



CALOOSA PATRIOT

Volume XXI Issue IX

Caloosa Chapter, Sons of the American Revolution Newsletter

October 2026



John L. Maier, Jr, Editor

The Battle of Valcour Island

Arnold's Cut and Run Naval Engagement Serves to Keep the Revolution Alive
(250 Years Ago: October 11, 1776)



*A View of the Battle of Valcour Island 11 October 1776
Drawing by Henry Gilder (Public Domain)*

Lake Champlain in early October is cold and foreboding. Its long, narrow body stretched like a blue blade between the New York wilderness and the rising hills of Vermont. For centuries it had been used as an important highway — for native peoples, for French traders, for British soldiers — and now, in the autumn of 1776, it was the corridor through which the fate of the American Revolution might be decided. For whoever controlled Lake Champlain controlled the gateway to the Hudson Valley. And whoever controlled the Hudson could split the colonies in two.

Benedict Arnold understood this with a clarity few others possessed. He had earned that understanding the hard way — through the brutal march to Quebec, the failed assault on the city, and the long retreat down the Richelieu. In the chaos that followed,

[Continued from Page 1]

the Continental Army needed a commander who knew the northern frontier, who understood the lake, and who possessed the audacity to act without waiting for permission. General Philip Schuyler and General Horatio Gates both recognized that Arnold, for all his temper and pride, had the rare combination of initiative and ruthlessness the moment demanded. So in the summer of 1776, Arnold was placed in command of the American naval forces on Lake Champlain — a “navy” that did not yet exist!

At Skenesborough, at the very southern tip of the lake, Arnold found little more than a few carpenters, scattered tools, and raw timber. The Continental Congress had authorized the construction of vessels, but authorization did not magically produce ships. Arnold had to create a fleet from nothing. He commandeered every resource he could find. Timber was cut from the surrounding forests. Iron fittings were scavenged from abandoned barns and mills. Rope and canvas were begged from local towns. Carpenters were pressed into service — some willingly, others reluctantly — and Arnold drove them with relentless energy. He slept little, ate irregularly, and stalked the shipyard like a man possessed.

The vessels rose quickly, almost violently, from the lakeshore. First came the gunboats — small, flat-bottomed craft built for rowing and carrying a single heavy bow gun. Then the galleys, larger and more complex, with space for broadsides (an entire battery of cannons mounted along one side of a ship) and crews of dozens. The schooner *Royal Savage*, captured earlier from the British, was refitted and armed. By September, Arnold had assembled a fleet of fifteen vessels, crude but functional.

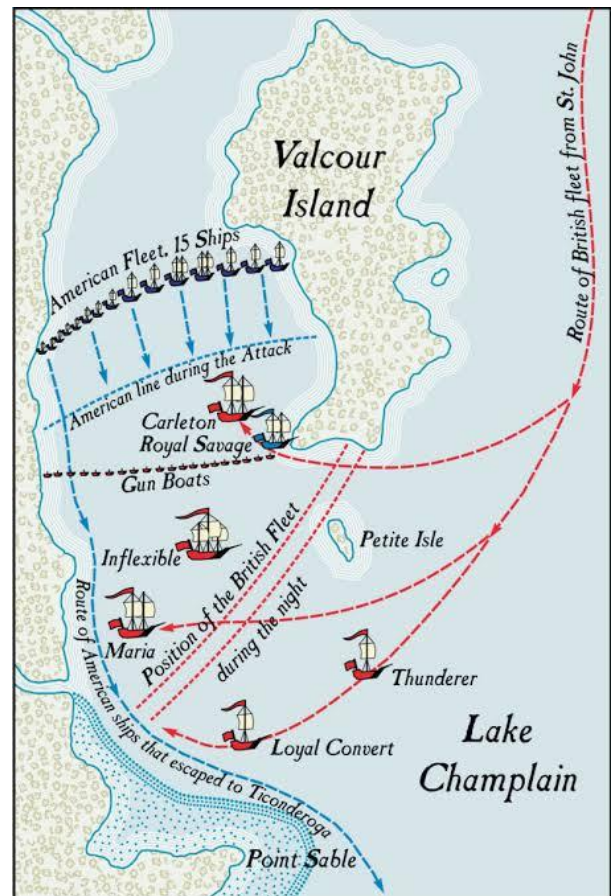
Cannons were the greatest challenge. The northern frontier had few heavy guns, and those that existed were scattered across forts, depots, and old French positions. Arnold sent riders south to Fort Ticonderoga and Crown Point, demanding every usable cannon they possessed. Some guns were dragged from the ruins of old French batteries dating back to the French and Indian War. Others were hauled from the fortifications at Ticonderoga, mounted on improvised naval carriages, and ferried north by raft. The gunboats received nine-pounders or twelve-pounders in their bows. The galleys were armed with a mix of heavy and light pieces — whatever Arnold could obtain. The Congress carried a respectable battery for a vessel built in weeks; the *Washington* slightly less. The *Royal Savage* was fitted with a patchwork of guns from multiple sources, her armament as improvised as her crew.

It was not a fleet that could win a naval war. But it was a fleet that could fight — and, more importantly, delay an oncoming enemy fleet. By early October, Arnold commanded a motley squadron of fifteen vessels: the schooner *Royal Savage*; the galleys *Congress* and *Washington*; and a swarm of gunboats — *Philadelphia*, *New York*, *New Jersey*, *Connecticut*, *Providence*, *Spitfire*, *Trumbull*, *Liberty*, and others. Each carried the cannons he had scraped together from forts, ruins, and depots. Each was crewed by men who had never fought a naval battle in their lives.

Against them stood the full weight of the British empire. The British fleet under Captain Thomas Pringle included the massive warship *Inflexible*, armed with eighteen heavy guns; the floating fortress *Thunderer*; the schooner *Carleton*; and more than twenty gunboats, each bristling with artillery. Their vessels were professionally built, expertly crewed, and supported by thousands of soldiers waiting to descend the lake.

Arnold could not defeat such a force. But he could delay it. He carefully chose the spot he would position his makeshift fleet. Halfway down the lake lay Valcour Island, a long, forested mass rising from the water like a natural barricade. On its western side, between the island and the New York mainland, lay Valcour Bay — a narrow crescent of sheltered water, invisible from the main channel. The prevailing winds blew from the south. If Arnold anchored his fleet inside the bay, the British would have to sail against the wind to reach him, struggling to maneuver their heavy ships in tight waters. It was a trap — not to win, but to bleed time from the enemy.

On the night of October 10, Arnold’s fleet slipped into Valcour Bay and anchored in a line running north to south. The *Royal Savage* guarded the northern approach. The gunboats formed the center, spaced like stepping stones across the bay. At the southern end lay the two galleys, *Congress* and *Washington*, their decks crowded with men and guns. The fleet waited in silence, the cold wind whispering through the rigging. [Continued on Page 30]



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



Chris Parfitt
Secretary



Jonathan Hunt
Member-At-Large



Rev. Dr.. Randy Moody
Chaplain



Chris Jenner
Registrar

A Message From Our President

Greetings Compatriots:



Welcome back Compatriots to our regular chapter meetings. At our October 14th meeting, held at the American Legion, Post 38 in Ft. Myers, we inducted four new members: Dr. William Richardson, John K. Thomas, Matthew Etzel and William McGreehan, and had a great time doing so!

The Fall Board of Management (BOM) meeting was held in Kissimmee on Oct 16-17, 2026. There was a good turnout, and I was happy to have had an opportunity to attend because quite a lot of information was presented and discussed (which I now will be able to share with you).

For example, some timely, human-interest, opportunities for participation by FLSSAR Members, were discussed. Among them, a Missing in America Project solemn military internment ceremony for 29 unclaimed veterans and one spouse will be held on October 29, 10:00 AM at the South Florida National Cemetery. Members of our FLSSAR regularly participate and support these “Call to Honor” ceremonies. Look for more information elsewhere in this Newsletter.

Our Chapter’s efforts to participate in the annual Youth Contests will be expanded this year when we begin presenting JROTC-Enhanced Awards for the top JROTC Junior Class members, with winners selected from essays submitted by the top cadets from each of our 16 Lee County High Schools. Our Chapter is proud to say that it participated in 6 of the Youth Contests last academic year, with only one SAR Chapter in Florida having participated in more.

Be sure to look for more information in this Newsletter on the Youth Contests, as well as an article on the SAR Americanism Award that many of our members, who regularly attend meetings, are eligible for.

I hope to see you all at our upcoming meetings.

Rick Parfitt

Rick Parfitt

President, Caloosa Chapter FLSSAR



Hear Ye! Hear Ye! Hear Ye! Caloosa Chapter SAR 2026 Meeting Schedule



[Unless Otherwise Indicated]

Chapter Meetings Are Held At Famous Dave's
12148 South Cleveland Ave. Fort Myers, FL 33903

ExCom Meetings Are Now Being Held Virtually
Via "Zoom" Connection

[Notify President Parfitt at Florida4rick@gmail.com or Vice-President John Maier at jmaier@wisclaw.com and request Zoom link if you'd like to attend]

Chapter Meetings

ExCom Meetings

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

Wednesday, Oct. 14, 2026 11:30 a.m.

