CALOOSA PATRIOT

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John L. Maier, Jr. - Newsletter Editor

The Revolutionary War in Florida
Spain Enters the War in Support of America
The Siege of Pensacola: March 9 - May 10, 1781)



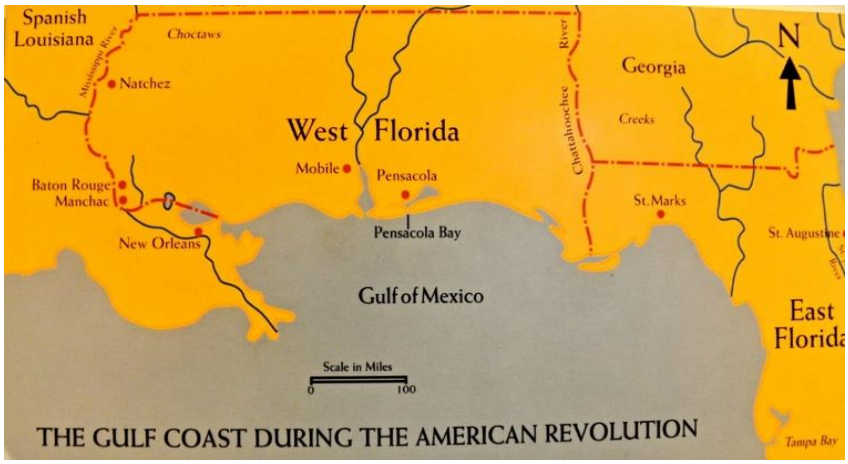
The Spanish forces led by General Don Bernardo de Galvez at the Battle of Pensacola
Oil on canvas, Augusto Ferrer-Dalmau, 2015

On the hills overlooking the downtown area of Pensacola, Florida, was fought one of the most significant battles of the American Revolution. I have to admit that I am pretty familiar with the critical assistance France provided to the American forces, including the involvement of the French Navy and the inestimable contributions of the Marquis de Lafayette. However, I constantly have to be reminded that the War for Independence evolved into an even larger international conflict when Spain entered the War in support of the fledgling American nation. In fact, the involvement of Spain led to a major campaign along the Gulf Coast that culminated at the Battle of Pensacola in 1781. All of this was made quite clear by Compatriot Jack Bovee, during his outstanding presentation at our March Chapter meeting.

The British had gained possession of Florida in 1763 as a result of the negotiations that ended the French and Indian War. Taking control of Pensacola, they fortified the city by building a series of forts, stockades, and redoubts, including Fort George, which was built on Gage Hill just north of and overlooking Pensacola.

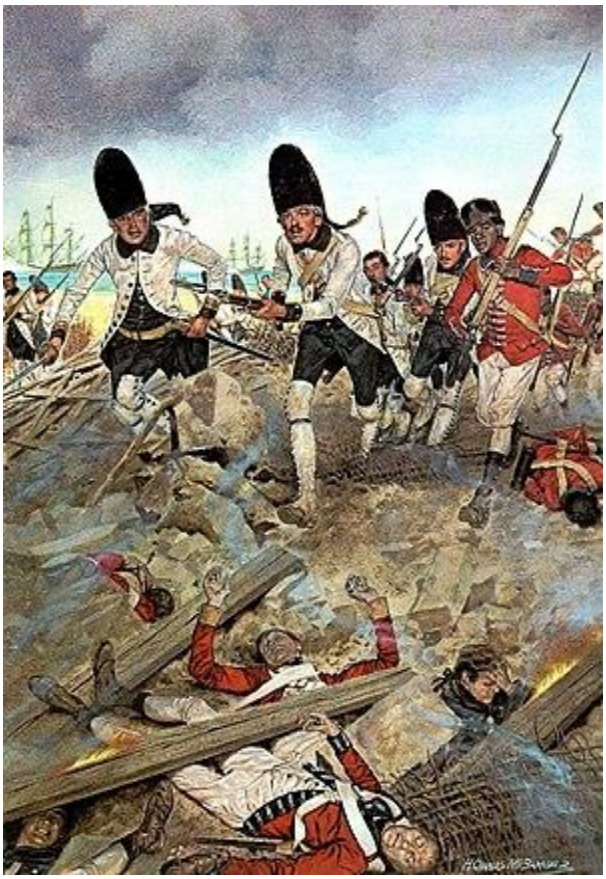
When Spain entered the War on the side of the Americans, Bernado de Galvez, the governor of Spanish Louisiana, immediately began offensive operations to gain control of West Florida. British fears of an attack on the City of Pensacola proved well-founded. Galvez began his assault on Pensacola, West Florda's capital using forces from Havana. Accompanied by a small party of American [Cont'd on Page 2]

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volunteers, Galvez led a massive Spanish land and sea force of 40 ships and 3,500 men, west along the Gulf of Mexico to Mobile Bay. There he laid siege to, and captured, Fort Charlotte on the site of the modern City of Mobile, Alabama. There he regrouped, sought out more troops and supplies from Cuba, and strategized in preparation for his attack on Pensacola.



Sending some of his troop's overland from Mobile Bay, Galvez boarded a ship and led the Spanish fleet to Pensacola. The fleet arrived off the entrance to the bay on March 9, 1780. The first attempt to enter the bay ended when his flagship ran aground and the naval officers expressed reluctance about making a second try, but General Galvez nevertheless sailed into the bay on his own aboard the brig Galveztown on March 18, 1781. Shown the way by Galvez, the rest of the fleet followed.

The main British army then assembled in Fort George and prepared for a siege as Galvez moved men and cannon into position from the west. Most of April was spent preparing for the siege, although several small skirmishes were fought. Then at the end of April, Galvez opened fire from an artillery battery on a hill within range of Fort George. The British replied and the Battle of Pensacola began in earnest. Using trenches and earthwork batteries, the Spanish troops moved forward during the nights and closed in on the British defenses. The British retaliated, overrunning and destroying one of the Spanish batteries, but the siege continued. Finally, on May 8, 1781, after days of heavy bombardment, a Spanish mortar shell struck the British powder magazine in one of the British redoubts, destroying it and killing approximately 100 British soldiers. Spanish troops rushed forward and occupied the ruins of the redoubt. Placing cannon of their own at the site, the Spanish then opened fire on Fort George itself from short range. Pensacola's defenders returned fire but were soon overwhelmed by the massive Spanish firepower.



Spanish grenadier officer leading assault on destroyed British redoubt during Battle of Pensacola

Two days later, finding his position untenable in the realization that his final line of fortification could not survive the barrage, British General John Campbell ran up the white flag and surrendered Fort George at 3p.m. in the afternoon of May 10, 1781. More than 1,100 British troops were taken prisoner. The battle had ultimately involved 7,400 Spanish regulars and militia, as well as 10,000 sailors and marines. In contrast, the British forces had consisted of 1,300 regulars, rangers, and militia and 500 natives. Casualties amounted to 95 killed and 202 wounded on the Spanish side, and 155 killed and 105 wounded on the British side.

