



ACWSA Michigan-Ohio Group Newsletter

Volume 1, Issue 4 - May 2010

Well, we did it. We finally had our first shoot, and I could not be happier with the outcome. It has been a couple of weeks since the event we held on Mother's Day at Blue Water, and the reaction and feedback from shooters who were there has been very positive. We had good weather on Sunday and had a good turnout, despite it being the most forbidden of holidays! Even the rain from the preceding week left the grounds at Blue Water in very manageable shape since the grass they planted last fall is really beginning to take root. The weather even cooperated for Sunday with very comfortable temperatures and sun! I speak with assurance when I say everyone on hand Sunday had a great time.



We fired musket team first, including a 25 yard event that I had some apprehension about before hand, because it is out of the norm. Following the shoot one member of the 2nd Texas said that he enjoyed the 25 yard event because his old eyes could see the targets! Out of the norm is certainly among the themes we are going for this season, and I am glad members have taken that with a positive attitude. On that same note we fired carbine team

following musket on Sunday in what amounted to a "one day shoot" for most shooters, and even though we did fire both major team events we were still able to be cleaned up and off the range by 2:30. Those who were there noticed that clean-up was very simple, and that the only waste left at the end of the day was broken pigeons and cardboard from the first event.

The metal targets were a success, and I am glad too, considering the toil and expense we went through to get them, that shooters enjoyed them as much as the small cadre of Michiganders who first experienced them at the Bristol shoot in Wisconsin last fall did. A video of the metal tile event has been posted on the [Facebook Group](#). When you watch it you will notice the distinctive PING! of the rounds hitting the targets, which adds another dimension to competition in that not only can you see other teams' targets falling, but you can hear every hit!

Registration seemed to go well too, and it was neat to see everyone meeting before the events on Sunday and talking it up with other members. A really positive feel. The registration period gave us an opportunity to sign up a few new members, as you will read about later in this newsletter, and allowed us to place teams and shooters in an effective fashion so that everyone who wanted to shoot in either match was able to, including a team of all women carbine shooters

led by Dianne Gibson. To improve on this at Richmond in June we have allowed a bit more time to complete registration in anticipation of more competitors.

For those of you driven by the numbers, we have posted statistics and event results from the Sunday portion of the shoot [HERE](#) on acwsa.org. [Check it out!](#)

The field trip portion of the weekend went very well too, except for the weather Saturday that was cold and rainy. This seems to plague the Lake Shore American Civil War field trips, and is a function to the time of year in which we are forced by school scheduling to hold the events. But, despite this chronic issue, students still enjoy it. We changed the field trip up a bit to incorporate ACWSA events, and I am already working on the schedule for the [October Field Trip Shoot](#).

One element that was added this time around which I was pleased with was a smoothbore team demonstration. The events were fired using all of the main firing methods used by units during the war, firing by volley, firing by file, and firing at will. This demonstration allowed me to talk about different combat situations and why a commander may choose one particular method. Likewise is true of the use of buck-and-ball cartridges which allowed students to consider different types of ammunition and weapons in use. I know from the feedback of the students that they were impressed by this. It also allowed me to incorporate some of the lecture items that used to be included with the small arms demonstration typically held in the afternoon. It makes sense to have others shoot and me talk about it while it is happening. As a result, for the [October Field Trip Shoot](#) we will do the smoothbore team after lunch, and follow it with the small arms demonstration, and switch the cannon match/demo to before lunch. An added



benefit for this is that the cannon match then can be done in leisure because students could leave to go cook their meal once they had seen each of the cannons, even if the "match" was not over.

Some elements of the cannon match worked well in this format. For example, as shown by Jim and Fritz above, the counter-battery target I had students make in class worked well for demonstration purposes. This one was fired by the 1st South Carolina's 10 pounder Parrott. Gunners also got to fire a lot of rounds, a fact that was only limited by the amount of time students had at the range. The

switch I mentioned in the previous paragraph will also prevent this rush at the end from happening. One element of the cannon match students enjoyed was the demonstration of canister

rounds. The Parrott rifle and Brian Haack's Williams gun both fired this devastating round at a row of silhouettes made by students as a part of their uniform research project, as shown in the image. In a lesson about medical care later in the term we will use those targets to compute hit ratios so we can determine the severity of the blast of canister and its affect on a line of infantry. It may go without saying, but all of the silhouettes were hit at least once. Unfortunately, the Zouave seemed to get the most hits. Students were so impressed with this round that they collected every scrap of it they could find down range and took them home with them! In the picture, graduating senior Elena Kron is pulling the lanyard on one of the canister rounds.



