

June 10, 2019 Meeting Minutes

Sons of the American Revolution

Tennessee Valley Chapter

The June 10th, 2019 Chapter meeting was called to order by **President Jim Griffith** at 11:00 a.m. in the auditorium of the Huntsville-Madison County Library. Jim began the meeting by asking everyone to please silence their cell phones. **Chaplain James Henderson** was asked to open the meeting with prayer.

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by **Vice-President Ray Livingston**, followed by the SAR Pledge.

Thirty seven (37) members and forty nine (49) guests were present for today's meeting.

This is a lunch time meeting, so feel free to enjoy the sandwiches and refreshments that are available against the wall to your right.

We are happy to welcome our Heroism Awardees today! We are thankful for you and the job that you do! Recognizing your contributions to our community is one of our objectives as an organization. Our community is a better place because of you!

Welcome to Early Works Museum representatives. We are happy to have you with us today. We are always looking for ways to engage with our community and are excited about expanding our relationship with you.

Others – Thank you for joining us today! This organization has more than 250 members locally and over 38,000 nationally. If you are interested in joining our group, please talk with a member or one of our officers. We are happy you are here!

We have a lot of guest here today, in lieu of individually recognizing the new guest at this time, I would like to let you know how much we appreciate you being here and what your presence bring to this organization.

To start with, President Griffith identified Jonathan Bragwell as the National Elementary Teacher of the year and wanted to read the following letter from him:

NOTE FROM JONATHAN BRAGWELL

To The Sons of the American Revolution,

I leave on my trip to the Colonial Williamsburg Teacher Institute tomorrow! I am so excited about this learning opportunity. I am excited to represent the Hartselle City School system & the state of Alabama. I have never been to Colonial Williamsburg, Jamestown, or Yorktown. I am also excited about how my future students will benefit from me attending this teacher institute.

This whole experience of being named the National Elementary History Teacher of the Year has been so overwhelming and humbling. For 22 years of my teaching career, I have never received this type of recognition. During my 23rd year, I received the honor of being named my school's Teacher of the Year earlier in January, then the honor your organization bestowed upon me in March. I am also shocked and honored to be the first teacher from the state of Alabama to receive this award, because I know so many high quality teachers in the North Alabama area alone.

I want to take a moment and sincerely thank everyone in the Sons of the American Revolution for this honor and especially for the all expenses paid trip to Williamsburg. There is no way I would ever be able to afford such an opportunity on my own and I truly, truly appreciate it from the very bottom of my heart.

Please forward my appreciation to everyone in the Sons of the American Revolution organization.

God Bless,

Jonathan T. Bragwell, M.Ed.

5th Grade Social Studies Teacher & Extended Day Director

Hartselle Intermediate School

2019 Sons of the American Revolution National Elementary History Teacher of the Year

Hartselle High School Football & Basketball PA Announcer

President Griffith said that this trip is going on now and that Jonathan had left last Saturday for the event. This is a huge honor, being selected out of the thousands of participants across the nation and he was sponsored by this chapter. (Applause) Jonathan will be reporting back to us as our speaker in our July monthly meeting.

Today we want to do the Heroism Awards, and we have some gentlemen here today that certainly deserve this award:

A Heroism Commendation and Medal recognizes outstanding bravery and self-sacrifice in the face of imminent danger - i.e., acts which involve great personal courage and risk to the recipient. It is intended primarily for acts by civilians, not in uniform, but does not exclude police, firemen, EMS and SAR members. It is not intended to recognize acts that would have been covered in the performance of one's normal duty, nor by medals for valor by the armed forces. Animals are not eligible for recognition. The medal may also be presented posthumously. An individual may receive this medal multiple times. Presentation and the wearing of Oak Leaf Clusters shall follow NSSAR policy.

Before we give this award out, this is an example of the oath that these men have to take before assuming their responsibilities. President Griffith thought by reading this oath to the group, we would have a better understanding of their responsibilities:

I solemnly swear that I will fulfill my duty according to the tenets of this oath:

I will honor the tradition and sacrifice of those officers who have preceded me, and will seek to pass on my knowledge and experience to those who follow my path.

I will faithfully serve and protect my community while recognizing that policing is strong medicine and must be delivered at the right dosage. I will apply my craft accordingly, avoiding the dual temptation to over-police or de-police neighborhoods and communities that need my help the most.

I will remember that policing is both an art and a science. I will seek to carry out my craft skillfully, judiciously, and with empathy. I will embrace what is known about policing and seek to advance the evidence base to answer that which is unknown.