Tuesday, Oct. 6, 2026 10:00 a.m.

Saturday, Nov. 14, 2026 11:30 a.m.

Tuesday, Nov. 3, 2026 10:00 a.m.

Wednesday, Dec. 9, 2026 11:30 a.m.

Tuesday, Dec. 1, 2026 [TBD]

**THE NEXT CALOOSA CHAPTER MEETING
WILL BE HELD ON
SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 14, 2026 AT:
FAMOUS DAVE'S BBQ RESTAURANT**

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



*Lunch Program Will Include a Presentation Given by Our
Compatriot Levi Golden, the Current President of the Florida State
Children of the American Revolution, on C.A.R.'s State Project:
"Supporting the Wounded Warriors Abilities Ranch"*

Lunch Buffet Menu:

**St. Louis Style Spareribs, Roast Chicken, Garlic Red-Skin Mashed Potatoes,
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 meeting 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
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.**

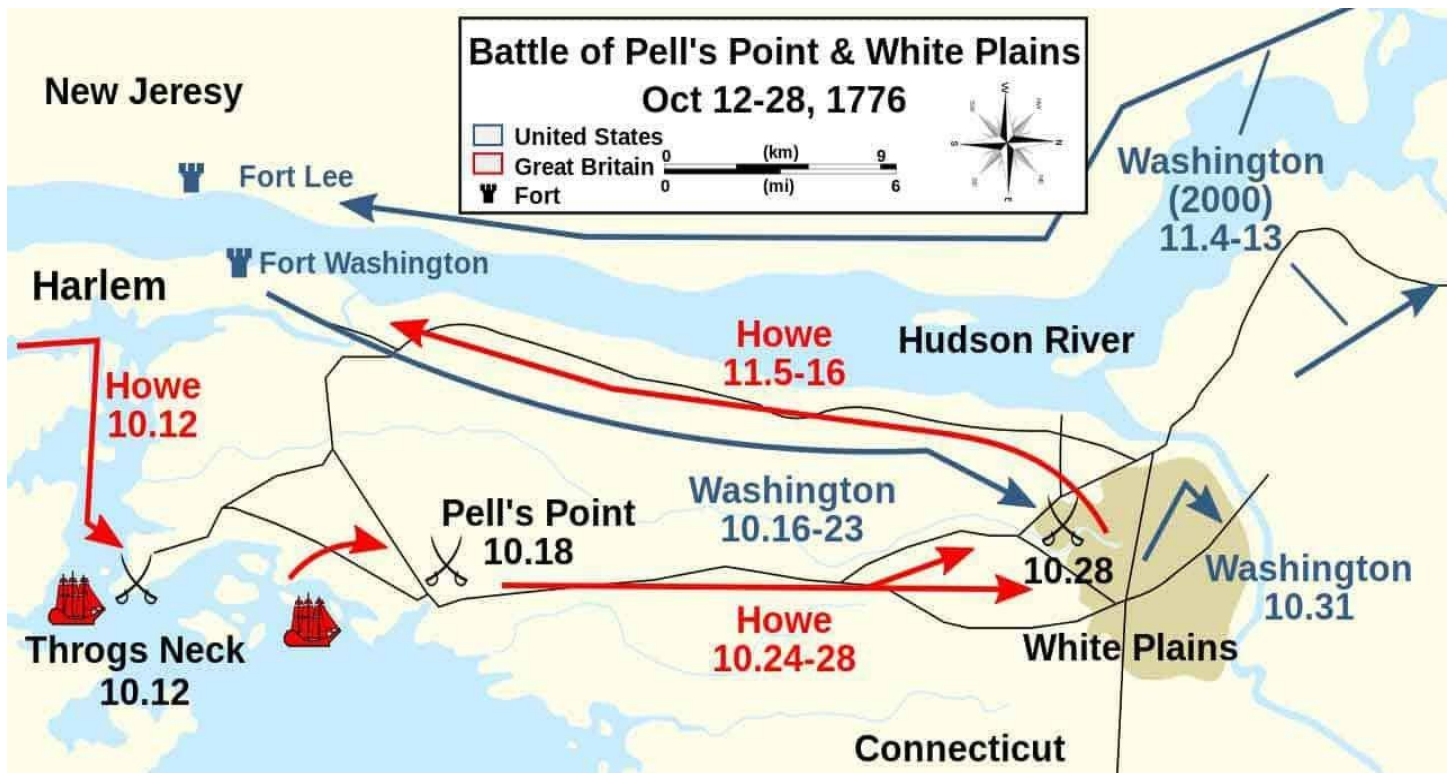
Timeline: The Revolutionary Road To Independence

What Was Going On In October Of 1776?

October 1776 — A Nation in Retreat, A Cause in Question. October 1776 opened with the American Revolution balanced on a knife's edge. The optimism that had accompanied the Declaration of Independence only three months earlier had been battered by the realities of war. New York City was lost (and would be occupied by the British until the end of the war). Washington's army—exhausted, undersupplied, and shrinking by the week—was retreating northward through Westchester County. The British, now firmly established in Manhattan, were maneuvering to deliver a decisive blow that might end the rebellion before winter. And in Philadelphia, Congress struggled to maintain political cohesion and public confidence as the military situation deteriorated. The month would become a study in contrasts: British strength and American resilience, tactical defeats and strategic delays, political anxiety and the stubborn persistence of the revolutionary cause.

Military Situation – October, 1776. The British opened October with a clear objective: destroy Washington's army. General William Howe had captured New York City in September, but the Continental Army had slipped away, retreating first to Harlem Heights and then further north. Howe's plan for October was simple in concept but difficult in execution—land a large force behind Washington's lines, cut off his escape route, and force a surrender.

On October 12, Howe attempted his first major flanking maneuver, landing roughly 4,000 troops at Throg's Neck, a peninsula jutting into the Long Island Sound. The landing itself was unopposed, but Howe quickly discovered that the peninsula was connected to the mainland by only a narrow causeway. A small detachment of American riflemen burned the bridge and took cover behind a woodpile, turning the British advance into a bottleneck. Howe camped on the peninsula for three days, unable to break out. The delay was small in absolute terms, but enormous in consequence: Washington used the time to reposition his army further north toward White Plains, preserving his line of retreat.



Howe tried again on October 18, landing at Pell's Point. This time he faced a more organized American resistance. Colonel John Glover—whose Marblehead mariners had ferried Washington's army across the East River after the disaster at Brooklyn—commanded a force of about 750 men. Glover understood that he could not stop Howe's advance, but he could slow it. Using a series of stone walls as successive defensive lines, Glover's men fired, fell back, reformed, and fired again. Outnumbered four to one, they inflicted significant casualties and forced Howe to proceed cautiously. The action at Pell's Point was small compared to the great battles of the war, but it was tactically brilliant and strategically vital. Once again, Washington escaped encirclement.

[Continued on Page 9]

While Howe pressed northward, another drama unfolded hundreds of miles away on Lake Champlain. There, Benedict Arnold commanded a makeshift American fleet—little more than a collection of hastily built gunboats—against the far superior naval forces of Governor-General Guy Carleton. Arnold knew he could not win a conventional battle. His goal was delay.

On October 11, the British fleet found Arnold's ships anchored near Valcour Island. The battle raged for hours, with Arnold's vessels battered and burning. Over the next two days, Arnold attempted a daring nighttime escape, but the British overtook him. Most of the American fleet was destroyed; Arnold himself burned the remaining vessels to prevent their capture. Yet the battle achieved its purpose. Carleton, unwilling to risk a late-season march to Albany, withdrew to Canada for the winter. The northern invasion was postponed until 1777, buying the Americans precious time. [See full story beginning on Page 1 of this issue.]



On this day in 1776,
a rag tag American fleet under the
command of Benedict Arnold
lost the Battle of Valcour Island.

It may have helped win the war.

Back in New York, Washington continued his fighting retreat. By late October, his army—now numbering perhaps 14,000 effectives—occupied defensive positions near White Plains. Howe advanced cautiously, probing the American lines. On October 28, he struck Washington's right flank at Chatterton's Hill. The British, supported by Hessian troops, drove the Americans from the hill after a sharp fight. Washington withdrew to stronger positions at North Castle Heights. Howe, seeing the American line too strong to attack directly, paused. Heavy rains set in, and the British commander—ever cautious—decided against further action. Washington slipped away once more.

Militarily, October 1776 was a month of retreats, delays, and narrow escapes. Washington lost ground but preserved the army. Howe won battles but failed to deliver the decisive blow he sought. The British controlled New York City and much of the surrounding region, yet the Continental Army remained intact—bloodied, but alive.