In summary, the first ACWSA shoot in Michigan, and the first attempt to mesh the field trip with our style of shooting was a success, and I hope you join me in looking forward to the new group of students for our October event. Hope to see you there, and keep your eyes on <http://civilwarfieldtripshoot.weebly.com> for event information and registration.

Coming Events

Memorial Day Parade, Dearborn - May 31st

As announced last month we will be marching in the annual Memorial Day parade in Dearborn, next week on Monday, May 31. We will be marching in a combined effort with the Sergeant John S. Cosbey Camp 427 of the Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War (SUVCW) organization in Dearborn. My understanding is that the route will duplicate the route of last year's parade and is about 2 miles long, proceeding down Michigan Ave. We will park behind the police station/train station and meet behind the Henry Ford Centennial Library at 9:30 AM (parade starts at 10:30 AM) and march east to city hall, disbursing at about 11:30 AM. The Henry Ford Centennial Library is located at 16301 Michigan Avenue Dearborn, MI 48126. If you can arrange a vehicle to pick you and members of your team up at the end of the route, that would be helpful.

We have no limit of how many members can participate in the parade, and it is my hope that we can have as many people as possible, considering the cause of honoring the men and women who have died in the service of our nation. Given that Memorial Day developed as a Confederate observance as well as Union one, Rebels will be accepted to march along with Union troops.

As in years past, all are invited to join us back at my modest home for a cook out following the parade. Please bring a dish to pass if you can, but don't let that stop you from coming by. Soft drinks will be provided, and you are welcome to bring any adult beverage you wish. My home is located only a few miles from the parade route at 4623 Detroit St., Dearborn Heights (48125). If you are only coming to my place instead of to the parade, plan on being there by noon. Even if we are not back from the parade, someone will be home. Please let me know this week if you plan on being in the parade and/or coming over afterward.

2010 Dearborn Parade to Honor Vets' Remains.

What I was unaware of until now, thanks to Mike Baker of the 8th Michigan, was the following story:

DEARBORN — Forgotten for generations, the unclaimed cremated remains of U.S. military veterans sit on shelves of funeral homes and state hospitals across the United States. Mostly men, some were indigent or homeless; some outlived their families and friends. They ended up missing in America.

In Dearborn, 26 veteran cremains were found at local funeral homes. They will be buried with dignity by the Dearborn Allied War Veterans' Council, which has planned a first-of-its-kind ceremony in Michigan. At 9:30 a.m. on Memorial Day, the council of veteran posts will pay final respects to the veterans who served in WWI, WWII, Korea and Vietnam. They expect to set a new standard for transferring the cremains, including a WWI veteran who had been languishing at funeral home since 1938.

The public is invited to line Michigan Avenue and watch a horse-drawn caisson carry a flag-draped coffin with the remains of the servicemen make its way along Michigan Avenue from the Dearborn Police Department near Greenfield, east to Dearborn City Hall at Schaefer.

An honor guard and military chaplains will accompany the caisson for the 1.25-mile funeral procession made possible by a recent change in state law. Everyone attending the ceremony, which starts 30 minutes before the city's annual Memorial Day parade at 10 a.m., will be asked to stand quietly and respect the solemn occasion. Veterans should salute and the public should put their hands over their hearts.

"This will be an Arlington-style procession," said Richard Fleek, commander of the allied council, referring to the national cemetery. "Two events are happening this year. The first event is a funeral to mourn the loss of these veterans. The second event is the parade."

"I think what Dearborn is doing is wonderful. I'd like to see it done for every veteran. It takes time and work but it's a labor of love for a debt of service that can never be repaid."

Dearborn's Memorial Day Parade is the oldest continuous parade in Michigan held on Memorial Day. It is produced by the City of Dearborn in conjunction with the Dearborn Allied War Veterans Council and honors all those who have given the last full measure of devotion in service to our country. The parade will begin in 2010 at about 10:30. a.m., a change from previous years to accommodate a special ceremonial funeral procession.

Click to read the [full story](#).