I will remember that policing, especially its coercive elements, is not a panacea for social ills. I will not be ashamed to de-escalate, wait for backup, or request the assistance of professionals outside of my field that are better equipped to address the root of the problem.

I will respect the humanity of those whom I encounter, both victim and suspect alike. I will treat life as sacrosanct and will only use deadly physical force as a last resort. If I must employ deadly force, I will strive to preserve life once it has been applied.

I will remember that I do not police an act or behavior, but a flawed human being, whose conduct may jeopardize their own future and that of their family.

I will prevent crime whenever I can, for the absence of crime and disorder is preferable to the visible evidence of police action in dealing with them.

I will remember that my calling as a police officer is an honorable one, but should never set me apart from society or the community I serve. I have been granted authority and am enjoined by duty, yet I am a member of the public and share the same obligation to comply with the laws I am sworn to uphold.

If I do not violate this oath, I will one day retire from public service having earned the enduring respect of my colleagues and my community.

Heroism Awards were presented by Vice President Ray Livingston to the following officers in groups:

The first group of officers is from the city of Huntsville. President Griffith asked the following officers to come up front: **Officer Christopher L. Wellman, Officer Darren W. White, Officer Taylor J. Davis, and Officer Larry W. Tomlin.**

All of these officers were recognized for their professionalism on January 16, when a suspected carjacker fired shots at officers during a pursuit. Due to their training, no one was injured in the incident and the suspect was taken into custody.

The second group of officers is from the city of Hartselle. President Griffith asked the following officers to come up front:

Mr. Stephen D. Johnson, Officer Robert W. Baker, Officer Roger R. Speake and Captain Robert A. Finn

All of these officers were recognized for pulling a lady out of a burning building just prior to it being totally engulfed in flames and an ensuing explosion of oxygen tanks in the residence.

After the officers received their medals and certificates, President Griffith stated that these are examples of split second decisions that these men have to deal with on a daily basis and we should all be proud of them. President Griffith indicated that they were all welcome to stay, but allowed for a short break while the officers returned to work.

Introduction of **Jim Maples** by Vice-President **Ray Livingston**: Jim has been a major player in the success of our chapter. He is the former Chapter President and also past State President. Jim is our present Communications Secretary, he produces our newsletter, manages our website, does our nametags, and numerous other activities supporting both the State and local chapter.

Next, Vice- President Livingston asked Jim Maples to come forward and give his special Presentation. Jim calls his presentation "Lafayette Visits Alabama". Before Jim got Lafayette to Alabama, He did cover his Revolutionary War service and his friendship with George Washington.

Lafayette had first come to America from France 47 years earlier to support America's war for independence from Great Britain. At the age of 20, Lafayette was made a major general and served with distinction on Washington's staff, fighting in important battles at Brandywine in Pennsylvania and Yorktown in Virginia. Upon returning to France after the war, Lafayette became embroiled in the French Revolution and ultimately had to flee France because of his opposition to the excesses of the revolutionary Jacobin Party

In 1818, he was elected to the French Parliament, where he served until 1824 as a leader of the opposition party and promoted such liberal measures as freedom of the press and religious tolerance. After losing his seat in Parliament, Lafayette accepted an invitation from President James Monroe in 1824 to make a grand tour of what were then the 24 U.S. states. The invitation was extended not only to honor Lafayette's service to America but also to expose a new generation of Americans to the "Spirit of 1776." Lafayette's extended tour began on August 15, 1824, when he arrived at Staten Island, New York. The Alabama General Assembly passed a joint resolution officially inviting Lafayette to Alabama, and [Gov. Israel Pickens](#) issued a formal invitation in late December 1824. The announcement of Lafayette's visit created great excitement in Alabama. The legislature authorized the payment of entertainment expenses out of public funds and Governor Pickens selected planning committees for lavish festivities to be held in [Montgomery](#), [Cahaba](#), and [Mobile](#). To ensure Lafayette's comfort during his travels, refreshments and supplies were cached along the route for the entourage.

Although Alabamians treated Lafayette's visit with enthusiasm and fanfare, the visit was in fact a severe financial burden for the state. The total cost approached \$17,000, which was quite a strain on the limited resources of the new state considering it only spent \$10,000 to build the capitol building at Cahaba. The state's

bill would have been even greater had the members of the military escort not paid their own expenses. Nevertheless, Lafayette's visit to Alabama exposed its early citizens to a world beyond the confines of its frontier borders. The excitement it generated prompted numerous inhabitants of isolated areas of the state to travel hundreds of miles to Montgomery, Selma, Cahaba, Claiborne, and Mobile, to see America's most prominent foreign dignitary. Among these were a few remaining veterans of the American Revolution, who came to pay respects to their old comrade in arms

Lafayette Died in Paris, France on May 20, 1834 at the age of 76. One interesting fact was that his son spread dirt taken from Bunker Hill on his grave in France.