Galvez personally accepted the surrender of General Campbell, ending British sovereignty in West Florida after signing the capitulation. The terms of capitulation included the entirety of West Florida, the British garrison, large quantities of war material and supplies and two British sloops of war. The Spanish fleet left Pensacola for Havana on June 1 to prepare assaults on the remaining British possessions in the Caribbean, but before leaving Galvez had artillery batteries placed on nearby Santa Rosa Island to guard the Bay against any future British attempts to recapture Pensacola. In fact, Pensacola remained a Spanish possession for the next 40 years

The Spanish fleet took the British prisoners to Havana, from which they were sent to New York in a prisoner exchange, which angered the Americans. However such exchanges were routine, and Galvez arranged the exchange to free Spanish prisoners of war from British prison ships. Galvez and his army were welcomed as heroes on their arrival in Havana. King Carlos III promoted Galvez , and he was made Governor of both West Florida and Louisiana. The royal commendation stated that as Galvez alone forced entrance to the Bay, he could place on his coat of arms the words "Yo Solo" (literally, "me alone").

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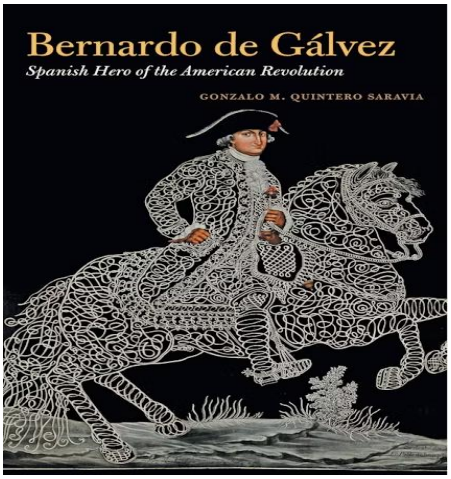
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The American Constitution **Premiers in Fort Myers on April 3rd (Page 17)**

A Message From Our President



Greetings to All!

It's hard to believe we are already one quarter of the way through 2025!

250 years ago, cries for Freedom were reverberating throughout the colonies. Patrick Henry was in Virginia giving his "Give Me Liberty or Give Me Death" speech. Tensions were at a fever pitch in Boston, as they were on the eve of Lexington and Concord. My own ancestor, Jonathan Blaisdell, was training with other Minutemen throughout Massachusetts. Within the month he would be at the siege of Boston and soon after that the Battle of Bunker/Breed's Hill. I urge all of you to take a little time and reflect on the courage of our ancestors as they risked everything for the ideals of a new republic.

I also wish to encourage everyone to encourage the youth you know to participate in the Brochures and Posters contests. We will be judging them at our April meeting. Winners will receive cash prizes.

May 1, we will have the honor of presenting a $1,500 scholarship to an outstanding JROTC student. The Lee County Schools have named the presentation ceremony after our own General Dozier.

I urge everyone to get their meeting reservations in as soon as possible for our April meeting. It's a big help for me, as I need the numbers to order our meals.

At Your Service,

Jeff

Jeffrey Brunelle, President
Caloosa Chapter FLSSAR

SAR©
SONS OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION

Chapter Officers for 2024-2025



Immediate Past President
and Treasurer
Edward “Mike” Buff



President
Jeffrey F. Brunelle



Vice-President
Richard “Rick” Parfitt



Genealogist
Dr. Ronald L. Peck



Secretary and Sergeant-
At-Arms
William “Bill” Jenks



Registrar
Chris Jenner



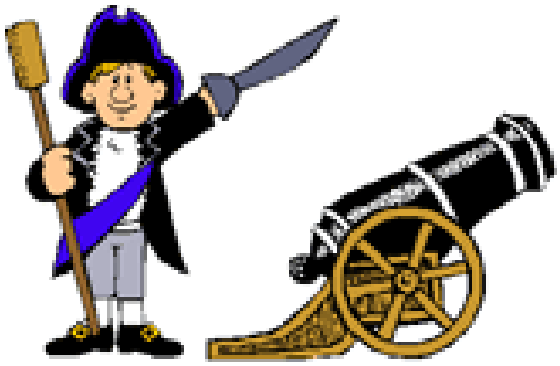
Member-at-Large
Jonathan Hunt



Chaplain
Rev. Dr. Randy Moody

Caloosa Chapter SAR

Hear Ye! Hear Ye! Hear Ye! April Meeting Notice



Chapter Meetings Are Held At Famous Daves

Looking Ahead
Caloosa Chapter SAR
2024-2025 Revised Meeting Schedule

Chapter Meetings		ExCom Meetings	
Saturday Oct. 26, 2024	11:30 a.m.	Tuesday Sept. 24, 2024	11:30 a.m.
Saturday Nov. 9, 2024	11:30 a.m.	Tuesday Oct. 29, 2024	11:30 a.m.
Wednesday Dec. 11, 2024	11:30 a.m.	Tuesday Dec. 3, 2024	11:30 a.m.
Wednesday Jan. 8, 2025	CANCELLED	Thursday Jan. 2, 2025	11:30 a.m.
Saturday, February 8, 2025	11:30 a.m.	Tuesday Jan. 28, 2025	11:30a.m.
Wednesday, March 12, 2025	11:30 a.m.	Tuesday Mar. 4, 2025	11:30 a.m.
Wednesday, April 9, 2025	11:30 a.m.	Tuesday Apr. 1, 2025	11:30 a.m.
Saturday, May 10, 2025	11:30 a.m.	Tuesday Apr. 29, 2025	11:30a.m.

Both Chapter Meetings and ExCom Meetings are held at Famous Dave's BBQ 12148 S. Cleveland Avenue, Ft. Myers FL

THE NEXT CALOOSA CHAPTER MEETING WILL BE HELD: WEDNESDAY APRIL 9, 2025 AT: FAMOUS DAVE'S BBQ RESTAURANT

12148 South Cleveland Ave, Fort Myers, FL 33903
(At the Intersection of Cleveland Ave. and Crystal Drive)



Program presented by:

Tiana Bohrer

the Founder and President of Women Veteran Warriors, and a USAF Veteran.

Tiana will be sharing her story, the stories of other women who have served their country, and the Mission of Women Veteran Warriors, which is to honor, preserve, and promote the legacy of the remarkable women who have selflessly served our nation.

Lunch Buffet Menu:
St. Louis Style Spareribs, BBQ Chicken, Cornbread Muffins,
Fresh Steamed Corn, Coleslaw, and Beverage (Soft Drink or Iced Tea)
[Anyone needing a special meal (i.e., Vegetarian, other) let us know]

The gathering will begin at 11:30 a.m.
Cost for the dinner is $25.00 per person paid at the link below by PayPal or Credit Card