Political Developments – October, 1776. Politically, the situation was equally fraught. Congress faced the challenge of sustaining public confidence amid repeated military setbacks. Reports from New York were grim. Newspapers described the British fleet in Manhattan's harbor as a forest of masts—an overwhelming display of imperial power. Rumors circulated that the rebellion was collapsing. Loyalist sentiment, especially in New York and New Jersey, grew more vocal. Congress understood that the Revolution's survival depended not on holding territory but on maintaining Washington's army as a functioning force.

To that end, Congress took several significant actions in October. On October 3, it approved a \$5 million loan at 4 percent interest to finance the war effort—a substantial sum for the fledgling nation. Congress also authorized the purchase of ships in Europe and commissioned twenty-four naval captains, marking one of its first major steps toward building a real navy. The political leadership recognized that American commerce, supply lines, and diplomatic outreach all depended on maritime capability.

Diplomatically, Congress continued its efforts to secure foreign support. The Model Treaty—adopted in September—guided American overtures to France and other European powers. October saw increased correspondence with American agents abroad, emphasizing the need for loans, arms, and alliances. Congress also debated military priorities, gradually accepting Washington's view that defending New York at all costs was impossible. The army had to survive, even if that meant ceding territory.

By the end of October, the Revolution remained in peril but not defeated. Washington's army, though retreating, had avoided destruction. The northern threat from Canada had been postponed. Congress had taken steps to strengthen the nation's financial and naval position. The British had won the month's battles, but not the war. October 1776 thus stands as a month of strategic preservation. The Continental Army lived to fight another day, and the political leadership held the nation together through one of its darkest hours. The Revolution endured—not through triumph, but through resilience.



Help Preserve 3.5 Million Pages of SAR History

Dear Compatriot,

For generations, SAR has carefully preserved the records that connect our members to the men and women who helped secure American independence. Today, our archival vault has reached capacity with more than 3.5 million pages of genealogical records and supporting documents housed at National Headquarters. These records are irreplaceable. Yet retrieving, copying, and delivering them remains a time-consuming manual process.

Digitizing the collection will help protect these documents for future generations while making them easier to locate and provide to members and researchers.

Records digitization is just one of several major technology projects that must be addressed to modernize SAR. The IT Campaign will also support critical needs such as a new national dues billing system, improved payment processing, paperless applications, more efficient genealogy processing, and other modernized member services.

The goal of the IT Campaign is \$3 million, and reaching it will require Compatriots, chapters, state societies, and friends of SAR working together. Every dollar counts. Will you make a gift today to help preserve our records and prepare SAR for the future?

Protect SAR's Records

Every contribution moves this important work forward. To give online, visit [SAR.org](https://sar.org), click the blue "Donate" button, and select "IT Special Purpose Fund" from the drop-down menu. Thank you for helping protect our history while building a stronger, more modern future for SAR.



With appreciation,
Amanda Holmquist
Fundraising Manager
National Society of the Sons of the American Revolution
502-588-6125
aholmquist@sar.org

What's the Buzz . . . Tell Me What's Happening!

Caloosa Chapter SAR News

Phil Thieler, Regional VP SW FLSSAR Will Speak On SAR's Americanism – Chapter Challenge Program At Caloosa Chapter November Meeting

The **Florida Society of the Sons of the American Revolution** embraces the Americanism Chapter Challenge Program as a spirited, year-round commitment to honoring the nation's founding ideals. Through this program, Florida chapters compete in a friendly but purposeful contest that measures how actively they promote patriotism, civic engagement, and historical education in their communities.

Chapters earn points by presenting ROTC and JROTC awards, supporting youth contests, participating in parades and commemorations, recognizing public-service professionals, and delivering educational programs in schools and libraries. The challenge encourages broad, consistent outreach rather than isolated events, rewarding chapters that weave Americanism into the fabric of local life.

For Florida SAR members, the program is more than a scorecard. It is a way to demonstrate that the principles of the Revolution—courage, duty, and devotion to liberty—remain vibrant today. Each activity strengthens public understanding of America's founding and keeps the legacy of the patriots alive.

Phil Thieler, President of the Naples Chapter FLSSAR and a Regional VP for the FLSSAR will speak on how the program works at the next Caloosa Chapter Meeting to be held on Nov. 14, 2026 (see Meeting Notice, page 7 of this issue). Plan to come and hear how you can participate.

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! If you are interested, please feel free to contact Compatriot Barie directly at his email address:

Authormarkbarie@gmail.com.



Christine Racine and Mark Barie

Caloosa Chapter SAR Announcements

President Parfitt has announced that: (a) volunteers to serve on the Chapter's Color Guard are needed and if you are interested, we can help put a period uniform together for your use; and (b) the SAR 2026-2027 youth contests are under way, including the Elementary School Poster Contest, the Middle School Brochure Contest, the Knight High School Essay Contest, the Rumbaugh Historical Oration Contest, and the Youth Video Contest. All of the information on rules, guidelines and deadlines for each of the Contests are now available on the Chapter Website: <https://caloosasar.org/>; and (c) the updated and upgraded Caloosa Chapter website is now up and running thanks to the efforts of our Compatriot Larry Hughes, who serves both as the Chapter Webmaster as well as its Historian; and (d) finally, you are encouraged to get your membership renewal in as soon as possible because we need to turn in our member list soon to the FLSSAR.

October 14th Chapter Meeting - Inducting New Compatriots; Honoring Jan Myles-Brunelle And Jeff Brunelle For Their Service; and Debuting The New Anthology – “Patriot Stories”

Our May Chapter meeting was noisy from start to finish. We again hosted a great group of Compatriots and their guests, and had a lot to talk over with old and new friends before the “official” meeting began. After the usual summer break, the “boys were back in town” but this time meeting at a new venue – American Legion Post 38, Fort Myers.

There were lots of smiles, hearty handshakes, and even some hugs as one by one we all met after not having been together as a group for several months. The authors of the new anthology “*Patriot Stories*” **Christine Racine** and **Compatriot Mark Barie** were hard at work handing out copies of their book and signing them for our members. Our **President, Rick Parfitt**, was multi-tasking – getting ready for the meeting, and greeting the new members as they arrived with their families and guests. And our **Treasurer, Jeff Brunelle** sat at the check-in table, making sure everyone was accounted for. The room was abuzz with laughter and conversation. We finally were all forced to get down to business when our President gavelled the meeting to order. Following the prayer of Invocation, the Pledge of Allegiance, and usual order of events and welcoming comments and introductions, President **Rick Parfitt** stepped to the front, and called our **Registrar, Chris Jenner**, to join him to help with the formal induction into the SAR of four new members: **Matt Etzel, Bill McGreehan, John Thomas and Dr. Bill Richardson**.



“The Lineup” of new SAR inductees– (L to R): Dr. William W. (“Bill”) Richardson, John K. Thomas, Caloosa Registrar Chris Jenner, Matthew S. (“Matt”) Etzel, and William F. (“Bill”) McGreehan, Jr.

Our President, Rick Parfitt, has often commented that the induction of new members is “the best part of my job.” And the same is true for the rest of us. It is fun to hear all about where these new Compatriots are from, what their work life entails, what their hobbies are, and, of course, who their Patriot ancestors were, and what they did in the Revolutionary War to aid in the cause of liberty.

Dr. Bill Richardson is a cardiologist, and has 20 years’ experience in taking care of his patients. Bill has to be one of the most enthusiastic inductees in recent times. He brought his wife, Neefa, to the meeting with him, and explained took to the microphone to explain that his Patriot ancestor was John Richardson who hailed from Massachusetts and served as sergeant in the Continental Army. He and Neefa had also brought with them a part of his collection of Continental currency and coinage, and took time to share it with all of us. [Continued on Page 13]



Neefa and Dr. William ("Bill") Richardson



Deborah and William ("Bill") McGreehan

We also were introduced to **Bill McGreehan** and his wife, **Deborah**, and enjoyed hearing from Bill whose proudest personal achievement is having been married to Deborah for fifty-three years. Bill's Patriot ancestor is Amos Spring who also lived in Massachusetts and served in the Continental Army. Recently retired after fifty years in aviation and rocket engine development, throughout his career Bill has served our Lord by supporting churches and training disciples to further the gospel of Jesus Christ, and has written about all of this in two recent books which he wrote, and which are titled *Rend the Heavens* and *Rend the Veil*.



