



The General's News

» General Joseph Bartholomew Chapter «
SONS OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION

September 2023

2023 Chapter Officers

| | |
|-----------------------------------|--------------------------|
| President..... | J. Gordon Bidner |
| Vice President..... | Jay L. Cummins |
| Secretary/Historian..... | Jay L. Cummins |
| Assistant Secretary | Vacant |
| Registrar..... | David J. Dougall |
| Assistant Registrar | Robert Harshbarger |
| Genealogist..... | William M. Hammitt |
| Treasurer & Asst. Historian | L. Lance McCormick |
| Chaplain & Sergeant-at-Arms..... | Richard 'Rick' Milner |
| Chaplain Emeritus | Dr. Virgil D. Short |
| Editor, The General's News | J. Gordon Bidner |
| 2023 Members at Large..... | Milton 'Sonny' Rudsinski |
| | Alan C. Washburn |
| | William A. White |
| Publisher..... | Dena McDonald |

www.gjbsar.org



Inside...

Kern Awarded ILSSAR
Patriot Medal – page 5

Haggard Patriot Grave Marker
Dedication Ceremony – page 6

DAR-SAR Constitution Week
Kick-Off Event – page 11

And more!

If My People PART II

A Remembrance of Harry Hoit

Submitted by Dan Leifel

Some may remember in the last issue of the General, we had the pleasure of relating a bit about the life of long-time SAR member Harry Hoit. I promised to answer the question, “Why that title?” and the piece ended with a citation to the Book of Corinthians.

In Harry’s mind, the admonition contained therein was a message to our own time. The full quote, “If my people which are called by my name, shall humble themselves and pray and seek My face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from Heaven and will forgive their sin and will heal their land.” This is the heart of Harry’s philosophy and he would spread the message, almost to the end of his days, using respect for the American Flag as a vehicle for delivering his call to young (as young Kindergarten children) to the Old (like members of our Chapter).

Harry’s inspiration came from the Bible, but his message is as old as our Country itself. It is close to the opinion of no less a figure than Ben Franklin, by then not a Christian but, like many of our Founding Fathers, a Deist. On leaving the Constitutional Convention, he was asked, “What kind of a government have you given us?” to which Franklin answered, “A Republic, if you can keep it.” How similar is that to “If My People”?

To his audience, Harry presented himself in a Revolutionary Soldier’s uniform, standing next to a picture of hands mending a tattered flag. After giving a History of America’s flag, Harry would then make his point by reference to the picture. He said, “This picture has a lot of hidden meanings in it when we study it closely. There are bullet holes that signify the warfare; the times when it has been attacked in both the spiritual and the physical battles for freedom.”

IF MY PEOPLE continued on page 7

Bloomington Memorial Day Parade

May 29, 2023

Submitted by J. Gordon Bidner

Thanks to those that attended breakfast at Bob Evans on IAA Drive at 7:00 a.m. to start the GJB SAR Memorial Day activities: Dan Leifel, Robert Harshbarger, Bud Lewis, Rick Milner, Sonny Rudsinski, Don Hyland and Gordon Bidner. We had good discussion over breakfast as to why we celebrate and remember Memorial Day.

Four of us left around 8:30 a.m. for downtown Bloomington for the Memorial Day parade. It was a beautiful day and well attended. Thank you to the GJB SAR members that participated in this event.

Twenty-one of our 41 members are veterans, one of which is presently on Active Duty (Will Owens). Thank you all for your Service!

Allen Selected as ISHS Orndorff Scholar

Submitted by Dena McDonald

Ryan Allen, one of the 2023 GJB SAR Good Citizenship Award recipients last April, was recently honored by the Illinois State Historical Society.

Ryan's essay, "The Light of Lincoln", was selected as the 2023 Verna Ross Orndorff Scholarship winning entry and published in the July-August issue of the ISHS's *Illinois Heritage* magazine, and



Pictured left to right are Sonny Rudsinski (holding the USA Flag), Rick Milner (holding the SAR Flag), WWII Navy Veteran Bud Lewis and Gordon Bidner.

