SONS OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION

CALOOSA PATRIOT

Volume XXI Issue I *Caloosa Chapter, Sons of the American Revolution Newsletter* January 2026

John L. Maier, Jr, Editor

When The Pen Became More Powerful Than The Sword: Publication Of The Pamphlet "Common Sense" By Thomas Paine (January 10, 1776)

The publication of *Common Sense* on January 10, 1776 marked one of the most decisive turning points in the American Revolution. At a moment when colonial resistance to British authority was widespread but unfocused, Thomas Paine's pamphlet transformed public discontent into a clear and compelling argument for full independence. More than any single event short of armed conflict, *Common Sense* unified colonial opinion and pushed the American colonies decisively toward revolution.



By late 1775, tensions between Britain and its American colonies had already erupted into violence at Lexington and Concord. Yet despite months of fighting, many colonists still clung to the hope of reconciliation with the Crown. The Continental Congress had not declared independence, and loyalty to King George III lingered, particularly among moderates who feared chaos, economic collapse, or foreign invasion. Political debate remained cautious, framed largely around rights as Englishmen rather than the creation of a new nation. Into this atmosphere of uncertainty stepped Thomas Paine, a recent immigrant with no official standing but an extraordinary gift for persuasion.

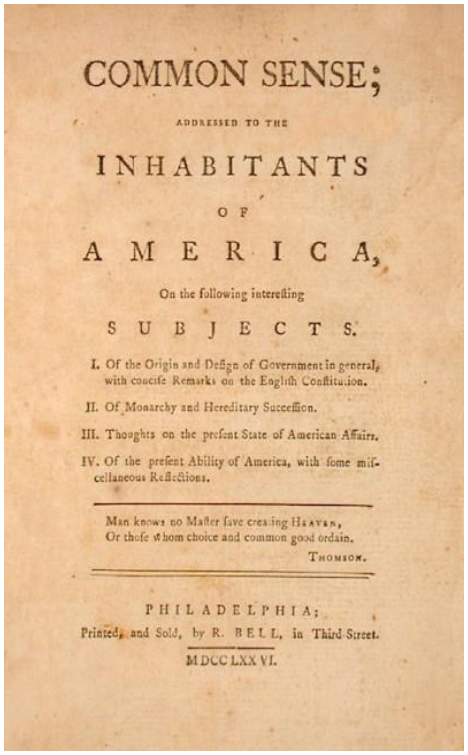
Paine published *Common Sense* anonymously in Philadelphia, the political heart of the colonies. Unlike most political tracts of the era, which relied heavily on legal jargon and classical references, *Common Sense* was written in plain, forceful language designed for ordinary readers. Paine deliberately avoided elitist arguments, instead appealing to reason, morality, and lived experience. He opened by challenging the very foundation of monarchy and hereditary rule, concepts many colonists had never openly questioned. By doing so, Paine reframed the debate from one about parliamentary policy to one about the legitimacy of kingship itself.

One of the pamphlet's most striking features was its direct attack on King George III. Paine rejected the traditional image of the king as a benevolent protector and instead portrayed him as a tyrant responsible for colonial suffering. He argued that a distant island ruling a vast continent defied both logic and nature, famously observing that ***"there is something absurd, in supposing a continent to be perpetually governed by an island."*** This simple yet powerful imagery resonated with readers across social classes, making independence seem not only reasonable but inevitable.

[Continued on Page 2]

[Continued From Page 1]

At the time Paine wrote *Common Sense*, most colonists considered themselves to be aggrieved Britons. Paine fundamentally changed the tenor of the colonists' argument with the crown when he wrote the following: ***"Europe, and not England, is the parent country of America. This new world hath been the asylum for the persecuted lovers of civil and religious liberty from every part of Europe. Hither they have fled, not from the tender embraces of the mother, but from the cruelty of the monster; and it is so far true of England, that the same tyranny which drove the first emigrants from home, pursues their descendants still."***


COMMON SENSE;

ADDRESSED TO THE

INHABITANTS

OF

AMERICA,

On the following interesting

SUBJECTS.

I. Of the Origin and Design of Government in general, with concise Remarks on the English Constitution.

II. Of Monarchy and Hereditary Succession.

III. Thoughts on the present State of American Affairs.

IV. Of the present Ability of America, with some miscellaneous Reflections.

Man knows no Master save creating HEAVEN,
Or those whom choice and common good ordain.
THOMSON.

PHILADELPHIA:
Printed, and Sold, by R. BELL, in Third-Street.
MDCCLXXVI.

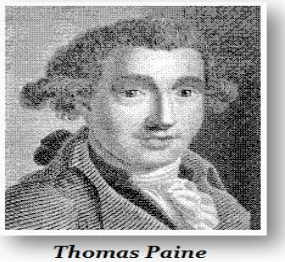
Equally important was Paine's vision of what independence could achieve. Common Sense did not merely condemn British rule; it offered a hopeful alternative. Paine outlined a republican form of government grounded in popular sovereignty and the consent of the governed. He argued that independence would bring economic opportunity, political freedom, and moral renewal. By presenting a future-oriented vision, Paine gave colonists something to rally around, transforming rebellion into a positive and purposeful movement.

The pamphlet's reach was extraordinary. Estimates suggest that *Common Sense* sold more than 100,000 copies within a few months—an astonishing figure in a population of roughly 2.5 million. It was read aloud in taverns, workshops, churches, and military camps, ensuring that even the illiterate encountered its arguments. Its ideas spread rapidly through newspapers and conversation, shaping public opinion at every level of society. For many Americans, *Common Sense* provided the intellectual and emotional permission to support independence openly.

The impact of *Common Sense* was soon evident in colonial politics. By the spring of 1776, colonial assemblies began instructing their delegates to the Continental Congress to consider independence. What had once been a radical notion increasingly became a popular demand. Although Paine did not directly write the Declaration of Independence, the language and ideas of *Common Sense* echoed through Thomas Jefferson's famous document, particularly in its emphasis on natural rights and the people's authority to alter or abolish unjust government.

Common Sense also played a critical role in democratizing the revolutionary cause. By speaking directly to farmers, artisans, and laborers, Paine helped ensure that the revolution was not merely an elite political project but a mass movement. Independence became a shared goal rather than an abstract theory, rooted in the everyday experiences and aspirations of common people. This broad base of support proved essential to sustaining the long and difficult struggle that followed.

In retrospect, the publication of *Common Sense* stands as a rare example of the power of ideas to shape history. Paine's pamphlet did not create colonial resistance, but it gave that resistance clarity, urgency, and direction. By dismantling old loyalties and articulating a bold vision of self-government, *Common Sense* helped transform thirteen disparate colonies into a people ready to declare themselves a nation. Its remarkable role in the American Revolution lies not only in what it argued, but in whom it inspired—the ordinary citizens whose belief in independence ultimately made the American Revolution possible.