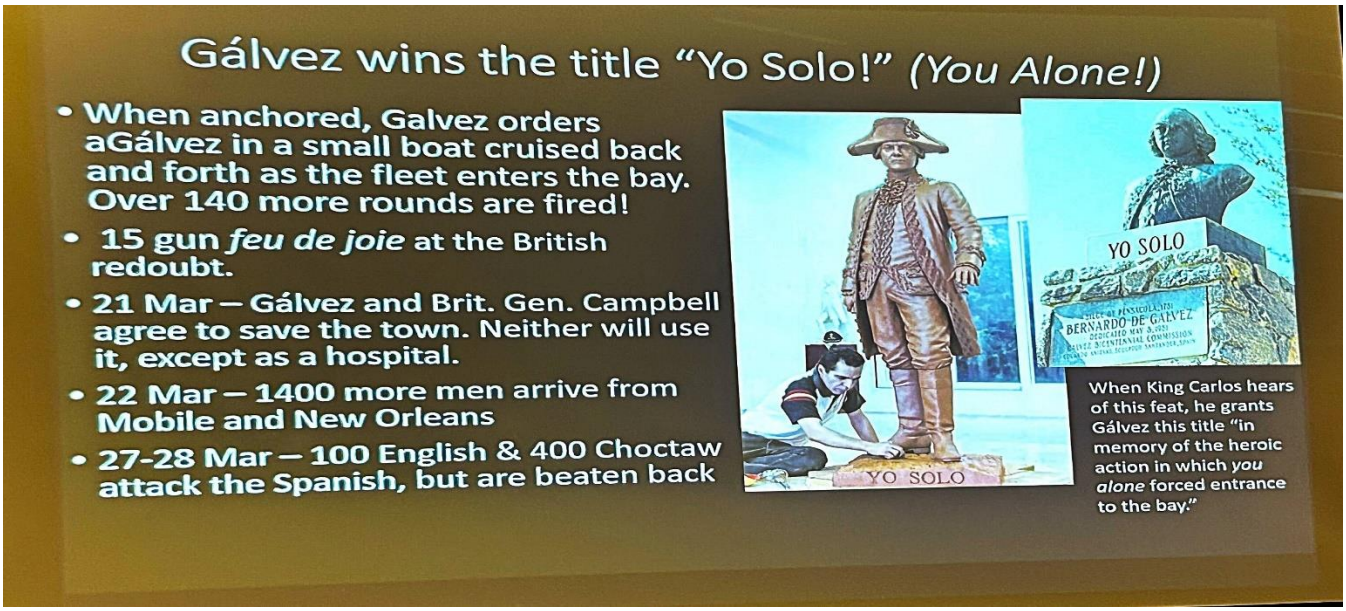
Please RSVP quickly (as we need to report final count to the restaurant) to: https://caloosasar.org/our-chapter/meetings/

REMEMBER! If you make a reservation, we have to pay for your meal !

Our meetings are open to all interested persons, and we particularly welcome Compatriots from other parts of the country who are visiting our area. Please note that wives, friends, and guests are welcome to attend.

March 12th Chapter Meeting

Honoring the Contributions of Bernardo de Galvez to American Independence



On March 12th, the gathered Compatriots of the Caloosa Chapter SAR were treated to a tour de force lecture from one of their own (Jack Bovee) about the exploits of the little-remembered ally who helped America win the Revolution – the Governor of Louisiana, Spanish General Bernardo de Galvez. One could guess, after the first three minutes into his passionate talk, that one of Jack Bovee's missions in life was to educate as many of us as he could about the importance of Galvez to the success of the American cause, and to the post-Revolutionary War ability of the fledgling country to grow and flourish.

Armed with an outstanding set of slides assembled into a power point show, and decades of experience teaching advanced placement courses to high school students in US History, Jack's only struggle was in attempting to restrain himself to a 30-minute talk. We all wished we could have let him go on as long as he wanted, and were certain it would have lasted until nighttime. Jack stressed that it is largely due in fact to the recent efforts of the Sons of the American Revolution that the significance of de Galvez will become better known in the years to come – especially as the Hispanic population of the United States continues to increase.

Compatriot Bovee instructed us that two years into the Revolutionary War, Galvez was sought out as the Americans hunted for any advantage. After all, Galvez had been serving as the Governor of Louisiana for several years, and it was the Mississippi River that led into New Orleans and provided an important trade route to the north. In April, 1777, George Morgan, the commander of Pittsburgh's Fort Pitt sent a flotilla down the Ohio and Mississippi Rivers to New Orleans, carrying a letter to Galvez, offering to trade with Spain and asking for aid in case the Americans decided to attack the British in Florida.

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Jack Bovee during his power point presentation
(Photo by Albert Myers)

[Continued from Page 8] What happened, you ask? The American ships sailed back up the Mississippi that August, filled with ammunition, arms and provisions. “I will extend . . . whatever assistance I can,” Galvez responded, “but it must appear that I am ignorant of it all.”

The point, then, according to our speaker, was that by whatever means were available to him, Galvez became a key ally of the American Revolution. First by stealth, and later by open warfare, Jack Bovee recounted the truly amazing lengths to which Galvez devoted himself to the task of defeating Britain, After all, he wasn’t helping the Americans solely out of his admitted sympathy for their cause. Siding with the Americans advanced the interests of Spain, England’s longtime rival, and Galvez was getting his orders from Spanish King Carlos III. The calculated subterfuge in ‘secretly’ aiding the Americans was meant to preserve Spain’s official neutrality in the matter of the American Revolution, while at the same time weakening England.

It was fascinating to listen to our speaker explain how Galvez worked with Oliver Pollock, the Continental Congress’ agent in New Orlans to bankroll George Rogers Clark’s band of frontiersmen, who took Fort Sackville in Illinois from the British in 1778. [See the February, 2024 Issue of the Caloosa Patriot, saved on the Chapter Website, for the story of the taking of Fort Sackville.]

After Spain finally declared war on England in the summer of 1779, Galvez set out on the direct attack on British forts in the Mississippi Valley, and later he besieged Mobile and seized it too. Compatriot Bovee explained that even hurricanes would not stop Galvez (his fleet was twice scattered) and in 1781, Galvez launched his delayed offensive against Pensacola. [See cover story, this issue.] Jack Bovee’s vivid description of Galvez’ bold risk-raking during the battle rendered the room quiet.



Jack Bovee describing the Siege of Pensacola
(Photo by Albert Myers)

When the Spanish naval commander proved reluctant to expose his fleet to British fire by sailing into Pensacola Bay, Galvez took the ships he was in personal command of, and went forward as he was certain the British artillery pieces could not be lowered sufficiently to successfully hit his ships. “The ship entered the port without the least damage, notwithstanding the great number of bullets that pierced the sails and shrouds,” reads a Spanish battle journal often attributed to Galvez himself, “and with the tremendous applause of the Army, who, with continuous ‘VIVAs,’ demonstrated to the General their delight and affection for him.”

The Spanish besieged Pensacola for two months. When they managed to blow up a British powder magazine in May, 1781, killing about 100 soldiers, the enemy surrendered. The English left Florida, never to return.

According to Jack Bovee, Galvez’ victory at Pensacola not only removed the British threat to the newly born United States from the south, but it also deprived the British of troops they could have deployed to battle the Americans at the War’s final Battle at Yorktown later in 1781. In addition, Spain’s command of the Gulf of America also allowed France to deploy all of its naval forces against the British at the Battles of Chesapeake and Yorktown. [Continued on Page 10]

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Jack Bovee: "Galvez was instrumental in obtaining funds to pay Washington's army." (Photo by Albert Myers)

And even more importantly, according to Compatriot Bovee, Galvez (with the help of his close friend, Don Francisco Saavedra, arranged for the financing of the Yorktown campaign which occurred in the summer following the capture of Pensacola.

