

Civil

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who joined him on stage to recreate how Randall and other war recruits "jumped on the bandwagon" at the state fairgrounds.

"After (the 1862 battle of) Frederickburg, we went into our winter quarters," Neely said. "The morale was low ... We were ordered to witness the execution of men caught deserting ..."

"It's a sad state of affairs to see your own men executed, and their only crime is that they're tired, hungry, homesick. They just wanted to go home."

Old war story

Neely described one scene of how soldiers were so hungry they stole livestock from a Maryland farm they were marching near.

"Over a hill, we could hear livestock, cows and pigs and geese," he said. "Some of us went over that hill and we found a

nice farm."

A goose was snared, and stuffed into the marching band's drum. "The colonel asked the boy why he was not playing the drum, and he said, 'I can't, I've got a goose in the middle of it.'"

That night, after it was apparent the colonel forgot about his verbal exchange with the boy, he was handed a plate of goose and sweet laters.

"Tears started rolling down his cheek, because he was just as hungry as we were. He said, 'I'm not going to ask you where you got it, but I'll just thank you for it.'"

Randall was honorably discharged home to Michigan after being wounded in July 1863 at the battle of Gettysburg, which Neely detailed in graphic terms.

Soldiers were being killed all around him, including his lifelong friends of the Iron Brigade. "I sweated so much that I

soaked the cartridges and ruined them."

The young soldier noted the surrounding stench of death, the sight of comrades "stacked up like cordwood."

Soon, he was wounded, too. "The last thing I remembered when I looked up was a gray (Confederacy) uniform. Then everything went black. I don't know how long I was there ... All I saw were firefles, and I figured out that soldiers were looking around for the dead and wounded ... Every house became a hospital."

Randall's discharge came down that day. "By the twilight of the moon, I boarded the train (in Philadelphia) and began the journey home. For Henry Randall, the war was over."

After recovering from his wounds back home in Birmingham, he got married, raised a family and lived until his death

at age 61, in 1901.

Amazing artifacts

Following Neely's talk, students waded through a museum of genuine Civil War artifacts, such as:

■ a Confederate soldier's canteen, fashioned out of two skillets;

■ a sword known as an "old wrist breaker," worn by horse-riding soldiers;

■ an amputation saw (soldiers usually needed their arms or legs cut off to survive gunshot wounds to those limbs);

■ and a piece of petrified wood with a bullet lodged in it, from the bloody battle of Gettysburg.

Neely, meanwhile, emphasized one of his best teaching techniques: talking about someone or something the audience can relate to.

"What interests the kids (at Power) is talking about a Michigan soldier," Neely said. "... I wanted to focus on someone who was from the (24th Michigan) brigade, and who at least fought through Gettysburg."

Neely's presentation culminated a curriculum section focusing on that period of American history. On the day of his visit, the Civil War was the theme of a variety of activities (organized by Power teacher Mike Ehlinger). Those included Civil War "Jeopardy" debates and journal readings. Also, students created projects for their own artifacts' museum, displayed in the media center.

"We've been talking about how to visualize things," said Power

teacher Jim Weston. "With a lot of this, you hear about death and weapons being used. But to actually see that weapon" makes more of an educational impact on students.

Student reaction

Jake Ghannam, an eighth-grader, liked how Neely included details, facts and painted a visual picture that made the audience "feel like we were really there (in the Civil War), ... what people had to go through."

Eighth-grader Jerry Shinkonis said the presenter really made an impact on him with stories such as the one where heavy artillery caused a sheath of a tree to impale a soldier, killing him instantly.

Beyond such visual imagery, Jerry said it was also impressive to actually see artifacts. "It was interesting, how he had all the stuff to look at."

Property

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letter of intent, and; ■ Whittling away at a \$6 million shortfall the developer is asking the city to help make up the difference.

Some residents continue to hold out for more than what the developer is offering, Kaline said.

"If they can sell their house for \$100,000, we're basically offering \$150,000, which I think is pretty decent," Kaline said. "Then you have someone whose house is worth \$100,000, but they want \$250,000."

"If you hold out like that, you're just going to live like that forever and nothing will ever get done there."

As some property owners continue to raise the stakes, it becomes impossible to do the deal unless the developer gets additional help from the city, Kaline said.

The city doesn't want to get involved in negotiations between developer and residential property owners, City Manager Steve Brock said. Malan Realty and city staff met Thursday.

"I'm confident everyone will come to their senses and strike a deal," Brock said.

One property owner is almost there but told a real estate agent it's no cigar. "Jim Fleischer owns a home on Clairview."

He said residents feel pinned, especially those who won't be able to afford to live in Farmington Hills after they sell.

"(The real estate agent) sent me a contract; There is no bargaining," Fleischer said.

The same real estate company is handling land acquisitions as four years ago when another

■ 'If you hold out like that, you're just going to live like that forever and nothing will ever get done there.'

Michael Kaline
—Malan Realty

developer had plans for the triangle. Offers are less than what they were then, Fleischer said.

"With the property appreciating, the offers should at least be the same," he said.

Roads

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paving program, ranging from \$467,460 to \$899,000. But the low bidder, Viking Construction Co., withdrew from consideration due to errors in calculation, according to city manager Frank LaHoff.

Meanwhile, council members awarded Canton-based S&J Asphalt Paving with the 1999 parking lot, cemetery and repair program. S&J was the lowest of five bids, with a bid of \$70,760.

This year's asphalt projects include: the resurfacing of the Shawwassee Park parking lot at Power-Shinwassee; completion of the driveway through Oakwood Cemetery; road patching to segments of Power, between 10 Mile-Grand River and Shawwassee between Farmington-Orchard Lake.

LaRocca Construction of Livonia won the contract for this year's sidewalk replacement program. LaRocca's low bid of \$109,290 was approved by council members.

To be completed, also by mid-summer, are repairs to about 40,000 square feet of sidewalk in the portion of the city south of Grand River.

LaHoff said the Department of Public Services will send letters of notification out to all affected property owners, an estimated 600.

The program does not include sidewalks in the Downtown Development Authority. Also, there will be no cost to homeowners, LaHoff told the council, because of the elimination of special assessments to property owners for those specific repairs.

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