



## THE LONG KNIFE

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

"Serving Madison County"



### ***Student Outstanding Citizenship Award Recognition Ceremony***

High school seniors from Madison, Jersey and Macoupin counties received Outstanding Citizenship certificates and pins April 4 in an annual recognition ceremony by GGRCC at First Christian Church, Edwardsville. The students were selected by their schools based on dependability, cooperative spirit, leadership, service to their school and community and evidence of personal values and patriotism. The event continued to be coordinated by chapter member Robert J. Stegemeier. Eleven of the 13 chosen were present for the program. They were, with high schools, (R to L front row) Aaron Peach, Granite City; Rebecca Billings, East Alton-Wood River; Taylor Pile, Roxana; Hannah Warneke, Alton; Rachel Wieseman, Edwardsville; and Nathan Brown, Staunton. (L to R top row) Joe Mersinger, Triad; Jonathan Woelfel, Civic Memorial-Bethalto; Phillip Reedy, Southwestern; Travis Dunnette, Collinsville; and Mallory Stevens, Marquette Catholic. Not present were two awardees, Allison Wadsworth, Bunker Hill, and David McIntyre, Madison. Chapter members who assisted in the program were (at left) Lloyd E. Schwarz, behind Robert J. Stegemeier, and (L to R behind top row) Chapter President Jim DeGroff, Tom Beavers, Tom Lawrence, Ronnie Hicks, Sam Akeman and Jim Hicks.

*The Long Knife* is a quarterly publication of the Genl. George Rogers Clark Chapter, Illinois Society, Sons of the American Revolution.

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Luncheon meetings held the third Wednesday monthly at Edwardsville Moose Lodge, 7371 Marine Rd. (IL Rt. 143)

## President's Letter

By Jim DeGross

It is with a very heavy heart that I report the death of Charles Benjamin Schweizer, founder of GGRCC. He passed away May 12. His vision, inspiration and service have guided our chapter since its founding Feb. 22, 1986. My sincere thanks to all of the 15 chapter members (plus two from other chapters, Bob Blanchard and Jim Wallace) who attended and participated in our memorial service for him. He will be missed.

In March, Ronnie Hicks and I were privileged to be the color guard at the Edwardsville Chapter DAR grave marking ceremony at Valhalla Cemetery in St. Louis honoring past regent Eleanor Schweizer. Charlie was there with his daughter Elizabeth, son-in-law Carl Saunders and two grandsons. The family had installed a beautiful granite stone bench with all the symbols inscribed for organizations both Eleanor and Charlie served. Pam Smith, Edwardsville DAR regent, and her husband Larry were hosts for the grand event.

At the March 20 GGRCC board of managers meeting the board voted to expand coverage to Calhoun, Montgomery and Bond counties. The board also authorized a new Minuteman uniform for color guard use.

The chapter combined its April monthly meeting and spring trip with a visit to the Bond County site Hills Fort, a reconstruction a War of 1812 frontier post, in Greenville. Lunch was provided by "chefs extraordinaire" John Coleman and Bill Johnson. Bill Johnson gave an interesting talk, illustrated by what he was wearing, about the clothing of the early settlers and soldiers, and Tom Beavers described and demonstrated the firearms of the time.

Eagle Scout Awards continue to be a very visible and rewarding outreach for our chapter. Awards were presented on March 10, April 20 and 21 and May 19. The chapter presents a certificate and an impressive patch which can be worn on the scout's uniform. Many thanks to Tom Lawrence and Bill Johnson for their continued support of the Eagle Scout program.

On behalf of GGRCC, I presented a bronze JROTC medal and certificate to Cadet Gage Counts April 20 at Alton High School and a silver medal to Southern Illinois University-Edwardville Cadet Joshua Lisenby April 25. Did you know that GGRCC also sponsors the awarding of a JROTC medal and certificate to a cadet at a Marine base in Japan?

Ours chapter held a grave marking ceremony May 11 for a Revolutionary War soldier at Kirkland Cemetery in Montgomery County near Sorento. Joseph Evans Sr. was a private in Capt. Joseph Crockett's Company, Col. McClanahan's 7th Regiment of Virginia Militia, and in Capt. James Parr's Company in Col. Morgan and Col. Butler's regiments. Thanks to Bill Wilson, Bill Johnson, Bob Ridenour and Roger Meyers for attending.

Once again, GGRCC was scheduled to participate in the Alton Memorial Day Parade May 27. With more of our members in uniform, the more impressive is our participation in these events.

Col. (Ret) Charles B. Schweizer, founder, first president and active member of GGRCC for 27 years, died May 12 just a week short of his 100th birthday. He was the second leader of the chapter to die in recent weeks.

The other was Donald E. Campbell, chapter president 2005-2007, on March 6 in Florida, where he moved after his service to the chapter.

