

THE CIVIL WAR ROUND TABLE



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Chicago, Illinois

November 2025

841st REGULAR MEETING, Friday, November 14th, 2025

Chris Kolakowski on Civil War to World War: Simon Bolivar Buckner Sr. and Jr.

Live Meeting. Time: Nov. 14th, 2025, 07:30 PM CST.



Not many Civil War generals can claim to have had a son who was a general during World War 2. But Confederate Lt. Gen. Simon Bolivar Buckner's son, of the same name, had a distinguished U.S. army career. A Kentuckian, Simon Sr. surrendered Fort Donelson to his close prewar army friend, Ulysses Grant, in 1862, and served as a corps commander in the Army of Tennessee. At war's end he surrendered the largest existing Confederate army, that of the Trans-Mississippi Department. After the war he was elected Governor of Kentucky, and ran for Vice-President in 1896.

On Nov. 14th Chris Kolakowski will talk about the two Buckners, and their interesting careers.

Christopher L. Kolakowski is Director of the Wisconsin Veterans Museum, a position he has held since January 6, 2020. He received his BA in History and Mass Communications from Emory and Henry College, and his MA in Public History from the State University of New York at Albany. Chris has spent his career interpreting and preserving American military history with the National Park Service, New York State government, the Rensselaer County (NY) Historical Society, the Civil War Preservation Trust, Kentucky State Parks, the U.S. Army, and the MacArthur Memorial. He has written and spoken extensively on various aspects of military history and leadership from 1775 to the present, and was the inaugural Director of the General George Patton

Museum and Center of Leadership at Fort Knox, Kentucky.

Chris has published three books on the Civil War and three on World War II in the Pacific. He is a reviewer and contributor to the Air Force Journal of Indo-Pacific Affairs and a Senior Fellow at the Consortium of Indo-Pacific Researchers. His latest book, titled Tenth Army Commander, is about General Simon Bolivar Buckner Jr., who was killed in battle on Okinawa in 1945.

Battlefield Preservation

Right now, you have the chance to help protect 77 important acres across three Georgia battlefields — Ringgold Gap, Rocky Face Ridge, and Kennesaw Mountain — where American history was shaped.

These battlefield sites are under real and immediate threat — including a 13-acre property at Ringgold Gap, where a residential subdivision could be built. But if we raise just \$107,000, we can secure all 77 acres, valued at over \$2.3 million, and protect them forever.

Thanks to anticipated federal grants and support from partner organizations like the Georgia Battlefields Association and Save the Dalton Battlefields, your donation today will be matched \$22-to-\$1 — meaning every dollar you give will have 22 times the impact.

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These lands were the stage for some of the Civil War's most pivotal clashes in the Western Theater — a region too often overlooked, yet essential to the outcome of the war:

- **Ringgold Gap (Nov. 1863):** Outnumbered Confederate troops under Gen. Patrick Cleburne held off Union forces to protect a vital supply line. This action helped prolong the Confederacy's fight by nine months.
- **Rocky Face Ridge (May 1864):** The first battle of Sherman's Atlanta Campaign, marked by fierce combat and historic earthworks that still remain today.
- **Kennesaw Mountain (June 1864):** Site of Sherman's first major frontal assault, where brutal fighting unfolded just 400 yards apart. The Union attack failed here, but it was part of the larger push toward Atlanta.

These battlefields are part of our shared American story — and they deserve to be preserved, not paved over.

'Til the battle is won.

David Duncan, President, American Battlefield Trust

October Presentation

By Mark Matranga

To come.



BULLETIN BOARD

Our in-person meetings are currently held at:

Blossom Cafe

8349 West Lawrence, Chicago

Parking at the Blossom Cafe is FREE

Dinner \$50.00 Members and Non- Members

Cocktails at 5:30, Dinner at 6:30

Presentation only is \$10 per person.

The Kenosha Civil War Museum will feature Lance Herdegen on November 14th, presenting on “Opening Manassas: The Iron Brigade, Stonewall Jackson, and the Battle on Brawner’s Farm, August 28, 1862”

The event is part of their Friday lunchbox series and will run from noon to one.