The Etzels (L to R): Steven, Matt, and Michelle



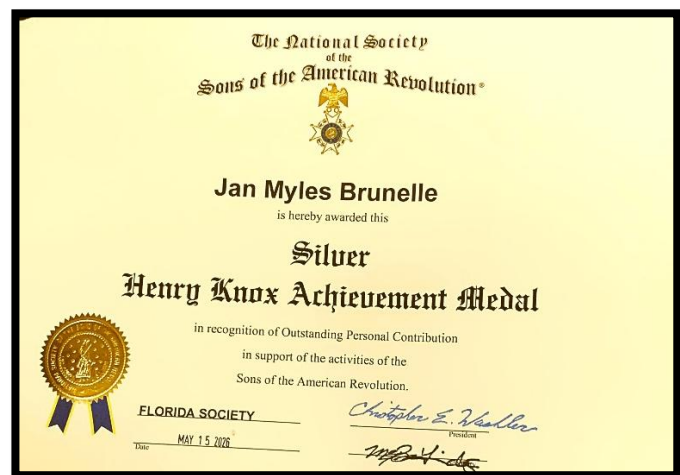
John K. Thomas

Our new Compatriot, **Matt Etzel**, was accompanied by proud parents **Michelle and Steven Etzel**. Matt's Patriot ancestor was James Saye who lived in Pennsylvania at the time of the Revolution, and served as an artilleryman in the Continental Line. Like his ancestor, Matt is originally from Western Pennsylvania and has spent time in Illinois and Wisconsin before moving to Florida in 2015. A history buff, Matt also enjoys travelling and doing genealogy research – all of which means he will certainly fit in well with our group.

Our group of inductees was rounded out for this meeting with **John K. Thomas**, a 'true' Floridian having lived here since 1947. John and his wife, Sandy, have been married for 51 years, have six kids, eleven grandkids and two great grandchildren. Having served 23 years as an Airborne Ranger in the U.S. Army, with assignments in Vietnam, Berlin and at the Pentagon, prepared him well for taking good care of all those kids! After his military service was over, he entered the civilian technology field, and his 'second' retirement was from Oracle. He and Sandy live at Shell Point in Fort Myers. John's Patriot ancestor, Richard Thayer, lived in Massachusetts, served in the Continental army, and like all of the other Patriot ancestors of our new inductees, will certainly be a candidate for an upcoming article in the Compatriot's Corner section of this newsletter—and I very much look forward to that.



*President Parfitt presenting awards to Jeff Brunelle and Jan Myles Brunelle from the Florida Society Sons of the American Revolution
In grateful recognition of their outstanding service to the SAR*



Following the induction of our new Compatriots, President Parfitt asked Jan and Jeff to step forward to be recognized for all their past and continuing service to all of us, collectively, as members of the Florida Society of the Sons of the American Revolution. Together they have contributed unreservedly to the Sons of the American Revolution, and the Daughters of the American Revolution. Both have held numerous offices over the years, and of course Jeff is an Immediate Past President and is currently serving our Chapter not only as Treasurer, but also as Color Guard Commander. Thank you both for everything you have done, and continue to do, for us. **Huzzah!** [Continued on Page 15]



No doubt that we, as SAR Compatriots, all enjoy reading stories about the exploits of General George Washington, the Minutemen, John and Sam Adams, the Sons of Liberty, Paul Revere, Henry Knox, and all of the other Patriots who fought for independence. But our Compatriot, Mark Barie, and his wife, Christine Racine, went a step further. They reflected on how much more fun it would be if you could read about your own Patriot Ancestor? You know – the one whose name is printed right below yours on your National SAR Membership Certificate.

Well, for a little over two years now, our Caloosa Chapter has been lucky enough to have had Mark and Christine author a series of articles for the “Compatriots Corner” section of our Chapter’s newsletter. Each month they have researched and penned a story about the Patriot ancestor of one of our Chapter Members, detailing what the Patriot did in support of our nation’s struggle for independence, as well as a description of what was going on around them during those Revolutionary times. And then they turned it all into a book!

Mark Barie took to the microphone at this point in the meeting and described how he and Christine put everything together into an anthology called “*Patriot Stories*” and have now made it available to all of us. Twenty-eight Caloosa Chapter members and their Patriot ancestors are featured in the 65-page book, which details each Patriot’s specific role in the American Revolutionary War. During his talk, Mark described that the anthology includes stories about revolutionary war battles, George Washington’s bodyguards, sutlers, a tax collector, prisoners of war, enlisted men, and officers too.

He reminded everyone that “The promotion of patriotism, and inspiring future generations about the founding principles of our country are, after all, the central tenets of the Mission of the Sons of the American Revolution. We hope that these stories can be read and re-read not just to members of your own family, but also to everyone who is interested in why ordinary people would ‘take on’ Great Britain, with its massive army and navy, and make the sacrifices they did in order to give us the country whose citizens enjoy the freedoms described in the Declaration of Independence, and which are enshrined in our United States Constitution.”

Compatriot Barie reviewed several of the stories in the book, and encouraged everyone to buy a copy for themselves – even if your Patriot ancestor is not included in this particular edition – because it can be used as a teaching tool to make people aware that the Patriots of 1776 were people just like us, and that just as they fought (each in their own way) to achieve independence, we need to carry on the fight to make sure that we don’t lose those rights which our ancestors were willing to die to achieve.

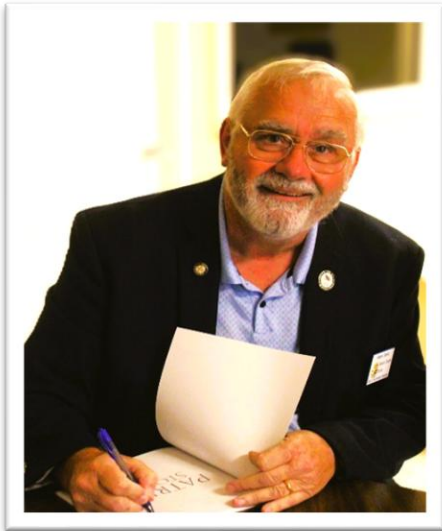
Patriot Stories is dedicated as follows: “The Sons of the American Revolution are committed to honoring the service and sacrifice of Revolutionary War patriots. And while this tribute is a woefully inadequate acknowledgement of their courage in the fight for our nation’s independence, it is both necessary and proper that we the beneficiaries of their bravery, recognize and commend what they did, both on and off the battlefield, some 250 years ago.

The Caloosa Chapter of the Florida Society of the Sons of the American Revolution proudly dedicates this anthology to those patriots whose direct descendants are members of our organization.

Their stories cannot and will not be forgotten.”

For information on how our Chapter’s “Compatriots Corner” series works, as published in our Newsletter, or on the *Patriot Stories* book (including how to order a copy), contact John Maier, Editor, The Caloosa Patriot at: jmaier@wisclaw.com.

More Photos from the October 14th Chapter Meeting



Author and Compatriot Mark Barie



John Maier reading the 'thank you' from our best-in-state history teacher, Rachel Michel



Dr. Richardson doing "show and tell" with his Continental currency



Welcome to our new Compatriots



*"They did it!" What a relief to finally be through the process.
(L to R) Matt Etzel, John Thomas, Caloosa Chapter President Rick Parfitt, Bill McGreehan, and Bill Richardson*

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 (see Page 11 for more information on Christine and Mark) 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. Each of our Patriot ancestors’ contributions combined to bring about the birth of the United States of America. Mark and Christine enjoy writing about the Revolutionary War exploits of our own Patriot ancestors! And what great stories they are indeed. What follows is the story they wrote regarding the service of George Houck, the Patriot ancestor of our Compatriot Michael Corso.

My Patriot: George Houck Who Served His Country As A Prison Guard

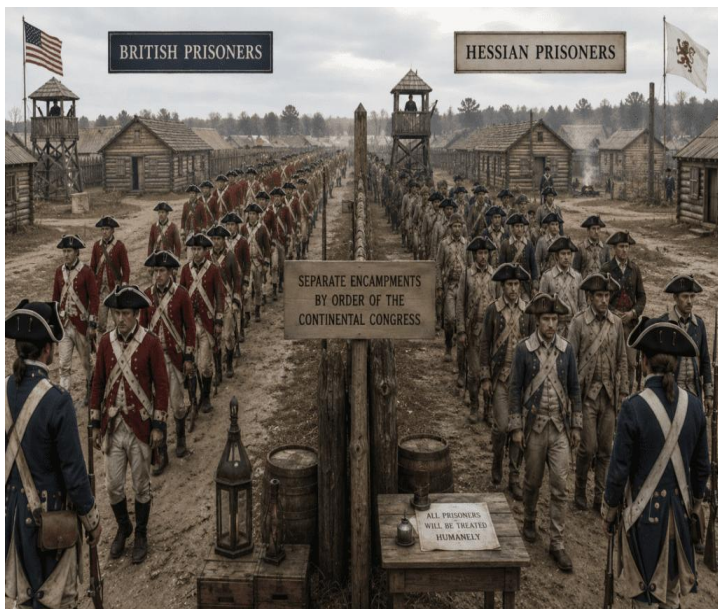
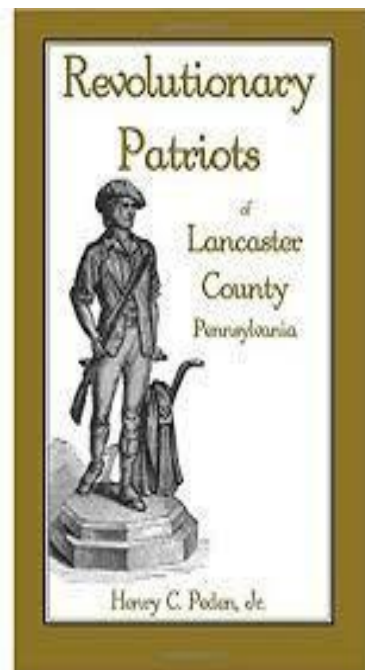
By Compatriot Michel Corso (With Christine A. Racine and Compatriot Mark Barie)

George Houck, my Patriot, served as a private in the Lancaster County Militia of Pennsylvania. He was called on for short-term, active duties, usually lasting two months at a time. A rotating schedule insured that the local farmers and other businesses in the area did not suffer from neglect, when the men were needed to assist the Continental Army.

