



## 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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### Young Hero, Trained in Scouting, Honored for Saving Injured Sister



*Andrew Goeken, 13, received June 5 a hero citation and medal from GGRCC for quick action which saved his sister from possibly bleeding to death April 17. Andrew, of Godfrey, applied pressure until an ambulance arrived when the sister, Caroline, 12, suffered a compound elbow fracture and severed artery in a trampoline accident at their home. Andrew, a recent graduate of Alton Middle School, said he learned the emergency procedure in Boy Scouts. His parents (seated), Lonnie and James, a Madison County deputy lieutenant, observed the ceremony. The presentation at the Godfrey Village Hall was by GGRCC members Lloyd E. Schwarz (left) and (from right) James C. Hicks, Alan Y. Harrison and President Ronnie D. Hicks.*

### GGRCC Members Recognized at Illinois State Society SAR Congress

A number of GGRCC members were recognized with awards at the 122<sup>nd</sup> State Congress of the Illinois State Society SAR: **Lifetime Achievement Award and Trophy**, Charles B. Schweizer; **Rosette**(attendance): William D. Wilson, Charles V. Casey, Chris Casey; **Joel Willis Newsletter**: Long Knife; **Perfect BOM Meeting Attendance and Flag Displays**: GGRCC; **War Service**: Samuel D. Akeman, David L. Conant, George L. Cook, Raymond J. Robinson, Eric V. Reelitz, William B. Warren, William D. Wilson; A. Robert Shaak, David M. File and George V. Casey. James A. DeGroff Jr. received a **Patriot Medal**, **Silver Color Guard Award**, **Membership Growth Award** and with wife Lola the **Genealogy Education Award**. Lola DeGroff also received the **Daughters of Liberty Award**.

*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 third Wednesday monthly at Edwardsville Moose Lodge, 7371 Marine Rd. (Rt. 143)

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## President's Letter

By Ronnie D. Hicks

The GGRCC conducted the annual Flag Day Program at the Lewis and Clark Confluence Tower in Hartford June 14. Chapter member and Past President Tim Raymer was chairman of the event. The 17 GGRCC ceremonial flags and the 50 state flags were on display. Thanks to Compatriots Burgess, DeGroff, Jim Hicks, Meng, Raymer, Reelitz, Shaak, Windland and Wilson for attending the program or assisting with the placement of the flags. Special thanks to Kevin and Jason Raymer for assisting, to Bill Wilson for a presentation of proper folding of the flag and to Ellen Henshen for singing "The Star Spangled Banner" and "America the Beautiful." Jim DeGroff provided a brief history of Flag Day.

The program drew one of the larger audiences of any GGRCC Flag Day, since it included a number of tourists who viewed the ceremony from high up in the soaring towers that mark the campsite of the Lewis and Clark expedition before its westward exploration. Boy Scouts, VFW Post 1308, Hartford and Confluence Tower officials received appreciation certificates for their assistance.

Several Eagle Scout commendations have taken place recently. On May 19 Bill Feeney recognized Triston Voss at First Presbyterian Church, Edwardsville. On June 24 at the Cornerstone Church in Godfrey Jim DeGroff, Al Oleson and I presented Eagle Scout Zachary Boren with a certificate, letter, and the SAR Eagle Scout patch. I appreciate the assistance and participation from compatriots DeGroff and Oleson, and a special thanks to Lola DeGroff for taking pictures of the court of honor ceremonies. On July 22 at the Cornerstone Church in Godfrey, Jim DeGroff and Al Oleson presented Eagle Scout Lucas Taylor with the Eagle Scout recognition items. On that day at Esic Baptist Church in Edwardsville, Jim Hicks and I presented Joshua Slaby with Eagle Scout commendation items.

The GGRCC sponsored little league team's season has ended. The team finished the season with 5 wins, 9 losses, and 2 ties. They played against the teams we sponsored for the previous two years that went to and won first place in the tournament last year.

