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# General Orders

## *Walker's Brigade*

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**FEBRUARY, 2025 MEETING**  
**Thursday, February 20, 2025**

**Rudi Lechner's Restaurant**  
**2503 South Gessner Road**  
**6:00 pm (or sooner) - Dinner**  
**7:00 pm - Program Begins**

**\*\*\* No Reservations Required for this Meeting\*\*\***

**There is no cost for dues-paid members.**  
**\$10.00 charge for visitors.**

### The HCWRT Presents Jeff Hunt Speaking On:

**“The Last Battle of the Civil War:  
Palmetto Ranch, Texas”**

The last land engagement of the War Between the States was fought on the banks of the Rio Grande, a little less than 12 miles from Brownsville, Texas, near Palmetto (Palmito) Ranch. This action, in which nearly 2,000 men ultimately took part, has been shrouded in myth and misinformation almost since day the day it was fought.

Historian Jeffrey William Hunt, author of *The Last Battle of the Civil War: Palmetto Ranch* (University of Texas Press, 2002), brings the

truth about Palmito Ranch to light and reveals that, contrary to popular myth, the Confederate and Federal forces who fought there were aware of the surrender of Robert E. Lee and other major Rebel armies east of the Mississippi, as well as the assassination of President Abraham Lincoln. Nonetheless, Southern forces in the Trans-Mississippi region had not yet agreed to lay down their arms, and the Rebel cavalymen led by Colonel John S. “Rip” Ford were still willing to fight. So too were the men of the 34<sup>th</sup> Indiana Infantry, 1<sup>st</sup> Texas Cavalry (U.S.) and the 62nd United States Colored Troops, who proved to be the heroes, not the villains, of the Union defeat as is often claimed. Why the battle was fought, the secret peace negotiations preceding it, the fight's casualties, and its international flavor, as well as the context of the war on the Rio Grande are all brought into focus in this presentation on the war's last clash on American soil.



**Jeff Hunt**

## About Jeff Hunt

Jeffrey William Hunt is the Director of the Texas Military Forces Museum at Camp Mabry in Austin, Texas, which is the official museum of the Texas National Guard, and an Adjunct Professor of History at Austin Community College, where he has taught since 1988. Prior to taking the post at the Texas Military Forces Museum in 2007, he was the Curator of Collections and Director of the Living History Program at the Admiral Nimitz National Museum of the Pacific War in Fredericksburg, Texas for 11 years. He holds a bachelor's degree in government and a master's in history, both from the University of Texas at Austin, and is a veteran reenactor, with 35 years of experience conducting, participating in and hosting a wide variety of events ranging from the War of 1812 through the Vietnam War. Jeff is the recipient of the Gettysburg Civil War Round Table's 2018 Distinguished Book Award and the Chicago Civil War Round Table's Edwin Cole Bearss Award for Outstanding Civil War Scholarship in 2022. In 2013, Mr. Hunt was appointed an honorary Admiral in the Texas Navy by Governor Rick Perry, in recognition of his efforts at the Texas Military Forces Museum to tell the story of the Texas Navy during the period of the Texas Revolution and Republic. Mr. Hunt is the author of *The Last Battle of the Civil War: Palmetto Ranch, Meade and Lee at Bristoe Station, The Problems of Command and Strategy After Gettysburg, From Brandy Station to the Buckland Races, August 1 to October 31, 1863, and Meade and Lee at Rappahannock Station: The Army of the Potomac's First Post-Gettysburg Offensive: From Kelly's Ford to the Rapidan, October 21 to November 21, 1863*. Mr. Hunt is also a contributor to the Essential Civil War Curriculum, The Revised Handbook of Texas, The Gale Library of Daily Life, American Civil War, and North & South Magazine. The final book in his post-Gettysburg Series, *Meade and Lee at Mine Run*, was published by Savas Beatie in 2023.