Thomas Paine
(1737–1809)

Common Sense

Some writers have so confounded society with government, as to leave little or no distinction between them; whereas they are not only different, but have different origins. Society is produced by our wants, and government by our wickedness; the former promotes our POSITIVELY by uniting our affections, the latter NEGATIVELY by restraining our vices. The one encourages intercourse, the other creates distinctions. The first a patron, the last a punisher.

"These are the times that try men's souls."

[Editor's Note: See related story on Page 12]

Table of Contents

Page

When The Pen Became Mightier Than The Sword:
Publication Of The Pamphlet "Common Sense". 1-2

A Message From Our Chapter President 5

Hear Ye! Hear Ye! February 11th 2026 Meeting Notice 6-7

Report On January 14th Chapter Meeting 8-10

Compatriot's Corner / Blind In One Eye -
John Stafford And His Service At The Battles Of Red Bank
And Monmouth Court House. The Defense Of Fort Mifflin,
And Valley Forge By Compatriot Larry Stafford (With
Christine Racine and Compatriot Mark Barie 11

Unsung Heroes Of The American Revolution -
Thomas Paine (1737 – 1809) 12-13

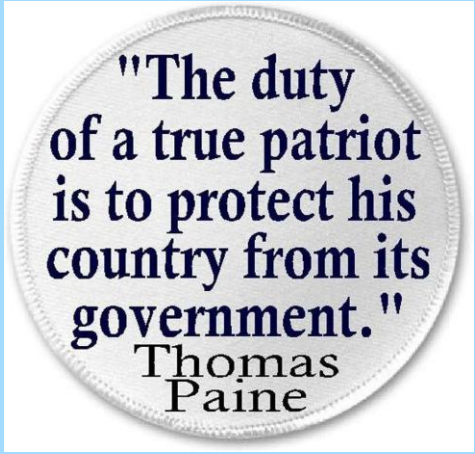
Calling For Volunteers For The Caloosa Chapter
Color Guard / Light Horse Harry Lee Camp #15 14-15

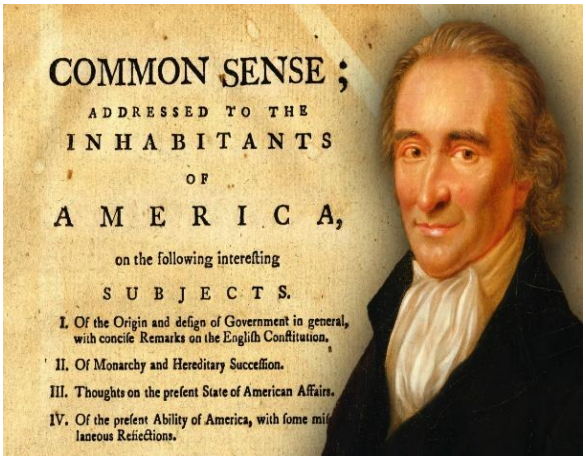
What's The Buzz . . . Tell Me What's Happening!
Caloosa Chapter SAR News 16

Final Deadlines For The 2025 – 2026 School Year SAR
Elementary, Middle School And High School
Americanism Contests Are Approaching. 18

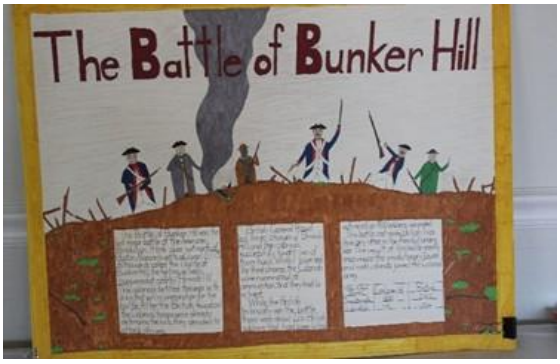
Knight High School Essay Contest
And The Caloosa SAR Chapter Winner Is. 19

FLSSAR President's Announcement That First
Amphibious Assault Memorial Fundraising Goal Has
Been Reached / Save The Date For The Dedication
Ceremonies 23-24





The Remarkable Role "Common Sense" Played In Uniting People Behind The Idea Of American Independence
(Pages 1-2)



Deadlines Approach For Annual Youth Poster and Brochure Contests – Get Those Entries In!
(Page 18)

FIRST AMPHIBIOUS ASSAULT MEMORIAL
POMPANO BEACH FLORIDA
250
1776 AMERICA 2026
SONS OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION
FLORIDA SOCIETY

Ribbon Cutting Ceremonies Set For March 14, 2026
(Page 24)

Chapter Officers for 2026



Immediate Past President
and Treasurer
Jeffrey F. Brunelle



President
Richard "Rick" Parfitt



Vice-President
John L. Maier, Jr.



Dr. Ron Peck
Genealogist



Tom Gillaspie
Sergeant-At-Arms



Bill Jenks
Secretary



Jonathan Hunt
Member-At-Large



Rev. Dr.. Randy Moody
Chaplain



Chris Jenner
Registrar

A Message From Our President

Greetings Compatriots!



We continue to have interesting and informative programming at our Chapter lunch meetings and at our February meeting we have Jan Myles-Brunelle, a member of the Florida Society of SAR Ladies Auxiliary, presenting on the important work and mission of the Ladies Auxiliary.

The *250th Anniversary Moment*, a short presentation, started by Compatriot, Rev. Randy Moody is becoming a highlight of our meetings presenting a Revolutionary War history brief of an event that occurred 250 years ago of the month we meet.

In keeping with SARs Decade of the American Revolution and help our young people explore American history we'll have Lee County School teachers, Anne Hester and Rachel Michel part of our March meeting receiving the Dr. Tom and Betty Lawrence American History Teacher Grant and presenting on their efforts teaching American history.

Finally, Compatriot Treasurer and Past President Jeff Brunelle issued a challenge to members to raise money for the *First Amphibious Assault by the Continental Marines on March 2-3, 1776,* memorial in Pompano Beach, FL. The Chapter raised $750.00. The Dedication will be held on Saturday, March 14, 2026, at 10:00 a.m.

Hope to see you at a future meeting. Let's not allow our young people to forget their history.

Rick Parfitt

President, Caloosa Chapter FLSSAR

Hear Ye! Hear Ye! Hear Ye!