Richmond Shoot – June 12-13 – 8th Arkansas.

The invitation and schedule of events for the June shoot at Richmond hosted by the 8th Arkansas has been e-mail out, and has been posted on the web [HERE!](#) The 8th has put together a great schedule of events for both shooting and fellowship! The Saturday evening movie will be Gran Torino. Please note that camping will open on Friday and shooting will be on Saturday and Sunday. Food will be available on the range both days. There will be an opportunity to practice at paper before all the team events start! Since the registration process is new to most of us please note the times given in the invite for registration periods and team commanders' meetings.

This is a great time of the early summer to be shooting, and a great location to do it at. Bring the family out and plan on making a weekend of it. Please contact John Schember, per the invitation, with an estimate of who will be coming within the next week or so.

Northville Victorian Festival - July 3rd

Jim Bone reports that we have been asked to set up a Civil War encampment in Northville's historic village (Millrace Village) on July 3rd, in the morning after Northville's 4th of July parade. The parade is at 10.00am and the Village will be open from 11:00am - 4:00pm. Millrace Village is similar to a miniature Greenfield Village with a 1 room schoolhouse, a church, a Greek Revival house, a general store, a Victorian house, a gazebo and more, all brought to the Village from locations around Northville.

We would like people and uniforms, guns, cannons, tents and flags. Anything you think that would be of interest about the Civil War, or our hobby, would be ok. This hopefully should be a great opportunity for recruitment. Please let Jim know as soon as possible who might be available, interested and willing.

We haven't yet applied, but if we get enough interest, we can probably march in the parade if we choose. The parade route goes along tree lined streets. Jim is going to coordinate this effort, so please contact him or post on the Facebook page.

2011 Schedule Survey

In my experience one of the most difficult elements of organizing and running shoots is the act of setting a schedule of when and where they will be held. The various factors that need to be taken into consideration creates the tedious nature of scheduling. Among those factors are the weather conditions in the prime months available in Michigan (where summer is sometimes considered three months of bad sledding), the availability of the various ranges we rent, national and Hallmark holidays, the schedule of the tides, and various other items. Scheduling was difficult before and will only be compounded by the simple necessity to respect and coordinate calendars with the N-SSA regions in which some of our membership participate. This year worked out well, in my opinion, but I was able to set both the local N-SSA calendar and our schedule, and had the added benefit of already having a final copy of the Wisconsin/Illinois ACWSA schedule. That will not be a luxury we have in 2011.

With this in mind, in an effort to be proactive in determining when and where we might be best suited to host shoots, I have put together a simple survey to provide guidance as to which ranges you would like to shoot on. This survey will be conducted on-line and I am asking that you access the survey between now and the week of the Richmond shoot to enter your opinion of what ranges you would like to shoot at. I have only included ranges we have access to, or have reasonable assurance of having access to, and we are able to afford. If you would like use another range not listed, please enter that in the comment field. Also, if you have suggestions and constructive criticism about the venues, please also enter that into the comment field. I will use the data collected to begin to put together a preliminary 2011 schedule that I can use to coordinate with the other affected parties. The survey is available at <http://civilwarfieldtripshoot.weebly.com/2011-range-survey.html>

New Smith Tubes

Steve Balla has long provided a rubber and plastic tube for shooters of Sharps' rifles and carbines who do not want to roll paper cartridges. This past month Steve has announced a new product that should be a welcomed addition for Smith carbine shooters. He is now offering Smith tubes made of flexible rubber that replicates the function of the originals used during the war.



He claims the following about his product:

- Same volume as standard reduced capacity black plastic tubes
- Seals breach completely when fired
- Keeps breach clean and free from fouling
- Lasts as long, or longer than a standard black plastic tube
- No need to resize. Returns to original size every time

If anyone has tried these out and can offer a product review, pass it along to me and I will put in a future edition of the News. More details, and ordering information can be found at <http://www.shelltube.us/SmithTube.html>

Hosting Duties

I have left this in here this month as a reminder for those who did not attend the Blue Water event. Those who were there saw this in action, and saw that everything went smoothly. Simply put, ALL TEAMS will be expected to assist in basic shoot operations. Everyone shoots at the ACWSA events including the host team, if they choose. This can only work if everyone is lending a hand. Additionally, a portion of each shoot's profits will go toward the ACWSA Michigan/Ohio general account to be used for purchasing necessary items and keeping overall shooting expenses down for everyone. For example, your team will take your targeting list to the targeting supply depot and gather the necessary amount of pre-drilled targeting. Of course, everyone is expected to also participate in cleanup and assist with setting up your team's target frames, providing safeties for individuals, etc.