For more on programs at the museum, visit
<https://museums.kenosha.org/civilwar/events/>

On November 11th (Veterans Day) **Rob Girardi** will be speaking at the Hinsdale Community Center on “Honoring the Brave: The Origins of Veterans Day.” On November 19 at the Kenosha Civil War Museum he’ll present “G.K. Warren vs P.H. Sheridan, Five Forks and a Knife in the Back.”

There is currently an exhibit on “Camp Douglas” at the Elk Grove Historical Museum.

More Upcoming Local Civil War Events

Nov. 7th, Northern Illinois CWRT: Dan Weinberg on "The Abraham Lincoln Book Store"
Nov. 8th, Rosehill Cemetery, Chicago: Veteran's Day observance
Nov. 11th, Southwest Michigan CWRT: Mollie Watson on "Niles in the Civil War"
Nov. 11th, McHenry County CWRT: TBA
Nov. 13th, Milwaukee CWRT: Chris Kolakowski on "Civil War to World War: Simon Bolivar Buckner Sr. and Jr."
Nov. 15th, Salt Creek CWRT: Terry Arliskas on "Fort Donelson"
Nov. 16th, Northwest Indiana CWRT: Ron Carlson on "General Alpheus Williams"
Nov. 18th, Lincoln-Davis CWRT: William Kolasinski on "Allen Pinkerton"
Nov. 21st, South Suburban CWRT: No Meeting
Nov. 21st, Minooka Public Library: Dennis Doyle on "Will County in the Civil War"

Check the **Announcements** section of the CWRT's website for additional coming events.

Future Chicago CWRT Meetings

Dec. 12th: Brian Jordan on "Marching Home: Union Veterans and Their Unending Civil War"
Jan. 9th, 2026: Guy Fraker on “Lincoln the Lawyer”
Feb. 13th: Keith Bohannon on “Wheeler’s Cavalry in the Atlanta Campaign”
Mar. 13th: Clifford Roberts on "Castle Pinckney, Charleston"
Apr. 10th: Wayne Motts, The Nevins-Freeman Address
May 12th: Chris Mackowski on TBA
June 12th: Alex Rossino on “Confederate Plans for Maryland”

The **Abraham Lincoln Book Shop’s** “House Divided” series will feature author Louis P. Gallo speaking on his latest book, *The Memoirs of General William T. Sherman: The Complete Annotated Edition*. This free program will be broadcast starting at 3:30 CST November 20th.

For more, visit <https://alincolnbookshop.com/>

The 2026 Battlefield Tour

Mark your calendar: April 29-May 2, 2026, Charleston/Savannah. These beautiful tourist locations have a great Civil War history. Charleston Harbor's Fort Sumter is where the war started! Our CWRT last visited in 1995, and since then the Hunley Museum and lots of great Civil War venues have opened.

We encourage people to use this tour as the core of a vacation—spend a few days extra down there, in weather that's got to be better than Chicago's!

We will be headquartered at the Holiday Inn North Charleston. More details to come.



Fort Sumter bombardment



CSS Hunley

November Meetings from the Past:

2020—John R. Scales on “General Nathan Bedford Forrest”

2015—Philip Leigh on “Trading with the Enemy”

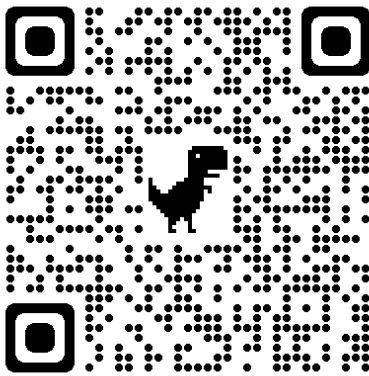
2010—Rob Girardi on “Civil War Corps Command”

2005—Ed Bonekemper on “Grant’s Military Genius”

1941—Stanley Horn on “The Army of Tennessee”

Reminder: If you haven't yet renewed your membership in the Chicago CWRT, please do so! Your membership comes with perks, and enables us to put on these great programs.

The renewal form can be accessed at <https://chicagocwrt.org/membership.html>



CWRT link