Caloosa Chapter SAR

2026 Partial Meeting Schedule



[Unless Otherwise Indicated]
Chapter Meetings Are Held At Famous Dave's
12148 South Cleveland Ave. Fort Myers, FL 33903

Chapter Meetings	ExCom Meetings
Wednesday Jan. 14, 2026 11:30 a.m.	Tuesday Jan. 6, 2026 11:30 a.m.
Wednesday, Feb. 11, 2026 11:30 a.m.	Tuesday Feb. 3, 2026 11:30a.m.
Wednesday, Mar. 11, 2026 11:30 a.m.	Tuesday Mar. 3, 2026 11:30 a.m.
Saturday, April 11, 2026 11:30 a.m.	Tuesday Mar. 31, 2026 11:30 a.m.
Saturday, May 9, 2026 11:30 a.m.	Tuesday Apr. 29, 2026 11:30a.m.

Summer Break: No Chapter Meetings June through September
ExCom Meetings Will Begin Again In September

THE NEXT CALOOSA CHAPTER MEETING WILL BE HELD ON WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 11, 2026 AT: FAMOUS DAVE'S BBQ RESTAURANT

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



Our Lunch Program Will Include:
A Presentation On The Role Of The FLSSAR Ladies Auxiliary
Given By Jan Myles-Brunelle, Treasurer, Florida SAR Ladies Auxiliary
And A Showing Of Our Chapter's 1st Place Winner's Entry In The
SAR Youth Video Contest

Lunch Buffet Menu:
St. Louis Style Spareribs, Roast Chicken, Dave's Cheesy Macaroni,
Creamy Cole Slaw, Corn Muffins, 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 lunch is $25.00 per person paid at the link below by PayPal or Credit Card

Please RSVP 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.

January 14th Chapter Meeting
Hearts and Homes for Veterans, Inc.
Serving Our Veterans – Past And Present
and
Recounting The Exploits Of Our Revolutionary Era Patriots

by Compatriot Hugh Myers and Photos Courtesy of Albert and Forrest Myers

On January 14th, the Compatriots of the Caloosa SAR Chapter again gathered at Famous Dave's for the first meeting of the New Year, and were treated to a great meal, another outstanding SAR America 250 Moment given by **Rev. Dr. Randy Moody**, and a special presentation by **Capt. Dale Spain, USMC (ret.)** on his current activities as CEO of Hearts and Homes for Veterans, Inc.



Randy Moody presents his SAR America250 Moment

The January SAR America250 moment was given by our Chaplain, **Rev. Dr. Randy Moody**, and for this meeting he delivered another informative and entertaining tale of Revolutionary Colonial grit - this time recounting the attempted sack of Norfolk in January 1776.

As recounted by Rev. Moody, in late 1775, Lord Dunmore together with the Colonial Governor of Virginia fled Norfolk to British ships anchored offshore. They ran out of food and other provisions in a hurry, so they decided they would bombard Norfolk from these ships, then send in a landing party to gather stores. They executed their plan January 1, 1776. (Yeah, Happy New Year.)

The Colonials weren't having any part of it. Two-thirds of the buildings in Norfolk were set afire during the bombardment, with fully half of that caused by Colonials employing a scorched earth strategy. The British landing party was then repelled with nothing having been gained but casualties and Colonials' ire for their trouble. Colonials blamed the British for the whole fiasco, scorched earth and all. Entirely fair? Not at all. Entirely real in Colonial minds? You bet. As Reverend Moody observed, many times reality is "enhanced" by perception, and this was one of those times. The raid on Norfolk steadied Colonials' resolve to "see it out" with the British and to deliver more black eyes to British Tars in the days, months, and years to come.

Captain Dale Spain, USMC (ret.), then took command of our attention, introduced himself and his organization, and gave us an update on the activities of Hearts and Homes for Veterans in our community. Hearts and Homes provides assistance to Veterans in Lee, Collier and Charlotte counties who need help improving their lives after service. In the past two years, the number of Veterans assisted has swelled from 1883 to 2761, as of a recent accounting. Hearts and Homes provides transportation for Veterans to and from their newly completed 10,000 sq. ft. service center, and distributes stores collected from local partners such as Home Depot and the Red Cross, to name a few.

The Car Show at the German American Club in Cape Coral is coming up in February, a major event benefiting Hearts and Homes. Last year over 3,000 attended. Even if you're not a "car person", you'll love it. I went last year and thoroughly enjoyed myself: **https://www.hhveterans.com/event-details/car-show-for-veterans-2026**. Hearts and Homes for Veterans, Inc. was formed not just to be another charity, but to end homelessness and assist low-income veterans in Southwest Florida. Their goal is to help veterans lift themselves out of poverty, and then, in turn, reach back and help other veterans do the same. [Continued on Page 9]



Dale Spain

[Continued from Page 8]

Hearts and Homes has come a long way since the earliest outreach in 2013. Today, the organization actively supports homeless and low income veterans and their families in the following ways: financial assistance for short term rental and utility costs; counseling and advocacy with local, regional, and national support networks for veterans; arranging for and providing short term funds for transportation; holiday outreach programs; sharing of goods and sundries from our physical inventories, including food, clothing, bedding, household appliances, furniture, bicycles, personal hygiene items, sleeping bags, automobiles (donated and put into working order, and passed on to a qualifying veterans.



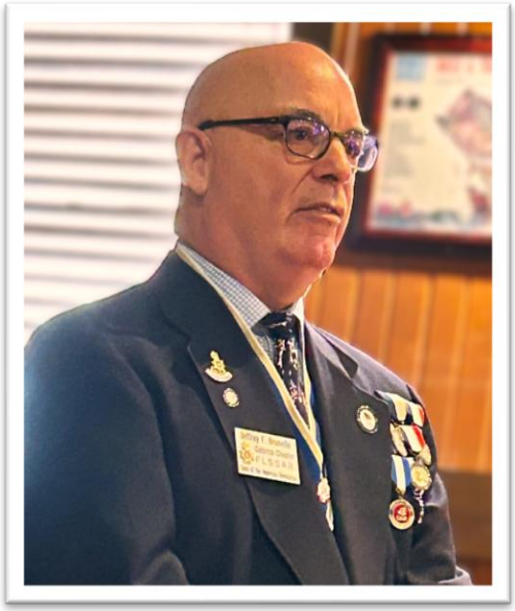
Since January of 2013, Hearts and Homes has served 500 veterans each year, many of which are first time visitors to the facility. Most have dependents and minor children. In addition to money, they always need volunteers to help. Please consider them in whatever way you can help. Their contact information is shown below.