We lost three members of GGRCC. I am saddened to announce the death of Harry Donald Laughlin July 22. Harry was a GGRCC member for a long time. I conveyed the chapter's condolences to Harry Laughlin's spouse Camilla Laughlin and the family. James J. "Jim" Kessler died Aug. 14. He chaired Eagle Scout court of honor activities for the chapter for several years. Compatriot William (Bill) Nix has moved to a retirement center in Suffolk, VA to be near his daughter who resides in Hampton, VA. He is transferring his SAR membership to the Norfolk, VA chapter.

Chapter members displayed the new Illinois Society War of 1812 float, built by Bill Johnson, in two parades. In the Alton Memorial Day parade May 28, Compatriots Johnson, Al Oleson, Jim and Lola DeGroff were on or following the float. Compatriots Johnson, DeGroff, Bill Wilson and myself participated in the Glen Carbon homecoming parade June 16.

The Genl. George Rogers Clark Chapter is very appreciative for the recruiting of several new members by Vice President Jim DeGroff. Please ask your friends and relatives if they are eligible to become a member of the SAR. Public awareness is very essential to the survival of the chapter.

GGRCC meetings are conducted on the third Wednesday of each month at the Edwardsville Moose Lodge located on Rt. 143, Edwardsville. The luncheon begins at 11:30 a.m. with the actual meeting begins around noon or shortly thereafter. If you are unable to attend the luncheon, perhaps you can attend the business session. Thanks to officers and event chairman for the difficult tasks you achieve.

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## Col. Schwiezer's Memories of World War II Duty on Atlantic Front

***Charles B. Schwiezer, founder and first president of GGRCC, continues active in the chapter at age 99, and this year received a Lifetime Achievement Award and Trophy from the Illinois Society SAR. He recently told caregiver Meghan Jones about his experiences in World War II. Following are excerpts from her transcription of his account. Editor's notes are in brackets.***

Out of all the students who died in WWII from LSU, 50 per cent of them were Charles Schwiezer's friends. [He graduated in 1935 with an engineering degree]. The *LSU War Memorial* sits in front of the Memorial Tower on the LSU Parade Ground. It was dedicated on Oct. 8, 1998, in memory of those who gave their lives in military conflicts from World War II through the present day.



Charles went into the army [1936] and asked to be stationed in Puerto Rico. None of his friends were sent to Puerto Rico. He was stationed from 1941-1943 at Fort Buchanan there. In May 1940 the location was designated as Fort Buchanan and expanded initially to 1,514 and later to 4,500 acres. During World War II, Fort Buchanan housed a depot supplying the Army Antilles Department. It also processed local troops through its replacement center. The industrial complex included pier facilities, ammunition storage areas and an extensive railroad network connecting the military installation to the bay. Puerto Rican soldiers were deployed for WW II and Korea from the train station located where the Golf Club is presently located, to the rail-connected Army terminal by the bay. At the time, Fort Buchanan served as a citizens training camp and soldier processing station. After WW II the post was gradually reduced to its current 746 acres. Location: Guaynabo, Puerto Rico / Major Command: United States Army (USARSO). Fort Buchanan is a primary site of military services in Puerto Rico. There he was ordered to push the Germans out into the ocean, in case they came on land. They [army units] were preventing the Germans from landing on Puerto Rico and using the airfields to bomb the Panama Canal. One of the main ways the United States sent supplies for the WWII war effort, in the Philippines, was the Panama Canal. German submarines surrounded Puerto Rico, cut off food supplies, imports and exports. At one point there were only two days of food rations left until the United States broke through the German lines to get supplies to the troops in Puerto Rico.

The Battle of the Caribbean refers to a naval campaign waged during World War II that was part of the Battle of the Atlantic from 1941-1945. German U-boats and Italian submarines attempted to disrupt the Allied supply of oil and other material. They sank shipping in the Caribbean Sea and the Gulf of Mexico and attacked coastal targets in the Antilles. Improved Allied submarine warfare eventually drove the Axis submarines out of the Caribbean region, resulting in an Allied victory. One of Charles' friends was in the Philippines when the Americans surrendered. The Japanese marched the Americans from the peninsula inland [The Death March]. If they fell out of line the Japanese shot them. His friend's ship was torpedoed by an American submarine but his friend wasn't killed. The Japanese took him to Hong Kong: from there he was sent to the Japanese coalmine. Fukuoka Mining Camp 17 was one of the mining camps, which was located near the town of Omuta. Prisoners would be used as slave labor to work in a coal mine that had been abandoned by the Japanese because it had been determined too dangerous to mine.

