

The Tyrants' Foe

The Newsletter Of The Texas Rifles

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COMMANDERS DISPATCH

Winedale is coming up, less than a month from when you receive this. We have quite a lot to talk over at the Annual "Bidness" Meeting, so we need to come prepared to effectively make decisions for the next year. Red River and Chickamauga are the biggies for the year in April and September. Texian Market Days in October (as usual). We also need to find a good time to hold the Marrow Bone Springs event while avoiding the roasting summer days. Bellemeade and Camp Ford are events we should strongly consider, as well.

It is now just under four months from the Red River Campaign. Regions need to fill their cartridge boxes and roll extra rounds for the event. See to it that you have the equipment you need and it is in good repair. If you have new brogans, get them broken in. And yes, yak-nag-nag, we need to be walking. By the beginning of this new year, we need to start making equipment marches. However, don't rely solely upon these regional marches. Endurance requires a sustained individual effort. The first few days of such a march can be miserable if you are not prepared. You could even have to fall out of the event altogether! In addition, begin weaning yourself off of cola addiction; you will have to rely on campfires for meeting any need for caffeine. Prepare your frazzled nerves for that.

Here is the agenda for the "Bidness" Meeting, by the way:

Saturday

1. Old "Bidness"-The Texas Brigade Proposal (see Captain's Comments)
2. Elections
3. New "Bidness"-Decide Texas Rifles max effort events; site of the annual "bidness" meeting; decide date for the Marrow Bone Springs Muster; introduce new members; and vote in additional members.
4. Lunch
5. Winedale traditional "Romp in the Woods"
6. Dinner
7. "Socializing Lamp" is lit
8. Slideshow

Sunday

1. Breakfast
2. Clean up
3. Competitions

4. Safe trips home

A challenging and rewarding new year is upon us. Let us gather at Winedale old friends and new recruits, and have a good start. And no, we shall never yield to Tyrants!

Your Obedient Servant,

Philip Ulbrich

SUTLERS ROW

Gaye Frazier, 5641 Gayle Blvd. Ste. #125, Dallas, TX 75206, (214) 696-1865. Jean shell jackets from QM Shop, \$125, 4-6 weeks if not in stock. Brogans, \$89.95 + \$5 for heel plates (installed). Prompt delivery of most sizes. They are still delighted to be called at home.

Jean Cloth/Shirt Material: Thistle Hill Weavers, Rd. #2, Box 75, Cherry Valley, NY 13320, (518) 284-2729. Ask for Rabbit Goodey.

Jean Cloth: Charles Childs, 13797-C Georgetown St. NE, Paris, Ohio 44669, (216) 862-3307.

Ready Made Shell Jackets: Terry Parker, 738 Currey Rd., Nashville, Tenn. 37217, (615) 361-8765. Ask for Alabama in gray-brown jean. \$150 with hand stitching. 4-6 weeks.

Grand Illusions, 90 E. Main St., Newark, DE 19711, (302) 366-0300. Trans-Miss. Dept. Shell Jacket, \$115. Top stitching, \$22 extra. Hand done button holes, \$5 each. 4-6 weeks.

Steve Abolt. 3927 Mattison, Ft. Worth, TX 76107, (817) 737-7513. Alabama Pattern Jean shell jacket, \$165. Gray-brown jean, hand finished. Call for information on delivery time, usually 2-4 weeks. His work is excellent. Also does shirts, vests, and trousers. From War of 1812 up through War of Northern Aggression.

Hats: Clear Water Hat Co., Bob & Kay Brewer, Box 202, Newnata, AR 72680, (501) 746-4324.

Leather & Paper Goods: Dixie Leather Works, P.O. Box 8221, Paducah, KY 42002-8221. (800) 888-5183. Sword belts, belts, wallets, buckles; labels, stationary & other paper goods. Catalog is \$3. Many useful & unusual items.

Custom Made Brogans & Boots: Robert Serio, Missouri Boot and Shoe Company, Rt. 7, Box 207, Neosho, MO, (417) 451-6100. Custom made brogans are \$115 + \$7 shipping, with 8-10 weeks delivery. Various styles & finishes available.

General Merchandise: Fall Creek Sutlery, P.O. Box 539, Freedom, CA (408) 728-1888.