Hearts and Homes for Veterans, Inc.
Distribution and Service Center
2230 Alicia Street
Fort Myers, FL 33901

Phone: 239-674-1719 Email: **vets@HHveterans.com** Website: **www.hhveterans.com**

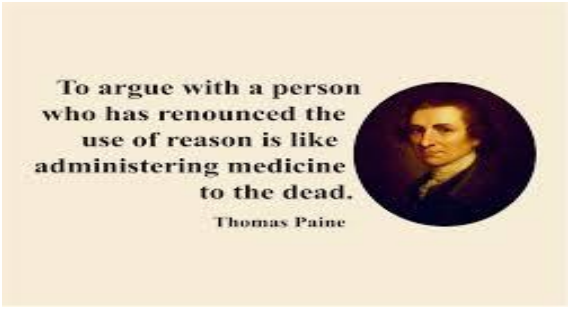
In closing, Captain Spain noted that 96.6% of donations get to the Vets. To donate, visit **https://www.hhveterans.com/donate**. Take a look at some of the pictures taken at our meeting:



Jeff Brunelle "pinch hitting" as Presiding Officer for the Chapter Meeting



Dale Spain Addressing The Assembled Compatriots





Above: Our Version Of The Constitutional Convention
The Compatriots Conducting A Spirited Discussion During The Course Of The Chapter Meeting



At left: Our Assistant Photographer, Forrest Myers, and Member At Large, Jonathan Hunt, clearly enjoying themselves before the start of the Meeting.



At right: Albert Myers, intrepid photographer, getting ready to report for duty at the Jan. 14 Chapter Meeting. Albert and son, Forrest, provide all the candid shots of the meeting, our speakers, and the gathered attendees. Thanks to the "Myers Photo Squad" – the Editor appreciates your service!

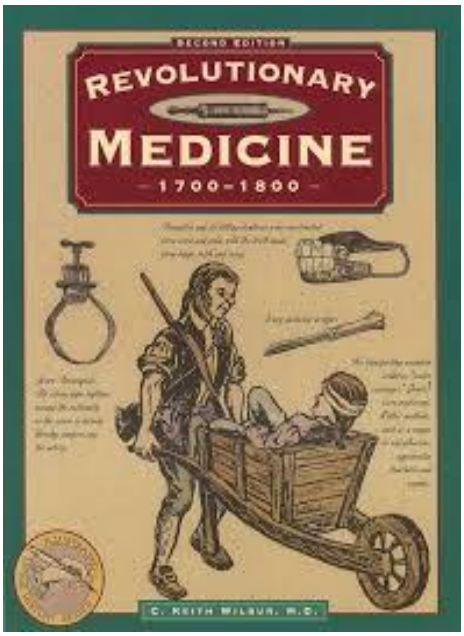
Compatriots Corner

The purpose of the "Compatriots Corner" page is to promote the mission and goals of the SAR by recounting our respective patriot ancestor's participation in the War for Independence. Award winning author Mark Barie, and his wife, Christine Racine, have been writing these vignettes now for some time, and we thank both of them for continuing to help getting our patriots' stories down on paper. Just see Page 16 of this issue for more information. Each of our Patriot ancestors' contributions combined to bring about the birth of the United States of America. Recently, Mark has had some surgery, but even as the period of his recovery continues, Mark and Christine enjoy writing about the Revolutionary War exploits of our own Patriot ancestors! And what great stories they are indeed.

Blind In One Eye
John Stafford and His Service at the Battles of Red Bank and Monmouth Court House, the Defense of Fort Mifflin, and Valley Forge

by Compatriot Larry Stafford (with Christine Racine and Compatriot Mark Barie)

My Patriot ancestor, John Stafford, enlisted as a Private in the Angell Regiment of the Rhode Island Line in 1777, and saw action at the Battle of Red Bank, the defense of Fort Mifflin, was present at Valley Forge, and faced the British at the Battle at Monmouth Court House. But he did not emerge unscathed. His honorable discharge, in 1780 at the age of 21, included a painfully brief handwritten notation: "cripple-one eye".



Precisely how Stafford lost his eye was not explained, but my Patriot was not alone. Eye injuries which led to partial or even total blindness were commonplace during Revolutionary War times. Soldiers lost their eyesight from shrapnel wounds, the spray of grape shot from enemy fire, traumatic head injuries, hand-to-hand combat, and even the Patriot's own weapon, when it misfired or was improperly primed during loading.

Revolutionary War records are replete with references to "close calls", "severe injuries", and "total loss of sight". For example, soldiers at the Battles of Bennington and Bunker Hill were documented as having lost their eyesight to grapeshot from musket fire. In New Hampshire and Massachusetts pension records listed veterans who survived the battles but were left "half blind".

Elsewhere, Captain Stephen Decatur, whose son would become a famous war hero during the War of 1812, suffered wounds that would result in partial blindness. George Washington's cousin, William Washington, was blinded by a savage slash of a sword to the head. He would eventually recover his sight but bore evidence of his wounds for the rest of his life.

The tragic loss of sight occurred on both sides of the American revolutionary war. A friend and fellow officer to the famous British spy, Major John Andre, (James Abercrombie), lost an eye during the Battle of Bunker Hill.

Pension records and medical reports regularly described eye injuries of the type suffered by my Patriot. One soldier's record included a reference to having "lost his left eye to a musket ball at Yorktown". Another report said a victim "was struck in the face at Concord, losing one eye and much of the sight in the other eye". My patriot was not the only soldier who suffered such injuries.

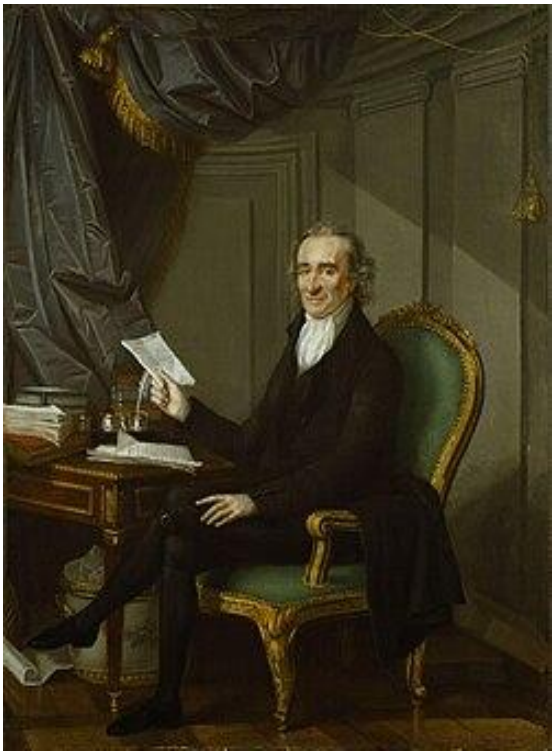
Sadly, no formal pension system existed for revolutionary war soldiers who suffered disabilities which stemmed from battlefield injuries. My patriot received a small pension for his military service, but ***not*** for his disability. Depending on their state of origin and congressional laws at the time, disabled soldiers might receive a one-time payment for their disability, continued military pay for a limited time-period, or nothing at all.