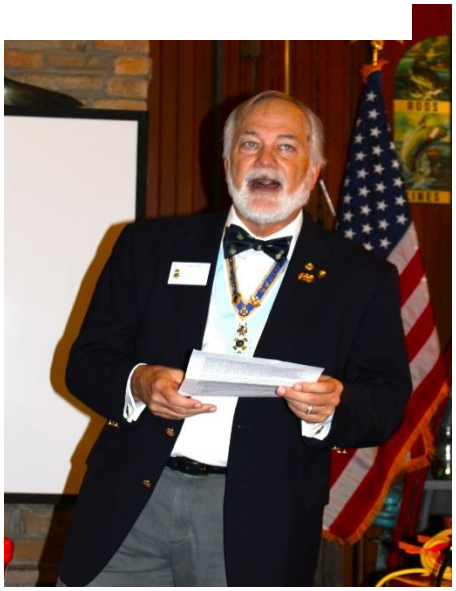
Washington's army had not been paid for months, and his troops were almost on the point of mutiny. Compatriot Bovee reminded us that "Only shortly before, General Anthony Wayne had found it necessary to punish by execution some men who resisted orders to march to Virginia. Without a desperately needed infusion of funds, the proposed Chesapeake campaign seemed likely to fail, possibly endangering the entire cause of American independence."

But Galvez and Saavedra intervened, and disaster was averted through decisive action at the last minute. Just in time, in fact, for the French to defeat the British fleet in the Chesapeake, thus preventing Cornwallis to escape. Instead, he and his army surrendered at Yorktown.



Jack Bovee: Booked for a comeback next Fall. (Photo by Albert Myers)

After the war, King Carlos III showered Galvez with honors, including permission to use the phrase "Yo Solo" (meaning "I Alone") on his coat of arms in memory of the heroic action in which Galvez forced entrance to Pensacola Bay. As our compatriot, Jack Bovee, ended his talk, we all found ourselves reflecting on the many historical events that we had never known before, but each of which contributed to the way America came to be. And before he left the meeting that afternoon, Jack had already found himself 'booked for a comeback' this coming Fall. I really can't wait for that. And please check out the other articles in this issue of the Caloosa Patriot for more about our hero, Bernado de Galvez.



Edmund Burke's warning to the English Parliament by Rev. Dr. Randy Moody

After a great buffet meal, the Meeting proceeded on with the monthly 'featurette' on America 250 SAR given by our own **Chaplain, Randy Moody**. This month, coinciding with our March meeting date, and the America 250 SAR celebrations, he read from a powerful speech given to the British Parliament on March 22, 1775 by Edmund Burke. This occurred less than one month before the "Shot Heard Round the World" which was fired on April 19, 1775 at Lexington Green. In his speech, Burke advocated for a reconciliation with the American colonies, urging the British government to modify their policies and repeal laws that had led to resistance. The speech was a direct (and negative) response to Lord North's February 1775 reconciliation proposal which Burke saw as inadequate and likely to fail. But unfortunately, the speech did not succeed in its purpose, and shortly thereafter, the "hot" war began, and the rest is history . . .

Again, a great meeting. Everyone left looking forward to getting together again in April.

Compatriots Corner

The purpose of the "Compatriots Corner" page is to follow the mission and goals of the SAR by recounting our patriot ancestor's participation in the War for Independence. I would like everyone to consider writing that story and share it with me. *But fear not - if you need assistance, genealogist Christine Racine, and her husband, award winning author Mark Barie, can help you get your story down on paper. Just let me know. We can help – see page __ of this issue for more information.* Then, with your permission, the personal account of your own ancestor's participation in the Revolutionary War will be published. Each of our patriot ancestors' contributions combined so that the end result was the birth of the United States of America. So, when you are finished, email them to me (John Maier) at: jmaier@wisclaw.com. What follows is a recounting of the Revolutionary War exploits of the patriot ancestor of our Compatriot James Cameron.

My Patriot Ancestor: John Summers and the Mystery Widow of Holly Spring

By Compatriot James Cameron (with Christine Racine and Compatriot Mark Barie)

My patriot, John Summers, joined the Third Regiment of the Gloucester Company Militia of New Jersey, in 1776.

He and 250 other volunteers reported directly to Colonel Richard Somers. And while history books have made little reference to this militia unit, modern day historians now recognize that Somers's regiment played a critical role in George Washington's victory at the Battle of Trenton. (December 26, 1776)



Col. Carl von Donop

My Patriot's militia unit traditionally spent much of its time chasing off British troops who constantly foraged for food on patriot lands. They also seized British transport ships and regularly protected American fortifications in the Burlington County area of New Jersey. General George Washington, however, had even bigger plans for the local militia. He wanted to attack the Hessian troops stationed at Trenton. But he needed a distraction. A distraction that would draw at least a portion of the Hessian troops away from their winter quarters in Trenton.

My patriot's militia unit began to harass the Hessians. It worked. Hessian Colonel Carl Emil Kirk Von Donop was ordered by his commander, Major General James Grant, (Lord Cornwallis was visiting his wife in London, at the time) to pursue the American volunteers, who were now perilously close to Mount Holly. Donop took 2000 men with him leaving Grant with just 1500 men to defend against the supposedly unlikely possibility of an attack by American soldiers in the dead of winter.



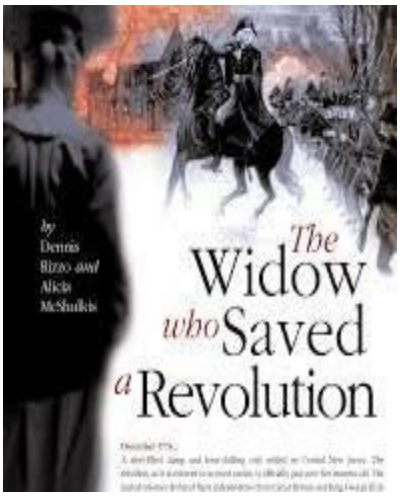
When the residents of Mount Holly heard that American militiamen were in the area with 2000 British soldiers in tow, they immediately fled, leaving most of their possessions behind. After a few skirmishes, including the Battle of Iron Works Hill, Donop arrived in the village and discovered the place to be all but abandoned. It was there that Donop decided to rest his troops.

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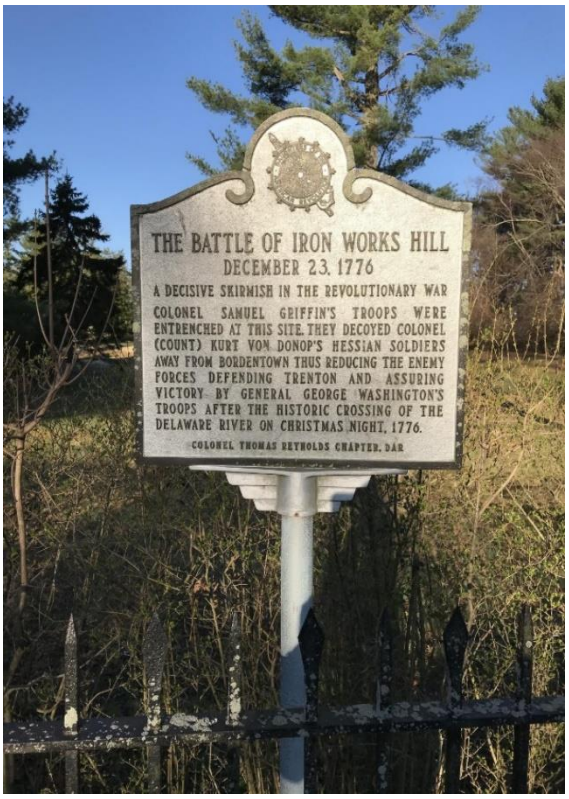
[Continued from Page 11]
Donop and his troops took full advantage of the missing residents, eating and drinking whatever they could find. Many became inebriated by midnight, having discovered a large supply of homemade wine. But it was Donop who would encounter much more than a few bottles of wine.

