



# The Hightower Recorder

Newsletter of the William Hightower Chapter  
Sons of the American Revolution



December 2020

*Patriotic - Historical - Educational*

2019 Ross Shipman Best Newsletter Award Recipient

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## This Month in the American Revolution

### Persistence Pays off at Christmas

By Stu Hoyt

As December approaches so does the end of a year. It is a time to separate the optimist from the pessimist. Many look at December as the commencement of a period of cold and dreary weather, others as a festive season to welcome in a New Year with grand opportunities. For the Continental Army it was more the former than the latter. Ever since the Patriots had pushed the British out of Boston, the conflict against the British Army and Navy had taken a turn for the worst. They were pushed off Long Island, out of New York and out of New Jersey. The positive of the Declaration of Independence on July 4, 1776 turned to doom and gloom as their untrained army hovered in the shivering cold of the Pennsylvania countryside on the west side of the ice filled Delaware River.

Their Commander-in-Chief, George Washington, needed a miracle to turn this negative into a positive. He was not only facing the end of a year of retreat and defeat, General Washington was also looking at a deteriorating army as most of their enlistments were up at the end of the year. Campaigns were not attempted in this season because the conditions were so unfavorable moving an army and all its equipment. To get

the most out of his fading army, Washington planned a daring attack on the British and Hessian troops wintering across the river in Trenton and Princeton.

His plan was a three-pronged attack on the City of Trenton. Two elements would cross



Washington Crossing the Delaware  
By Emanuel Leutze, 1851

the river south of town and the third from the north. The element of the attack was to surprise the enemy on Christmas morn thus the crossing had to occur on Christmas Eve so all units would be in place as the sun rose on Trenton. To keep it a surprise, the plan was restricted to a few of his closest generals.

Continued on page 5

### In this Issue...

This Month in the American Revolution.....	1
Coming Soon.....	1
President's Message.....	2
Rank Insignia in the Continental Army.....	2
The Resounding Echo of a Small Voice.....	3
Know Your SAR.....	4
Remembering Veterans We Could Not Stand With on Veterans Day.....	4
Small Shoes, Big Sound.....	4
Life Membership: What It Is and How It Works.....	5
Anniversaries and Birthdays.....	6
Texas Society Perpetual Membership.....	6
Officers and Committee Chairs.....	7

### Coming Soon...

- Dec 10: Chapter Meeting
- Jan 14: Chapter Meeting
- Feb 11: Chapter Meeting
- Feb 22: George Washington's Birthday
- Mar 4: NSSAR Spring Leadership Meeting
- Mar 11: Chapter Awards and Officer Elections
- Mar/Apr: TXSSAR Spring Leadership Meeting

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Email the Editor, Kris Krueger  
[krisk96@gmail.com](mailto:krisk96@gmail.com)

# Message from Chapter President Tom Jones



Well, this year is just about over, just a few more days. We have survived and obviously are looking for a better year in 2021.

I want to thank all our Compatriots that hung in there and keep our Chapter active and moving. We have developed outstanding programs for 2021 as we move forward.

We still have many challenges ahead of us that are being addressed and resolved.

To meet those challenges our Officers and Committee Chairman have reviewed our existing Chapter activities, programs, and budget to fulfill our Chapter's motto "Patriotic, Historical and Educational." This topic will be addressed at our upcoming Chapter Zoom meeting on Thursday, December 12 at 6:30 PM. Please attend for additional information.

To complete the three distinct missions in our motto we need everyone's help.

Currently, we have only a small number of our members "holding down the fort." Several are doing multiple programs. Our Chapter only has 13 members "holding down" 9 Officer Positions, 14 Committee Chairmen and 3 Communication directors.

Many of our requirements are not time consuming, they are only required for a little time during specific events. For instance, our ROTC awards (at 16 high schools and colleges) take only a few hours out of one day to present our medal and certificate to worthy cadets. Some, I am sure will have outstanding careers in defending our country. Everything else is done prior to that night. Some of our members wear Colonial uniforms/dress and some do not.