Years later, Congress would enact laws that mandated pensions for soldiers who suffered a "total disability". Unfortunately for John Stafford and hundreds of his fellow patriots, the wounds of war would earn those men neither fame nor fortune. And that is why the Sons of the American Revolution came into existence.

It is our sacred mission and solemn purpose to regularly remind our fellow Americans of the tremendous sacrifices made by these men, in the noble cause of freedom.

Unsung Heroes of the American Revolution
Thomas Paine (1737 – 1809)

From Humble Beginnings To The Pamphleteer Whose Writings Transformed A Colonial Squabble Into The American Revolution



Thomas Paine
Oil Painting by Laurent Dabos c. 1791

Thomas Paine stands as one of the most influential voices of the American Revolution—not because he commanded armies or signed treaties, but because he spoke directly to ordinary people and convinced them that independence was not only possible, but necessary. In an age when political debate was often cloaked in elite language and legal tradition, Paine cut through complexity with clarity, urgency, and moral conviction. More than any other single individual, he helped unite average colonists behind the radical idea that America should break completely from British rule.

Born in 1737 in Thetford, England, Paine came from humble origins. The son of a corset maker and a Quaker mother, he received only a modest education and worked a series of unremarkable jobs—sailor, schoolteacher, excise officer—before finding himself frustrated with English society and politics. Paine was deeply affected by the rigid class system of Britain, where privilege and power were inherited rather than earned. These early experiences shaped his lifelong belief that government should exist to serve the common people, not kings or aristocracies.

In 1774, with the encouragement of Benjamin Franklin, Paine emigrated to the American colonies. He arrived at a moment of mounting tension between Britain and its colonies. While resistance to British policies such as taxation without representation was widespread, the idea of full independence remained controversial. Many colonists still hoped for reconciliation with the Crown, viewing themselves as loyal Englishmen seeking redress rather than revolution. It was into this uncertain political climate that Paine introduced a bold and transformative argument.

In January 1776, Paine published *Common Sense*, a short pamphlet that would become one of the most widely read and influential political texts in American history. Unlike earlier political writings, which were often dense and legalistic, *Common Sense* was written in plain, direct language that could be understood by farmers, laborers, shopkeepers, and sailors. Paine did not appeal to obscure legal precedents or elite philosophical traditions alone; instead, he framed independence as a matter of natural rights, common morality, and everyday logic.

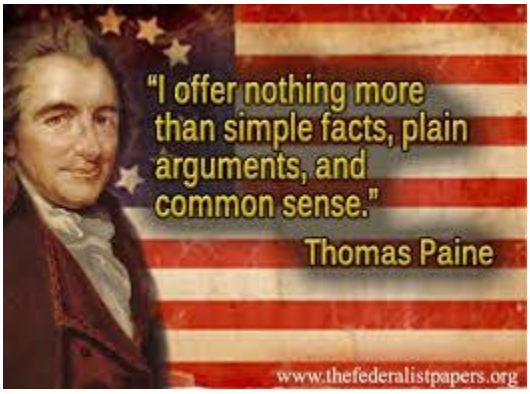
Paine attacked the institution of monarchy with unprecedented bluntness, arguing that hereditary rule was both absurd and unjust. He dismissed King George III not as a misguided father figure but as a tyrant who had forfeited any moral authority over the colonies. “A government of our own is our natural right,” Paine insisted, reframing independence as something ordinary people deserved rather than a dangerous gamble orchestrated by elites. His arguments resonated deeply because they validated what many colonists already felt but had not yet fully articulated.

Perhaps Paine’s greatest achievement was transforming independence from an abstract political idea into a shared popular cause. *Common Sense* sold tens of thousands of copies within months and was read aloud in taverns, churches, and public gatherings, reaching far beyond the literate elite. It gave voice to the frustrations and aspirations of everyday Americans and helped create a sense of collective purpose. By the spring of 1776, public opinion had shifted dramatically, and support for independence surged throughout the colonies.

Paine’s influence did not end with the Declaration of Independence. During the darkest days of the Revolutionary War, when American morale faltered, he again turned his pen to the service of the people. Beginning in December 1776, he published The American Crisis series, opening with the famous line, “These are the times that try men’s souls.”
[Continued On Page 13]

[Continued From Page 12]

These essays were designed to be read aloud to soldiers and civilians alike, offering encouragement, resolve, and moral clarity. Paine reminded Americans that the struggle for independence was a test of character and perseverance, reinforcing the idea that ordinary citizens were the backbone of the revolution.



Thomas Paine's contribution to the American cause did not end with the written word. After the explosive success of *Common Sense* in 1776, Paine joined the Continental Army as a civilian aide-de-camp to General Nathanael Greene. Although he did not serve as a soldier in combat, Paine lived among the troops and witnessed firsthand the hardship, morale problems, and uncertainty that plagued the army, especially during the bleak winter of 1776–1777. These experiences directly inspired The American Crisis, a series of pamphlets written while the war was ongoing. The opening line—"These are the times that try men's souls"—became legendary after George Washington ordered it read aloud to the troops before the crossing of the Delaware River. Paine's writings during this period functioned as a morale weapon, reinforcing resolve when defeat seemed likely.

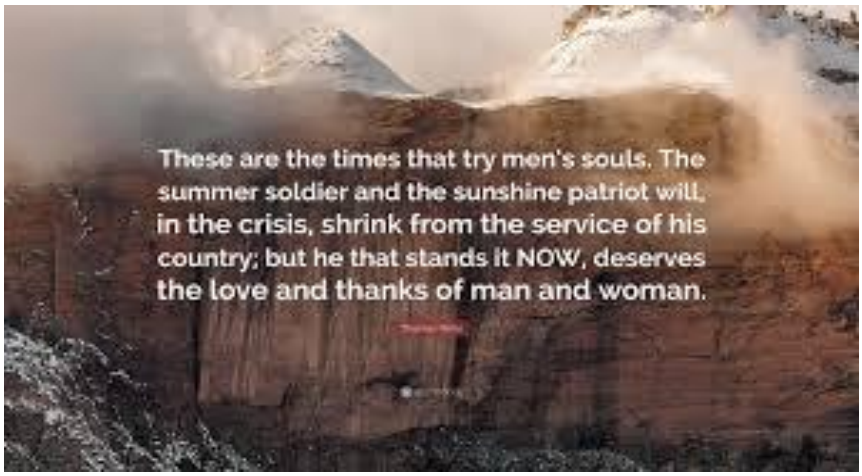
In 1777, Paine was appointed Secretary of the Committee of Foreign Affairs, a key body of the Continental Congress responsible for diplomacy, intelligence, and communication with America's allies, particularly France. In this role, Paine handled sensitive correspondence and helped manage foreign policy at a critical moment in the war. However, his tenure ended controversially in 1779, when he publicly revealed information related to the Silas Deane affair. Although Paine believed he was exposing corruption, Congress viewed the disclosure as a breach of confidentiality, and Paine was forced to resign. Despite the dismissal, his service reflected the trust once placed in him at the highest levels of revolutionary government.