In the home where Donop chose to stay, he was approached by the only American who chose to remain in Mount Holly; an "exceedingly beautiful young widow". As noted below, a fellow officer described Donop as being obsessed with the woman. Donop would unnecessarily extend his stay in Mount Holly, several times.
Meanwhile, George Washington slipped across the nearly frozen Delaware river in the middle of the night and attacked more than 1000 unsuspecting Hessian troops.

Donop, now more than a day's ride from his original encampment, could not render assistance. More than 20 Hessian soldiers were killed by Washington's Army and an additional 83 soldiers, wounded in action. Nearly 900 soldiers were taken prisoner by the Americans. It was a stunning victory for General Washington. Spurred by his success, Washington would go on to Princeton just days later and defeat the British once again.



But who was this mystery lady and was she at least partially to blame for the British defeat at the Battle of Trenton? The untold story would remain a mystery for more than 200 years. A diary belonging to one of Donop's German officers was discovered and translated into English. According to Captain Johann Ewald, Donop was indeed smitten with the woman and repeatedly extended his stay in Mount Holly for that reason.



Most recently, a museum guide/podcaster from the Mount Holly region, argued that he had finally discovered the identity of the woman. Eric Orange argues that the mystery woman was not a genuine widow, but a "war widow". She was engaged, not married, and her fiancée was still off at war. By tracing a series of familial relationships and military connections, Orange concluded that the "Mystery widow of Mount Holly" was in fact, Mary Brainerd. Her captain/doctor husband-to-be was Dr. John Ross. The woman, twenty years old at the time, may or may not have disclosed her betrothal to the American Captain. She hardly knew the 44-year-old British colonel. Her decision could have been because she feared the British or because she loved the Colonel. No one knows for certain. Either way, Donop remained in the woman's house for days on end.

Two years later, Mary Brainerd married Captain/Doctor John Ross. Colonel Donop was never punished for his "off-the-battlefield-exploits" and went on to serve in the British Army for two more years. He was shot at the Battle of Red Bank and died from his wounds, several days later. Only in recent years has the Third Regiment of the Gloucester Militia of New Jersey received long overdue recognition for its strategic role in the Battle of Trenton. I am proud of the fact that my Patriot, John Summers, played a part in that very important battle.

It is either unfortunate or somewhat amusing that my patriot must now share the limelight with the mysterious widow of Mount Holly.

Calling for Volunteers to Step Forward and Become Caloosa Chapter Color Guard Members

The Light Horse Harry Lee Camp #15 Color Guard is made up of Caloosa Chapter SAR members who come to meetings and events properly uniformed as either Continental Soldiers or Militiamen or attired as Revolution era clergymen. Our Color Guard is available for participation in community events locally, as well as Regional and National celebrations. We are always looking for additional Color Guard members, according to our current Chapter President, Jeff Brunelle.



Caloosa Chapter SAR Color Guard Members: Mike Buff, Tom Thompson, and Ron Peck at the Honor Flight Welcome Home Ceremony (April 29, 2023)

There are typically one or two requests for our Color Guard per month and are most often within driving distance and do not include overnight stays. The Guardsmen who volunteer arrive at the site early enough so that Color Guard Commander Mike Buff is able to run through the plan for what their participation at the event will consist of.

There is no need to be concerned, according to Commander Mike Buff, about complicated marches or ceremonies. "If there is a need for any training," he said, "we provide it, and no one needs to be afraid that they will be unprepared."

There are currently six to eight Caloosa Color Guardsmen who serve, but as with any organization, people come and go so there is a constant need for new recruits. "The personal rewards for volunteering come immediately," said President Brunelle. "The looks on the faces of young and old when they see us in our Revolutionary War attire bring a lot of joy and satisfaction to each of us.

If you are interested in joining the Color Guard, or have questions about it, contact our Caloosa Chapter SAR President Jeff Brunelle at: jfbrunelle55@comcast.net. We need you to help us to carry our mission forward.



(L to R) Mike Buff, Ron Peck, Andy Petrson and Jeff Brunelle at the Vietnam War 50th Commemoration (March 29, 2024)



(L to R) Andy Peterson, Ron Peck, Mike Buff Posting the Colors at the Constitution Week Luncheon (September 21, 2024)

Light Horse Harry Lee Camp #15



The Caloosa Chapter Color Guard is named in honor of Henry Lee III, a Virginia patrician (and father of Confederate General Robert E. Lee) who became a captain in a Virginia dragoon detachment at the outbreak of the Revolutionary War. In 1778, he was promoted to Major and given command of a mixed corps of cavalry and infantry known as Lee's Legion. During this period, he earned the sobriquet of "**Light Horse Harry**" for his horsemanship.





This unit became one of the best-known in the Continental Army's history, and in 1780 Lee was given authorization to form a formal Legionary Corps. Many of the best soldiers from other units either volunteered or were specially invited to join its ranks. In 1780, Lee was promoted to Lieutenant Colonel and on January 1, 1781, the Legion was re-designated as the 2nd Partisan Corps, organized with 3 troops of horse and 3 troops of infantry. It was assigned to General Nathaniel Greene for service in the southern theater.

One of his most legendary victories occurred on February 25, 1781 in North Carolina, when he and his force were mistaken for British cavalrymen by Loyalist John Pyle. Lee caught on and rode directly into the midst of the Loyalist ranks and ordered his men to fire. When the smoke had cleared, Lee and his men were seen to have killed or injured most of the enemy militia, while suffering no loss of life of their own. Lee went on to participate in many more Revolutionary War battles and was present at the surrender of Cornwallis at Yorktown. After the War, he served as: (a) a delegate to the Confederation Congress; (b) a three-term governor of Virginia: (c) a Major General, appointed by George Washington to put down the tax protest known as the 'Whiskey Rebellion' in Pennsylvania; and (d) a member of the U.S. House of Representatives representing Virginia.

Compatriot John C. Jones wrote a full biography of Harry Lee III when he served as our Newsletter Editor. If you go to our Caloosa SAR Web Page, you can read it if you "click on" the July 2020 Edition of the SAR Patriot.

If You Are Interested . . .

248th Anniversary of the Battle of Thomas Creek
Saturday 10:00 AM, March 29, 2025 in Jacksonville, Florida*



The Florida Society SAR commemorates the 248th anniversary for the Battle of Thomas Creek (the Southernmost Battle of the American Revolutionary War).

The ceremony will be held at Seaton Creek Historic Preserve Park at 10:00 AM. If placing a wreath and/or participating in the color guard, please arrive no later than 9:30AM to register your wreath. The park is located off I-95 at Exit 366 then head west 2.5 miles on Pecan Park Rd. to 2145 Gold Star Family Parkway / Arnold Rd.). This new 3.4-mile road accesses the Jacksonville National Cemetery that connects with to the Lem Turner Road (US#1).

There will be a social and orientation meeting Friday evening at 5:30PM on March 28th at the Long Horn Steak House, 1366 Airport Rd, Jacksonville, FL 32218 Both the Hampton Inn and the Marriott, SpringHill Suites are in this same complex, as well as a number of other hotels in the area. Organizations and participants will be announced during the ceremony.