Charles Schweizer, retired from 30 years of Army service and living in Edwardsville, had a strong interest in family genealogy and had known for some years that he had Revolutionary War ancestors. In 1980 he was approved for SAR membership and affiliated with the Lewis and Clark Chapter in nearby St. Clair County.

But he felt that members could be found to form a chapter in Madison County. His efforts were successful and GGRCC was chartered in February 1986. Many of the members he recruited then and later served in chapter and state SAR positions, and Charles held offices (including state president) and won high awards in the state and national SAR societies in subsequent years.

He was born May 18, 1913 in Maplewood, MO. After his family moved to Vicksburg, MS, he graduated in 1936 from Louisiana State University, Baton Rouge. He then began service as an Army second lieutenant. While in the service, he earned a master's degree in civil engineering at the University of California, Berkeley.

His military career included war and peacetime service in the United States, the Caribbean, Great Britain, Germany, France and Korea. He returned to the St. Louis area in 1941 to marry Eleanor Noxon of Webster Groves. When it was possible, his wife and growing family accompanied him to foreign assignments.

They were parents of a son, Charles, and two daughters, Anne and Elizabeth. Charles Sr. and Eleanor were married for 70 years before her death in 2011. One of Charles' business cards called himself "Father, Grandfather and Great-Grandfather Extraordinaire." There have been nine grandchildren and 18 great-grandchildren.

Late in his Army career, Charles was commander of the Corps of Engineers, St. Louis District, and the Granite City Army Depot. During his watch, the Corps was responsible for engineering projects maintaining the Mississippi River levees, for overseeing the construction of Rend, Shelbyville and Carlyle Lakes in Illinois, and technical specifications for the St. Louis Arch.

After retiring in 1966, Charles served 10 years as executive director of the Southern Illinois University-Edwardsville Foundation. He and his wife continued to sponsor numerous educational scholarships and awards, including in recent years a statewide award for high school history teachers who stress Revolutionary War information.

Besides his many years of SAR activities, Charles was a 32nd degree Master Mason, including Junior Warden and Worshipful Master of the Grand Lodge in Orleans, France. In recent years and up to the time of his death, he was active in offices the Illinois Society of the War of 1812.

Charles is buried beside wife Eleanor in Valhalla Cemetery, St. Louis. GGRCC President Jim DeGroff reported that a bagpiper and an Army detail commanded by a colonel were at the grave site. The detail folded the flag that was on the coffin and the colonel presented it to Charles' son.

Donald E. Campbell, born Sept. 12, 1941, was a Marine veteran and retired administrator at the Alton Health Center. He joined GGRCC in 2003 and immediately took charge of patriot grave marking ceremonies which had lapsed for several years. His wife Marilyn provided research on deaths and burial sites of Revolutionary veterans.

They moved to Florida to be close to a daughter and grandchildren. After Donald's death his widow donated his uniform to GGRCC.

## First Entry Sponsored by GGRCC Wins Knight Essay Award

In its 27 years, GGRCC has conducted many activities but not youth participation in the annual Knight Essay competition--until this year, with a single entry that won the top state award.

The essay, which focused on Revolutionary War-era statesman John Jay, was written by Ben Pinkley of 151 Holiday Dr., Edwardsville. His entry was judged best over 17 from other parts of the state. GGRCC President Jim DeGroff said the essay came to his attention after the chapter tentatively planned to begin participation in the essay contest.

Ben Pinkley received a special certificate and \$500 award for winning the state contest at the ILSSAR awards luncheon May 19 in Springfield.

A son of Wes and Melissa Pinkley, Ben maintains a 4.33 grade point average in home schooling (high school level graduation expected in 2014). He had previously received superior ratings for exhibits in regional and Illinois state history competitions and the regional science fair. He also has had major roles in several Community Theater productions.

The Knight Essay entry noted that John Jay lost popularity because of his major role in negotiating the final peace treaty with England "The American people didn't want peace with England, they wanted atonement, some even called for war....Jay found that he had been elected governor of New York in his absence. Though many people hated him and the news media slandered his name, he was still able to organize his state and abolish slavery in New York . . . .

"John Jay's life is an example of order ... His efforts for peace and independence helped develop a working nation . . . . John Jay should be thanked and remembered; for without his calculating mind and his passion for a peaceful community our country would not have had such a successful beginning."  
--Jim DeGroff

### **Membership in GGRCC is Second Highest Among Illinois SAR Chapters**

GGRCC now has 107 members this first part of 2013. President Jim DeGroff said this number is second highest among Illinois SAR chapters. "It is because many of our great members have submitted their sons, grandsons, brothers and cousins for inclusion in our community involved chapter." The GGRCC membership has nearly doubled in the last two years.

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