Women's Team(s)

Another cool aspect of ACWSA is that women are free to form their own teams and are allowed to fire at shorter distances than the men if they choose. In some regards it may be more welcoming to female participants who may otherwise not be interested in shooting. We had a team on the line in May, and we will continue to welcome women who wish to shoot on female teams. If you have interest in forming a female team, please contact Dianne Gibson (dianne@firstsouthcarolina.com) who has agreed to coordinate the efforts at this early stage.

Featured Uniform Sources

This month I would like to introduce you to a vender who makes hats. While there are many makers of hats out there, there are few makers of good hats out there. Most of our shooting is done in shirt sleeves, and in many cases shirts look like most other shirts. It is the hat that sets a man a part! It is the choice of a good hat that gives you character! That in mind, I would like to present you this month with TP& H Trading Co. - Hats by Tim Bender. <http://www.benderhats.com/>



Tim Bender is a maker of hats of many varieties representing North and South, and civilian hats as well. He does not make caps, only hats. T P & H Trading Company has been involved in Civil War sutler business since 1990 when it was started as a part time business while Tim pursued his career in the law enforcement field. Since then he has retired from Law Enforcement and is a full time hat maker.

He relies on period techniques and authentic materials similar to those used in the Civil War when creating his products. In many cases his headgear is made using custom hat blocks made to ensure a proper fit and style appropriate to the mid 19th century. Even if it is a style not shown on his website Tim can probably help you out with any type of period fur hat you are interested in. He even was able to craft a fabulous Zouave fez for my 146th New York impression.



Label choices for the 1858 Dress Hat

In my opinion, Tim's specialty is his version of the United States Army Dress hat of 1858, that distinctive and critical piece of headgear for any self-respecting Iron Brigade impression or U.S. Regular soldier portrayal. I have owned two of these in recent years, one that I wear without adornment in campaign style, and one that I have decked out with all of the appropriate brass ornamentation. Having been raised in the Iron Brigade I have had my share of black hats, from Burgess and from other makers,

and by far Bender is the best in the business. His styling matches what is written in such sources as the Columbia Rifles Research Compendium, and replicates closely the few original hats I have seen, down to the label in the crown. It is true, when talking about price, this is not your \$30.00 Hardee hat, but then again when considering quality this is not your \$30.00 Hardee!

Whether you are in the market for an exceptional black hat, or out for a hat with attitude, like his civilian "Purves hat" or one of the porkpies, you will notice the difference in quality, and so will most others!

I know from firsthand experience, you will not be disappointed!

Chevrons and the ACWSA Rank System

Several of you have commented about my mention of chevrons in last month's news, so I decided to expand on that and have written more about the ACWSA "functional" rank system. As a recap, the system is provided for in the By-Laws. Section 3 which reads as follows: *"The National Commander will hold the rank of Sergeant-Major. All other elected National Board Members to hold the rank of Quartermaster Sergeant. Regional Commanders will hold the rank of Ordnance Sergeant. All other elected Regional officers to hold the rank of First Sergeant. All Company Commanders will hold the rank of Sergeant, and all Company Adjutants to hold the rank of Corporal. All other members to hold the rank of Private."* For those of the naval persuasion the appropriate rank would be the naval equivalent of those army ranks. What it means for most of us is nothing on our sleeves as most members are "privates."

Placement of the chevrons for those who are authorized to wear them seem to be a bit of a point of confusion. Original regulations simply state *"1549. The rank of non-commissioned officers will be marked by chevrons upon both sleeves of the uniform coat and overcoat, above the elbow."* The Army adopted that regulation in 1851, the same year it switched from having the point of the chevron up to the Civil War standard of them being pointed down. So, points DOWN, except in the Marine Corps. As listed in the regulations, chevrons were attached only to the coat, and not to the shirt sleeves. There are some examples of chevrons being applied to shirts, as in one of the famous Iron Brigade photos, but the practice was rare in the Union army.