After the American Revolution, Paine struggled financially and politically, despite his immense contributions. He continued to write and became deeply involved in the great political debates of the late eighteenth century. In the 1790s, he traveled to Europe and published Rights of Man, a powerful defense of republican government and the French Revolution. The work made him enormously popular among reformers but also deeply unpopular with monarchists and conservatives, particularly in Britain, where he was charged with seditious libel.

Paine later wrote The Age of Reason, a critique of organized religion that argued for deism and reason over revealed theology. While influential, the book damaged his reputation in the United States, where religious sentiment was growing stronger. During the French Revolution, Paine served as a deputy to the French National Convention but was imprisoned during the Reign of Terror and narrowly escaped execution.

Thomas Paine's enduring legacy lies in his ability to speak to and for the common people. He did not merely argue for independence; he made it feel inevitable and just. By translating revolutionary ideals into language that ordinary citizens could understand and embrace, Paine helped forge a shared American identity rooted in equality, self-governance, and moral responsibility. In doing so, he united a diverse population behind the revolutionary cause and ensured that the fight for independence was not only led by elites, but owned by the people themselves.

In 1802, President Thomas Jefferson invited Paine back to the United States. He returned hoping for renewed respect, but instead found himself largely shunned due to his religious views and radical politics. Paine spent his final years in relative poverty and isolation. Thomas Paine died on June 8, 1809, in New York City, at the age of 72. Only a handful of people attended his funeral, a quiet and tragic end for a man whose words had once stirred a continent to revolution. Today, Paine is remembered not only as the voice of independence but as a revolutionary who served both with his pen and in public office, shaping the political conscience of the modern democratic world.



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, Rick Parfitt.



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 Rick Parfitt at: **Florida4rick@gmail.com** 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.

Breaking News!
Winners Of Dr. Tom & Betty Lawrence American History Teacher Awards Announced By Caloosa Chapter SAR

The National Society of the SAR annually invites all American History teachers at the middle and high school levels whose approved curriculum teaches students about the American Revolution Era from 1750 to 1800 to apply for this grant award.

The Grant Award recognizes educators who distinguish themselves in teaching the history of the American Revolution. A teacher who is selected as a winner at a chapter level will then be submitted to compete for the state contest, and the winner of the state contest will then be a finalist for the national grant. Our Caloosa Chapter SAR is proud to announce that from those American History teachers who applied for the award, we have selected two outstanding teachers who meet the criteria.

Rachel Michel is our finalist for the Middle School level teaching award. Rachel is the Social Studies Teacher and Teacher of the Gifted at Lehigh Acres Middle School (6th and 7th Grades), and also serves as the Chair of the Social Studies Department. She has been teaching history for 7 years, and expects to teach for another 20!

Anne Hester is our finalist for the High School level teaching award. Anne teaches history at East Lee County High School where she is also serves as the Chair for the Social Studies Department. Anne has been teaching for 20 years and has no plans to quit anytime soon.

Rachel and Anne will both be our guests at the March 11th Chapter Meeting to be recognized and thanked. They will be accompanied by their Principals.

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 (both pictured below), 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! If you are interested, please feel free to contact Compatriot Barie directly at his email address: **Authormarkbarie@gmail.com**.



Caloosa Chapter SAR Announcements

President Parfitt has announced that: (a) volunteers to serve on the Chapter's Color Guard are needed; and (b) the SAR 2025-2026 school year contests are still under way for the Americanism Elementary School Poster Contest, and the SAR Middle School Brochure Contest, with deadlines for those contests approaching the end of February; and (c), deadlines for the Knight High School Essay Contest, the Rumbaugh Historical Oration Contest, and the Youth Video Contests have all be reached, and; all of the information on rules, guidelines and deadlines for each of the Contests is available on the Chapter Website: **https://caloosasar.org/**. Further, Chapter volunteers are also needed to assist with future SAR Americanism Youth Contests which all begin at the Chapter level, with winners then advanced to the FLSSAR and National SAR levels. Help with mailings to public, private and homeschool teachers and administrators is planned for the Spring, 2026 so that all teachers, parents and students are informed about next year's opportunities are presented for these Contests.

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.

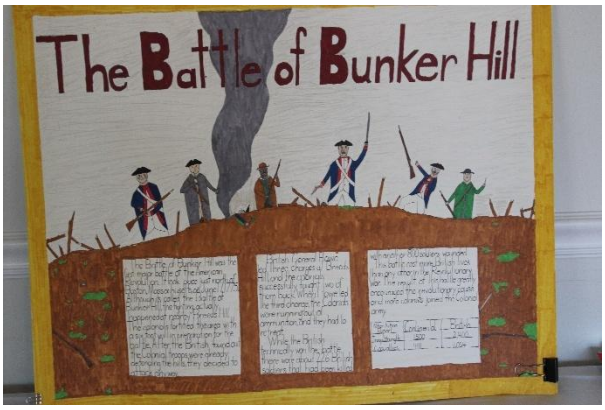
The SAR 1776 Campaign, started in 2015, is also available and recognizes donations in the amount of $1,776 and fractions and multiples thereof. The SAR has a story to tell, and your continued support will allow the SAR to champion our rich heritage for all to appreciate by building The SAR Education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

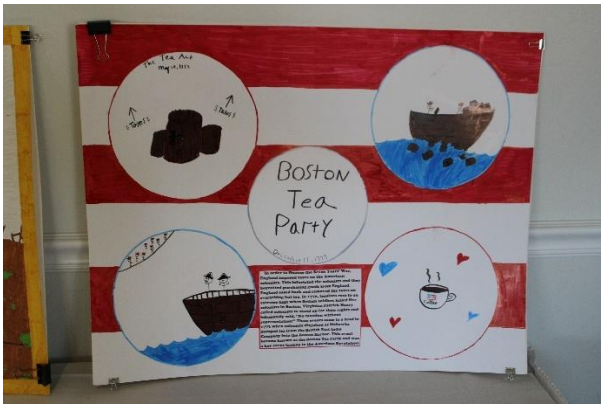
The 2025 – 2026 School Year SAR Elementary, Middle School And High School Americanism Contests Are Off And Running!

