



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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September 2013



The GGRCC Flag Day program on June 14 was held for the second straight year on the spacious grounds of the Lewis & Clark Confluence Towers in Hartford, which provided an impressive setting for the chapter's 50 state and 19 historic flags. Chapter Chaplain Lloyd E Schwarz (at podium) narrated descriptions as each of the historic flags was displayed by Troop 1031 scouts and their leaders, assisted by chapter members William E. Johnson (left) and Albert A. Oleson. The flag array included for the first time banners commemorating two recently deceased GGRCC presidents--chapter founder Charles B. Schweizer (*Fort Moultrie*) and Donald E. Campbell (*An Appeal to Heaven*). Two daughters of Schweizer, Anne van Giessen and Elizabeth Saunders, attended and were introduced. The program was organized by chapter Vice President Marvin A. Meng. Baritone Don Bradford sang the *Star Spangled Banner* and *God Bless America*. Chapter President Jim DeGroff spoke on the history of Flag Day.

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

Charles E. Burgess, Editor

Lola DeGroff, Associate Editor

Send announcements, items of interest and member news to:

Editor, *The Long Knife*

6264 Lanterman Drive

Bethalto IL 62010

Phone: (618) 377-6010

Email: cbur305325@aol.com

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

President's Letter by Jim DeGroff

What is the measure of a successful chapter?

Is it membership? We have certainly done that. GGRCC is now the second largest chapter in the state with 112 members, but with Fox Valley near Chicago running a very close second. Don't forget, if each of you recruit one new member think what we can do! And remember our family plan for brothers, sons and grandsons.

Or is it programs? We have a chairman for all the programs in the SAR handbook. And all of our chairmen are doing an excellent job with their programs. More help is always appreciated. If there is a certain committee that interests you, let us know. There is always something you can do to help or it can be good training for you to be that chairman.

Is it the members who come to the monthly meetings at the Moose? Last month we had 35 members and two guests at our meeting, a record attendance. And I thank each and every one of you for being there.

I submit to you that participation is the key to a successful chapter. Most of us are very busy and I for one appreciate that you make GGRCC a priority.

These are a few of the greatest pleasures of being an SAR president: Presenting awards to our community youth, presenting Flag Awards, and recognizing our community heroes. It is so enlightening to be at an Eagle Scout Court of Honor and hear about the great things these young men are accomplishing. The families

love having our members present to make it more worthwhile.

Another is the Outstanding Citizens Awards presented to high school seniors. It is amazing to see what these high school students are accomplishing and to hear about their outstanding character.

Have you attended one of the Flag Award programs at the Madison County courthouse? It does my heart good to see so many Americans who are proud of the Flag every day.

My heart bleeds red, white and blue every time our chapter presents its historic flag program.

So where does your interest lie? The chapter chairman can always use help scoring essay papers for our Knight Essay Program, setting up flags, or distributing chapter brochures. There is always something you can do. Just tell us what you like to do and how much time you are willing to provide.

There is a great measure of pride in what our chairmen have accomplished. So I ask all of you to help us and reach out to our program chairmen and take a little time and join us in celebrating the great work of members of our community by attending our events.

GGRCC activities for early autumn will include a tent at the Latzer Homestead Days, Highland, Sept. 6-8 and the membership fall day trip in October to a civil war-type fort and Indian artifacts collection at Germantown.



Edwardsville Scouts (from left) Drew Tojo, Aaron Wilkinson and Bryan McPherson receive awards from GGRCC President Jim DeGroff.

Honor Courts See Eagle Scouts Receive SAR Medal

Several scouts from the area who had just earned Eagle rank received SAR medals and patches in recent months. GGRCC President Jim DeGroff and other chapter members made the presentations.

Benjamin Gabel and Jai Kansai were given the SAR honors May 19 at First Baptist Church, Edwardsville.

John Alexander Cousley received the medal and patch July 28 at St. Ambrose Catholic Church, Godfrey. He earned about 40 merit badges and was named to the Order of the Arrow and Arrow of Light. His special Eagle project was beautification of the Alton Visitor's Center.

Three scouts received the Eagle awards Aug. 17 at Eden United Church of Christ, Edwardsville: Drew Tojo, Bryan McPherson and Aaron Wilkinson. (Aaron is a son of Siobhan Wilkinson, one of the caregivers for the late Charles E. Schweizer, founder of GGRCC).

Stephen Edward St. John received the medal and patch during ceremonies Aug. 31 at St. Ambrose Church in Godfrey.

And Other GGRCC Activities

In addition to the "Man of the Year" Award for GGRCC President Jim DeGroff (see Pg. 4), the chapter received the following awards this year at the ILSSAR annual meeting.

Good Citizenship Award for William R. Feeney, chairperson of the chapter's annual flag display awards program. The chapter also received an award for general flag activities, and a Joel Willis Newsletter Award for *The Long Knife*. Ray Robinson received a World War II Service Award and Medal

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President DeGroff and other chapter members arranged for the SAR remarking of stones commemorating Revolutionary soldiers at Vaughn Cemetery, Wood River, and July 21 at Nix-Judy Cemetery, Glen Carbon. Patriot ceremonies were held in past years for the veterans: Isham and Richard Randle, Henry Thornhill and Jonas Wright at Nix-Judy. The new marker for John Rattan at Vaughn Cemetery will be placed in 2014.

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GGRCC members who participated in the Alton Memorial Day Parade May 27 were President DeGroff with his wife Lola, Eric V. Reelitz, Albert A. Oleson, William E. Johnson and Robert Ridenour (1812 descendant).

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President DeGroff attended the July 4 dedication at Cahokia of a monument commemorating Capt. Jean Baptiste Hamelin, a Revolutionary soldier who served with George Rogers Clark.

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The chapter received approval from the state society to expand GGRCC services to Bond, Montgomery and Calhoun counties.

Awards at SAR State Meeting

President Jim DeGroff Named SAR State Man of the Year

Members of GGRCC received numerous awards at the annual meeting of the Illinois State Society SAR in May and additional recognition in August when GGRCC President James A. (Jim) DeGroff Jr. was cited as the state society's "Man of the Year."

In presenting the award, State President Bruce Talbot said, "I want to acknowledge the person we were not able to give an award to at the last meeting because he was attending the funeral of Charlie Schwiezer."

Besides his offices in GGRCC, Jim DeGroff has been secretary of the state society for several years. He "is our contact for all matters of the state society to SAR national in Louisville. He has taken his chapter and more than doubled the membership to where they are the second largest in the state . . . He was the selection of our state society for the Joe Smith Color Guardsman of the Year Award," Talbot said.

In the awards announced in May, President DeGroff also was recipient of the Distinguished Service of a Chapter President award and membership certificate of appreciation, plus (with his wife Lola) the genealogy award. Lola, who designed and maintains the chapter's website, also was recipient of the state society's Daughters of Liberty Award.

President DeGroff has been a member of GGRCC since 2008 and also served as treasurer, vice president and color guardsman and chaired several other activities.



GGRCC President Jim DeGroff (right) receives ILSSAR Man of the Year Award from State President Bruce Talbot.

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