In the last three years, we have lost the following GJB SAR Veterans, and we Remember them for their Military Service and dedication to the GJB SAR Chapter:

- **Dave Ashbrook** (88 years old)
Passed away August 8, 2020
Korean War, Army
- **Kelly Gray** (84 years old)
Passed away November 11, 2020
Vietnam, Air Force
- **Bill Miller** (95 years old)
Passed away January 11, 2021
WWII, Navy

- **Harry Hoit** (101 years old)
Passed away August 26, 2022
WWII, Navy
- **Dr. John Frisch** (96 years old)
Passed away October 19, 2022
WWII, Navy

These men made a difference and contributed significantly to our SAR Chapter, our communities, our State, Nation and, yes, our World. ★

Ryan was awarded a \$1,000 check from ISHS.

A 2023 graduate of Cornerstone Christian Academy in Bloomington, Ryan was a Student Chaplain, IHSA All-State Academic Team Nominee (for varsity baseball and soccer), and a 2023-24 Illinois State Scholar.

He now attends Liberty University as a Business/Finance major

Congratulations to Ryan for this well-deserved honor! ★



ISHS Director Robert Sampson presents the Verna Ross Orndorff Award certificate to Ryan Allen.

Photo published in *Illinois Heritage*, July-August 2023, and at historyillinois.org/Scholarships/VernaRossOrndorffScholarship.aspx.

Ryan's winning essay can be found on the next page

The Light of Lincoln

By Ryan Allen Cornerstone Christian Academy, Bloomington, IL

The name “Lincoln” carries the profound weight of an American hero. While the country was deteriorating, Lincoln preserved the Union by leading the country through the American Civil War. As a result, he is often hailed as the country’s greatest president. While not without fault, Lincoln’s leadership and unique moral character crafted, as Walt Whitman observed, “the greatest figure yet, on all the crowded canvas of the Nineteenth Century” (206-07).

Abraham Lincoln was born in 1809. While his father was never “more in the way of writing than to bunglingly sign his own name,” Lincoln pursued knowledge (Autobiography 61). Lincoln taught himself to read, and his pursuit of knowledge propelled himself from an uneducated farm boy to a respected lawyer; however, Lincoln “arrogated to himself no superiority over anyone—not even the most obscure member of the bar” (Tarbell 247). While tragedy plagued the Lincoln household, including the deaths of his mother and sister, Lincoln persevered.

Despite the hardship, Lincoln had unique charm. He was empathetic and humble; a New Salem neighbor wrote he was “liked by every person who knew him.” Moreover, Lincoln “made himself useful in every way that he could...and [was] always cheerful” (Oldroyd 519). In fact, Lincoln did not need to “be with a man more than an hour to gain his good will” (Basler 391). Businessman Gurdon Hubbard remembered, “His character was almost faultless, possessing a warm and generous heart, genial, affable” and “courteous to his opponents” (305). In addition, Lincoln captivated people with his storytelling. Lincoln’s eloquence would prove useful. Lincoln’s eyes turned to politics.

Ralph Waldo Emerson wrote, “the highest bribes of society are at the feet of the successful orator? He has an audience at his devotion. All other fame must hush before his” (65). Perhaps Lincoln’s greatest political advantage was his eloquence. While Lincoln’s lengthy frame appeared awkward and face was described as having a grim expression, “when Lincoln began to speak,” reporter Horace White noted, “...His face lighted up with a winning smile...I now beheld keen intelligence, genuine kindness of heart, and the promise of true friendship” (19). Furthermore, his speech was “one of the world’s masterpieces of argumentative power and moral grandeur” (12). Lincoln’s words were “as if the people were listening to their own thinking out loud” (Lowell 208).

After losing his first bid, Lincoln served four terms at the Illinois House; his popularity grew. In 1846, he got elected to Congress. Here he gained national attention with his Spot Resolutions. Stephens observed Lincoln “was possessed of a very strong, clear and vigorous mind. He always attracted the riveted attention of the House when he spoke; his manner of speech as well as thought was original...his anecdotes were always exceedingly apt and pointed” (Stephens 241). Despite losing a Senate bid, Lincoln succeeded in his district. People recognized that “his conscience was the strongest element of his nature. His affections were tender and warm. His whole nature was simple and sincere—he was pure, and then was himself” (Guelzo 53).

