up about 4 A.M. on Sunday morning and got Parker to the San Francisco Airport. He got his plane, but had some "fun" transferring flights in Houston. He did get home safe and sound on Sunday evening.

All in all, it was an outstanding week for the Round Table. We had an award winning author speak to us and raised a good deal of money for battlefield preservation. We also again established that this Round Table is able to do what many other Round Tables have not been able to accomplish, that is to work together to do good things for the preservation movement. We are a special group of people and I want to thank each and every one of you for what you do to make this Round Table one of the best in the United States. It just goes to prove that it doesn't take a large number of people to get things done, just a group that is willing to work. Now on to the next project, and that is hosting the 2013 West Coast Conference. We have a lot of ideas that we are working on, but we need your help to get it accomplished. I hope to see you at are January meeting at Denny's on Thursday the 12th. Our program will be a show and tell and anyone who would like to make a presentation of between 5 and 10 minutes should contact Patty and let her know. It should be a good time for all of us.

February will have a special treat for us. It will be the Davis vs. Lincoln debate with our own Presidents' Lincoln and Davis. It should be fun and informative.

If you haven't submitted your 2012 dues as of yet, please remember that they are due. Without that money, we would not be able to bring people into our meetings to make presentations.

Happy New Year and I hope to see you at the meeting on the 12th

Michael Green

President SJVCWRT

CIVIL WAR HUMOR

From "The Blue and Gray Laughing"

"A correspondent from Pennsylvania informs us that when the rebel army was marching to Gettysburg, several privates stopped at the hotel of Mr. John Brown, in Fayetteville, and inquired for ale. The host informed them that he was out of that article. One of the rebs remarked that they were going to Baltimore, and there they would get plenty of ale. A few days after, when the rebs were retreating from Gettysburg, Brown met one of the men. He asked him if he had got any Baltimore ale. "No," replied Johnny Reb, "we only got as far as Gettysburg, where the Meade was too strong for us!"

We made sure that the General got to keep a busy schedule.



Parker at Fort Point Golden Gate in the background



Parker locking the "slammer" on the "rock"



