



BIVOUAC

KENT CIVIL WAR SOCIETY * P.O. BOX 3671 KENT, OH 44240

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Meeting Hotline (330) 474-9362

**“LIEUTENANT FREDERICK PHISTERER”
A TALK BY JOHN BURKE OF MEDINA, OHIO
SHELTER HOUSE, FRED FULLER PARK, KENT
TUESDAY, OCTOBER 13, 2026, AT 7:30 P.M.**

Medina County Treasurer John Burke will portray Lieutenant Frederick Phisterer, a Union soldier in the Civil War from Medina County who received the Medal of Honor for valor at the Battle of Stones River in Murfreesboro, Tennessee.

Treasurer Burke is a local historian and a lifelong resident of Medina County where his ancestry dates back to the first pioneers to Valley City. His ancestors include veterans of the Civil War, Spanish American War and World War II.

There will be two parts to the night’s program. First, Frederick Phisterer will speak to us about the Battle of Stones River and his role in it. In the second part, John Burke will step out of character and tell us more about the battle and answer questions.

Now prepare your minds to go back to a different era. It is 1894 at a reunion of Union veterans of the Civil War, and Frederick Phisterer has recently been awarded the Congressional Medal of Honor for his action at the Battle of Stones River.



John Burke as Lt. Frederick Phisterer

The Medal of Honor – A Brief History

Excerpted from <https://cem.va.gov/history/Medal-of-Honor-history.asp>

The Medal of Honor is the highest award for valor in action against an enemy force that can be bestowed upon an individual serving in the Armed Services of the United States. Recipients receive the Medal of Honor from the President on behalf of Congress. It was first awarded during the Civil War and the eligibility criteria, medal design, and recognition on a recipients' grave marker have all evolved over time.

Military awards and medals had little role in the early years of the U.S. military. During the Revolutionary War, three soldiers received a purple heart-shaped Badge of Military Merit made of cloth for gallantry, fidelity, or essential service. The Badge of Military Merit fell out of use, becoming the Purple Heart in 1932.

During the Mexican-American War, the government began to systematically recognize enlisted men and non-commissioned officers who distinguished themselves in action for the first time. Men received a certificate and cash bonus, but physical badges were not issued until 1905.

The political and military leaders viewed the Civil War as significantly distinct — with two American largely-volunteer militaries facing one another — and requiring a greater recognition of courage.

The greatest commendation our nation can confer is the Medal of Honor. The Medal of Honor is reserved for those who have distinguished themselves "conspicuously by gallantry and intrepidity at the risk of life above and beyond the call of duty."

There are Medal of Honor recipients interred at VA national and grant-funded cemeteries. Visit their memorial pages to celebrate their legacy, military service and sacrifice to our nation. You can also post tributes, upload images, and share biographical information and historical documents.



Medals of Honor over time