Lincoln began capturing national attention. In February 1860, Lincoln delivered a compelling anti-slavery speech. The *New York Tribune* described it as “one of the happiest and most convincing political arguments ever made in this City” with “the vast assemblage frequently rang with cheers and shouts of applause, which were prolonged and intensified at the close. No man ever before made such an impression on his first appeal to a New York audience.” The *Chicago Press* and *Tribune* called him an “honest man” who represented the “fundamentals of Republicanism with due respect for the rights of the South.” In May, Lincoln, against the odds, won the Republican nomination.

LINCOLN continued on next page

After Lincoln's win, Bates, his opponent, expressed his support of Lincoln, praising him for having "earned a high reputation for truth, courage, candor, morals, and ability so that, as a man, he is most trustworthy" (Letter). He later wrote "his character is marked by a happy mixture of amiability and courage; I expect him to be as mild as Fillmore, I equally expect him to be as firm as Jackson" (*Lincoln's Attorney* 120).

In his presidency, Lincoln did something unprecedented: he filled his cabinet with political rivals. Seward, Chase, and Bates, all chosen for his cabinet, were rivals for the Republican nomination. When questioned, Lincoln responded, "We needed the strongest men of the party in the Cabinet...I had looked the party over and concluded that these were the very strongest men. Then I had no right to deprive the country of their services" (Medill 85). The remaining positions were offered to three former Democrats. While initially criticized, Lincoln took charge of his cabinet and gained their respect. Bates, who regularly challenged him, later recited that Lincoln was "very near being a perfect man" (*Six Months* 68). Seward noted "a Cabinet which should agree at once on every such question would be no better or safer than one counsellor" (Seward 527).

By listening and being open to compromise, Lincoln attempted to hold together a fracturing country, understanding that "a house divided against itself cannot stand" (House Divided). At the same time, Lincoln understood the need to protect his presidential prerogatives. An observer noted "his mind is at once philosophical and practical. He sees all who go there, hears all they have to say, talks freely with everybody, reads whatever is written to him, but thinks and acts by himself and for himself" (Weed 261). "Not a creature was denied access," wrote Harriet Beecher Stowe, "Not a soul so lowly but might have their chance to bore the soul of this more lowly servant of the people" (74).

In addition, Lincoln brilliantly tackled slavery. Rejecting ornate language, Lincoln used simple analogies. For example, while Southerners argued the Wilmot Proviso would destabilize the country Lincoln responded "because I may have refused to build an addition to my house, I thereby have decided to destroy the existing house!" While denouncing the Kansas-Nebraska Act and, thereby, slavery, Lincoln recalled the Declaration of Independence, making his argument both philosophical and moral. Lincoln declared, "No man is good enough to govern another man, without that other's consent. I say this is the leading principle—the sheet anchor of American republicanism." Furthermore, "If a negro is a man, why then my ancient faith teaches me that 'all men are created equal'; and that there can be no moral right in connection with one man's making a slave of another." Slavery robbed "our republican example of its just influence in world" (Peoria Speech).

In addition, instead of calling Southerners corrupt, Lincoln said "They are just what we would be in their situation. If slavery did not now exist amongst them, they would not introduce it. If it did now exist amongst us, we should not instantly give it up...I surely will not blame them for not doing what I should not know how to do myself" (Peoria Speech). Even throughout the Civil War, Lincoln saw the Confederacy not as a separate country, but as states in rebellion. He placed himself in the Southerners' shoes, pointing out incongruences by their laws. Even the Democratic paper was "compelled" to write they had "never read or heard a stronger anti-Nebraska speech" (Peoria Daily).

Most importantly, Lincoln was unafraid to risk his political standing to maintain his principles. In fact, Lincoln thought he was not going to be reelected. As a result, the chairman of the Republican National Committee urged Lincoln to change his stance regarding the Emancipation Proclamation, but Lincoln ignored him. Lincoln "never had a feeling politically that did not spring from the sentiments embodied in the Declaration." It provided a "promise that in due time the weights should be lifted from the shoulders of all men, and that all should have an equal chance." If the Union "cannot be saved without giving up that principle," Lincoln exclaimed he "would rather be assassinated on the spot than to surrender it" (Speech in Independence Hall, 240).