The exact placement other than above the elbow and point down shows a lot of variation and is not an exact science. The best bet for this for either Union or Confederate chevrons is to study original images. The United States documented the official uniform worn during the war in a long series of photographs taken in 1866. One such image is shown at the right. This series is great at showing the placement of chevrons. Examples for the various corps of the army can be found at Army Quartermaster museum at <http://www.qmmuseum.lee.army.mil/1866uniform/>.



Confederate placements seem to vary a great deal more than Union placements, and this is a result of the way chevrons were made and applied in the different armies. Again, though, your best guide is original images. There are some significant differences between Union and Confederate chevrons, and some really outrageous early war or homespun examples that can be seen in photographs.

Union chevrons were typically made from woolen tape that was sewn to a backing material made from the same material as uniform coats. The tape was the color of the branch of service the chevron was intended for, and the backing was typically dark blue to match the bulk of the upper garments worn by the Union army. This means that the chevron was somewhat of a "patch" that was sewn to the sleeve of the jacket. Chevrons were made both by the army depots and by private contractors.

The shape of the chevron itself is also worth noting. There are two distinct shapes, and both were available in the "patch" fashion described above. The first, as shown in the official Quartermaster Department photos and regulations, are simple "V" shapes with the legs of the chevron being straight pieces of tape. The second type are still a "V" shape but with the legs of



the chevron having an elliptical or curved shape to them, as shown in the image at left. There is some speculation that the "Straight V" type were intended for Regular troops, and the "Elliptical V" were intended for Volunteers. This is speculation and speculation that I think is without merit. Photographs show both volunteers and regular soldiers wearing either type. One surviving set of uniforms from the same soldier reportedly has one type on his over coat and the other type on his fatigue blouse or vest front.

Some suppliers of high quality Union chevrons include [Dan Wambaugh](#) who offers the straight variety, and [Chris Daley](#) and [Nick Sekela](#) who both offer the curved variety.

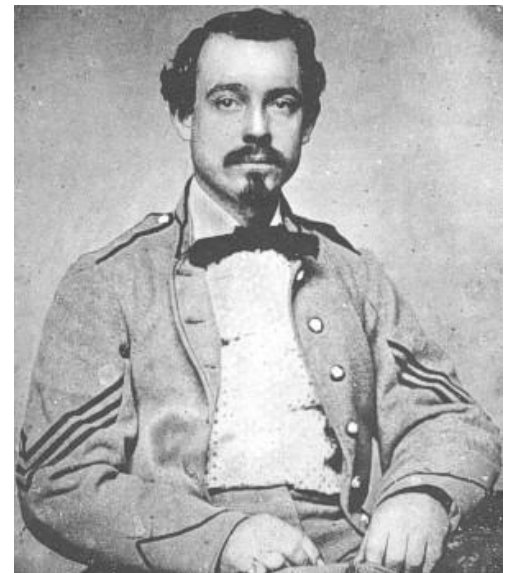
It should be noted that there was variation in this practice even among Union armies. Not all Union insignia was sewn with a backing material, some was sewn directly to the jacket or coat.

Zouave regiments and other non-standard troops often adapted rank insignia from other arms of service that coordinated with their uniforms better. For example, the 146th New York used cavalry rank insignia because the trim on their jackets and the tape on cavalry chevrons were both yellow. Other units had chevrons privately made for them, and there are many accounts of soldiers making their own insignia.

For the Confederacy things were a bit different, and less standardized. The "Regulations for the Army of the Confederate States, 1863" reads in part:

[Para.] 1529. [p. 406]: The rank of non commissioned officers will be marked by chevrons on both sleeves of the uniform coat and the overcoat, above the elbow, of silk and worsted binding, half an inch wide; color the same as the edging of the coat; points down...

This appears to be nearly the same text as the Union, but in practice differed from the Union in that the chevrons appear to be sewn directly to the coat. It appears that Confederates were not supplied with stripes sewn onto a backing material, but rather, in near universal fashion, had tape applied directly to the garment. In some cases, as in the image at the right, this was done during construction of the jacket, so the stripes are sewn into the seam of the sleeve, rather than applied after the fact. If you look at images of surviving Confederate NCO uniforms and pictures of Confederates in the field, you will noticed that the stripes vary quite a bit from soldier to soldier, and that they are nearly in every case applied directly to the coat sleeve.