In Lancaster County, the Sixth company of the Third Battalion, to which Houck belonged, was utilized to safeguard local ironworks, to protect supply lines, and to guard the Lancaster Barracks, a prison for British and Hessian prisoners of war. Because he served in the militia when the revolutionary war was winding down, (1781–1782) Houck did not participate in any major operations. In fact, at that time, most of the Revolutionary War skirmishes and battles were taking place in the Southern Theater at places like Yorktown, some 300 miles away.

Historians have all but ignored the imprisonment of British and Hessian soldiers during the revolutionary war. And yet, there were more than a dozen major facilities in Pennsylvania, Maryland, Virginia, and New England. The Barracks in Lancaster, where my Patriot served as a guard, was one of the most notable prisons.

Although estimates of the prison’s population vary, this facility is said to have housed



between 1400 and 2000 men plus hundreds of women and children. (Yes, inmates were allowed to bring their spouses with them!). The stated capacity of the prison, however, was only 1000 men, leading to crowded conditions, insufficient food, sickness, and disease.

The facility itself utilized stockade walls which were 20 feet high, split logs sunk 3 feet into the ground, and re-enforced structures at each corner of the prison. But it is the relationship among and between the inmates, the soldiers, and the community which makes my Patriot’s story so interesting.

For example, when the federal government could no longer pay for the prisoners’ food, (Congress approved two dollars per man per month.), the locals chipped in with food and funds of their own, “less they starve to death”.

[Continued on Page 18]

[Continued from Page 17]

The facility at Lancaster also made headlines. When the British executed an American captain for violating military law, it was decided to execute a British officer in retaliation. A “lottery” was organized at a local hotel and the “winner” turned out to be the youngest British officer in the prison. The inmate, also a captain, was spared however, when the French minister appealed to George Washington, and Washington granted the inmate, a reprieve.

The prison also hosted a British officer named John Andre. He was at the Lancaster Barracks for one month in 1776, transferred to Carlisle, and eventually given his freedom as the result of a prisoner exchange. Four years later, Andre would be captured with incriminating documents on his person, showing that he had conspired with Benedict Arnold to capture the American fortress at West Point. Andre was then hung as a spy within months of his arrest.

In the second half of the Revolutionary War, the Lancaster Barracks took in hundreds of Hessian soldiers. Because many of them were skilled craftsmen, they were put to work. Prison officers allowed the Hessians to leave the stockade and work

A Return of the German Troops taken Prisoners, in and near the Camp at <i>Lancaster</i> in the State of <i>Pennsylvania</i> the <i>15th</i> Day of <i>May</i> 1781.										
No.	NAMES.	Regiment or Corps.	Rank.	When Taken.	Where Taken.	STATE.				REMARKS.
						Fit for Duty.	Sick.	Injured.	Dead.	
1	Johann Becker	Knyphausen	Serjeant	Apr. 19	near Charlston.	1	-	-	-	
2	Conrad Albrecht	Regiment	Private	Apr. 20	"	1	-	-	-	
3	Peter Huber	"	Private	Apr. 20	"	1	-	-	-	
4	Heinrich Meyer	"		Apr. 20	"	-	1	-	-	
5	Johann Klein	"	Corporal	Apr. 21	"	1	-	-	-	
6	Adam Ruhl	"	"	Apr. 21	"	1	-	-	-	
7	Friedrich Wagner	"	"	Apr. 22	"	-	1	-	-	
8	Christian Stoll	"	"	Apr. 22	"	1	-	-	-	
9	Jacob Wemer	"	"	Apr. 23	"	-	1	-	-	
10	Johann Dietz	"	"	Apr. 23	"	1	-	-	-	
11	Georg Emrich	"	"	Apr. 24	"	1	-	-	-	Missing since Apr. 27.
12	Wilhelm Bauer	"	"	Apr. 24	"	-	-	1	-	Shot in the leg
13	Philipp Moser	"	"	Apr. 25	"	-	1	-	-	Fever
14	Johann Schmitt	"	"	Apr. 25	"	-	-	-	1	Died Apr. 28.
15	Lorenz Kuhlman	"	"	Apr. 25	"	-	-	-	-	Missing since Apr. 25
Total,						9	4	1	1	

I do certify that the above Return is just and true, to the best of my Knowledge.

Theo. Smith Capt. & Comdg. Officer.

Remarks. *Several of the Men are employed at working for the Inhabitants.
Camp Provision good. Sickness not prevalent.*

Hessian Wives and Children in a Revolutionary War Prison Camp

Life Behind the Barracks



When entire Hessian units surrendered, their wives and children entered captivity with them. These camp followers performed essential daily tasks—cooking, laundry, mending, nursing, and caring for children—while their husbands lived and worked under guard.

Because they were considered non-combatants, many women were allowed to leave the camp to find work in nearby communities.

in the community. There were blacksmiths, shoemakers, weavers, butchers, tailors, and carpenters. In fact, the Hessians were so skilled in their respected trades, that the Continental Congress paid them more than 2000 pounds sterling to make several thousand pairs of shoes for the Continental Army. Inmate labor was also utilized to cast cannon pieces for the patriot cause. In both instances, the prisoners were paid a very modest wage.

Hessian officers, considered more trustworthy than their British counterparts, were allowed to quarter with local families outside of the prison. They were required to sign an oath promising not to leave town. Many of the prisoners, for example, were employed by American officers and local families as servants. They received minimal wages but were grateful for the opportunity to “temporarily escape” their prison walls.

When the President of the Lancaster Barracks hosted a large party at a local hotel, he contracted with a dozen Hessian musicians. They formed a band and proved quite popular with the President and his guests.

[Continued on Page 19]



There were genuine escapes of a more serious nature, usually one or two inmates at a time and almost always with the help of a local resident. Such was the relationship between inmates and the residents.

The most serious incident at the Lancaster Barracks was a drunken party organized by English prisoners who decided to celebrate the King's birthday. This group of inmates got out of hand and chased off their guards, about 15 soldiers. (My Patriot could easily have been one of them!).

Additional soldiers in the local militia were called in. The ensuing battle caused several British prisoners to be killed or wounded. The Hessians refused to participate in either the birthday party or the riot and emerged unscathed.

It is a testament to the local citizens and the militia men in Lancaster, like my Patriot, that when the war ended, many of the inmates, settled in the area. In fact some inmates, who left the prison well before the war ended, returned to Lancaster and settled there with their families. I like to think that when the hostilities between the Hessians and the Americans, finally came to an end, soldiers like my Patriot welcomed them to Lancaster, as friends and neighbors.



Either way, I am proud of the service to our country that my Patriot ancestor, George Houck, rendered during the Revolutionary War.

Thank And Honor Our Veterans On “Their” Day

Wednesday, November 11, 2026

The origin of Veterans Day begins with the end of World War I. Fighting ceased in World War I when an armistice, or temporary cessation of hostilities, between the Allied nations and Germany went into effect on the eleventh hour or the eleventh day of the eleventh month in 1918 (“Armistice Day”). The “Great War” officially ended 7 months later when the Treaty of Versailles was signed, but on November 11, 1919, President Woodrow Wilson proclaimed November 11th as the first commemoration of Armistice Day (now Veterans Day) with the following words:

“To us in America, the reflections of Armistice Day will be filled with solemn pride in the heroism of those who died in the country’s service and with gratitude for the victory, both because of the thing from which it has freed us and because of the opportunity it has given America to show her sympathy with peace and justice in the councils of the nations”

Armistice Day officially became Veterans Day via legislation signed in 1975 by President Ford, and continues to be observed on November 11, regardless of what day of the week it falls on. This date preserves the historical significance of the date and helps us focus attention on the important purpose of Veterans Day: A celebration to thank and honor American’s veterans for their patriotism, love of country, and willingness to serve both in wartime and peacetime, and a platform for America to continue its commitment to its veterans to see to their needs and care.