Musket Tools & Gun Parts: S & S Firearms, 74-11 Myrtle Ave., Glendale, NY 11385-7433, (718) 497-1100.

Catalogs are \$3.

THE CAPTAIN'S COMMENTS

At Texian Market Days, I was given permission to act on behalf of the Rifles and begin the process of entering into General King's gentleman's agreement to form a brigade based on the historical model of how a Civil War military organization was operated. Pending the agreement of our members, the Rifles will work with the Nineteenth Century Living History Association—a non-profit organization—in order to field a "semi-professional" brigade that will look, act, and perhaps even smell like the real thing.

There has been some concern that the agreement will damage the Rifles or overwhelm our unique identity. I have spent many hours with General King, Colonel Mount, and Lieutenant Straz discussing this. The Rifles WILL continue as we are, and I have the assurance of all concerned that our unique organization—civilian and military—will continue as it always has. A "civilian draft committee" (my deepest gratitude to Laura Fitzpatrick and Dwight Hall) has drawn up two enumerated addenda that have been sent to General King and passed on to the NCLHA that make plain that our civilian contingent is an integral part of the Rifles, and will be involved in future planning of any civilian component of the NCLHA. The brigade will have no impact on the Rifles Bylaws, and we will continue on our own string. No one will be required to join the NCLHA, and the Rifles will continue to have our own events, such as Marrow Bone Springs, and attend WHICHEVER events we see fit.

There is healthy skepticism inherent in any autonomous organization in the process of associating with a larger entity, union, or (ahem) confederation. We shall discuss this in detail at Winedale. But, the agreement will grant us many benefits: tax exempt status (something we have sought since our founding and been unable to achieve); a quartermaster system; individual insurance to cover anything we do with the Brigade; a statewide recruiting resource; hay, ice, and water at every event; and perhaps most importantly, an authentic and realistic historical experience.

Your Obedient Servant,

Philip Ulbrich

FROM THE LIEUTENANT'S INKWELL

Well everybody, the magic number is 4. That's right, less than 4 months until the Red River Campaign. Whether you are civilian or military, it is time to start seriously doing something to prepare for the RRC. We have all though a lot about it already. The thinking phase is over.

The easiest thing to start doing is to check out your gear. Are your shoes going to hold up fifty or so miles of walking? If not, try to get a new pair. Then, break them in and get used to them. If your feet go out or you get blisters, you will want your pards to shoot you and leave you behind! Frankly, we need all men in the field and not dead on the road. Are you going to carry a shelter half? Will you take only one blanket? How about your poncho? Is it torn and ripped? Maybe you should get a new one and give the old nasty one to the quartermaster. Do you have a blanket coat? It could still be coolish at night in early April. I have a pattern if you would like to make one. Is your rifle working properly? If anything goes wrong at the event, there will be no parts available to fix your weapon.

How is the old canteen holding up? Do you wear contacts? Perhaps you should buy period glasses. Those bottles of saline solution are bulky and quite the hassle. All of these things are easy to look after. The hard stuff is next! Are you walking or running two or three miles every day or so? Are you walking with a full haversack and canteen? Can you carry an eight pound weapon all day, every day? First of all, don't go walking through the neighborhood carrying a weapon. You might just scare the neighbors to death! Instead, duct-tape some rebar to a one-by-two, and carry that around. Every week or so, add a new piece of equipment until you are walking fully decked out. Are you a soda drinker? If you, you may go into withdrawal on the RRC. Start drinking only water, or at least cut down. The caffeine will be a problem for you. Now for the hardest one-lose ten pounds (or more if you are the Boo). Carrying less gut around will make the trip more fun. You will NOT miss it. If you are a veteran of RRC1, you know what I am talking about. If you are new to this event, trust me. I know a doctor!

This event isn't going to be typically what we do. It isn't going into the field for two days and then coming home. The first two days are for getting used to the pace. After that, the rest is gravy. Although most of this has been directed at the military, the civilians will need to do more than their share of preparation. I look to the veteran ladies to teach you properly.

P.S.-Ryan, James, and Chuck: you don't need to lose any weight!

Your Obedient Servant,

Chris Strzelecki

MARROW BONE SPRINGS

Many of us attended the Marrow Bone Springs Event last May and found some worthwhile "fibers" that can be woven into a new and improved impression for our company. This article includes my thoughts on how this could best be done. Best for us and best for Doc, and his existing town club. Since the term "historical model" has been making the rounds recently, let us incorporate Marrow Bone Springs into this historical model. Regardless of what happens with the contract.