Later in his Gettysburg Address, Lincoln emphasized that this country, “dedicated to the proposition that all men are created equal” shall endure and “that government of the people, by the people, for the people, shall not perish from the earth” (Gettysburg). A soldier commented “his benignant smile as he passed on was a real reflection of his honest, kindly heart; but deeper, under the surface of that marked and not all uncomely face, were the unmistakable signs of care and anxiety” (Twichell 154). During Reconstruction, instead of adopting the extreme restrictions of the Radicals, Lincoln welcomed back the rebellious states more easily. I have always found that mercy bears richer fruits than strict justice” (*Lincoln Herald*).

It is hard to imagine the United States without Abraham Lincoln. Lincoln kept America’s flame of liberty alight. Lincoln, as Tolstoy described, was a “man of whom a nation has a right to be proud; he was a Christ in miniature, a saint of humanity, whose name will live thousands of years in the legends of future generations” (Tolstoy). ★

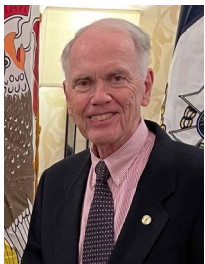
If you are interested in consulting the references Ryan used in his research, please refer to pages 29 and 30 in the July-August issue of *Illinois Heritage* magazine (a publication of the Illinois State Historical Society).

Next publication of The General’s News: November 17

To ensure inclusion in the next issue, please send submissions and calendar additions/corrections to publisher Dena McDonald by November 10 at cre8.denamcdonald@gmail.com

Kern Awarded the ILSSAR Patriot Medal

The Illinois Society of the Sons of the American Revolution can award two Patriot Medals per year, and last year the ILSSAR approved the award for just one individual—Steve Kern.



This is a prestigious one-time award, so once an individual receives it, he cannot receive it again. Steve was awarded the Patriot Medal on May 13, 2023.

Steve was admitted into the ILSSAR on November 30, 2018 and has been deeply involved in the General Joseph Bartholomew Chapter since he joined. A comprehensive list of his contributions are too numerous to list, but here are just a few:

- Chapter Eagle Scout Chairman (3 years)
- Chapter Flag Day Committee Chairman (3 years)
- Public Service and Heroism Committee Member (2 years)

- Finance Committee Member (2 years)
- Color Guard/Parade Committee Member (2 years)
- IT Committee Member (3 years)
- ILSSAR Regional Vice President (1 year)

During his nearly four-year tenure as a member of the Sons of the American Revolution (at the time of his nomination), he has been awarded the following:

- War Service Medal
- Silver Roger Sherman Medal
- Meritorious Medal
- Silver Good Citizenship Medal

Steve has actively solicited new members and has suggested and implemented new and different GJB SAR Chapter activities.

His service extends far beyond the GJB SAR Chapter. Steve has served on the Advisory Committee for Boy Scout Troop 29 (WD Boyce Council), President of Home Sweet Home Mission of McLean County, State of Illinois Pension Laws Commission—among many other acts of service.

Steve served in the US Army 1968-76 (Vietnam 1969-70), ultimately earning the rank of Captain, and he is also a Bronze Star Recipient.

Married to Susan and with two sons and four grandchildren, Steve retired from State Farm Life Insurance Company after 35 years of service. In his last years at State Farm, he was an Associate Actuary with responsibilities in pensions and group life. He and Susan are very active at Grace Church in Normal, where they have been members for 50 years. Steve has served as both Deacon of Mission and Finance at Grace.

Thank you, Steve for dedicated service to the GJB SAR Chapter and to your community, and congratulations on earning the distinguished Patriot Medal! ★

The NSSAR also recently honored the GJB SAR Chapter with two additional awards!

Certificate of Commendation for active participation in the Flag Display Recognition Program

Carl F. Bessent Award, Honorable Mention to The General’s News and Editor J. Gordon Bidner for outstanding multiple sheet chapter newsletter

David Haggard Patriot Grave Marker Dedication Ceremony

June 11, 2023

Submitted by Steve Kern

On Sunday, June 11 at 1:30 p.m. the General Joseph Bartholomew Chapter of the Sons of the American Revolution conducted a patriotic grave marking for David Haggard. David Haggard is an American Revolutionary War Soldier buried in Evergreen Memorial Cemetery in Bloomington.

The ceremony was held in the mausoleum at Evergreen Cemetery due to inclement weather with over 70 people in attendance, including Bloomington City Mayor Mboka Mwilambwe. Evergreen Cemetery from Memorial Day to Flag Day (June 14) is decorated in a patriotic theme with US Flags lining the pathways.