For Confederate chevrons, or to make you own Union ones, you can purchase the tape from Needle and Thread, in Gettysburg, or through their internet source <http://www.woodedhamlet.com>. You will need about 1 foot of tape for each "V" on the chevron. So, 3 feet for each chevron of a sergeant, and a total of 6 feet for a complete set. Making them correctly is really not that difficult and just takes some time.

T-Shirts

The T-shirts were delivered Sunday morning of the Field Trip Shoot at Blue Water. They really turned out great, and I want to thank Paul and Julie Montresor who own and operate



Screened in Printing for getting them done for us, and making the fund raiser possible. Paul and Julie have made several different t-shirts, hats, and other items for me over the years, and are an excellent choice if you are having gear made for your team or school.

Some of you were able to pick the shirts up Sunday, but many remain. If you ordered a shirt but did not receive it at Blue Water, you can get it at Richmond in June. We did order some extra shirts that will be sold with proceeds going to the ACWSA account at the same fund raiser rate (\$14.00). These will be available after the pre-orders have been distributed. If you missed out on ordering a shirt this time around, we may be able to put future orders in.

Team Webpages

Most of the team web pages are still empty, including mine! We really need to take advantage of this opportunity and get some information up there. In a few weeks I should have some more free time as I am only taking two graduate courses this summer, and will be willing to populate any of the pages with content that you would like to see there. Just give me an idea of what you would like to have posted!

Team pages can be seen at <http://www.acwsa.org/Team%20Pages/Teams.htm>. We would like to populate some of the empty sites with new information, pictures, and recruiting contacts for each team.

[Facebook Group](#)

If you have a Facebook account, log on and search for “American Civil War Shooting Association” and you will find us, or follow this link - <http://www.facebook.com/#/group.php?gid=123117631965>.

Membership

I left the best news for last. Hopefully most of you are still reading. Since last month we have added quite a few members, and took the opportunity to cross-check the official ACWSA roster against our working copy here. Good news! The new membership count for the MI/OH area is 221 members counting 18 new additions! It is with pleasure that we welcome the following new members; Purcell's Battery, Jack Weatherford, - 4th Michigan, Adam Savickas and Curtis Leshay, - 8th Arkansas, Douglas Barbret, Russ Upston, Thomas Smith, Bill Martin, Gary Simmons, John Gaskill, and Karen Gaskill, - 7th Wisconsin, Lloyd Hevelhorst, LeeAnn Hubbard, - 8th Michigan Cavalry, Daniel Norfleet, Robert Braman, and Ken Lenz, - Bledsoe's Battery, Bill Hein, Nicholas Raptis, Tom Voigt, and - USS Michigan, Pam Smith.

In some cases we have new sign-ups but are still in the process of getting info submitted for some of them. In any event, this is fantastic news, and it is pleasing to see the group growing so quickly. With events that are as fun as the Blue Water shoot was, and the absolute ease in signing up new folks, I imagine this will continue to be the trend, and that is exciting!

If there is anything you would like to see in the News, please let me know. If there is an article you have written that you would like to include, please send it along!

See you in three weeks at Richmond!



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ACWSA Michigan Calendar Dates			
2010			
Date	Location	Hosts	Notes
May 8-9	Blue Water Port Huron, MI	146 th New York	LSHS Field Trip/ 1-Day ACWSA
May 31	Dearborn	Chris Hubbard	Memorial Day Parade
June 12-13	Richmond	8 th Arkansas	
July 24-25	Blue Water Port Huron, MI		Includes Artillery
July 31-August 1	Grayling	Loomis' Battery	Long Range Artillery
August 14-15	Richmond	1 st South Carolina	
September 24-26	Grayling	7 th Wisconsin / Loomis' Battery	Includes Artillery
October 9-10	Richmond		
October 23-24	Blue Water Port Huron, MI	146 th New York	LSHS Field Trip/ 1-Day ACWSA

ACWSA Wisconsin/Illinois Calendar Dates			
2010			
Date	Location	Hosts	Notes
June 5-6	Appleton, WI	66 NC & 2 WI	
July 17-18	Bristol WI	56VA	
August 7-8	Boscobel WI	15 WI & 8 WI	Civil War Days
September 4-5	Rhineland WI		
September 11-12	Bristol WI		ACWSA/N-SSA