We are again honored to have our intriguing Compatriotic speaker Dr. Roger Smith of Colonial Research Associates, Inc. and our Patriotic Choral Group "Let Freedom Sing" plus various Patriotic and Civic Organizations. We are especially honored this year to have our friend and our South Atlantic District, NSSAR Vice President General from GA, Scott Collins, who will be bringing greetings from our National Society SAR. We are also honored to have our FLSSAR President James Gaskins bringing greeting and Florida DAR State Regent Elect Kim Zeman, for State Regent Cindy Addison.

*Bad weather site: Motel Mtg. Room, 1351 Airport Rd., Jacksonville, FL

American Revolution – Battle of Thomas Creek

The Battle of Thomas Creek, which occurred on May 17, 1777, was the southernmost military engagement of the American Revolution, and resulted in a British victory.

The British controlled Florida during most of the war and had frequently staged raids into Georgia. In retaliation, in May, 1777, Col. John Baker was placed in command of a force of 400 Continental troops, and a separate 165 members of the Georgia militia who organized in Sunbury, Georgia (just north of the Florida border), into British East Florida. Traveling by water, the Continental soldiers encountered British troops at Amelia Island, which prevented their scheduled rendezvous with the Georgia militia who had marched south separately by land. The goal was to take St. Augustine from the British.

Instead, on May 17, the small force of Georgia militia men (who had failed to join up with the Continentals) were ambushed by a mixed force of British Army, Loyalist militia, and Native American Creek Indian warriors, near the mouth of the Thomas Creek, near current-day Jacksonville, FL, in Duval County. More than half of the Georgia militia were killed, wounded, or captured, and the few survivors retreated back along their route or into the surrounding swamps. The British ambush was so successful that the battle is also known as the Thomas Creek Massacre.

If You Are Interested . . .

2025 Battle of Pensacola Commemoration and Galvez Day Celebration

Friday May 9, 2025

On May 9, the Sons of the American Revolution Color Guard will once again present the opening procession for the Galvez Day Celebration **sponsored by the City of Pensacola**. The Color Guard will muster at 09:00 AM (Central) at Fort George (501 N. Palafox Street) and march down Palafox Street to one of the largest monuments in the United States to General Bernardo de Galvez as the opening ceremony of Pensacola's Galvez Day celebration.

Additionally, the Pensacola Chapter SAR and Pensacola area DAR chapters will be hosting a wreath laying ceremony in the afternoon at the Minuteman Monument located in Veterans Memorial Park on Bayfront Parkway in Pensacola.

Schedule of Events:

8:30am	-	Color Guard Muster begins at Fort George (501 N. Palofox St.)
9:30am (approx.)	-	Color Guard Procession to Galvez Monument
10:00 – 11:30 am	-	Ceremony at Galvez Monument and at St. Michael's Basilica
12:00 – 2:30 pm	-	Luncheon at Pensacola Yacht Club (Reservations Required)
3:00 pm	-	Wreath Laying at Minuteman Monument in Veterans Memorial Park

All participating Color Guard Units will receive a **BATTLE OF PENSACOLA FLAG STREAMER.**

Additional information can be found at: http://pensacolasar.org/chapter-programs/battle-of-pensacola- commemoration/

Filmmaker Begins Nationwide Theatrical Tour in Florida with Historical Documentary, *The American Constitution*

FORT MYERS, FLORIDA -- David Garrigus, award-winning filmmaker behind the PBS critically acclaimed *Kitty Hawk: The Wright Brothers' Journey of Invention*, is taking his new feature film, *The American Constitution*, on a city-to-city roadshow tour for the next 20 months before its broadcast release on PBS stations. Because of his unusually long commitment to grassroots community exhibitions of his film and his advocacy for civic education, Garrigus has been characterized as the "Constitution's Johnny Appleseed."

The American Constitution begins its nationwide theatrical tour at the Alliance for the Arts Theatre at 10091 McGregor Blvd., Fort Myers, Florida on April 3rd. There will be two screenings: 1PM and 7PM.

Immediately following two premiere screenings on April 3rd, Garrigus will be joined on stage by James Madison, the Father of the Constitution & 4th President of the U.S., uncannily portrayed by nationally recognized first-person interpreter & Madison expert, LOUIS MAGILL. Garrigus and James Madison will converse with the audience about the film and the historical Constitution. The gala screenings will be catered by Victorian Garden.

The American Constitution unveils the dramatic origin story of the Constitution that played out over the summer of 1787. Set in Independence Hall, Philadelphia, a large international cast brings the intrigue, drama and conflicts of the Framers, including George Washington, James Madison, Alexander Hamilton and Benjamin Franklin, to life as they struggled to hold their fragile country together.

ConstitutionMovie.com

Reserve **April 3rd, 1:00 pm** World Premiere Matinee Tickets Here.

Reserve **April 3rd, 7:00 pm** World Premiere Evening Tickets Here.

Watch the OFFICIAL FILM TRAILER here.

A Continuing Offer to You From Christine Racine and Mark Barie Christine Racine and Mark Barie

So, are you having some difficulty getting a "kick-start" on fleshing-out more of the detail on the life of your patriot ancestor? Or do you need help in getting started on taking the information you already have gathered together and putting it down in storybook fashion? We need your stories for the Compatriot Corner section of our monthly newsletter, and now there is a way to help you out with your research and writing.

Our Compatriot Mark Barie, an award-winning author, and his wife, Christine Racine, an expert genealogist, have offered to assist any member of our Caloosa Chapter SAR with the research and written summary of your patriot ancestor's biography. These mini biographies will then be published in our monthly newsletter, as space allows. And there is no fee for this service! You can't get a better deal than that!

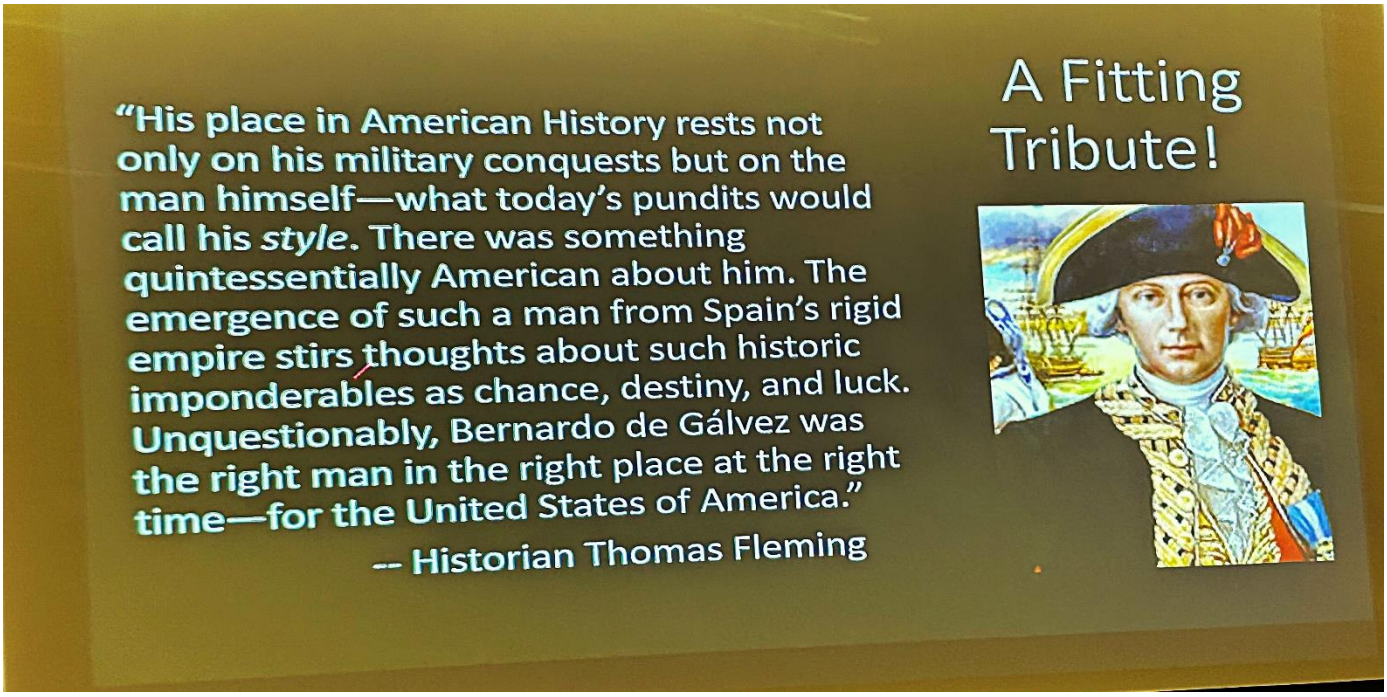
The latest of these series of stories is included in this issue of the Caloosa Patriot, on Page 11. If you are interested, and wish to avail yourself of this complimentary service, please feel free to contact Compatriot Barie directly at his email address: Authormarkbarie@gmail.com.