Jim was presented a certificate for his presentation. Jim was also given additional praise from President Griffith for all he does for our chapter.

OLD BUSINESS

Reading of last month's meeting Notes

President Griffith asked for the reading of the minutes from the previous meeting. A motion was made by Jim Griffith to suspend with the reading of the minutes, the motion was seconded by Bob Doherty. A voice vote was called for and the motion was passed to dispense with the reading by unanimous vote.

President Griffith then asked Bob Doherty to come up and make a presentation. Bob then presented Dr. Frank Paul Stefano with a Certificate of Military Service (Navy).

Bob then updated us on the Certificate of Patriotism which is now presented by National. About a year ago, the National organization thought that they should handle this award. The chairman and Vice Chairman of the national committee made the procedure change, and then found out that they must go thru other committees to make their changes. Last month, both resigned and now a new chairman and vice chairman have been assigned. Until things are sorted out, we will not be putting any new candidates in for this award.

President Griffith also announced that our Chapter was awarded the State Americanism award for chapters of over 100 members. Bob Anderson expressed to the group how important this award is to the chapter because it is based on chapter activities. We are now competing for the National Neal Shepherd Americanism Award. President Griffith thanked last year's President Randal Jennings for his leadership in this award.

President Griffith also announced that one of our own –Jonathan Gubert, a member of the Tennessee Valley Chapter has received his appointment to West Point Military Academy in the fall. Gubert, son of compatriot Michael Gubert is a member of the National Honor Society, a varsity letter member of Sparkman High cross country team and an Eagle Scout. He is an executive officer with a rank of major for Sparkman's JROTC army battalion and commander of the JROTC drill team. He received nominations to West Point from Representative Mo Brooks, Senator Richard Shelby and army JROTC.

Officers Report:

President-Jim Griffith

Schedule of upcoming events:

- June 21st – Flag Pole Dedication at the American Village (Bob Anderson will provide additional details later)
- June 27th – BOO Meeting
- June 29th – Skeet Vaughn’s 90th Birthday Party, All members are invited. Jim can provide address if you are interesting.
- July 4th – Color Guard participation in the 4th of July event at the American Village Cemetery in Montevallo, AL.
- July 11th at 5:00 p.m. – TVCSAR visit to the Huntsville Botanical Garden to see “Making Alabama, A Travelling Bicentennial Exhibit”.
- August 10th – Tentative Grave Marking for DAR Daughter
- August 23rd – Summer Social at Whitesburg Baptist Church Event Center with entertainment from “Eight Feet Wide”, a barbershop quartet. (Free of Charge)
- Sept. 17th – Athens State University Constitution Day Celebrations.
- Next Meeting will be on July 8th

50% reimbursement has been approved by the ALSSAR for the Jonathan Bragwell reception. Total cost of the reception was about \$560.00. The check has been delivered to Randall Jennings.

We have several monthly meetings upcoming where we were unable to get this space. At this point, our September Monday meeting has been moved to Wednesday of the same week. Set your Calendars. If anyone has any concerns, please follow up with President Griffith.

Bob Anderson announced details of the Flag Pole Ceremony at American Village on June 21st. Bob started by showing a slide picture of the new Flag Poles taken at the BOM Meeting. Bob said that we still need another \$800 dollars for the maintenance fund. He is still accepting donations. The Dedication will begin at 10:30am up on the hill. The 2nd part will be a sit down lunch provided by American Village in Liberty Hall. Everyone is invited, but you must RSVP to Bob or to Jodie at the Village to participate in the lunch event. The Village will be open that day and tours will be available after lunch. Dress code for the event will be polo shirt and slacks unless you are participating in the event. Warren Alter will be the speaker making this a National event for the Color Guard. At this point, we will have Color Guard from Tennessee, Georgia, Mississippi and Georgia. Any questions should be directed to Bob Anderson.

Vice President-Ray Livingston

Recognition of JROTC Cadets is now complete for this year.

Next month’s speaker will be our Teacher of the year award winner, Jonathan Bragwell. You do not want to miss this presentation.

Chaplain –James Henderson

Nothing new to report.

Treasurer-Randal Jennings

Nothing new to report.