Evan, Parker, Henry, and Fred



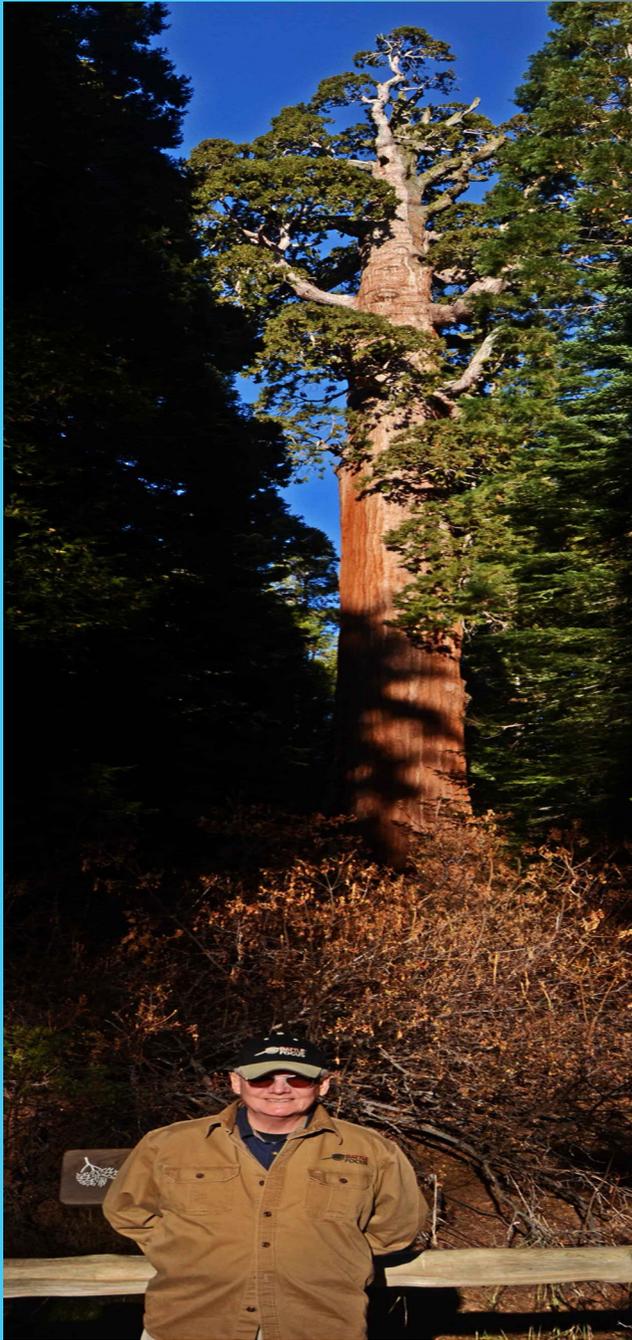
Parker at Yosemite overlook



Parker and Fred on Alcatraz



Mike and Parker at the crest in Sequoia



General Hills meets General Grant



Walt, Gail, and Parker with Walt's specially autographed copy of Receding Tides

AFTER ACTION REPORT SJVCWRT MEEITNG OF 12/8/11

By Ron Vaughan

. Our December meeting was very different from our usual Christmas party and gift exchange. One might say that this night, our gifts were the raffle prizes, and hearing an excellent speaker. There were about 38 persons present for Brigadier General James Parker Hill's informative presentation on the topic "U.S.. Grant-- Military Genius, or Just Plain Lucky?" Parker Hill proceeded to discuss Grant's background, illustrating each point with his excellent power point program. At West Point, Grant was taught Jomini's Tactics-- Use maximum force at a decisive point. Grant summed it up "Find your enemy, get at him as soon as possible, hit him hard, and keep moving forward."

. Grant graduated in 1843, with the rank of 2nd Lt., and soon found himself assigned to the 4th US Infantry Regt., along the Texas-Mexico boarder. In 1846 he had his first exposure to combat, under the command of General Zachary Taylor. Taylor is not considered a tactical genius, but Grant learned the value of resolution, not only while under fire, but also in the face of responsibility. From the example of the other Regular officers, Grant noted the importance of professionalism. Grant's assignment as a Quarter-master taught him the importance of logistics, the value of riverine support, and managing affairs among a conquered civil population. When Grant and most of the Regular Regts. were transferred away from Taylor, to General Scott's Command, he learned the impact of political considerations upon strategy.

. Under Winfield Scott, Grant learned numerous lessons from this master of strategy: The value of reconnaissance of terrain, climate considerations, surprise flanking movements, and how to write clear and simple orders. When Scott left his supply base at Puebla and advanced into the Valley of Mexico, Grant learned how to forage while bringing along necessary ammo supplies. Most of Grant's fellow junior officers in Mexico, later became Union and Confederate generals in the Civil War. Grant knew their character and could often predict the actions of his Confederate opponents.

. When the Civil War broke out, Grant soon learned that the enemy commanders "were as much afraid of me, as I was afraid of them." He also came to appreciate the difference between the conception of a plan and the execution of a plan. He developed the strategic vision, and realized the value of the rivers in the Western Theater: the Tennessee, Cumberland, and Mississippi Rivers. He utilized these routes to penetrate deep into the Confederacy.

. When grant was planning his Vicksburg campaign, he discussed the proposal with his three Corps commanders. Sherman and McPherson were opposed to the plan, but McClernand thought it was a good idea to cross the Mississippi. So Grant put McClernand in command of the vanguard, even though he was a less capable general. Grant realized that a general who is not enthusiastic about a plan, will not be aggressive enough to insure success. Grant's boldness and maneuvers during this campaign resulted in victories in five battles, where he achieved local numerical superiority over a larger total Confederate army . The quality of boldness is the difference between a great commander and a mediocre one.

. Later in the Eastern theater, Grant kept moving forward, even after most of the battles against Lee turned into bloody draws. [

. After the conclusion of the talk about Grant, Parker Hill gave a short slide presentation on the battle monuments at Vicksburg. He told how they were inspired by Romano-Greek architecture of Vitruvian style.

. Following this enjoyable presentation, there was a short panel discussion on the importance of battlefield preservation, and our project to buy another cannon for the Raymond battlefield.

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