We have been fortunate that Phil Sozansky and others have done lots of character research for us in recent years. That meant a lot to many of us at Antietam and Gettysburg, as well as Tennessee events in the past. This work takes hours of time. As much as I love taking on these roles, not everyone memorizes their character or those of the whole company. By the time the event ends, some of us have died and others have been wounded. These folks then are "reborn" at a later event or left to wither because our portrayed unit changed. I propose that we all create characters from Marrow Bone. The town name can change if we want to adopt the identity of a historical unit. I think we should follow Doc's suggestion regarding names. Use our middle names as our first name and a form of our first name as our last name. For example, I would always be Alan Christopher. This would allow us to keep our identity the same from event to event and still create our first person impression. Each person would then be able to develop a story around Marrow Bone Springs. Business owners, laborers, farmers, and a variety of occupations would allow us to build these characters. We would need to have a yearly event at Doc's. The membership would have to decide

if it was to be a totally civilian or a military and civilian event like the last one. Both have advantages. In order for this to happen we have to decide this will be a priority for our company. When we say maximum effort this will have to really be maximum. A town cannot be built with 18 people. Maximum attendance is also needed to make the event work financially for Doc. Hang onto your hats, here comes the money part. Gulp.

At the last event Doc lost money. There are obvious costs in owning and operating a town. However, there are many hidden costs as well. We need to pay our own way. Of course Doc has the last word on the issue, but I would propose a fee of \$30 to attend the event. Now before you think that is way too much, consider this. When we travel to events, we all take money along to spend at sutlers. Let us assume a person brings \$10 to blow at Frazier's. We also spend money on rations. Hard to get by without spending \$10 on food. That, by a very conservative count, is \$20. Doc would feed us Saturday and Sunday. The food we choose can be inexpensive but filling. We don't have to have prime rib for supper. By eating in this manner and providing our own beverages, it should be possible for Doc to make enough money to break even or make a little extra to pay for upkeep on the town. I would also propose that we choose a cooler weather event. Something from February to March or in November to December. It is easier to be comfortable in our heavy clothing when it is cooler. A February date will allow us to work on our Red River preparations by marching as a company into the town, pretend it is Pleasant Hill. We are the rear guard of Gen. Taylor's forces. This would put us in the role of guarding the civilians, even those "loyal" ones like Doc. If we chose December, instead it could be a Christmas event focusing on our parish and preparing the town to celebrate our Lord's birth. Doc could be the Grinch (and don't think he couldn't or wouldn't do it either). Of course this is very hard to do because of our crazy, hectic lifestyles around the holidays. But it is something to consider. It would also be a "soft" event for spouses and children who don't normally attend our events. Kind of like mixing the old summer picnic with a first person impression. I imagine Doc would consider a group rate for families. The first person could pay \$30 and each person after could pay \$20. Or something along those lines.

I believe this could really take us to a new level in our impression, but it will only take us there if that is where we want to go. Organizations die if they do not keep moving forward. The Texas Rifles have always been willing to move forward in our impression. I hope the membership agrees and that we take the road back into Marrow Bone Springs that we marched out on in May of 1998.

Your Obedient Servant,

Chris Strzelecki

ASK JOHN

NUMBERS AND ORGANIZATIONS

We naturally focus upon the structure of the single Civil War infantry company. Sometimes this makes us lose sight of how small the company was in the big picture of an army. This article is a review of the basics of a Civil War period army organization.

The typical infantry regiment consisted of ten companies. Each company started with an approximate strength of 100 men, so a brand new regiment boasted a strength of 1,000 men. For the American Civil War, a regiment and a battalion are the same thing. In European armies, one regiment was composed of two or more battalions. A regiment was usually commanded by a Colonel. Two or more regiments were formed into a brigade. The brigade was commanded by a Brigadier General. With each brigade in the federal army was attached one artillery battery of six cannons. Two or more brigades were formed into a division. A division was theoretically commanded by a General. Two or more divisions were combined to form a Corps. A corps was the command of a Major General. In theory, then, a corps composed of three divisions (each division composed of three brigades and each brigade composed of four regiments) should equal 36,000 infantrymen plus associated artillery, engineer, staff, quartermaster, ordnance and signal troops. They never were actually that strong. Why?