The program began with a musket salute performed by the Color Guard of the Illinois Society of the Sons of the American Revolution, followed by a Presentation of the Colors by Bloomington Boy Scout Troop 920. Next was the Invocation, Pledge of Allegiance, and SAR Pledge, led by Chaplain Ray Owens, Dan Leifel and Lance McCormick, respectively.

General Joseph Bartholomew Chapter President J. Gordon Bidner welcomed the attendees and then introduced Misty Porter, the Evergreen Memorial Cemetery Manager. Misty's remarks encompassed a history of the cemetery as well as notables buried there—Vice President Adlai Stevenson II, Dorothy Gage, the inspiration for “Dorothy” in the Wizard of Oz, and Baseball Hall of Fame pitcher Charles “Old Hoss” Radbourn.

Julie Emig, Executive Director of the McLean County Museum of History, was the keynote speaker. Descendants of the Haggard family—Scott Prosser and his mother Dee Prosser—were present to unveil

HAGGARD continued on next page

Below: The unveiling of the David Haggard bronze plaque. Pictured left to right are Steve Kern, Member of the General Joseph Bartholomew Chapter SAR, J. Gordon Bidner, General

Joseph Bartholomew Chapter SAR President, Scott Prosser, and his mother Dee Prosser. The Prossers are Haggard Family descendants.



After the reason he used the picture of the flag, he pointed to the other traits exemplified: “Tragedy” (like the events of 9/11); “Evil” (reminding us that evil exists in our world); “Tattered” parts (reminding us that there is neglect); “Fraying”(representing the disrespect, which some see as “protected speech”); “nail holes in his hand” (which Harry saw as signifying our hope for the future promised in 2 Chronicles).

After his impressive display, he delivered his “If my People” message in his definition of Patriotism: “Patriotism is defined as love, support and defense of our country. Our freedoms, which a lot of people take for granted, are a very precious thing. It is also very fragile. Institutions and governments do not preserve themselves. It takes each family and each person to do his or her part in helping to aid, defend and protect our freedom.”

After setting the stage, Harry proclaimed a solution which could serve as an alternative mission statement for the Sons of the American Revolution: “One way to protect our freedom is to teach the love of our country to future generations. No one is born a patriot. It must be taught.” Of course, that is our responsibility. Are we up to the task? “If my people”.



Harry Hoit, in full uniform, posing next to the Jack Dawson painting entitled, "If My People".

Harry Hoit was a great example. Of humble origins, he volunteered to fight for his Country. He built a life dedicated to service, to his family, his Church and his nation. He set a standard and lived a life. He was true inspirational leader. Now, it is up to us, the living, to heed his message. We salute you, Brother Harry Hoit. ★

the bronze plaque, which will be mounted at the Haggard burial site. After the unveiling President J. Gordon Bidner dedicated the plaque to the memory of David Haggard.

Following the dedication, a rifle salute and sounding of taps was conducted by American Legion Post 635 Honor Guard. McLean County Board Member and GJB SAR member Chuck Erickson led the SAR Recessional with Chaplain Ray Owens following with the Benediction. Refreshments were served at the conclusion of the event. ★



The musket salute by the Color Guard of the Illinois Society of the Sons of the American Revolution.

Flag Day Meeting

June 14, 2023

Submitted by Steve Kern

The General Joseph Bartholomew Chapter of the Sons of the American Revolution celebrated Flag Day on June 14 with a breakfast meeting at Grace Church in Normal, catered by Bob Evans. There were 19 in attendance.

The meeting kicked off at 7:30am with a welcome to everyone from President J. Gordon Bidner, followed by GJB SAR Chaplain Reverend Ray Owens delivering the Invocation (see Invocation text following this article). The Pledge of Allegiance and SAR Pledge followed.



Steve Kern presents Sherry and Steve Shipley the 2023 Flag Day Award.

After breakfast the Secretary's Report was given by Jay Cummins followed with Lance McCormick's Treasurer's Report. Steve Kern provided the two final reports—the Finance Committee Report and a report on the June 11 David Haggard Patriot grave marking at Evergreen Memorial Cemetery in Bloomington.

Rick Milner, our newest GJB SAR member, was introduced to the audience, and his certificate of membership was presented to him by President Bidner and Robert Harshbarger, Assistant Registrar. Rick will be assuming the responsibilities of the Sergeant at Arms.