## President's Comments

*By Walker Agnew*

At last month's meeting, we enjoyed an interesting presentation by New Orleans native Sean Michael Chick on P.G.T Beauregard. This general did not fit the normal mold of the time. As a French speaking Creole, he was the superintendent of West Point for three days before joining the Confederate army. He led troops in both the eastern and western theaters of war. He was the victor at the First Battle of Bull Run; while at Shiloh, he was defeated after taking command during the battle. Though a great engineer and general, he did not have a good relationship with Jefferson Davis.

Our February speaker will be Jeff Hunt, Director of the Texas Military Forces Museum in Austin. His topic will be the Battle of Palmito Ranch, Texas.

Our nominations committee will soon be collecting names of members who would like to serve on our committees. Please let us know whether this might be of interest to you.

## Civil War Symposium at Lone Star College

Lone Star College North Harris will hold a conference commemorating the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Civil War. The conference, which is free and open to the public, will be held on Friday, April 4<sup>th</sup> with registration at 9:00 am and the day's sessions beginning at 9:30 am. The conference site is Lone Star College's Student Services Building, Room 206, located at 2700 W. W. Thorne Drive, Houston. Speakers will include Neil Chatelain, Lorien Foote, Brian Matthew Jordan, and others.

If you'd like to attend, please RSVP at <http://www.eventbrite.com/e/105157402517?aff-oddtcreator>

Should you have any questions, contact Neil at [neil.chatelain@lonestar.edu](mailto:neil.chatelain@lonestar.edu)

## Membership Report

*By Michael Clennan*

Be sure to bring a friend on Thursday, February 20th to enjoy a history lesson about the Battle of Palmito Ranch in south Texas. Are you aware that our primary source of recruiting new members is our current members? That's why we're always reaching out to you, asking everyone to bring a guest to our next meeting. Remember, all guests are able to attend free of charge during their first visit.

I firmly believe that our Round Table offers some of the best educational and social events in Houston. For only \$50.00 yearly (\$60.00 for family memberships), you receive nine outstanding lectures. Also, by arriving at Rudi's by about 5:45 pm you can enjoy fellowship over dinner with 25 other students of history. If you join in February, your new membership includes the remaining months of the 2024 – 2025 campaign plus the upcoming 2025 – 2026 campaign year!

After dinner, we'll enjoy our program, which includes our guest speaker, a challenging Civil War quiz, and the popular book raffle. If you have any questions, please feel free to call me at (713) 864-1204.

## Book Raffle

*By Rita Campbell*

With spring not very far off, this could be a good time to declutter your house! Please consider bringing me your Civil War books you'll never read again. I even offer curbside service; just leave the books in your car when you attend upcoming meetings and I'll transport them in a dolly or otherwise carry them away. I plan to be in attendance at all of our upcoming meetings through May.



Here are our special picks for February:  
**CONFEDERATES IN THE ATTIC** by Tony

Horowitz and **TEAM OF RIVALS: THE POLITICAL GENIUS OF ABRAHAM LINCOLN** by Doris Kearns Goodwin. These two are on the top 100-rated Civil War book list. Other selections being raffled this month include **MR. LINCOLN GOES TO WAR** by William Marvel, **THE IRON BRIGADE: A MILITARY HISTORY** by Alan T. Nolan, and **FROM MANASSAS TO APPOMATTOX: MEMOIRS OF THE CIVIL WAR IN AMERICA** by James Longstreet.

## February Quiz

*By Jim Godlove*

The Confederate commanders at Brownsville believed that there was an unofficial truce in the area after a meeting with a Union general. He met with them to discuss a withdrawal from the Confederacy (which came to nothing).

**Who was this general who would later write the novel *Ben Hur*?**



*Last month's speaker Sean Michael Chick*

## 2024 – 2025 SPEAKERS CAMPAIGN

Feb. 20, 2025	Jeff Hunt: “The Last Battle of the Civil War: Palmetto Ranch, Texas”
Mar. 20, 2025	Catherine Clinton: “Lincoln: The Immortal President”
Apr. 17, 2025	Andrew Bledsoe: “Decision at Franklin: The Nineteen Critical Decisions That Defined the Battle”
May 15, 2025	Reserved for 2025 Vandiver Award Recipient, topic TBA

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