



# THE drum roll

424th Regular Meeting Volume 43 Number 6 February 6, 2026



PLEASE NOTE!!!!!! PLEASE NOTE!!!!!!!!!!  
AT THE LIBRARY!!!!!!!!!!

The February meeting will be in person at the Arlington Hts. Library on Friday, February 6, 2026, and on ZOOM, at 7:00 P.M. The library is located at the corner of W. Euclid Ave. and Dunton St. in Arlington Hts. Public parking is available in the garage below the library using the entrance in the rear. There is an elevator just inside the building which will take you to the second floor where our meeting will be.

---

Our speaker for February will be our own Wayne Rhine who will talk about the Great Escape from Libby Prison. Wayne is a retired judge and has been a life saver in helping out our group, to say nothing of his allegiance to the Chicago Cubs.

\*\*\*\*\*

## ARTIFACTS FROM KENOSHA

A short distance north of us, just over the border, is the Kenosha Civil War Museum. On January 2, DougDammann talked about some of the many artifacts from the institution.

Why is there a Civil War museum in Wisconsin – far from any battlefield of the war? The answer lies in the contributions of the Upper Midwest to the Union war effort. The states of Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Michigan, Minnesota, Ohio, and Wisconsin provided approximately 49% of the Northern army’s manpower: 1,044,212 soldiers, of which 139,640 gave their last full measure. Natural resources were another considerable factor: coal, lead, wood, copper, and more. And a third key contribution was food, be it corn (Illinois, Ohio, Iowa), wheat (Illinois, Wisconsin), or meat (Ohio alone had 6 million sheep– which of course doubled as a wool source), among others.

Immigrants, both from within the United States and from foreign lands, also loomed large in the region. In 1860, Wisconsin's population was about 33% foreign born; a generation later, in 1880, Minnesota's population was about 70% immigrant. As for immigration from within the country, Damman highlighted Illinois. The northern half of the state, thanks to the Erie Canal's link with the Great Lakes, was largely settled by Northerners; the southern half of the state received an influx from south of the Ohio River. (In the 1860 Presidential election, although Lincoln carried the state, Stephen Douglas won the region south of Springfield.)

Having demonstrated the vital importance of the Upper Midwest, Dammann moved on to some of the museum's artifacts, demonstrating a wide variety of both items and back stories. He started with a couple of Wisconsin cavalry units. The 1st Wisconsin was trained in Kenosha; the museum has regimental stationery with a horse icon. Lieutenant James Pond of the 3rd Wisconsin horse, who had been with John Brown in Kansas, won the Medal of Honor campaigning against William Quantrill in 1863. His medal is on site in Kenosha.

James Livingstone of the 25th Wisconsin Infantry emigrated to America in 1863. A broadside from the ship he sailed on has writing on the back, confirming an upgrade in passage for his family. Caroline Quarles was an entirely different kind of "immigrant;" a slave in St. Louis, she was the first female to pass through Wisconsin on the Underground Railroad. Upon reaching Milwaukee she was conveyed to Detroit and crossed into Canada. The man who enabled her passage to Detroit wrote her 38 years later; two of her responses are in Kenosha. (Dammann noted that the Underground Railroad has very little extant primary source material.)

Flags are always notable artifacts. Among those at Kenosha is the colors of Company G, 1st Wisconsin Infantry, a unit recruited in Kenosha. Dammann related that while the regimental flags were the property of the state, company flags were owned by local municipalities. This particular banner had been in a shadowbox until the 1990s. Another company flag is "E," 26th Illinois, with battle honors from New Madrid (1862) to Bentonville (1865) stitched into it.

Clothing is important as well. Dammann highlighted the early war frock coat of Col. Milton Ewen, 1st Wisconsin infantry. Its salient feature: The cloth is gray, not blue. Early in the war, some Northern

uniforms were gray and some Southern ones blue (famously causing confusion at First Manassas). There is also a shell jacket from Frederick Malish of the 6th Wisconsin Light Artillery. Its unusual feature is the veteran service bars on both sleeves. Equipment can also tell stories; Corporal Lucius Smith's (133 Ohio) haversack still has stains from the raw meat it carried.