Gary and Carol Simpkins of the Simpkins Military History Museum of Heyworth gave a presentation on some select flags in their collection, ranging from the formation of America through to the current day. The audience was extremely appreciative of the presentation. Gary brought to our attention a number of historical points about the flags that were new to us.



The presentation by Carol and Gary Simpkins included interesting facts about various flags in their collection. The flag Gary is displaying here is the Grand Union Flag, which was one of our nation's first flags adopted December 3, 1775 and relinquished June 14, 1777.

Last but not least, our 2023 Flag Day award recipients were introduced, Steve and Sherry Shipley of Towanda. They were presented with a SAR Flag Day Award Certificate and an SAR Outstanding Citizenship pin.



Steve Kern presented the Simpkins with a \$50 honorarium to the Simpkins Military History Museum in Heyworth.

FLAG DAY continued on next page

Welcome to Our Newest Chapter Member

David B. Williams, Ph.D

Submitted by Steve Kern



The newest compatriot to be added to the roles of the General Joseph Bartholomew Chapter is David B. Williams. David's SAR application was approved on September 7, 2023 and I am thrilled to have been his sponsor. His National SAR Member ID# is 227828 and the Illinois State Society of the SAR Member ID# is 9634.

His Patriot is Isaac Clason. Private Clason's revolutionary war pension submission indicates he served in the coast guards under Capt. Charles Smith, "that said company was in a regiment of militia commanded by Col. Canfield in General David Waterbury's Division. Clason's service began in 1780 at Greenwich Points, CT. In the year following he was stationed in Stamford guarding the coast between said town and Middlesex [Darien]." During the final years of the War until April 1783 he was among those stationed at Fort Stamford, CT.

FLAG DAY continued from previous page

The criteria to be a GJB SAR Annual Flag Day award recipient are:

- Location is a personal residence—not a business or organization.
- Flag is prominently displayed.
- Flag is properly displayed—not tattered or soiled and if flown at night, it must be lighted.
- Flag must be persistently displayed—continuous.

The Shipley Flag display easily met all these criteria.

The meeting concluded with closing comments by President Bidner and, finally, the SAR Recessional. ★

Dr. Williams holds a Bachelor of Music Education and a Master of Music Theory degree from Northwestern State University of Louisiana and a Ph.D in Systematic Musicology from the University of Washington, Seattle. He is Emeritus Professor of Music and Creative Technologies in the College of Fine Arts at Illinois State University.

He has written extensively in the areas of music education, music psychology, music and arts technology, and instructional development. The fourth edition of his textbook, *Experiencing Music Technology*, co-authored with Peter Webster, is published with Oxford University Press.

And he enjoys golf!

Finally, at our October 10 meeting Professor Williams (Emeritus Professor of Music and Technologies at Illinois Sate University) will be giving a presentation on music during the American Revolutionary War period. His presentation was extremely well received at a recent LGS DAR meeting, so you will not want to miss it. Our October 10 meeting begins at 6pm, and the location is St. Luke Union Church, 2101 E. Washington St., Bloomington, IL 61701. **MARK YOUR CALENDARS NOW!** ★



Rick Milner was inducted as a new GJB SAR member by Robert Harshbarger and Gordon Bidner.

[Read the full Flag Day Celebration Invocation on the next page.](#)

Flag Day Celebration Invocation

*Delivered by
Rev. Ray Owens*

June 14, 2023

Flag displayed at the Shipley residence.

Heavenly Father, as we observe Flag Day today, we are reminded of more than a piece of material but of the great nation that was started in Your honor.

We thank You for the men and women of the original thirteen colonies that stood together in the formation of this great nation.

We thank You for the thousands that have fought and stood to defend the Constitution of our country.

We are reminded that we are to stand united with the 50 states of America as we continue to live out our lives with valor, vigilance, innocence and justice.

Throughout scripture, You have always used symbols to remind Your people of the great things You have brought us through.

Let us never forget that it's not about a piece of cloth but instead about the greatness we have become as a nation because of You.

You, Lord, have truly shed Your grace upon us and we ask most especially now for Your wisdom, guidance and covering as Americans for the challenges we are facing as individuals and as a nation.

Please keep Your covering over us today and always.