If You Are Interested . . .

MISSING IN AMERICA PROJECT

Thursday, October 29, 2026 – 10AM

**South Florida National Cemetery
6501 S. FL-7, Lake Worth, FL 33449**

MISSION STATEMENT – MISSING IN AMERICA PROJECT



The purpose of the Missing in America Project (MIAP) is to locate, identify and inter the unclaimed cremated remains of American veterans through the joint efforts of private, state, and federal organizations, and to provide honor, respect, and dignity to those who have served this country by securing a final resting place for these forgotten heroes.

Members of the Florida Society of the Sons of the American Revolution (FLSSAR) play a consistent and meaningful role in supporting the Missing in America Project (MIAP), a national effort dedicated to locating, identifying, and interring the unclaimed cremated remains of American veterans. Their participation reflects the SAR's core mission of honoring Revolutionary War patriots by extending that respect to all who have served the nation.

FLSSAR compatriots regularly attend MIAP Call to Honor ceremonies held at the South Florida National Cemetery, where MIAP–Florida inters unclaimed veterans with full military honors. These ceremonies bring together volunteers, law enforcement escorts, funeral homes, and veteran organizations to ensure forgotten servicemembers receive dignified burials.

SAR members commonly participate by standing as honor guards, assisting with ceremony logistics, and representing the lineage community during the final salute.

Beyond ceremonies, FLSSAR chapters help raise awareness of MIAP's work, encourage community attendance, and collaborate with local veteran-support organizations. Through these ongoing efforts, Florida SAR members ensure that no veteran—regardless of era—goes to rest without recognition, remembrance, and honor.

On Thursday, October 29, 2026, at 10:00am at the South Florida National Cemetery, Lake Worth, FL, MIAP – Florida, in cooperation with Dignity Memorial's Fred Hunter's Funeral Home in Hollywood, and the Miami-Dade County Medical Examiner Department's Indigent Cremation Services, will hold CTH (CALL TO HONOR) #38. During this service we will inter 29 veterans and 1 spouse of a veteran. We will inter, 21 Army, 1 Marine Corp, 6 Navy and 1 Navy spouse (this couple will be placed in the same niche) and 1 Air Force veteran. This service is open to all residents of our area communities.

There will be an escort of the hearse led by the Palm Beach Sheriff that will leave from the Southwest parking area (the Lantana Roadside) of the Wellington South Super Target Store at 5900 Florida State Road 7 (Rt. 441), on the Northeast corner of State Road 7 and Lantana Road. All motorcycle organizations, riders, and vehicles are welcome to participate. Meeting time is 8:45am for a safety briefing, and the escort will depart at 9:15am.

Members of the FLSSAR, including the Palm Beach Chapter SAR, regularly participate in and support the Missing in America Project, and the solemn military internment services for unclaimed veterans and their spouses which are held frequently at the regional South Florida National Cemetery at Lake Worth, Florida. It is a great way to honor the service of our veterans.

Caloosa Chapter Member Renewal Reminder!
Florida Society Sons of the American Revolution
2027 Dues Invoice

Dear Compatriot,

It is time to renew regular membership dues for 2027. The breakdown of dues includes National Society dues \$50.00. Florida Society dues \$20.00, and Caloosa Chapter dues are \$30.00.

I have previously sent email notice of the need for renewal, and if you have already responded, please disregard this Notice. However, if you have not, and wish to do so, please act right away because the deadline is fast approaching.

Your total dues for 2027 are \$100.00, and are payable before November 15, 2026, to:

Caloosa Chapter, FLSSAR
c/o Chris Parfitt, Secretary
4488 Saint Clair Avenue West
North Fort Myers, FL 33903

So that we may update our records, please make any change to your information below and submit with your payment to the undersigned at the address shown above. Make certain we have valid email address for you.

Name:

Address:

City, State, Zip:

Telephone:

Email:

Thank you for your prompt response to this notice. We hope to see you at an upcoming Chapter meeting.

Very respectfully,

Chris Parfitt

Caloosa Chapter Secretary
Email: parfitt527@hotmail.com

Unsung Heroes of the American Revolution: Silas Deane -- A Patriot Whose Life Encompassed Triumph, Ruin, and Posthumous Vindication

Amid the military crises of October 1776, when Washington's army was retreating northward through Westchester County and the British seemed poised to crush the rebellion, Congress took one of its most consequential political steps of the entire war: authorizing a \$5 million loan at 4 percent interest to sustain the Revolution. The figure was staggering for a nation that barely existed on paper. Congress was not imagining a domestic loan — there was no American financial market capable of producing such a sum. Instead, the authorization was a political signal: a formal commitment to draw heavily on foreign credit, especially from France, to keep the Continental Army alive.

At the center of this effort stood Silas Deane, a man whose personal story mirrored the improvisational nature of the Revolution itself. Born in Connecticut in 1737, the son of a blacksmith, Deane rose through determination and talent. He became a lawyer, a merchant, and eventually a delegate to the Continental Congress. He was intelligent, socially adept, and comfortable operating in the ambiguous spaces where diplomacy, commerce, and politics overlapped. Congress needed someone who could navigate European courts without official status, charm potential allies, and negotiate in the shadows. Deane was the perfect choice.

In March 1776 — four months before independence was declared — Congress quietly dispatched him to France as its first secret envoy. He arrived in Paris alone, without diplomatic recognition, without protection, and without the authority of a nation that yet existed. His mission was immense: secure arms, ammunition, clothing, and, above all, credit. The Revolution could not be financed with enthusiasm alone. Hard money was scarce, inflation rising, and the Continental currency already showing signs of instability. Without foreign support, the war effort would collapse under its own financial weight.

By October, Deane had become deeply enmeshed in the clandestine world of French covert assistance. His chief ally was Pierre-Augustin Caron de Beaumarchais, the celebrated playwright of *The Barber of Seville*, who had reinvented himself as a secret agent and commercial intermediary. Beaumarchais operated Roderigue Hortalez & Co., a fictitious trading house designed to funnel French arms and supplies to the Americans while giving the French Crown plausible deniability. Behind the façade stood Vergennes, the French foreign minister, who saw the American rebellion as a strategic opportunity to weaken Britain — but who could not yet risk open war. [Editor's note: see full story on Beaumarchais in *The Caloosa Patriot*, August/Sept., 2026 issue.]

The “loan” Congress authorized in early October was, in reality, a line of credit Deane could draw upon through Hortalez & Co. It was not cash delivered in chests; it was credit extended for the purchase of military supplies in France. Beaumarchais arranged for muskets, powder, cannon, uniforms, tents, and other essentials to be bought in French markets and shipped to America aboard vessels flying neutral flags. Congress promised repayment after the war — a promise made with more hope than certainty.

The credit served three critical purposes.

First, it allowed Deane to procure arms and ammunition on a scale Congress could never have financed domestically. Washington's army was chronically short of powder and muskets in 1776. French credit enabled Deane to purchase thousands of muskets and tons of powder, much of which arrived in America during the winter of 1776–77 — precisely when Washington's army was retreating across New Jersey and desperately in need of supplies.

Second, the credit financed clothing and equipment for the Continental Army. Washington's troops were poorly clothed as winter approached. French shipments of uniforms, blankets, tents, and boots were essential to keeping the army intact during the bleak months ahead, when disease, desertion, and exposure threatened to hollow out the force. [Continued on Page 24]



Silas Deane, as a young lawyer and merchant in Connecticut
Portrait by William Johnston, 1766
[Public Domain via Wikipedia Commons]

Third, the loan supported naval procurement. Congress used part of the authorization to begin building a Continental Navy capable of protecting American commerce and harassing British supply lines. The October authorization included commissions for twenty-four naval captains and instructions to purchase ships in Europe. French credit helped finance the acquisition of fast, maneuverable vessels suited for commerce raiding — a strategy Congress increasingly embraced as a way to offset British naval dominance.

For Deane personally, the loan represented both triumph and danger. He had succeeded in opening the door to French support, but he was also operating in a world of intrigue, half-promises, and political rivalries. His accounts were complex, his receipts scattered across Europe, and his enemies in Congress numerous. Among them was Arthur Lee, prickly, suspicious, and perpetually convinced of conspiracies. Lee accused Deane of financial misconduct, profiteering, and corruption. He claimed Deane had enriched himself through the Hortalez arrangement and mishandled funds.

Congress, overwhelmed and divided, responded poorly. In December 1777, without explanation, it recalled Deane to America. When he arrived in Philadelphia in July 1778, he expected a hearing. Instead, Congress refused to give him one. Lee's accusations hung over him like a cloud, and Deane was denied the chance to defend himself. He published a fiery pamphlet demanding justice; Congress responded by publishing Lee's charges. The public turned against him. His reputation collapsed.