RULES AND GUIDELINES – ELEMENTARY SCHOOL POSTER CONTEST

The National Society SAR developed the Elementary School Poster Contest to help stimulate interest in and aid the study of American History in the 3rd, 4th or 5th Grade Curriculum (depending on the grade the subject is taught). This Contest also includes; Cub Scouts, Brownies, Children of the American Revolution and other youth organizations recognized by the NSSAR Council of Youth Programs Committee in addition to public, private, parochial, or home schools. Participants from organizations other than schools must be of equivalent age for 3rd, 4th or 5th grade, whichever year that they teach American History in the specific school district. If they teach American History in lower grades at selected schools, an entry may be accepted for the competition at the discretion of the NSSAR Council of Youth Programs. Judging of ALL entries will be on an equal basis regardless of point of origin. [**DEADLINE FOR SUBMITTAL: FEBRUARY 28, 2026]**

For more information: **https://www.sar.org/americanism-elementary-school-poster-contest-2/**
Examples of prior submittals:

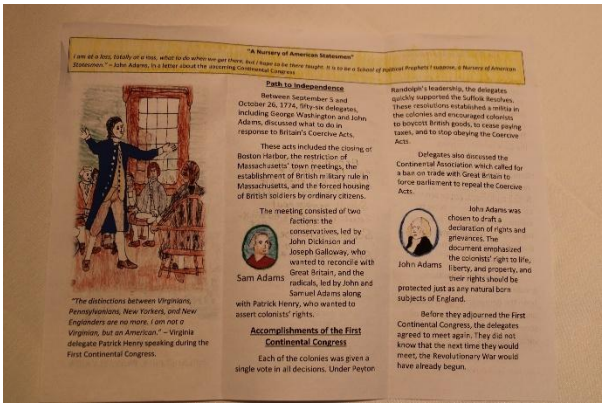


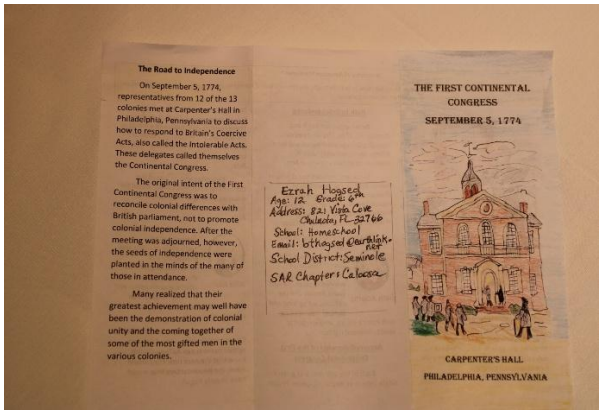


RULES AND GUIDELINES – SGT. MOSES ADAMS MEMORIAL MIDDLE SCHOOL BROCHURE CONTEST

The SAR Middle School Contest is to create a tri-fold brochure out of a typical 8 ½ x 11" piece of paper. The brochure must conform to the contest theme which is one of the nine foundational documents of the United States which the student selects. The brochure will be judged on Content, Creativity and Correctness. The judging criteria rates highest personally drawn artwork and text authored by the student as opposed to 'cut and paste' from books, magazines and the internet. The use of software tools by the student for creating the brochure, and even the artwork, is permissible. [**DEADLINE FOR SUBMITTAL: FEBRUARY 28, 2026]**

For more information: **https://www.sar.org/sgt-moses-adams-memorial-middle-school-brochure-contest/**
Examples of prior submittals:





George S. and Stella M. Knight High School Essay Contest And The Caloosa SAR Chapter Winner Is . . . Ari Hogsed



Ari Hogsed, Chapter Winner Knight High School Essay Contest
Caloosa Chapter Florida Society Sons of the American Revolution

The SAR Knight High School Essay Contest invites all high school students (9th through 12th grades) interested in the American Revolution to participate by submitting an original 800 – to 1200 – word essay based on an event, person, philosophy or ideal associated with the American Revolution, Declaration of Independence, or the framing of the United States Constitution. The contest is open to all US Citizen and Legal Resident students attending home schools, public, parochial, or private high schools in that same grade range. Each student's essay is judged based upon its historical accuracy, clarity, organization, grammar and spelling, and documentation. The contest is conducted in three phases: the local chapter, state-level society and national phases. The contest is entered through an SAR chapter near the student's residence. Only one entry per student is permitted per contest year.

The student's essay is submitted with a title, but no name, so the judges do not know who the entrant is. Ari is a Florida high school junior, and no stranger to competition in SAR contests. In addition, one of his favorite activities is competing in NCFCA, a speech and debate league. He also volunteers at his church on the audio-visual team, and hopes to attend Palm Beach Atlantic University and major in business.

Ari's winning essay: *The Life of a Continental Soldier* is printed below. Keeping it 'all in the family' Ari's cousin, Elysianne Davis (also a Florida 11th Grader) was our Chapter's runner-up in the Essay Contest. Elysianne's essay was titled: *You Zealots are Full of Despotism*, which discussed the differences in the political views of the Federalists vs. the Anti-Federalists during the drafting of the US Constitution. Ari and Elysianne are the grandchildren of our Compatriot Tom Gillaspie, who serves as our Sergeant at Arms. Having placed 1st in our local Chapter's contest, Ari's essay has moved on to the state competition by the Florida Society SAR. Good luck Ari!

The Life of a Continental Soldier by Ari Hogsed

"Great men get great praise, little men, nothing." – A Narrative of a Revolutionary Soldier

Countless statues, paintings, books, and movies have been made in honor of the great Revolutionary War heroes, such as George Washington, Benjamin Franklin, Henry Knox, and the Marquis de Lafayette, yet the critical force of the Revolution—the foot soldiers of the Continental Army—are often overlooked. One of the few firsthand accounts of a soldier in the Continental Army is *A Narrative of a Revolutionary Soldier* written by Joseph Plumb Martin, who joined the war when he was just fifteen. His account of the war gives insight into the daily life, struggles, and sufferings of a Continental Army soldier.

