

Sesquicentennial Plans March Forward; Fundraisers Planned in Light of Budget Woes

BY HERB FRAZIER

This time next year, the world will be watching Charleston to see how the city observes the 150th anniversary of the first shot of the War Between the States. Plans for an extravaganza hit the jetties long ago when the recession drained South Carolina's economy.

To prop the city up on the international stage on April 12, 2011, the Fort Sumter-Fort Moultrie Historical Trust stepped into breach to plan two lecture series with high-profile Civil War scholars and a possible address from President Barack Obama.

Charleston lawyer Robert Rosen, the Trust's president, is optimistically toying with Civil War-era music performed by the Charleston Symphony Orchestra at The Battery to mark the eve of the Fort Sumter attack, even though the recession has temporarily silenced the CSO.

"The sesquicentennial will not be what it would have been if we had the money to do it right," Rosen lamented. "So we have to be somewhat realistic about our goals."

With no public money from the Legislature, the Trust is raising money from individuals. It also has received support from Charleston and North Charleston. A fundraising event is scheduled April 12 at the Edmondston-Alston House on East Bay Street. "If we raise enough money, I am hoping to invite Ken Burns," Rosen said. Burns produced the PBS docu-

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mentary *The Civil War*.

The trust wants to coordinate commemorative events along the coast from Georgetown to Beaufort. "We are not trying to take on the whole state," Rosen cautioned. "Raising money in this environment is difficult." The trust, which represents a diverse group, assumed leadership from the Lowcountry Civil War Sesquicentennial Committee. Some of the trust's board members were on the committee.

More than three years ago, the state began discussing a commemoration that would be respectful, memorable, diverse and not divisive, and educational, said Mike Allen, a community partnership specialist for the Fort Sumter National Monument and Charles Pinckney National Historic Site, managed by the National Park Service. The effort to stage events in Charleston could encourage people elsewhere in the state to plan programs in their communities, Allen said.

Allen, Rosen and Randy Burbage, the immediate past commander of the

South Carolina Division of the Sons of Confederate Veterans, represent Charleston on the South Carolina Civil War Sesquicentennial Advisory Board. Ben Hornsby, a spokesman for the board, said in the absence of money from the state the board is maintaining its Web site and will help where it can. In Columbia, the State Museum will mount an exhibit, and the Columbia chapter of the Civil War Roundtable is planning a seminar on Union Gen. William Tecumseh Sherman's march to Columbia. Other smaller events are planned around the state, he said.

So far, the trust, the Sons of Confederate Veterans and the Park Service have planned events locally.

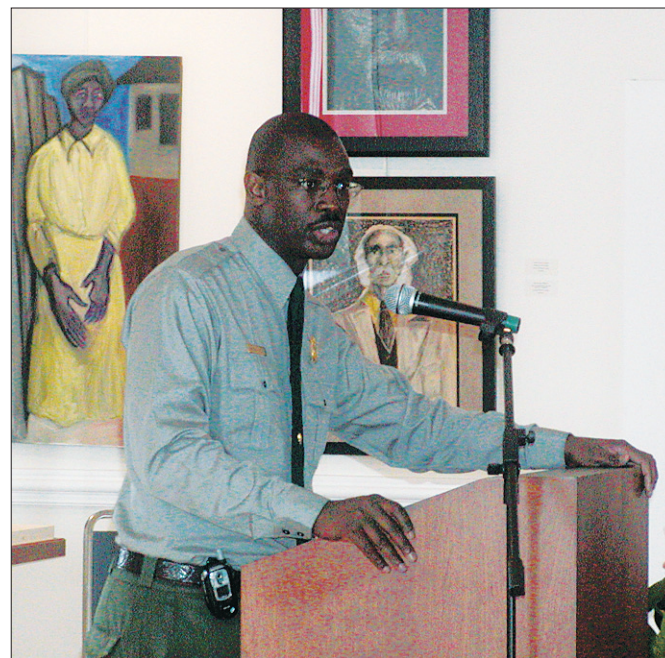
The trust's first event is a lecture series December 3-5 titled: *A House Divided: Secession and Its Legacy*. The second round of lectures, *Why They Fought: Reflections on the 150th Anniversary of the American Civil War*, will be held April 8-12.

The Sons of Confederate Veterans are expected to

announce soon that a local municipality will let the group erect a monument to the signers of the Ordinance of Secession signed on December 20, 1860, Burbage said.

Other events include a re-enactment of the signing of the ordinance and a ball organized by the Confederate Heritage Trust, he said. "Over the course of five years, we are planning to do something to observe the firing on Fort Sumter, hold a lecture series in March 2011 to discuss the legality of secession, and have re-enactments of the Battle of Secessionville in 2012, the Battle of Battery Wagner in 2013, and Hunley-related memorial services in August 2013 and October 2013."

The Park Service has planned monthly talks at the Fort Moultrie Visitor Center on Sullivan's Island. Beginning in April, the presentations will look at themes and events in antebellum history that led to war. The lecture series, entitled *Impending War*, will include talks on: *Interpreting Sensitive History at Civil War Sites*, *The*



Mike Allen.

PHOTOGRAPH PROVIDED

Untold Stories on April 17, *If These Walls Could Talk: The Building of Fort Sumter* on May 22, and *Palmetto Day Speeches and the Rise of Southern Nationalism* on June 19. In April 2011, re-enactors will give living history interpretations at Fort Sumter, Fort Moultrie and Liberty Square.

The Park Service, The Citadel and the Fort Sumter-Fort Moultrie Historical Trust are sponsoring the lectures in December and April.

The trust acknowledges that the commemoration will not be possible without the participation of a variety of groups, including historical organizations, historic sites, re-enactment groups, schools, colleges and universities. In Charleston, private groups and colleges will address the war's effects and its aftermath. As these events are planned and the anniversary draws closer, the

Charleston Mercury will have on-going coverage of the commemoration and its own unique presentations of the many facets of the history surrounding the conflict.

Rosen said, "The Civil War is the most famous event to have happened in the history of Charleston, and the city has to recognize that event. We will raise the private money to get it done. A lot of people want to see us properly commemorate this event."

Herb Frazier is a freelance writer based in Charleston. He is the author of "Gullah Memories Behind God's Back", which is scheduled to be released in August by the Evening Post Publishing Company. The book is a collection of stories from black and white residents of the Cainhoy, Wando and Hugger communities and St. Thomas and Daniel islands.

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Larry Kobrovsky
CONSERVATIVE REPUBLICAN FOR CONGRESS

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— Preamble to the U.S. Constitution

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My name is Larry Kobrovsky. I am a Conservative running for Congress to put an end to the madness in Washington. I am asking for your support in the June 8 Republican Party primary.

My wife, Susan, and I have been married for 26 years and we have two daughters, Valarie and Abby. Just like you, I have to count my pennies, live within my means, and pay my bills. We should require Congress to balance the country's budget and not spend us into bankruptcy.

I witnessed firsthand the excesses of government waste and the damage caused by political correctness when I served on the Charleston County School Board. The lessons I learned there made me an advocate for school choice and led to my career path of making sure government followed the Constitution as the law of the land.

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Sincerely,
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