Registrar-Charles McMurry

TVCSAR Registrar's Report updated as of 2019 June 06. Several new prospects added since last month and are labeled as new in the report. There are two new registrations approved. Three SAR Applications were received at NSSAR since the last meeting for a total of six applications awaiting review.

Summary as of 06 June 2019:

1. SAR COMPATRIOTS REGISTERED AWAITING INDUCTION—2
2. SAR APPLICATIONS RECEIVED AT NSSAR AWAITING REVIEW — 6
3. SAR APPLICATIONS MAILED NOT RECEIVED AT NSSAR—0
4. SAR APPLICATIONS STARTED, NOT FINALIZED —24
5. SAR PROSPECTS: AWAITING PROSPECT'S FAMILY DATA INPUT – 52
6. SAR SUPPLEMENTAL APPLICATIONS APPROVED, CERT NOT AWARDED--0
7. SAR SUPPLEMENTAL APPS RECEIVED AT NSSAR AWAITING REVIEW—1
8. SAR SUPPLEMENTAL APPS MAILED NOT RECEIVED AT NSSAR—0
9. NEW SAR MEMBERS INDUCTED AT LAST REGULAR MEETING 13 May 2019 - 10

Recording Secretary-Benny Hannah

- Notes recorded in our monthly meetings are published by Jim Maples in our bi-monthly newsletter.
- Americanism Award data for 2019 is being collected and input into an official active SAR spread sheet. Need all members to please send e-mails of any Chapter activities outside our regular meetings to Benny Hannah. Please include any documentation or pictures.
- Pictures for the State Face Book page should be forwarded to Benny for inclusion in our State site. Randal also noted that we have a chapter Face Book page.

Corresponding Secretary-Jim Maples

The latest newsletter is posted to the website at www.tvcsar.org. There is a link on the home page or you can go to "Newsletters" where the latest issue is at the top.

John Hunt Society – Children of the American Revolution presentation by Jim Maples, and Bob and Kay Anderson

Our chapter is now over 220 members again.

Our August Speaker will be Tom Walker from American Village; he is a terrific Speaker and is also Chairman of the Alabama 200 Bi-Centennial.

Historian –Cliff Lanham

Absent, Cliff has a staph infection following some minor surgery. He is on an antibiotic drip at home.

Genealogist-Warren Adams

Absent

Committee Report:

Randal Jennings updated the chapter on the current Color Guard activities:

Recent activities included:

Wreath Laying – Memorial Day Ceremony

Color Guard – Memorial Day participation at The American Village

Upcoming Activities:

June 21st-Flag Pole Dedication

July 4th –American Village

Aug.10th-Grave Marking

Sept 17th-Athens State University

The Color Guard is still looking for new members. One of our challenges this year is to increase our numbers. If anyone is interested we have some extra uniforms. Please contact Randal for information.

Flag Committee- If you know of anyone who is properly displaying our Flag please let Randal know so he can recognize them with a flag certificate.

President Griffith indicated that he would like to regress and go back and recognize our 1st time guest or visitors that may be in attendance. Please stand and introduce yourself. Ron Bridges, Randy Morrison, Nancy Helms, Susan Elrod all stood and were recognized.

Visitors from Early Works Family of Museums (**Julia Coberly and Catherine Cape**) President Griffith thanked them for their attendance and indicated that he and some of the officers would meet with them after our regular meeting to discuss areas where we can work together.

NEW BUSINESS: (None)

Announcement- As part of the Bi-Centennial event, all six of the State constitutions will be on display at the Art Museum. The first is rolled up and considered to be the best. The last is considered the worst and is the one that we use now. The display will begin on June 30th and will run thru August 17th.

President Griffith made the following closing comments:

- Thank you greeters (**Ray Cassell** and **Danny Whitt**) Both of these individuals are new inductees and are already active participants in our Chapter. Make sure and thank them for joining us and playing an active role!
- Thank you Ladies Auxiliary for your undying support and for feeding us at every meeting! Your Efforts are appreciated more than you know!
- The Tennessee Valley Chapter, Sons of the American Revolution is a growing, dynamic organization that is active in our community. We are happy that you are here today! If you have any questions at all, please do not hesitate to ask a member or an officer.
- And don't forget, our next meeting will be: July 8th at 11am.

President Jim Griffith asked the group to stand for the dismissal prayer by Chaplain Henderson. Jim then led the group in the SAR Recessional.

President Griffith adjourned the meeting at 12:11PM.

Respectfully submitted,
Benny Hannah, Recording Secretary
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