Joseph was born in western Massachusetts in 1760. When he turned seven, he moved in with his grandparents in Connecticut. Despite the fact that war was brewing, Joseph resisted joining the army in 1774 when "the smell of war began to be pretty strong" (7). However, his grandparents refused to let him join the army until 1775 when Joseph at age fifteen threatened to become a privateer. Frightened by this dangerous prospect, his grandparents reluctantly agreed to let him join the army. At long last, Joseph Plum Martin had become a soldier. After enlisting, he visited his grandparents and departed to New York to begin his fateful career. [Continued on Page 20]

Continued From Page 19]

The majority of Joseph's autobiography is devoted to his daily life as a soldier, including the frequent sufferings and trials the soldiers had to endure. One of the biggest difficulties in the Continental Army was lack of food. The young, poorly funded Continental Army experienced constant shortages of food. As Joseph notes while arming himself for a battle, "Here we drew our arms and equipments. Uncle Sam was always careful to supply us with these articles, even if he could not give us anything to eat, drink, or wear" (55). Furthermore, the sleeping conditions were often miserable, and disease frequented the troops. Joseph summarizes the troubles of a Continental soldier at the beginning of his second campaign. "No one who has never been upon such duty as those advanced parties have to perform, can form any adequate idea of the trouble, fatigue and dangers which they have to encounter. Their whole time is spent in marches…watching, starving, and, in cold weather, freezing and sickness. If they get any chance to rest, it must be in the woods or fields, under the side of a fence, in an orchard or in any other place but a comfortable one;-lying down on the cold and often wet ground, and, perhaps, before the eyes can be closed with a moment's sleep, alarmed and compelled to stand under arms an hour or two, or to receive an attack from the enemy...and ten thousand other causes to harass, fatigue and perplex" (59-60).

While the majority of his account is dedicated to the everyday occurrences in the army, Joseph recorded several momentous battles during his time as a soldier, one of which was Yorktown. During his third campaign in 1781, Joseph was assigned with the rest of the troops to the siege of Yorktown. The beginning of the siege, as Joseph describes, took place during a dark and rainy night on October 5th. A detachment of troops started several fires in a nearby marsh, drawing the British fire and providing a distraction for the rest of the troops to begin digging the trenches. Throughout the following nights, the soldiers finished the trenches. "By daylight they [the soldiers] had covered themselves from danger from the enemy's shot, who, it appeared, never mistrusted that we were so near them the whole night" (Martin 199). Once the British realized their mistake, they attempted to fire on the Americans. However, the trenches were expertly placed out of range of the British artillery, effectively making the British artillery useless. Several days later, the American artillery arrived. At the raising of the flag, the bombardment of Yorktown began. As Joseph describes it, "About noon the much wished for signal went up. I confess I felt a secret pride swell my heart when I saw the 'star spangled banner' waving majestically in the very faces of our implacable adversaries; it appeared like an omen of success to our enterprize, and so it proved in reality. A simultaneous discharge of all the guns in the line followed; the French troops accompanying it with 'Huzza for the Americans!'" (201).

Yet, the siege didn't end there. In order to progress in the siege, the Continental Army needed to capture a pivotal line of trenches. After days of bombarding the British, the Continental Army prepared to attack the British trenches in the dead of night. The watchword that would signal the troops to attack was the name of the French Lieutenant General Rochambeau, which Joseph mentions was "a good watchword…it sounded when pronounced quick, like rush-on-boys" (202). Suddenly, the watchword rang through the night, and the Continental Army attacked. "We immediately moved silently on toward the redoubt we were to attack, with unloaded muskets. Just as we arrived at the abatis, the enemy discovered us and directly opened a sharp fire upon us. We were now at a place where many of our large shells had burst in the ground, making holes sufficient to bury an ox in; the men having their eyes fixed upon what was transacting before them, were every now and then falling into these holes. I thought the British were killing us off at a great rate" (Martin 202). However, the Continental Army succeeded, and as Joseph records, "The fort was taken, and all quiet in a very short time" (203). Several days later, the British General Cornwallis surrendered.

In June of 1783, Joseph and his fellow soldiers were discharged. Despite the fact that Joseph felt much anticipation for this day, there was as much sorrow as joy on leaving his fellow soldiers, which he described as "a family of brothers" (241). The end of his account details the sufferings that the soldiers had to endure and the meager compensation that Congress provided. For example, Joseph was promised a monthly salary. However, his pay, along with the many others, was cut off in 1777. Additionally, Congress promised the soldiers one hundred acres of land each. However, "when the country had drained the last drop of service it could screw out of the poor soldiers, they were turned adrift like old worn-out horses, and nothing said about land to pasture them upon" (Martin 243). While some soldiers did obtain their land, most did not, including Joseph. Furthermore, he mentions how some had begun to doubt how useful the Continental Army was in comparison to the Militia.



As we celebrate our 250th anniversary, let us not forget the "common" soldiers that fought for our country's freedom. While most soldiers didn't achieve the famed heroic feats of George Washington, Henry Knox, or Lafeyette, they played a crucial role in founding America. As Joseph notes, "Great men get great praise, little men get nothing" (83).

Let this not be the case.

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 over 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.

DATE FOR MISSION 29 (SPRING 2026): APRIL 25, 2026



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: Mission 29
Was Rescheduled From October 18, 2025 to April 25, 2026
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!

FLSSAR President Washler Announces
"We Reached Our Goal"
The First Amphibious Assault Memorial Is Fully Funded!

Compatriots:

On behalf of the Florida Society Executive Committee and the First Amphibious Assault Memorial Committee, I am pleased to announce that we have reached the final fundraising goal for the First Amphibious Assault Memorial!

The FAAM Committee has voted to cease all fundraising efforts. Recognizing that some of you may have already mailed in checks, the Committee will accept any final donations that are received between now and January 26th. After January 26, the FLSSAR Treasurer will contact the donor (s) and inform them that the fundraising had stopped. The donors will be offered the opportunity to have their donation refunded or their donation will be directed to the FLSSAR.

Compatriots, I am incredibly proud of what this Society accomplished in a very short amount of time. In just over a year, this Society raised the funds needed to construct a "first in the nation" monument to an often-overlooked event that not only was significant in the founding of our country, but was also a true first for what would become the United States Marine Corps. When we dedicate the monument on March 14 in Pompano Beach, the eyes of the country will turn to Florida and the Florida Society, and you should all be proud of what we've done!

Now that we are done with this incredible fundraising effort, I encourage everyone to make your plans to be in Pompano Beach on March 14, and let's all celebrate together what we accomplished as a Society!

Chris Washler

President

Florida Society Sons of the American Revolution
(850) 380-1329
Find us at https://link.edgepilot.com/s/659686e8/Qj9O0Mxv9U2ZPwUMKVtAxg?u=http://www.flssar.org/ or on Facebook (Florida Society, Sons of the American Revolution)

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



The Florida Society SAR has been working non-stop to make this monument a reality. There is a website for the memorial:

https://link.edgepilot.com/s/2c9a38aa/kOeCRgcwnEizwpRIacG6Ow?u=https://1776landing.org/

where you can see pictures and full information on the monument.

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.