

Fighting Joe Wheeler
Camp 1372

The Fighting Joe Wheeler Dispatch

Volume XXVII, Issue 8

August 2008

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The Next Camp Meeting will be at 7:00 pm, Tuesday, August 12, 2008
at the New Merkel House

This Month: Alabama Division 1st Lt. Commander Tom strain will speak on
"General Lee After the War"

Words of Wisdom and Warning

"I cannot undertake to lay my finger on that article of the Constitution which granted a right to Congress of expending, on objects of benevolence, the money of their constituents...." --**James Madison**

"To compel a man to furnish contributions of money for the propagation of opinions which he disbelieves and abhors, is sinful and tyrannical.-Thomas Jefferson

"Of all tyrannies, a tyranny exercised for the good of its victims may be the most oppressive. It may be better to live under robber barons than under omnipotent moral busybodies. The robber baron's cruelty may sometimes sleep, his cupidity may at some point be satiated; but those who torment us for our own good will torment us without end, for they do so with the approval of their own conscience."-C. S. Lewis

"In the end, more than freedom, they wanted security. They wanted a comfortable life, and they lost it all -- security, comfort, and freedom. When the Athenians finally wanted not to give to society but for society to give to them, when the freedom they wished for most was freedom from responsibility, then Athens ceased to be free and was never free again." Edward Gibbon

"Abraham Lincoln once asked General (Winfield) Scott the question: "Why is it that you were once able to take the City of Mexico in three months with five thousand men, and we have been unable to take Richmond with one hundred thousand men?" "I will tell you," said General Scott. "The men who took us into the City of Mexico are the same men who are keeping us out of Richmond." (**Confederate Veteran Magazine, September 1913, page 471**)

**Sign up for the Wheeler Camp Message Board and receive
"The Dispatch" in it's entirety by e-mail.**

Contact Compatriot Mike Little at cdr_mike_little@bellsouth.net

Alabama: We Dare Defend Our Rights

"The principal for which we contended is bound to reassert itself, though it may be at another time and in another form."
Jefferson Davis, May 1865

Commander's Report

The "dog days" of August are here and it is unbelievably HOT, and busy. As I prepare for my finals next week and for my children to begin school again next week I wanted to say that I truly hope to see all of you next week at our monthly meeting.

Also, our last big event this year is the annual Joe Wheeler birthday cookout featuring Tom Strain's famous steaks as well as entertainment by the South's own Ross Moore! We only have seating for 80 so send your check to Larry Muse asap.

The following paragraphs are taken from the introduction to a book entitled "The Gray Book":

"Soldiers and sailors of the Confederacy have been characterized as "belligerents fighting to make slavery a permanent principle on which to maintain national life." Many schoolchildren are taught and, unfortunately, many adults believe that the "Civil War was fought between the forces of slavery and disunion on one side and the forces of liberty and freedom on the other." Southerners are to be ashamed of their soldier ancestors, as of their region of the country - a region supposedly rescued from its stupidity first by guns, then by constitutional amendments and finally by the Federal courts and commissions. It was incumbent upon Northern politicians to draw attention away from the true political factors leading to the war and instead, make it appear a moral conflict. To a large extent they were successful.

The dissolution of the Union was not what the Southern Soldier had chiefly at heart. The establishment of the Confederacy was not, in his mind, the supreme issue of the conflict. Both were secondary to the preservation of the sacred right of self-government. Secession and the Confederacy were means to an end, not the end.

It is incredible to believe that this conflict was fought to preserve the institution of slavery. No thinking person can accept that slavery, a financial interest of a single percent of the South's population, prompted hundreds of thousands of farm boys and shopkeepers to endure incredible hardships for four long years with many of them to die for their beliefs. They fought for one reason ...liberty!

Southerners believed the Federal government was assailing self-government, a sacred heritage of Anglo-Saxon freedom, when they flew to arms as one.

It is important that all Americans know the true story of their gallant struggle. Southerners, in particular, should reaffirm their determination not to cut loose from a proud heritage.

Ben Jonson, the 17th Century Englishman stated, "It is the highest of earthly honors to be descended from the great and good. They alone cry out against noble ancestry who have none of their own."

Southerners should never forget this.

Charles H. Smith, CIC (1982-1984)



**One lucky Wheeler Camp member will win
this knife in September!**

Recruit a new member for a chance to win!



Join us for the General's Birthday!

Fighting Joe Wheeler Camp 1372 cordially invites you to an evening of fun and festivities as we celebrate the birthday of our namesake, General Joseph Wheeler.

The event is to be held at the New Merkle House at 7:00 pm on September 13, 2008

Ribeye Steaks, baked potatoes, and salad will be cooked and served by Bonnie-Blue BBQ. We will also have hamburgers and hot dogs for the kids.

Live entertainment provided by Ross Moore.

Cost is \$20.00 per person or \$35.00 per couple. (Kids plates are \$15.00 for steak and potato or \$10.00 for hamburger or hot dogs.)