We give Scholarships to students, teach history about our Patriots in schools (working to extend this program into private and home schooling), attend community events to draw attention to our Patriots, pay respect to our fallen members, Honor our First Responders, recognize our citizens and organizations that display our National Flag with the proper respect, present proclamations to cities for honoring special historic days, provide a Honor and Color Guards for community events and ceremonies, and plenty of other activities.

I look forward to your attendance at our Chapter meetings and your dedication to fulfill your obligations to your Patriot(s). 🌟

-Tom

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## Rank Insignia in the Continental Army

### Part 3: The Early Role of Noncommissioned Officers and Their Uniform 1776-1779

By Ed Blauvelt and Kris Krueger

Noncommissioned Officers, or NCOs, are enlisted soldiers who attain leadership roles based on their experience. In the early days of the war, American NCO duties were patterned after their European counterparts with responsibilities mostly for discipline among the "rank and file" and ensuring soldiers stayed steady while in the line of battle.

In 1779, Baron von Steuben's Regulations for the Order and Discipline of the Troops of the United States, the "Blue Book," began evolving the role of the American NCO. Von Steuben incorporated more responsibilities in Continental Army NCOs, increasing responsibilities for leadership and training soldiers. While the "Blue Book" was not a renaissance for the role of NCOs, it broke several European traditions that would lead to the mid-1800s.

In particular, American NCOs received training and on the line. This was unique to stand on the line, load, and fire en masse. Firing in the correct general direction the French Charleville musket and its in-Bess, accuracy by individual soldiers could not hurt that American soldiers generally their European counterparts, either, in small advantages to a Continental Army British counterpart. Von Steuben applied

The other advantage the American tactical control and leadership at the small  
Continued on page 4



added responsibility for marksmanship, in for the time. In line tactics, soldiers' ability to stand on order was seen as the key to battle that was required. With the adoption of increased accuracy over the British Brown now play a bigger role in the tactics. It did had more experience with firearms than including aimed fire at a target. These were that lacked in almost every category to its these advantages to the role of the NCO. NCO had over the British was in increased unit level.

## The Resounding Echo of a Small Voice

by Stu Hoyt

Each year in December at over 120 cemeteries across this great nation wreaths are placed at the graves of veterans. The event, which started at Arlington National Cemetery, has spread across the Land of the Free and the Home of the Brave, is called Wreaths Across America.

The Patrick Henry Chapter of Austin, in conjunction with local DAR Chapters, started a remembrance ceremony several years ago to remember our fallen heroes on Memorial Day. Part of that ceremony included reading the names of those departed followed by the ringing of a bell. The performance of the service was cut short this year due to the limitations of social distancing put forth to contain the COVID-19 virus. A thirty-minute video was created to replace that ceremony.

Here it is almost nine months later and the ceremony to honor those heroes is still being hampered by the same restrictions caused by the pandemic. This year, it has affected the amount of money raised to pay for those wreaths. If sufficient funds cannot be obtained to set a wreath at every grave, flags will be used in their place. The flags used to honor over 3,200 graves at the Texas Cemetery in Austin on Memorial Day and Veterans Day will be placed at each grave on the day set aside for Wreaths Across America Day, December 18.

Doing his part to meet the goal for purchasing the wreaths is nine-year-old Remmer Machamer and this is not his first year at this worthy task. His personal goal is \$6,000 and he is well on his way to meeting that goal. To stay within the guidelines of the restrictions, the DAR and SAR are putting together another video ceremony. It was agreed to add the reading of the names most recently interred and the ringing of the bell to the Wreath Ceremony. Remmer Machamer was invited to read those names. The completed video will be available for the December Ceremony.