On this Flag Day, we give You thanks and praise for the Flag of the United States of America and all that it represents.

We pray all these things in Jesus' name, Amen!

*Attributed to
Dr. Richard Mansfield*



DAR-SAR Constitution Week Kick-Off Event

September 15, 2023

Submitted by Steve Kern

On Friday, September 15, the Letitia Green Stevenson Chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution and the General Joseph Bartholomew Chapter of the Sons of the American Revolution held a joint meeting to Commemorate the US Constitution and kick

off Constitution Week from September 17-23. The keynote speaker was Dr. Robert Irons, PhD of Illinois Wesleyan University, who spoke on “The Promise of the Preamble and the Path to Fulfillment.” He has coauthored a book on the subject. Two members of the audience were presented with an autographed copy of Dr. Irons’ book.

See the end of this article for a few excerpts from Dr. Irons’ presentation.

The GJB SAR Chapter presented certificates and commendation medals to first responders in our community:



Dr. Robert Irons, Ph.D. delivering the keynote address.

- Firefighter/Engineer Rich Batka of the Bloomington Fire Department received the Fire Safety Award.

CONSTITUTION continued next page



Stephen Kern (Chairman of the GJB SAR Public Service and Heroism Committee), Firefighter/Engineer Rich Batka (Bloomington Fire Department), Sergeant Nathan Haynes (McLean County Sheriff's Department), Trooper Ryan Billingsley (Illinois State Police), Trooper Jacob

Nimrick (Illinois State Police), Daren Deverman (Corn Belt Energy) and J. Gordon Bidner (President of the General Joseph Bartholomew Chapter of SAR).

- The Heroism Award was presented to Correctional Officer Timothy Hinman of the McLean County Sheriff's Department.
- Law Enforcement Medals were awarded to Sergeant Nathan Haynes of the McLean County Sheriff's Office, Troopers Ryan Billingsley and Jacob Nimrick of the Illinois State Police, and Sergeant Kiel Nowers of the Bloomington Police Department.
- Daren Deverman of Corn Belt Energy Corporation received the Life Saving Award.

The LGS DAR presented Stephen Kern with a US Flag that had flown over DAR Constitution Hall in Washington, DC in recognition of his commitment to patriotism.

Approximately 70 members of the community were in attendance at Grace Church in Normal to honor the US Constitution and the 2023 public servants, heroism, and life saving honorees. ★



Sheriff Matt Lane (right) presented the SAR Heroism Medal to Correctional Officer Tim Hinman, who was unable to attend the GJB SAR/Letitia Greene Stevenson DAR award ceremony, so the McLean County Sheriff's Office presented this separately during their department's annual awards ceremony. GJB SAR member Jeff Kretlow and Chief Welsch created the background for the award.

Excerpts from "The Promise of the Preamble and the Path to Fulfillment"

By Dr. Robert Irons, Ph.D

To Form a More Perfect Union. It is listed first for a reason: our strength lies in our unity; without it, as a nation we are weak. Our country's motto, *E Pluribus Unum* – Latin for out of many, one – echoes that our strength lies in being one nation rather than 13 colonies. This objective is so important that George Washington listed it first among the things he considered essential to our future as a nation in his farewell address to the army in 1783.

To Establish Justice. This goal was particularly difficult from the start because the Articles of Confederation made no provision for the establishment of national courts, which created problems for the country both here and abroad. Justice is the primary objective of government, the one without which the other objectives are unobtainable.

To Insure Domestic Tranquility. Yes, there will always be those who seek power to use it for corrupt purposes, and yes, there will always be those in government who reach their level of incompetence – just as in business – but they are not as many as others would have you believe. Government is people, it is us. It is our neighbors, our coworkers, our best friends, and even family. If someone can't believe in government, it's because they can't believe in people... We are imperfect, but we are perfectible.

To Provide for the Common Defense. Everyone sees the need for this one, but not necessarily to the same degree... a point that is often overlooked: a strict reading of the Framers' words would preclude an Air Force or a Space Force.

To Promote the General Welfare. Politicians have done an impressive job of stigmatizing the word welfare, so much so that many people who truly need and fully deserve help are afraid to ask for it... We can't do everything alone; some things require help. And what is a government for, if not to help its citizens in need?