Letters can be counted on to reveal much about the person in question. Seven letters written by Samuel Barrett of the 29th Wisconsin Infantry make it clear that money was a key factor in his enlistment, since bounties still owed to him are discussed. William Welshans of the 30th Illinois, from the Illinois side of the river near St. Louis, served despite not being a fan of President Lincoln – his 1864-65 letters show him as a McClellan backer in the 1864 election. This same attitude is illustrated – literally – by a Milwaukee German-language newspaper, *Der Seebote*. The paper's viewpoint is evident even to those who know no German, as Dammann pointed out: the picture of McClellan looks military and heroic, that of Lincoln looks disheveled and disreputable.

The German heritage of some Wisconsin soldiers is plainly exhibited in some ambrotype images of soldiers from the 26th Wisconsin. These studio-posed photos include a backdrop identifying not only the regiment but its nickname – the "Sigel Regiment." Photos can give a more personal context when linked to other artifacts. An ambrotype of Sgt. Robert York, 1st Wisconsin Infantry, accompanies a lock of his hair, with a presentation note to his girlfriend.

Nor are the home-front women ignored, as can be seen by invoices for farm expenses, which the women had to manage while their men were at war. A broadside of the Emancipation Proclamation, printed in Chicago in 1865 (and purchased at a garage sale for \$10.00!), is a reminder of the metamorphosis of the conflict into a fight for freedom. And even the enemy is represented in the artifacts, in a diary kept by a Rebel prisoner from the 55th Tennessee, from Camp Randall in Wisconsin (the unfortunate soldier had been captured at Island Number 10.)

Throughout the presentation, Dammann demonstrated that the stories behind the artifacts are the "fun part." On behalf of the Round Table, I would like to thank Doug Dammann for the journey.

Pat McCormick

---

## Speakers

Sept. 5, 2025, Dr. Chuck Rebesco, Ward's Brigade at Gettysburg  
Oct. 3, y, Jerry Allen: General James Blair Steedman  
Nov. 7, 2025, Daniel R. Weinberg, The Abraham Lincoln Book Shop  
Dec. 5, 2025, Bruce Allardice, Hawaii in the Civil War  
Jan. 2, 2026, Doug Dannaman, Kenosha Civil War Museum  
Feb. 6, 2026, Wayne Rhine, The Great Escape from Libby Prison  
Mar. 6, 2026, Civil War Trivia Game  
Apr. 3, 2026, Laurie Schiller, U.S. Cavalry  
May 1, 2026,  
June 5, 2026,



### 2024-25 Officers and Trustees

President	Wayne Rhine
1 <sup>st</sup> Vice President	Jerry Allen
2 <sup>nd</sup> Vice President	
Secretary	Laurie Schiller
Treasurer	Pat McCormick
Assistant Treasurer	
Membership	
Historian	Pat McCormick
Trustee	Tom Gavigan (2024)
Trustee (2024)	Fred Reczkowitz
Trustee	Danielle Kafka (2026)
Trustee	Susan Hirsch
Trustee	Alisa Corsi (2028)
Trustee	Laurie Schiller

### Appointed Positions

Newsletter Editor Jerry Rodosky

[gjrodosky@gmail.com](mailto:gjrodosky@gmail.com)  
847-420-1639

## Upcoming Events

---

Our monthly discussion is at a crucial junction. We have only 4-6 participants and would certainly like to double that. Pat McCormick and Laurie Schiller contribute a lot but it is open to anyone who hooks up. It starts at 7 PM and goes till around 8:30 PM. Anyone can ask a question or contribute to the discussion. Even I add a thought from time to time. In Feb. we will be discussing Lincoln's effect on the war, the good, the bad, and the mixed. It will be at 7PM on Wed. Feb. 18, 2026.

If anyone has an idea of how to attract participants, please share it with me.

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/81433758155?pwd=S1FqVjJ1WmZsTTd1VlJNRClLcjJLdz09>

[This link works for regular meetings and discussions.](#)

Questions? Comments? Email me or call.

Jerry Rodosky  
847-420-1639  
[gjrodosky@gmail.com](mailto:gjrodosky@gmail.com)

I will forward your questions or comments to the appropriate person.

---

### My Upcoming Presentations - Charlie Banks

February 10, 2026, Armchair Generals 11:45 am to 1:00 pm Civil War Thru Postal Covers  
March 10, 2026, McHenry County CWRT 7:00 pm to 8:30 pm Battle of South Mountain.  
April 25, 2026, Salt Creek CWRT 11:00 am to 12:30 pm General Nathaniel P. Banks

Charlie always gives interesting presentations, and, boy, does he know railroads!

---

