



*Director's Notes, April 2010*

*Subject: Website, Park Project, Way Ahead*



21 April, 2010

Dear Members, Prospective Members, and/or Civil War Park Project Supporters

If you are viewing these notes, you've probably already spent a few moments perusing our recently revised website. Due to the efforts, patience, and talents of Ms. Debra Scites (our Secretary and Webmaster) and Mr. Brian Withrow (one of our new Directors) who shared his considerable web-development and design talents, I hope you agree our website is absolutely first class. It is also ideally structured to facilitate dissemination of news, recruit new members, and allow on-line donations. A major focus of the new website is our Stafford Civil War Park project which will be the key FSCWS effort for at least the next three years. This park, will preserve, interpret and open to the public an area occupied and fortified by the Union 11<sup>th</sup> Corps during the winter of 1862-1863. In a larger sense it will also honor and provide insights into the lives of all Civil War soldiers who camped in Stafford's woods and fields during the Civil War. After 150 years, it is time. Natural questions might include: "What is the current status of the FSCWS Organization and Civil War Park project?", and, "What can one do to help?" The following paragraphs provide some answers starting with the organization question.

The FSCWS organization has undergone key changes over the past year per a plan presented and voted on at a meeting at the White Oak Museum in late 2008. Changes include transforming ourselves from a "not for profit" organization to a 501(c)(3) Non-Profit. The key difference being that contributions to a 501(c)(3) are tax exempt. Two additional Directors, a President, Secretary and Treasurer were selected from members whom were most active and who volunteered to serve as part of this transformation. Additional Directors are Steve Leblanc and Brian Withrow of Stafford. DP Newton of White Oak now serves as President, Debra Sites as Secretary, Becky Trimmer as Treasurer, and Bill Shelton as our liaison to the Stafford County Civil War Park Steering Group, a County sponsored group. No Directors or Officers are paid. The FSCWS is incorporated in VA, and approved by the Federal Government. The shifts in organization were a prerequisite to application for various State and Federal grants and also made to increase the likelihood of donor support based on the ability to deduct contributions. More background on Directors, Officers, and bylaws can be accessed via our homepage at <https://fscws.org> .

As for Park Project status, as I write this letter, the Stafford Board of Supervisors (BOS) and the Fredericksburg City Council have identified 25+ acres to be set aside for preservation of the sites referenced above. The FSCWS has negotiated an agreement with the Stafford BOS, if we

can raise the necessary funds, to allow us to execute construction of a road to connect three major fortifications, a pre-Civil War sandstone quarry, a family picnic area, and several other historic resources via a hard surface road in a public park. Using funding we received per our agreement with the BOS, the FSCWS contracted with Freeland Engineering, a professional consultant to complete a Park Engineering Feasibility study and Preliminary Construction Plan. The park was found to be feasible, and the Preliminary Plan was presented to and approved by the Stafford BOS 7 to 0 on February, 16<sup>th</sup>, 2010. This Park with your help will open to the public during the Civil War Sesquicentennial. Finally, we and the County have negotiated with the good folks at Sona Homes Inc. to gain easements that will allow public access to the Park area----a key pre-requisite for any construction.

So, what can members, perspective members, or just those who would like to contribute in some fashion do to help. There are many answers and help is needed on many fronts, but none more so than fundraising. For members we are now asking for (but not mandating) annual dues of \$25.00 per year. But, we need \$1,000,000 to build this Park so we will have to do a lot more through both individual contributions and efforts. While the FSCWS has accomplished many good things to date, literally using hundreds of dollars in member contributions to generate hundreds of thousands in preservation, this Park project will take every single, idea and dollar we can come up with. This means we need to get the word out on this project on a large scale and we must be willing to ask for support from others. If you know of an organization we should contact, then suggest it. If you would be willing to, or would like one of our Officers or Directors to present to a group whom you think would help then let us know. Thanks to the recent efforts of LtCol Steve Leblanc (USMC ret) we also will soon have available business cards with all the information others need to join us, and/or to contribute to the Park Project via web or personal check . I ask you to please ask any Director or Officer for these cards and to passing them out to your friends and relatives whom have an interest in Civil War or Stafford History. If you would be willing reply via the website contact us info, or call any Director or Officers and we will work with you. If you can draft letters, are willing to host information tables, or sponsor an FSCWS talk to an organization to which you belong again just contact us. Over the last several months we have made presentations on the Civil War Park effort to the Stafford Lions Club, Rotary, Historic Commission, and Historic Society. Beginning 30 April, I will take an earlier retirement than I had once planned solely to work this project full time. Please feel free to call with your ideas, your requests, or proposals, and I will meet your schedule and get with you to discuss. My home phone is 540-658-6324. Thank you so much for your support of Stafford's Civil War Sites.

Sincerely

Glenn A. Trimmer  
Director, Friends of Stafford Civil War Sites