Charles came back to the states and was stationed in Washington. Then he came to Granite City to run the Army Depot School. In 1945 Americans dropped the atomic bomb and the Emperor of Japan surrendered. If they had not surrendered Charles would have been in the landing forces but his orders got changed after Japan surrendered. After Granite City Charles went to Arkansas to participate in creating Boshal Stand, a big lake. Next he was stationed in Germany. During the Vietnam war Charles was stationed in Granite City at the Army Depot. The Army Depot shipped out supplies for the Vietnam War. He aided in the planning of Vietnam Forts including Camron Bay fort.

## GGRCC Honoree, Medal of Honor Winner, Is Revered in Europe

Near the end of a Rhine River cruise in May I toured WWII battlefields in the Alsace. That area just west of the Rhine was the site of a mountain pass and bridges crucial to the Allied push from Northern France into the Nazi homeland.

The tour narrator was outstanding, citing endless descriptions of the units involved, their movements, counter movements, and strategy.

One of the heroic acts he described was of a US Army sergeant who was often chided by his fellow GIs for the amount of ordnance he would carry—carbine, sidearm, extreme amounts of ammunition and grenades. On Jan. 8, 1945, near Kayserberg, France, his company of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Infantry Division was pinned down by three Nazi machinegun nests and taking heavy casualties. The sergeant single handedly assaulted one nest with several grenades and then used their machine gun to eliminate the other two. Continuing uphill, he defeated several other Nazi positions before being wounded in the back.

He hid in a pickle barrel but was subsequently captured by two Nazi soldiers whose argument over which of them should keep the cigarettes taken from the sergeant was so heated that they failed to fully search him for other weapons. During transfer toward enemy lines he retrieved a pistol from beneath his winter clothing, killed his captors, and made his way back to allied lines. He was awarded the Medal of Honor for his heroics.

That sounded like a scenario I'd read about, but had no reason to think that it had any special significance to me.

Much later in the tour the guide mentioned the name of the technical sergeant was Russell E. Dunham. That name indeed rang a bell. T/Sgt. Dunham was honored at GGRCC's Revolutionary War Patriot Commemoration ceremony in 1998. The patriot honored that year was Private William Bates who had served in the North Carolina Militia. The ceremony was held in a field adjacent to the Lockhaven Country Club in eastern Jersey County, near where Pvt. Bates had once lived. Sergeant Dunham spoke briefly, was lauded by the chapter, and received extensive publicity in the *Alton Telegraph*. About 300 Bates descendants and area residents attended the ceremony.

The complete citation for which Sgt. Dunham received the Medal of Honor can be read at [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Russell\\_E.\\_Dunham](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Russell_E._Dunham). Dunham died in Godfrey in 2009.

Incidentally, it was during another January 1945 battle near Kayserberg that Lt. Audie Murphy performed the heroic acts that put him on the path to become America's most decorated soldier. A monument to Murphy stands near the battlefield.--**Harry K. Windland**.

## Schweizer History Teacher Award Goes to Pope County Elementary Teacher

The recipient of the fourth Illinois Society SAR History Teaching Award is Seth Graves, who has taught five years in 5<sup>th</sup> through 8<sup>th</sup> Grade at Pope County Elementary/Jr. High School, Golconda. The \$500 award was established by GGRCC founder Charles B. and Eleanor N. Schweizer.

Seth Graves, is a graduate of Southwestern Illinois College and Southern Illinois University. In addition to teaching he participates in War of 1812 ranger activities and has portrayed Genl. George Rogers Clark for SAR and DAR functions.

In the nomination, Principal Ed Blankenship said "One of his greatest assets is his ability to bring the past to life by his portrayal of several key historical figures. Students follow every word . . . and they all showed up at the Fort Massac encampment where Seth was reenacting."

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