Let's look at the Federal army first. Warfare put a constant drain on manpower. Although a typical volunteer infantry regiment might start the war with 1,000 men, it would quickly decline in numbers on active service. Most men were lost due to illness, accidents and desertion, not battle wounds. A typical Northern regiment was usually down to approximately 2500-350 men after two years active service, only 25% to 35% of theoretical strength. Such under-strength regiments were commanded by Lt. Colonels or Majors. Brigades were often commanded by the senior Colonels, divisions by Brigadiers, etc. Regular army regiments failed to attract the men that looser disciplined, hometown volunteer units did. Regular army infantry regiments might be less than 200 men commanded by a

Captain. The Federals had no replacement system, so rather than place new enlistees into existing regiments, the Federals created whole new regiments. Brigades sometimes were given up to ten regiments to bring them up to theoretical strength. This practice lead to unbalanced commands with one new regiment as strong as three or four of the old regiments. Thus a Federal corps would never be 36,000 plus strong. Typical mid war strength might be more like 12,000 to 15,000. The Union army entered the Battle Gettysburg with seven corps totaling 90,000 men, or 12,8000 per corps.

The Confederate army did use a replacement system for units already in the field, so its unit strengths remained high until their manpower shortage caught up with them. Some units declined to small numbers because they became cut off from their home areas by Federal invasion. The Texas Brigade in Lee's Army of Northern Virginia is an example. It went into Gettysburg with 1,5000 men, of 375 per regiment. The 26th North Carolina entered the same battle with 750 men, about as many men as some Northern brigades. The Army of Northern Virginia marched to Gettysburg with three infantry and one cavalry corps totaling 75,000 men, or 18,700 men per corps. Of course, Confederate regimental strengths declined rapidly when the manpower pool dried up. Some of Lee's regiments at Appomattox surrendered only 50 men.

John Keahey

REGIONAL REPORTS

AUSTIN:

Well, greetings from Austin. Mike Lucas here. For the remainder of this year and into 1999, I will be assisting the honorable First Sergeant Huey with the coordinator duties here and around Austin. Bob's extended sergeant duties keep him pretty busy, so you may hear from me from time to time on reports, phone calls, and stuff like that. Not to worry, Bob remains the pillar at the end of the line on which we all lean.

Well, another fine TMD event. Time after time the yankees tested our line. I think we threw every sergeant we had at 'em and stopped them every time. However, casualties were high from the clash with insects and fire ants. Last minute plans to attend Galveston fell through for me and our new recruit Frank Marek. Frank lives in nearby Georgetown and has traveled to Granbury and Richmond drying to find the Rifles. He and I did manage to attend a local Christmas event that weekend. Frank shares a big interest in Civil War history and reenacting. I know he will be a strong addition to the company. At this time I have three recruits lined up for Winedale with a fourth on the fence. My goal is to rent a van. I hear from the crusty veterans here in Austin we need some new blood in the ranks to tote muskets and pitch tents. I will be contacting everyone soon for a little Pre-Winedale get-together to discuss travel arrangements. TMD meeting mental minutes, contracts, recruiting plans and basically get our lies straight. Hold the line, never yield.

Mike Lucas

EAST TEXAS:

Thought I would let everyone know that I have been chosen to be the civilian coordinator for RR2. Believe me this was not a decision that I made lightly. I suspect that I will lose a lot more hair, and turn what I have left, a lot grayer. However, I hope this will be one of the greatest events that this company has ever had the honor of attending. There are a lot of plans to make, and an awful lot of work ahead. I hope I can count on help from not only the civilian contingent of the Rifles, but the military as well. I perfectly well realize that there is no way that I can do this all by myself. We've got just under 4 months, at the time that I write this. That time will be upon us, before we know it. I will take any, and all suggestions. I don't guarantee that I will use them all, but I look at each one, and decide if it is doable. I hope to have more details at Winedale. So talk up RR2, as much as possible, and I'll try and keep you informed.

Dwight Hall.

Submission of articles, letters, reports, etc. from members of the Texas Rifles are welcome for publication in The Tyrant's Foe, as space allows. Articles MUST be submitted no later than February 15 to be included in the next exciting issue of The Tyrant's Foe. Please follow this simple guideline.