Filming took place at the entrance to the Texas State Cemetery on Navarro Street in Austin. In the picture below, from left to right are: Harry Tooke, age eight and youngest member of the Patrick Henry Chapter; Wayne Courreges; Remmer Machamer, nine years old and reading the list, also a new applicant to the SAR; Ken Tooke, President, Patrick Henry Chapter, Jim Clements, Secretary, Texas Society (ringing the bell); and Stu Hoyt of the William Hightower Chapter. Not shown is the narrator Robert Hites of the Patrick Henry Chapter. 🌟





# Know Your SAR



This Month: Texas Society Website and Self-Service

Have you visited the Texas Society website at this [link](#)? If you have, you have probably found a lot of information about our Texas Society and the SAR. There is also a private site with even more information for Compatriots. Did you know the website also offers self-service options to make your membership a little easier?

On the public site, you can:

Calculate your dues at this [link](#)

Renew your dues online at this [link](#)

On the private site, you can:

Update your contact information at this [link](#)

Request to transfer to other Chapters within the Texas Society at this [link](#)

Request a dues invoice at this [link](#)

Access National Society Membership information at this [link](#)

The private site also offers manuals, handbooks, forms, and other information to help with most of SAR's programs. The private site is username and password protected. If you need assistance accessing the private site, send an email to the Chapter Secretary, Kris Krueger, at [krisk96@gmail.com](mailto:krisk96@gmail.com).

## Remembering Veterans We Could Not Stand With on Veterans Day

By Steve Polk and Kris Krueger



Statue of the Crucifixion  
St. Peter & Paul Cemetery  
New Braunfels

As we honored our veterans for their service November 11, one of our Compatriots took some time to thank those veterans not with us this year to receive those thanks. Our immediate Past President Steve Polk and his wife, Henrietta, visited our veterans who are buried at St. Peter and Paul Cemetery in New Braunfels, placing US Flags at the grave sites of 200 veterans. We are grateful to all of our veterans, past, present, and future, for their dedication to serve our great nation and their sacrifices to ensure the sacrifices made by our Patriot ancestors were not in vain.

## Small Shoes, Big Sound

by Stu Hoyt

As the saying goes, "Great oaks grow from small acorns." So it is with SAR members, they all come from small shoes. The Texas SAR Color Guard has combined with VFW Post 6441 of Wimberley, Texas, to honor our veterans on Memorial Day and Veterans Day. This year we added Fourth of July. A few years ago, a park was constructed in Wimberley and dedicated as a memorial to veterans. A set of flagpoles were installed around the park for each of the services with the American Flag in the center.

Social distancing restrictions for the pandemic prevented a public event. The VFW Post 6441 members invited the Texas SAR Color Guard and a few friends to raise the American Flag and those of each of the services as its anthem was played. This year a new contingent was added to the Texas SAR Color Guard in the form of a little fife and drum corp. I say little because they were tiny, yet it did not stop them from producing a large sound.



From left to right, rear row: Mark Minutaglio (Asst. drum leader), Blair Rudy (TX SAR CG Comm/ William Hightower), Jim Horton (Patrick Henry). Frank Rohrbough (San Antonio), John Knox, Wayne Courreges, Henry Schenfelt, and Jim Clements (all Patrick Henry), Stu Hoyt, William Hightower, and Robert Hites and Fred Duncan of the Patrick Henry Chapter. Front row: Gavin Carlisle (4), William Minutaglio (8), Finley Carlisle (8), Rowan Carlisle (12), Liam Carlisle (9), and Ron Moulton (Drum leader/Patrick Henry).

## NCO Roles & Uniforms

Continued from page 2

This was only a shadow of the role NCOs play in the small unit command of today's Army, but it was revolutionary for its time. This American tradition began in the early days of the militias. The militias worked in smaller units that would be led by a Sergeant or Corporal, similar to today's squad. This increased the militia's ability to fight more agile Indian raiding parties, especially in the forested areas outside of towns and villages. By the time of the Revolution, this level of leadership was often a generally accepted part of the role of NCOs and would be incorporated into Americans tactics.