Unable to clear his name, Deane returned to Europe in 1780 to gather documentation. He expected vindication. Instead, he found himself trapped. The war ended in 1783, but Congress still refused to settle his accounts. Deane drifted between Paris, Ghent, and London, living on loans from friends. His health deteriorated. His finances collapsed. He wrote increasingly desperate letters to Congress, to Franklin, to anyone who might help. No one did. By the mid-1780s, Deane's bitterness deepened. In private letters — later intercepted and published — he argued that America should seek reconciliation with Britain to stabilize its economy. The letters were taken as evidence of treasonous intent. His reputation, already damaged, was destroyed.

In 1789, after more than a decade of wandering, Deane finally secured passage back to America. He boarded a ship at Deal, England. But he never arrived. On September 23, 1789, Silas Deane collapsed and died suddenly aboard the vessel before it left port. The cause remains mysterious — illness, poisoning, or stroke. He was 52 years old.

It took nearly a century for Deane's name to be cleared. In the 1850s, historians uncovered long-lost French records showing that Deane had acted properly, that his accounts were accurate, and that the confusion arose from Congress's own disorganization and Arthur Lee's vendetta. In 1885, Congress finally acknowledged that Deane had been wronged and formally exonerated him. By then, of course, he had been dead for nearly a hundred years.

Silas Deane's story adds a poignant counterpoint to the October 1776 narrative. He was the man who opened the French pipeline of arms that sustained Washington's army through its darkest winter. He secured the credit that made the \$5 million loan meaningful. He helped bring Lafayette and other European officers to America. And yet he died in exile, disgraced by the very government he had served. In a month defined by military retreat, the \$5 million loan — and the man who made it possible — was a quiet but decisive act of political endurance. The Revolution survived October 1776 not only because Washington preserved the army, but because Congress preserved the nation's ability to supply it — and because Silas Deane, working in the shadows of Paris, had the skill and audacity to make foreign credit flow toward a nation still fighting to be born.



This 1857 painting by Alonzo Chappel entitled "Baron de Kalb Introducing Lafayette to Silas Deane" shows the German born officer Johann de Kalb (center) introducing American diplomat Silas Deane (right) to the youthful Marquis de Lafayette (left) in Paris in 1776. Sent as a secret agent by the Continental Congress in order to seek financial and military assistance against the British, Deane enlisted the services of a number of foreign military officers. DeKalb and Lafayette, who arrived in Philadelphia in 1777, took leadership roles in the Continental Army.

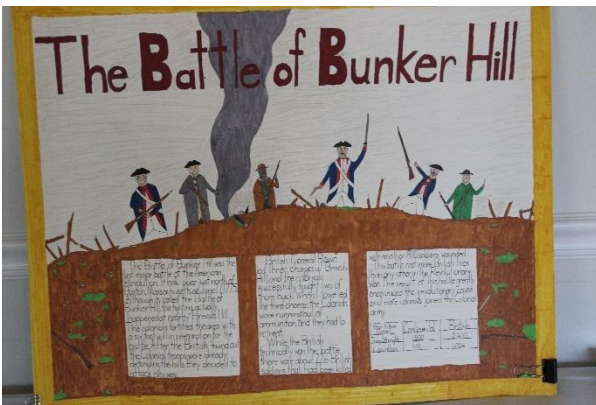
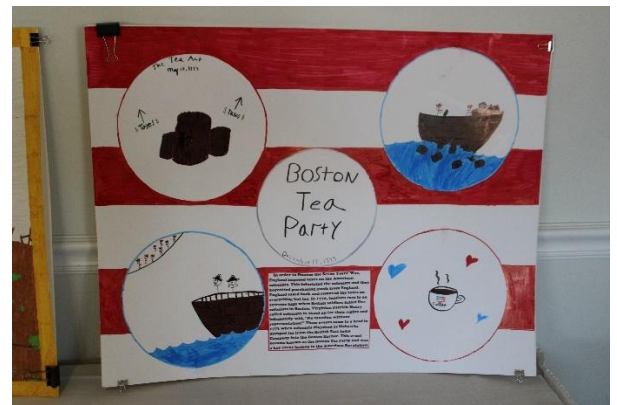
The 2026 – 2027 School Year SAR Elementary, Middle School And High School Americanism Contests Are Off And Running!

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. The contest must be entered through an SAR chapter near the student's residence. Judging of ALL entries will be on an equal basis regardless of point of origin. **[DEADLINE FOR SUBMITTAL: MARCH 31, 2027]**

For more information: <https://www.sar.org/americanism-elementary-school-poster-contest-2/>

Examples of prior submittals:

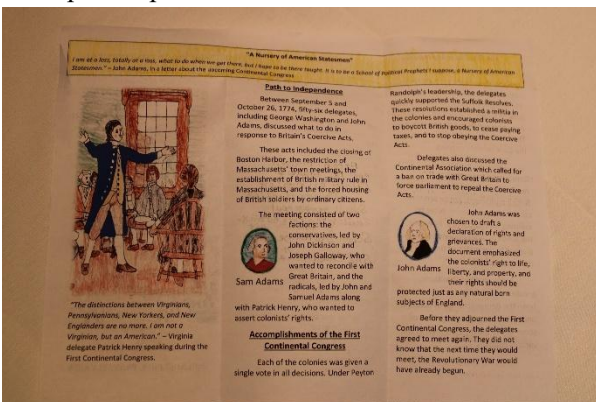
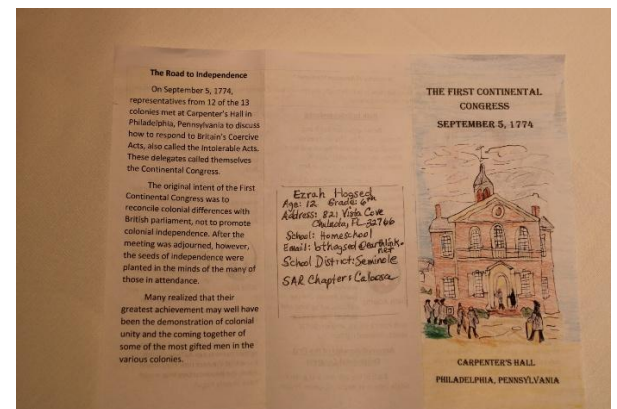


RULES AND GUIDELINES – SGT. MOSES ADAMS MEMORIAL MIDDLE SCHOOL BROCHURE CONTEST

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 contest must be entered through an SAR chapter near the student's residence. **[DEADLINE FOR SUBMITTAL: MARCH 31, 2027]**

For more information: <https://www.sar.org/sgt-moses-adams-memorial-middle-school-brochure-contest/>

Examples of prior submittals:



[Continued on Page 26]

**RULES AND GUIDELINES – GEORGE S. AND STELLA M. KNIGHT
HIGH SCHOOL ESSAY CONTEST**

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 will be 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 must be entered through an SAR chapter near the student’s residence. Only one entry per student is permitted per contest year. **[DEADLINE FOR SUBMITTAL: NOVEMBER 30, 2026]**

For more information: <https://www.sar.org/sar-high-school-essay-contest/>

**RULES AND GUIDELINES – JOSEPH S. RUMBAUGH
HISTORICAL ORATION CONTEST**

The Joseph S. Rumbaugh Historical Oration Contest invites all students attending 9th through 12th grades in public, parochial or private schools; or home-school students studying at the same grade levels. The preliminary rounds of the contest begin at the local chapter level; students have the opportunity to advance to the state or national levels where scholarships and cash prizes are awarded. Participants must write an original oration of not less than five minutes, or more than six minutes. The oration must be delivered from memory and without the use of notes or any kind of props. The subject of the oration shall deal with an event, a personality, or a document pertaining to the Revolutionary War with a mention of our nation’s 250th anniversary celebration. It is essential that each oration show the relationship it bears to America today. Evidence of historical research and creative presentation are also important. The oration will be judged based upon its composition, delivery, significance, historical accuracy and relevance to our 250th anniversary. **[DEADLINE FOR SUBMITTAL: FEBRUARY 28, 2027]**

For more information: <https://www.sar.org/joseph-s-rumbaugh-historical-oration-contest/>

RULES AND GUIDELINES – YOUTH VIDEO CONTEST

The SAR Youth Video Contest is an exciting new format where you can share what you know about the American Revolution. Tell us about a person, battle, document, or event during the American struggle for independence and do it in video form. Eligible contestants are students attending 6th through 12th grade in public, parochial, or private schools; or home-school students studying at the same grade levels. Your 3 to 5 minute video could be filmed or animated. The key is to be creative! It could look like a cable news broadcast, or a pretend movie trailer. Perhaps you would create a music video or even a rap battle. Show the judges you can think outside of the box. Entries must contain original content and must be based on scholarly research of the presented topic. The contest must be entered through an SAR chapter near the student’s residence. Content may not violate copyright laws. Emphasis on the 250th anniversary of the Revolution is recommended. The style, approach, and perspective are not limited. **[DEADLINE FOR SUBMITTAL: DECEMBER 31, 2026]**

For more information: <https://www.sar.org/youth-video-contest/>

*If You've Ever Wondered Whether We Make A Difference . . .
... Read This Letter From Our Chapter's Winner Of
"Best American History Teacher (Middle School, 2026)
... And Then Pat Yourself On The Back!*

Dear Members of the Caloosa Chapter Sons of the American Revolution,

I would like to extend my sincere gratitude to the Caloosa Chapter SAR for your generous support through the Dr. Tom and Betty Lawrence History Teacher Contest. Your commitment to supporting history education makes a meaningful difference in my classroom and in the learning experiences I can provide for my students.