We thank Christine and Mark for their interest in assisting our members in the documentation of the stories of what their involvement was in the War for Independence.



Christine Racine and Mark Barie

Unsung Heroes (and Heroines) of the Revolutionary Period
General Bernardo de Galvez, America's Daring and Decisive Ally



Based upon what I've learned since coming to Florida, especially as the result of getting an earful from my friend and our Compatriot, Jack Bovee, I still have a hard time believing that I never knew about the significant contributions made to the success of our American Revolution by Bernardo Vicente Apolinar de Galvez. After all, I had taken history classes all the way through high school and college (where I majored in History). Now, at age 75, I find myself enthralled by the rousing life of this Spaniard, anxious to learn more.

Galvez was born in the small village of Macharaviya in the province of Malaga, Spain on July 23, 1746, the son of a career military man. The young Galvez decided to follow in the footsteps of his father, studied military science at the Academy of Avila, and – at age 16 – first saw military action in the Spanish invasion of Portugal in 1762. This was during the Seven Years' War in Europe and alternately known as the French and Indian War in North America. Over the next 14 years, Galvez was promoted several times and saw battle in both the Americas while fighting the Apache Indians in New Spain (today's Mexico and the southwestern US), and at another posting in North Africa he proved his valor when he refused to abandon a position about to be overrun by the enemy, even though he was badly wounded.

By June, 1776, at age 29, Galvez found himself having been appointed Governor of Louisiana, with his term of office to begin on New Year's Day, January 1, 1777 -- approximately 6 months after the signing of the American Declaration of Independence. His mission as Governor was to cultivate friendship with the native Indian populations, promote trade, build-up the population, fight smuggling, and protect the province.

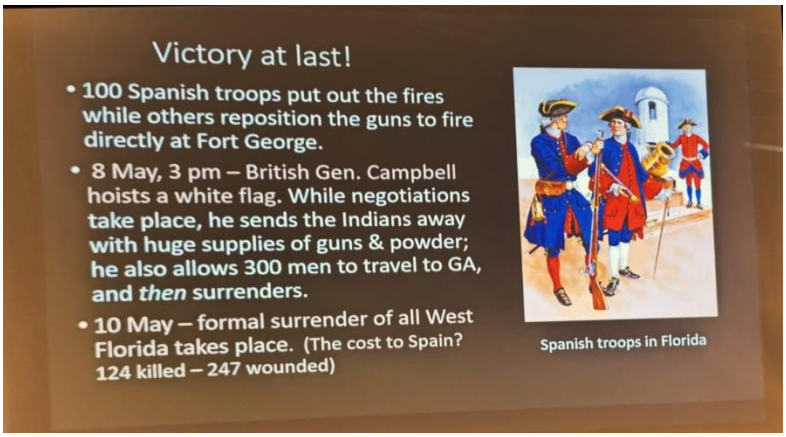
Spanish Louisiana stretched west from the Mississippi River to the Rockies, and north from the Gulf to Canada. France had been Spain's ally in the Seven Year's War and had secretly ceded the area to Spain in 1762, nearing the end of the War. The War had been lost to Britain, and when Spain lost the War, it also lost Florida to Britain. Hence, Spain's loss of Florida left most of the Atlantic coastline under British control.

When the Americans began their revolt against Britain, both they and the British wanted something from Spain. The British wanted Spain to remain neutral. The colonies, on the other hand, wanted money, military supplies, and even military intervention. Since the end of the Seven Year's War, King Carlos III of Spain had been looking for a way to weaken Britain, thwart their efforts in the American colonies, and reap the benefits from an anticipated defeat of Great Britain. His plans remained a closely guarded secret, from all but his most trusted officials – and de Galvez had deservedly earned that trust. From his post in New Orleans, King Carlos knew that de Galvez would be the perfect conduit for Spain's clandestine support of the American cause. Ships could
[Continued on Page 19]

[Continued from Page 18]
pass undetected into the port of New Orleans, avoiding the blockade that the British Navy had established around most of the port cities along the east coast. From there, medicine, uniform fabric, weapons, cartridge boxes, and other supplies could be smuggled to Ohio, Pittsburgh, and on to Philadelphia by way of the Mississippi and Ohio Rivers.

In his recent biography, *Bernardo de Galvez: Spanish Hero of the American Revolution*, Dr. Gonzalo M. Quintero Saravia maintains that de Galvez was an individual who, as a young man, had been deeply influenced by Enlightenment values (Locke, Rousseau, Voltaire, Smith, Kant, Montesquieu, and others), and that his later professional and social successes were possible because of the political and social reforms that took place in the Spanish Empire during the second half of the eighteenth century. Dr. Savaria writes of reforms that de Galvez designed and implemented during his administration of Louisiana. New towns were founded, new crops introduced, hundreds of migrant settlers came into the territory, de facto religious toleration (unknown in the rest of the territories under Spanish rule), made it possible for non-Catholic citizens to prosper. When dealing with the crop failures that were the consequence of disastrous weather events, de Galvez put his Enlightenment ideals into practice by focusing on the welfare of poor peasants. He adopted the policy of "public happiness" (Felicidad Publica) according to Dr. Savaria, a term that included a unique sense of responsibility by the government toward the governed, especially those on the bottom rung of the social ladder. Finally, one of his most important and long-standing legacies as Governor was his policy toward the native Indians. He instituted a new Spanish policy toward Indigenous groups living in the borderlands of the Spanish Empire in the Americas. He demanded from his countrymen that they be "impartial and acknowledge that if the Indians are not our friends, it is because they do not owe us any benefits, and if they take revenge on us, it is only in just compensation for the affronts we have caused them . . . , the lies we have told them, and they tyrannies they have suffered from us."

