

Preservation Trust Needs \$40K For Bristoe Station

By Deborah Fitts

BRISTOE STATION, Va. — The Civil War Preservation Trust has put out a fund-raising appeal to its members to help purchase 7 acres at Bristoe Station battlefield. Board member Ed Bearss, former chief historian for the National Park Service, called the two parcels "the most important ground on that battlefield."

The Trust has negotiated a purchase price of \$135,000, of which \$95,000 is expected to come from the federal Battlefield Protection Program matching fund. That leaves \$40,000 for the Trust to raise "in short order," said President Jim Lighthizer.

Last year the Trust acquired 127 acres at Bristoe in a deal with a developer, Centex Homes. Lighthizer noted that the high per-

acre cost for the 7 acres — \$19,822 — reflects soaring real-estate prices in Prince William County, one of the fastest-growing counties in the nation.

The two parcels, separated by a small intervening parcel, comprise land where on Oct. 14, 1863, four North Carolina regiments, the 46th, 15th, 27th and 48th, marched "into a Federal trap" — a portion of a line of nine brigades of Federal troops that were concealed on the far side of a railroad embankment.

The surprise left nearly 1,400 Confederates dead or wounded compared to 300 Federals casualties, the "most one-sided defeat" suffered by the Army of Northern Virginia in more than two years.

Lighthizer said Prince William County may provide the \$40,000, but it won't be in time to close the deal. The Trust needs to come up with the total "in literally the next few weeks," he said.

Trust spokesman Jim Campi said there will still be much work to do at Bristoe. About 600 acres of the core area of the battlefield, where the fighting took place, is still undeveloped. The land acquired by the Trust last year includes the remains of Alabama and Mississippi troops who died at Bristoe during a winter encampment there in 1861-62, as well as the trench graves of Confederates who died during the Bristoe Station battle.

For information on donating to the Bristoe purchase contact the Trust at (202) 367-1861.