Because of your support, I have been able to attend summer training opportunities to strengthen my knowledge and teaching of American history. I also purchased the new PBS DVD about the American Revolution, along with a DVD player, so I can incorporate these valuable resources into my classroom lessons. These materials will help bring the events, people, and ideas of the American Revolution to life for my students.

Additionally, your support has allowed me to add new Founding Father posters and America250-themed items to my classroom. During the 250th anniversary of our nation's founding, these resources provide meaningful opportunities to engage students in our nation's history and encourage them to appreciate the sacrifices, principles, and ideas that shaped the United States.

Thank you for investing in history teachers and the next generation of American citizens. Your generosity helps me create a more engaging, meaningful, and memorable history classroom. I am truly grateful for your dedication to preserving our nation's history and supporting those who teach it.

*With sincere appreciation,
Rachel Michel
History Teacher,
Lehigh Acres Middle School*



Rachel Michel and our President Rick Parfitt

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 Peterson 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 redesignated 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 cavalymen 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.

[Continued from Page 2]

Dawn on October 11 broke gray and misty. Arnold stood on the deck of the Congress, staring northward. Somewhere beyond the fog, the British fleet was descending the lake. By midmorning, the first British sails emerged from the mist. The Carleton appeared first, followed by gunboats rowing in tight formation. Behind them loomed the dark hull of the Inflexible, her guns glinting like teeth. The British had sailed past Valcour Island without realizing Arnold was hidden behind it. When they discovered his position, they were forced to turn into the wind — a maneuver that threw their line into confusion. Arnold seized the moment. “Open fire!” he shouted, and the American line erupted. Cannon smoke rolled across the bay. The gunboats fired their bow guns, the galleys unleashed broadsides, and the British found themselves under sudden, concentrated fire from a fleet they had not expected to face.

The Royal Savage, positioned too far north, took the brunt of the first British assault. Gunboats swarmed her from the east, raking her with fire. Her rigging caught flame, and she drifted helplessly until she ran aground on Valcour Island’s rocky shore. Her crew abandoned her as flames climbed her masts. Inside the bay, the battle became a brutal slugging match. The gunboat Philadelphia, commanded by Lieutenant Benjamin Rue, fought stubbornly in the center of the line. British fire smashed her hull; water poured in. She sank slowly, her colors still flying as her crew scrambled into nearby boats.

Arnold strode the deck of Congress, shouting orders, rallying men who had never before faced naval combat. Cannonballs tore through the galley’s sides; splinters flew like knives. Smoke choked the air. Yet the Americans held their line, refusing to break.

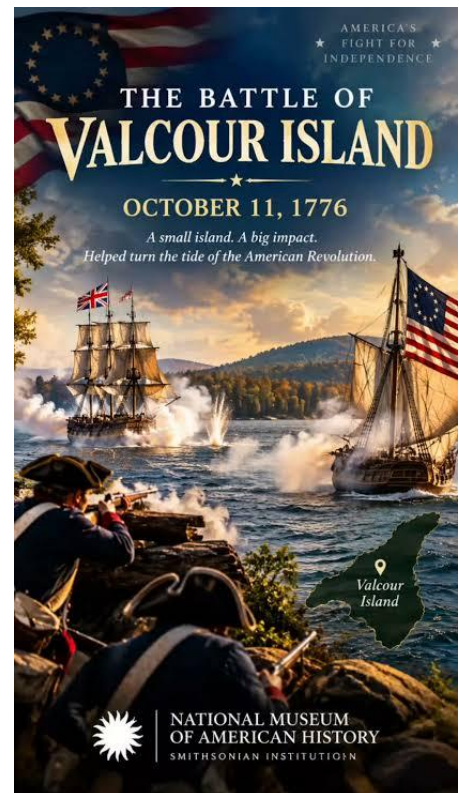
The British, unable to sail directly into the bay, were forced to fight from the open lake, firing into the narrow channel. Their gunboats advanced in waves, each one taking fire from multiple American vessels. The Carleton, attempting to close the distance, was hit repeatedly and forced to withdraw. Even the mighty Inflexible struggled to bring her guns to bear. By late afternoon, the battle had become a stalemate — but a costly one. The American fleet was battered, several gunboats were sinking or disabled, and ammunition was running low. Arnold knew he could not withstand another day of combat.

As dusk fell, the British anchored north of Valcour Island, blocking the main channel. They believed Arnold was trapped. They believed the morning would bring his surrender. But Arnold saw something they did not. Between the British anchorage and the New York mainland lay a narrow gap — a sliver of water unguarded, hidden in darkness. If the Americans could slip through it, they could escape southward. Arnold gathered his captains aboard Congress. Their ships were shattered; their men exhausted. But the night was dark, and the wind had died. It was their chance.

In absolute silence, the American fleet began to move. Lanterns were extinguished. Oars were muffled. The vessels rowed southward, hugging the mainland so closely that the oars nearly brushed the rocks. They passed the British line unseen, so near that men could hear British voices drifting across the water. By dawn, Arnold was miles to the south, near Schuyler Island, where the fleet paused briefly for repairs. But the British were in pursuit. The retreat became a running fight down the lake. One by one, the remaining gunboats were overtaken or scuttled. The Spitfire sank. The Providence was captured. The New York and New Jersey were abandoned and burned. At last, near Button Bay, Arnold realized escape was impossible. He ordered Congress and Washington run aground. The crews carried their wounded ashore. Arnold set both vessels ablaze, refusing to let the British claim them. Arnold led his survivors through the forest, marching south toward Crown Point. Behind them, the last remnants of the American fleet burned on the lake.

The British had won the battle. They had destroyed Arnold’s fleet. But they had lost the campaign. Winter was closing in. The delay Arnold had forced upon them — the precious weeks he had bought with wood, iron, and blood — made it impossible for the British to reach the Hudson Valley before the snows. Their invasion was postponed until the next year. And in 1777, when they finally marched south, they met their ruin at Saratoga.

Valcour Island had been a defeat. But it was also a turning point — a moment when a handful of crude gunboats, commanded by a man of fierce will, changed the course of the American Revolution.





Dear Compatriot,

The SAR 1776 Campaign recognizes support of the SAR Education Center & Museum through distinctive commemorative lapel pins and museum recognition opportunities.

These lapel pins are visible symbols of dedication to preserving the legacy of the American Revolution and the future of the SAR. Worn proudly at chapter meetings, Congress, and leadership events, fellow compatriots immediately recognize the significance of these distinctions and the commitment they represent.

Many members enjoy adding each level to their SAR collection while advancing toward higher recognition within the campaign. In addition to the lapel pins, Quill-level donors receive permanent recognition within the museum.

- **Bronze Quill** — \$5,328 • **Silver Quill** — \$8,880
- **Gold Quill** — \$17,760



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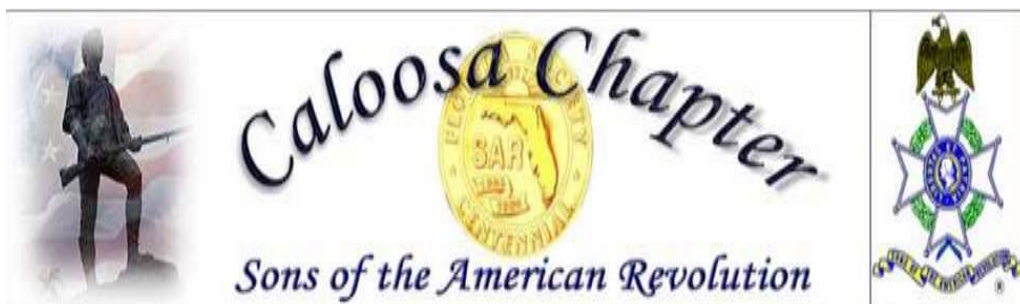
These quills will remain on display within the SAR Education Center & Museum as a lasting tribute to those helping preserve our nation's history for future generations. Partial donations are accepted and may be applied toward future recognition levels. Thank you for your time and please do not hesitate to reach out to me with any questions. I would love to speak with you!

Sincerely,

Amanda Holmquist

Amanda Holmquist
SAR Foundation Fundraising Manager
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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



Newsletter Editor John Maier administers the Chapter’s Facebook Page. 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.

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.