To Secure the Blessings of Liberty to Ourselves and Our Posterity. People who argue for "smaller government" miss an essential point: it is not important how many laws there are, but rather the just or unjust nature of those laws. That government governs best which governs most justly. ★

If you were unable to attend the Constitution Day event to hear the full presentation and would like a copy, please contact a member of the Editorial Board or publisher Dena McDonald for a copy (cre8.denamcdonald@gmail.com).

2023 Programs/Events

SEPT. 28 • 7:00 pm • Danvers Historical Society Meeting • Stout's Grove Cemetery, Danvers (Main St., just south of The Vault Restaurant)

Four Revolutionary Soldiers are buried in this cemetery

OCT. 10 • 6:00 pm • St. Luke Union Church, 2101 E. Washington St., Bloomington

PROGRAM: "Revolutionary War-Era Music" by Dr. David Williams, Retired ISU Professor of Music; Nominate the 2024 GJB SAR Leadership Team

HOST: Ray Owens

OCT. 27-28 • MISSAR BOM, Great Lakes District Gala and Meeting, Bay City, MI

NOV. 10 • 12 pm • Veterans Day, St. Luke Union Church, 2101 E. Washington St., Bloomington

PROGRAM: "Reflections of a Vietnam Veteran" by Dennis Garrigus; Elect and Install the 2024 GJB SAR Leadership Team

HOST: Sonny Rudsinski

NOV. 10-11 • ILSSAR BOM Meeting, Peoria

NOV. 17 • The General's Newsletter

DEC. 8 • 1:00 pm • The Iroquois County DAR-SAR Citizenship Program for Iroquois County High Schools, St. John Evangelical Lutheran Church, Milford



2023 Committees

CITIZENSHIP: Chair Gordon Bidner

Robert Flesher, Bill Hammitt, Rob Jones, Dan Leifel, Phares O'Daffer, Dr. Virgil Short, Bill White (Iroquois/Livingston Co.)

COLOR GUARD/PARADE: Chair Al Abbott

Gordon Bidner (ex officio), Don Hyland, Stephen Kern, Don Lush, Rodney Lush, Milton Rudsinski, Dr. Virgil Short

EAGLE SCOUT: Chair Stephen Kern

Al Abbott, Lance McCormick, Bill White

EDUCATION: Chair Dan Leifel

Charles Erickson, Dr. Virgil Short, Alan Washburn

FINANCE: Chair Stephen Kern

Charles Erickson, Bill Hammitt, Lance McCormick, Lee Wilder

FLAG DAY: Chair Stephen Kern

Albert Day, Ed Proctor

PUBLIC SERVICE & HEROISM: Chair Stephen Kern

David Dougall, Bill Hammitt, Ray Owens, Dr. Virgil Short

MEMBERSHIP/MENTORING: Chair Gordon Bidner

Jay Cummins, David Dougall, Bob Harshbarger, Rob Jones, Lance McCormick, Rick Milner, Ray Owens, Steve Runyan

PATRIOT GRAVES: Chair Jay Cummins

Gordon Bidner, Albert Day, Roger Hollis, Dan Leifel, Milton Rudsinski, Bill White

PUBLIC RELATIONS: Chair Gordon Bidner

Jay Cummins, Bob Harshbarger (Zoom coordinator), Ray Owens, Dr. Virgil Short

THE GENERAL'S NEWS: Editor Gordon Bidner

Editorial Board includes Jay Cummins, Stephen Kern, Dan Leifel, Dr. Virgil Short

VETERANS/ROTC AFFAIRS: Chair Milton Rudsinski, Vice Chair Dan Leifel

Albert Day, Dave Edwards, Jeff Kretlow, Bud Lewis, Rodney Lush, Dr. Virgil Short, Bill White

ILSSAR POSTER/KNIGHT ESSAY/RUMBAUGH ORATIONS/SCHWEIZER HISTORY: Chair Gordon Bidner

Charles Erickson, Rob Jones, Dr. Virgil Short

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY: Chair Bob Harshbarger

Jay Cummins, David Dougall, Stephen Kern (GJB Webmaster)

NSSAR 250TH ANNIVERSARY: Chair Jay Cummins

Gordon Bidner, Stephen Kern, Dan Leifel, Lance McCormick, Ray Owens

NOMINATING AND PROGRAM LEADERSHIP:

2023 Leadership Team/Board of Managers