Because NCOs were still enlisted soldiers, their uniforms differed little from the Privates they oversaw. Sergeants wore the same uniform as the rank and file with a red cloth epaulet on the right shoulder, a red waist sash, and an iron hilt sword. Corporals wore a green cloth epaulet on the right shoulder, the same red waist sash and iron hilt sword. This was plenty to distinguish NCOs within the ranks because Privates wore no insignia.

Washington was a praying man but maybe his prayer was frozen in time because the weather turned for the worst as a freezing rain and snow began falling as the units mustered for the crossing.

The weather and the conditions of the river became so bad that one of the southern prongs turned back and the other never attempted the crossing of the river (at least that night). Washington had his best generals at his side. Henry Knox monitored every cannon as they crossed. The reliable John Glover directed his team of seamen navigating the Durham boats back and forth, even when they could not see the bow from the stern of the boat. Because of the weather and the conditions of the river, it took four hours longer to get everything in place on the east side of the river.

Washington divided his army into two columns under the direct of trustworthy veterans Nathaniel Greene and John Sullivan. Even though they were only nine miles north of Trenton, it was 4:00 a.m. before the march was started. Greene and Sullivan took parallel roads to Trenton. The element closer to the river was to approach the city from the south and the other from the north. Washington rode the line encouraging his troops. For Washington, this mission was "Victory or Death." General Sullivan sent a message to Washington that the weather had soaked the troops' powder. Washington replied. "Use the bayonet, I am resolved to take Trenton."

It was 8:00 a.m., long after dawn when the battle commenced. The element of surprise was almost lost when a shot rang out in front of the advancing troops. It seems that a New Jersey Militia unit, unaware of Washington's plan to attack Trenton, decided to have a skirmish of their own. A militiaman spotted a Hessian sentinel and fired on him. Sullivan's men were close enough to contain the situation and the enemy was not alerted. The rest of the battle is history. Because some of the Hessians escaped across the creek to the south and because it was such a trying event delayed by weather, Washington elected to take his win and his prisoners back across the river. Princeton would be another day. Persistence paid off for George Washington on this Christmas morning. It was the shot-in-the-arm that his army needed at that crucial moment in time. ⚙️

### Washington's Rules of Civility

#### Rule No. 82

Undertake not what you cannot Perform but be Careful to keep your Promise.

## Life Membership: What it Is and How it Works

By Kris Krueger

Like many organizations, the National Society of the Sons of the American Revolution offers a Life Membership option. A Life Membership is a one-time, lump sum payment that covers National Society membership dues for the rest of the member's life. Life Membership in the SAR is a little different than other organizations.

The SAR is organized into a federated system of the National Society, state societies, and chapters. Each Compatriot's total dues each year are broken into dues for the National Society, the Texas Society, and the William Hightower Chapter. Life Membership pays for all future dues for the National Society only.



When you become an SAR Life Member, all National Society dues are paid for the rest of your life. The Texas Society and Chapter are not covered in the Life Membership. There is still an opportunity to cover Texas Society and Chapter dues for life as part of the Texas Society's Perpetual

Membership. See the story in this month's newsletter on page 6, at this [link](#).

The cost of Life Membership is determined by age. The cost ranges from \$1,040 for age 1 to \$0 for age 100. The cost to be paid is determined at the time the application is submitted. For example, a Compatriot who is age 50 when he applies pays the rate for 50 years old, amounting to \$685.

Three requirements must be met to qualify for Life Membership. First, a Compatriot must be in good standing with the Society. That means dues are paid through the current year. Second, Compatriots must complete the application. This is form NLM-2014 ver 2, available at this [link](#). The form is submitted through the Texas Society Secretary. Finally, the fee is mailed with the application. The Texas Society Secretary will process the application and submit it to the National Society.