Clearly, then, de Galvez served the interests of his King, but there is no doubt that he also was motivated by his sympathy for the American cause. During his service as Governor, he corresponded directly with Patrick Henry, Thomas Jefferson, and Charles Henry Lee, personally received their emissaries, Charles Pollock and Capt. George Gibson, and then saw to it that the port of New Orleans was secured so that only American, Spanish and French ships could move up and down the Mississippi River. And, as has been described in other articles in this issue of the Patriot, he assisted the colonies by delivering arms, ammunition and money to the embattled American forces under George Washington and George Rogers Clark.



Then, when Spain formally declared War against Great Britain on June 21, 1779, Galvez actively joined the fight. He mustered an army of Creoles, free blacks, and American Indians to march with his Spanish regulars. With 667 men, Galvez routed the British from their forts in the Mississippi Valley, including Baton Rouge and Natchez. In March 1780, he besieged Mobile and seized it after a four-day battle. Delayed but undeterred by hurricanes, his force strengthened to a command of 7,000 men, in the Spring of 1781, he launched his offensive against Pensacola, described on Pages 1 and 2 of this issue. The British surrendered on May 10, 1781, and left Florida, never to return. The Battle of Pensacola was one of the longest battles of the American Revolution, and yet it, as well as de Galvez, only rarely appear in our history books.



Equestrian Statue to Bernardo de Galvez in Washington DC

As described elsewhere in this issue, the impact of de Galvez' actions on the success of Washington at Yorktown are inestimable. His troops had kept the British occupied on a second front throughout the war, and the money he was able to supply kept Washington's troops on the field and the French Navy prevented Cornwallis from escaping.

Bernardo de Galvez felt at home in the Americas. He spent most of his adult life in America, where he found his wife, where his three children were born, and where he decided that he would be buried. Unquestionably, Historian Thomas Fleming was correct in saying that Galvez "was the right man, in the right place, at the right time -- for the USA. His life was cut short when in November 1786, he died of yellow fever in Mexico City at age 40. Happily, in time, Galvez has finally begun to get the recognition he deserved. In the 1820's, Mexico named Galveston, TX, after him. And on December 16, 2014, President Obama signed the congressional resolution that named Galvez an honorary U.S. citizen, an honor given to only eight foreign nationals, including wartime allies Lafayette and Winston Churchill. The Resolution called Galvez a hero of the Revolutionary War "who risked his life for the freedom of the United States."

A Look Back On Past SAR Activities . . .

Caloosa SAR Color Guard at the Edison Parade (2011)



(Adults to the rear, L to R) Bill Spearman, Earl Kennedy, Philip Moody, Commander Randy Moody, Earl Kennedy, Bob Easterly and John McCullough (Naples Chapter)
(Front L to R are Junior Members Matthew Spearman and Joseph Kennedy)
Photo courtesy of Earl Kennedy



(L to R) Commander Randy Moody, Earl Kennedy, Philip Moody, Earl Kennedy, Bob Easterly
Photo courtesy of Randy Moody

SAR Education Center and Museum Liberty Tree Campaign

We will all soon celebrate the 250th Anniversary of the Declaration of Independence. Is there a more fitting tribute to those who secured the liberties we enjoy than to share their story? Help ensure that the SAR Education Center and Museum is completed in time for the celebration.

The SAR Foundation, Inc. asks you to support the SAR Education Center and Museum through ***The Liberty Tree Campaign.*** While few of us can make a $1,000 gift without pause, you could, budget monthly support of $25 save American's history? Think of it as a utility bill, but instead of water, gas, or cable TV, you will be helping the SAR.

The Liberty Tree Campaign has four levels.

Bronze – A one-time gift of $1,250 (or $25 monthly until total is reached)

Silver- A one-time gift of $2,500 (or $50 monthly until total is reached)

Gold – A one-time gift of $25,000 (or $500 monthly until the total is reached)

Diamond – Please contact the SAR Foundation to arrange for a $250,000 gift



Donors receive a lapel pin like the one pictured above. Donors at the Gold and Diamond Levels will also be recognized with an appropriate naming opportunity in the SAR Education Center and Museum. Call **Phil Bloyd** in the SAR Foundation Office at **(502) 315-1777** to pledge to the Liberty Tree Campaign today! For those who need to hold onto their cash, the Founders Circle allows Compatriots to remember the SAR in their estate. Call Phil Bloyd or email him at pbloyd@sar.org for assistance.

The SAR 1776 Campaign, started in 2015, is also available and recognizes donations in the amount of $1,776 and fractions and multiples thereof. The SAR has a story to tell, and your continued support will allow the SAR to champion our rich heritage for all to appreciate by building The SAR Education Center and Museum.

Chapter Web Site



Compatriot Lawrence J. Hughes has now taken over duties as the Caloosa Chapter Webmaster, and the website is available at https://caloosasar.org/. It is also available through a link on the Florida Society web page. (www.flssar.org) where you would click on the "Chapters" tab, then "Caloosa." You may also be interested in visiting the National Society Sons of the American Revolution webpage: www.sar.org which includes a "members only" section and access to the SAR Merchandise Store.

Larry is anxious to hear from you and would be grateful for any suggestions you might have to help him continue the fine tradition established by the prior Webmasters and make the Webpage everything you would like it to be. His email address is: lawrencejhughes@gmail.com.

Chapter Facebook Page

Many thanks to our Compatriot Albert Myers for keeping our Facebook page up to date with current activities in the last few years. Newsletter Editor John Maier has volunteered to take over these duties. The following link to the page can be entered into your web browser's navigation bar (some recipients of the newsletter may be able to click on the link):

https://www.facebook.com/CaloosaChapteroftheSAR

The Caloosa SAR Facebook page strives to provide the most current and timely information and images covering Chapter programs and local happenings. If members have items of interest, John Maier welcomes email submission of photos and information. Send it to jmaier@wisclaw.com.

Our mission is to transport local Veterans to Washington, D.C. to visit those memorials dedicated to honor their service and sacrifice. We were established on September 25th, 2013 to bring this program to the Collier and Lee County areas in Southwest Florida. Six short weeks after forming, a remarkably successful inaugural flight (Mission 1) took place on November 9th, 2013. To date we have transported nearly 1200 WWII, Korean and Vietnam veterans on this deeply emotional and well-deserved trip. Support for these trips is provided by volunteers and is at no cost to the veterans. Top priority is given to our most senior heroes.

LAST MISSION OF SPRING 2025 IS NOW SET FOR APRIL 12, 2025



We would love to hear from you. Please contact us using the information provided below for any questions about signing up, volunteering or anything else.

PO Box 8001
Naples, FL 34101
(239) 777-9295
info@collierhonorflight.org

Next Flight
Has Been Scheduled On: April 12, 2025.
If You Or Your Vet Are Interested In Being Part Of This Next (Or Future) Missions
As An Honored Participant, Or As A Guardian Or Volunteer
See Our Website And Sign Up Now!

The SAR Mission Statement

The Sons of the American Revolution honors our Revolutionary War patriot ancestors by promoting patriotism, serving our communities, educating, and inspiring future generations about the founding principles of our Country.

The SAR Pledge

We, the descendants of the heroes of the American Revolution who, by their sacrifice, established the United States of America, reaffirm our faith in the principles of liberty and our Constitutional Republic, and solemnly pledge ourselves to defend them against every foe.

Recessional

Until we meet again, let us remember our obligations to our forefathers, who gave us our Constitution, the Bill of Rights, an independent Supreme Court, and a nation of free men.