



THE LONG KNIFE

Quarterly Newsletter of the Genl George Rogers Clark Chapter
Illinois Society Sons of the American Revolution

"Serving Madison County"

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GGRCC Honors 15 High School Seniors as Outstanding Citizens

These high school seniors from Madison and neighboring counties received Outstanding Citizenship certificates and pins April 24 at First Christian Church, Edwardsville, in an annual GGRCC ceremony. The students present and their schools were (first row, from left) David Zimmerman, Vandalia; Hannah Ditter, Triad; Mirena Pebley, Gillepie; Taylor Boodoram, Alton; Colton Evans, Cowden Herrick; and Alexandra Hachmeister, East Alton-Wood River. (Top row, from left) Aaron Mattix-Wand, Marquette Catholic; Chad Carter, Metro-East Lutheran; Daniel Sims, Collinsville; Nathan Early, North Greene; and Jacob Sparks, Granite City. Not present but honored were Mallory McCune, Bethalto Civic Memorial; Aaron Wilkinson, Edwardsville; Katie Carson, Brownstown; and Hannah McEnery, Staunton. GGRCC members who assisted were (left, from bottom) James C. Hicks, event coordinator Robert J. Stegemeier, Ronnie B. Hicks and (right rear) chapter President Jim DeGroff. Event speaker (rear center) was Col. Peter Wangler, Alton High ROTC supervisor. The students were nominated by their schools on the basis of dependability, cooperative spirit, leadership, service to their school and community and evidence of personal values and patriotism. Compatriot Stegemeier is retiring from oversight of the activity after conducting it for 14 years.

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President's Letter--By Jim DeGroff

. Thanks to all our chapter members, the GGRCC has 111 members this first part of 2014. It is because many of our great members have submitted their sons, grandsons , brothers and cousins for inclusion in our community-involved chapter. We look forward to many more active members. And don't forget all members are talented at something and just a little of their personal time is all that is expected to be involved with the chapter. We always need help. Some members rarely come to meetings but do a superb job at some of our high profile award presentations. So you see you don't have to come to meetings to be part of our chapter. Thanks to all those who volunteer.

Eagle Scout Awards continue to be a very visible and rewarding outreach for our chapter. See separate story for five recent awards. My personal thanks to Ronnie Hicks and Bill Johnson for their continued assistance in the Eagle Scout program.

On April 24 GGRCC held its Outstanding Citizenship Award Ceremony for high school seniors (see separate story). Our sincere thanks to Compatriot Bob Stegemeier for his 14 years of service in coordinating the gathering of nominations and the award presentation. Bob is retiring from his chairperson position and we need another member or members to step up,

On behalf of GGRCC, Chuck Dobias and I presented a bronze JROTC medal and certificate to Cadet Brandon Rose May 3 at Alton Senior High School, and a silver medal April 24 to Southern Illinois University-Edwardsville Cadet Jon D. Thompson of Troy.

GGRCC has received approval to install a Revolutionary Cemetery marker at the site of the Judy-Nix Pioneer Cemetery in Glen Carbon where the chapter has already placed markers for six Revolutionary War participants who came to Madison County. The new marker will tell their story and direct visitors to the commemorative markers. The new marker's cost is \$2,500. We have received \$1,000 from National SAR and \$500 from the Illinois SAR. We have taken \$550 from GGRCC funds to pay for the difference.

Many thanks to Tom Beavers for his relentless efforts in finding donations from the local area businesses and organizations including Rotary of Edwardsville. We now have the difference made up and will be depositing that back in our GGRCC funds. We have ordered the marker and it should be delivered by July.

The GGRCC color guard participated in several early 2014 events, including the DAR marking of the grave April 5 of Revolutionary War Pvt. Nathaniel Bell at Woodlawn Cemetery, St. Louis, and at the March 15 Benjamin Mills Chapter DAR Awards Day in Greenville.



Grant Thole, 16, Highland, receives Eagle Scout awards from his grandfather, GGRCC President Jim DeGroff (story on page 4).

Awards for GGRCC Members at Annual Illinois Society Meeting

The Genl. George Rogers Clark Chapter has received the Chapter of the Year Award for the second time in three years in medals and awards announced in May at the annual meeting of the Illinois Society--Sons of the American Revolution.

GGRCC President Jim DeGroff was recipient of the State Medal of Distinguished Service and a certificate for launch activities in the ILSSAR Cemetery Marking Program.

Awards for the Chapter included a Presidential Citation Certificate, a Joel Willis Newsletter Award Certificate for *The Long Knife* newsletter and a Flag Award streamer,

Meritorious Service Medals and Certificates for leadership in numerous activities were awarded to former GGRCC Presidents Alan Y. Harrison, William R. Feeney and Ronnie D. Hicks, former treasurer and student citizenship award chairman Robert J. Stegemeier and to Charles E. Burgess, editor of *The Long Knife* for a decade.

Medals for wartime military service were awarded to GGRCC members Dwight Alan Moore, Gary Smith, Chuck D. Dobias, John R. Roach and Robert M. Roach.

New Eagle Scouts Receive GGRCC Recognition at Courts of Honor

Early 2014 has been a prime season for Eagles in Madison County--for Boy Scouts who have earned Eagle rank and have received commendation at Courts of Honor from GGRCC. Chapter President Jim DeGroff presented most of the medals and scrolls, assisted by several other GGRCC members.

One of the recipients was Jim DeGroff's grandson, Grant Thole, a member of Troop 1040, Highland. Grant, 16, son of John and Denise Thole, was cited March 23 at the Highland Knights of Columbus Hall. His Eagle project was erection of a sign and fence at the Burgess Cemetery in Bond County, where two War of 1812 soldiers are buried.

Another Highland Eagle Scout, Phillip LaFrance, was recognized in a Court of Honor at the same time and place. The son of Chris LaFrance, Phillip's Eagle project was painting a map of the United States on the Highland Primary School playground.

A Court of Honor was held March 29 for Thomas Johnson of Troop 1031 at Eden Church, Edwardsville. A son of James and Barbara Johnson, Thomas, 18, attends Althoff High School. Compatriots Ronnie D. Hicks and James C. Hicks presented the awards.

Recognized at for attaining Eagle Rank at very young age were two 13-year-old Scouts.

Ethan Kercher, 13, of Godfrey Troop 7, was honored March 18. In 2 1/2 years he advanced from Tenderfoot to Eagle, qualifying for 28 merit badges plus an Arrow of Light Award. The son of Robert and Lisa Kercher, his Court of Honor was at Camp Warren Levis. He attends Evangelical Middle School. Ethan's Eagle project was designing an activity box for the Nature Institute.

A Court of Honor for Jonathan Andrew Turner, 13, of Troop 7, was held March 30 at Julia's Banquet Center, Alton. A son of Geoffrey and Kathleen Turner, Jonathan is a student at St. Ambrose School. He earned 38 merit badges in 2 1/2 years while rising to Eagle rank, and was named to the Order of the Arrow.

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