Seating is limited, so please RSVP to:
Fighting Joe Wheeler Camp 1372
C/O Adjutant
P. O. Box 43362
Vestavia Hills, AL 35243



About the Entertainment:



When it seems everywhere you go, everyone is talking about the "good old days," it's a welcome sight to have someone like Ross Moore come along and give us the kind of music and entertainment that we all miss so much. He runs the gambit from singing old time favorites and playing instruments popular during the Civil War to picking some of the hottest bluegrass coming out of Nashville. He plays twelve different instruments, including Autoharp, Dobro, Hammered Dulcimer, Mountain Dulcimer, 6 and 12 string Guitar, Banjo, Mandolin, Celtic Harp, Irish Pennywhistle, Concertina and Harmonica. Along with strong vocals, and his brand of down home humor, Ross puts on a show that captures the imagination of old and young alike.

Tuesday, August 5, 2008

'Stonewall' scholarship under attack

Valerie Richardson

An Alabama state scholarship program honoring Confederate Lt. Gen. Thomas "Stonewall" Jackson has run into a stone wall of opposition from black legislators.

State Rep. Alvin Holmes said he plans to introduce a bill abolishing the Alabama Stonewall Jackson Memorial Fund when the Legislature convenes in February.

"It's not the job of the taxpayers of Alabama to fund anything in remembrance of those who tried to overthrow the U.S. government and maintain the institution of slavery," said Mr. Holmes, a Democrat, who said the measure would have the support of the legislative black caucus.

The scholarship's backers have no intention of surrendering, however. They argue that the fund teaches students about the state's heritage and history while providing aid for higher education.

"Thomas Jonathan Jackson and Robert Edward Lee were two of the greatest military leaders in history," said Murfee Gewin, a longtime scholarship judge. "They were men of the finest character. I would maintain that anybody would benefit from studying the lives of these two men."

Mr. Holmes doesn't buy it. "This is to preserve their history, and their history was to have slaves," he said.

The debate is the latest chapter in the decade-old conflict over Southern symbols such as the Confederate flag. Some argue they have no place in state government because they represent a system that supported slavery, while others say they stand for regional pride and heritage.

The Legislature appropriated \$20,000 to establish the scholarship in 1955, shortly after the Brown v. Board of Education decision, which declared public school segregation illegal. Part of the reason was to send a signal to federal authorities.

The fund offers college scholarships of \$1,000, recently increased to \$2,000, for high school seniors who write a 1,500-word essay relating to the Confederate general's life. Recipients are expected to repay the money within five years of graduation.

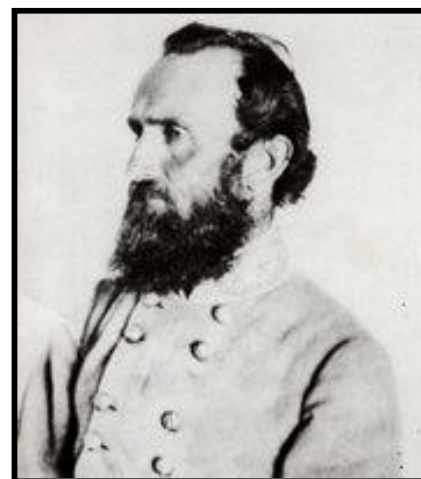
Rising college costs may pose a bigger threat to the program than the black caucus. A thousand bucks doesn't go as far as it did in 1955, and the fund is at risk of falling into disuse.

The scholarship committee receives just a handful of applications in most years, and last year it received none, said Debbie Pendleton, assistant director of the state Department of Archives and History.

Most students write standard biographical essays about the Southern general's life rather than expressing an opinion on whether he deserves his place in history. Almost all of those who apply receive the award, she said.

"Unless the essays are really awful, we generally award scholarships to anyone who applies,"

Miss Pendleton said. Since 1989, 53 students have received the scholarships. The committee doesn't ask the race of the applicants, but Miss Pendleton noted that at least one past winner planned to attend a traditionally black college.



One paper in the state, the Decatur Daily, recently came out in favor of abolishing the fund, calling it an "anachronism."

"In 1955, a student could go a year to college on \$1,000, which gave the fund a measure of legitimacy. Today, it's hardly worth the paperwork to get it," said the July 20 editorial. "Keeping the fund alive perpetuates a past we would be better off not honoring."

Mr. Gewin disagreed, arguing that some students will stockpile smaller scholarships to fund their education. "It may be only \$1,000, but that's \$1,000 more than they had the night before they got it," he said.

A lobbyist for the state's Eagle Forum, Mr. Gewin said he doubted the Legislature would have the votes to kill the program.

"There's no support for it. This is a bunch of people simply grandstanding," he said. "There's no great outcry. It's not going to pass, and the governor's not going to sign it if it did. The best thing these politicians could do is to get behind the Stonewall Jackson Memorial Fund and get us some help."