Life Membership means you will always be an active member of the National Society of the Sons of the American Revolution. Your Life Membership fee goes to national-level programs that promote the patriotism, history, and education for our patriot ancestors and their sacrifices and triumphs. ⚙️

*Happy Birthday to our Compatriots  
And Remembering our Patriot Ancestors*

**Happy Birthday, Compatriots**

Terry Hardemann, December 6  
Timothy Jones, December 23  
Michael Mark, Jr., December 6  
Joseph Scott, December 21  
Harold Storer, Jr., December 2  
Bill Washington, December 29

**Remembering our Patriot Ancestors**

Aaron Stebbins, ancestor of Allen Chandler born  
12/18/1747  
Charles Griffin, ancestor of Francis and Steven Griffin,  
born 12/1/1734  
Benjamin Tanner, ancestor of Timothy Killam, born  
12/1/1758  
Jesse Robinett, Sr., ancestor of Dick, David, and Rich-  
ard Robinett, born 12/3/1755  
George Mallow, ancestor of Dick Robinett, born  
12/22/1722

**HEAR YE! HEAR YE!  
Compatriot Society Anniversaries  
November**

Stuart Cox, 11 years  
Wendell Cox, 11 years  
Westley Hensley, 3 years  
James Shaw, 3 years  
Harold Storer, Jr., 2 years  
Harold Storer III, 2 years  
Norman Sanders, Jr., 1 year

Thank you for your continued service to our Soci-  
ety and your dedication to promoting patriotism,  
preserving American history, and promoting edu-  
cation to future generations

**The Texas Society's Perpetual Membership: A Lifetime for Texas**

By Kris Krueger

Hopefully, you have already read the article on Life Membership in the National Society, on page 5. You can check it out at this [link](#). The Texas Society also has a program that pays your dues for life: The Perpetual Membership. The Perpetual Membership is a 2-part program that pays your dues for life at the National, State, and Chapter levels.

The Texas Society's Perpetual Membership is completed in two parts. The first part of the program is to complete a NSSAR Life Membership. This part pays for all future NSSAR annual dues. Learn more about the NSSAR Life Membership in this newsletter.

The second part of the Perpetual Membership pays for all future Texas Society and chapter dues. This part goes through the Texas Society's Treasurer. It follows a similar pattern to the NSSAR Life Membership. First, be in an active membership status where your dues are paid current. Second, complete the Texas Society form, form TPM-2020.ver 3, available at this [link](#). Finally, pay the fee.

The fee for Perpetual Membership is twice the cost of the NSSAR Life Membership, with half going to the National Society and half to the Texas Society. The fee is calculated by age. The Texas Society allows the Perpetual Membership fee to be paid in four equal parts within a year.

The Texas Society recommends completing the NSSAR Life Membership process first. Compatriots are notified once the National Society processes Life Membership. At that point, Compatriots should complete the Texas Society's Perpetual Membership form. You can learn more about the Perpetual Membership process at the Texas Society's website by visiting this [link](#).

Compatriots who complete the Texas Society's Perpetual Membership are NSSAR Life Members and Texas Society Perpetual Members. Perpetual Membership fees go to a Texas Society investment fund, managed by a board of trustees. All money raised supports Texas Society programs to perpetuate the story of our Patriot ancestors.

# *William Flightower Chapter Leadership*

**2020-2021**

## **Officers**

President Tom Jones  
Vice President Ed Blauvelt  
Secretary Kris Krueger  
Treasurer Stan Trull  
Registrar Robert Duckworth  
Chaplain Don Chandler  
Historian Stu Hoyt  
Parliamentarian Cliff Caskey  
Sergeant at Arms Robert Duckworth  
Past President Steve Polk  
Webmaster Will Moravits  
Newsletter Editor Kris Krueger

## **Committee Chairs**

Color Guard: Blair Rudy  
Flag Awards: Tom Jones  
Finance & Budget: Stan Trull  
Fund Raising: Steve Polk  
George Washington Proclamations: Joe Cox  
Grave Marking: Cliff Caskey  
Medals, Awards & Citations: Kris Krueger  
Public Events: Patrick Hollis  
Public Service Awards: Lou Colontoni  
Publicity & Media: Will Moravits  
ROTC & CAP: Tom Jones  
Scouting: Kris Krueger  
Youth Awards & Contests: Will Moravits

