



## The Iowa Compatriot

The Journal of the Iowa Society, Sons of the American Revolution November 17, 2024

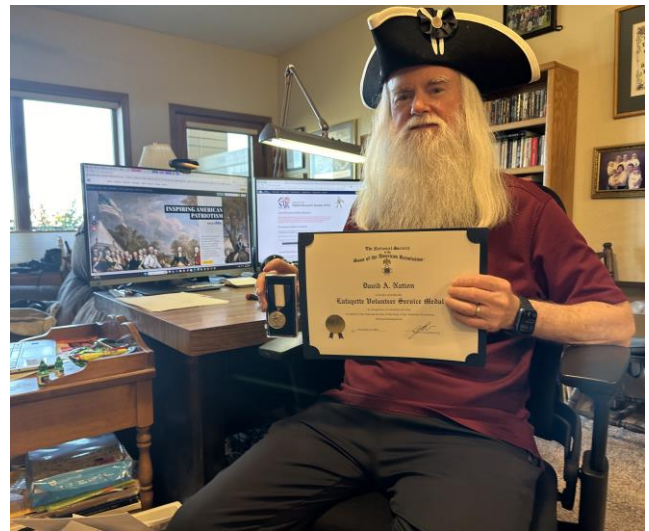
*We the descendants of the heroes of the American Revolution, who by their sacrifice established the United States of America, reaffirm our faith in the principles of liberty and solemnly pledge to defend them against every foe.*

### David Nation Receives Lafayette Volunteer Service Award

The National Society presents the Lafayette Volunteer Service Award to an individual for volunteer service performed at the national level. The award is presented when 40 hours of volunteer service have been accumulated.

In 2022 and 2023, David entered the data from 125 applications and updated a patriot page in the Patriot Research System for a total of 63 hours of service.

Congratulations David!



### Gravestone Cleaning a Focus

By Randy Lyon



Following several days of cool weather and brisk winds, part of the Dubuque cleaning crew of SAR members (Larry Hoelscher, Dennis Geesaman, and Randy Lyon) headed out on a pleasantly warm afternoon. Our attention this time was Mount Calvary Cemetery.

Seeking out and cleaning gravestones quickly spelled out a quick end to 90 minutes. The only problem was running out of pre-measured cleaning solution.

There is no doubt that D/2 does a fine job of cleaning—gravestones and your wallet. We have been using Wet & Forget with great results. Walking the rows of gravestones is also giving us definite sites for some long overdue repositioning of stones next spring.



## Compatriot and U.S. Army Veteran William F. Hecker III

By Matt Schwalm



Following the Army football game at West Point on Saturday, October 19<sup>th</sup>, I took a tour of the West Point Post Cemetery. I saw the grave marker at left of a fallen SAR member buried in the cemetery. Mike Rowley provided the following additional information about this compatriot from his obituary:

Hecker, 37, of St. Louis, was killed January 5<sup>th</sup> (2006) in Najaf by a roadside bomb. He was assigned to Fort Hood. He graduated from the U.S. Military Academy at West Point in 1991, where he studied engineering management and sang in the glee club, and received a master's degree in English from the University of Oregon in 2000. He went back to West Point, where he was an assistant professor for three years.

## Seven Gravestones Installed at Oakview Cemetery in Albia, Iowa

By Mike Rowley

On Sunday October 20<sup>th</sup> at 1:00 p.m. at Oakview Cemetery in Albia, Iowa, society members joined with local volunteers and 4-H members to install seven gravestones on the graves of previously unmarked Civil War veterans. These veterans served in the 4<sup>th</sup> Iowa Cavalry, the 8<sup>th</sup>, 9<sup>th</sup>, 36<sup>th</sup>, and 37<sup>th</sup> (Gray Beards) Iowa Infantry, and the 38<sup>th</sup> and 112<sup>th</sup> Illinois Infantry. Most of these men died in the early 1900s and recent research and documentation allowed volunteers to make application to the Veterans Administration for 240-pound granite military markers. The veterans whose graves were marked ranged in age from 16 to 65 when they mustered in. One of these veterans was born in 1797 and was a member of the famous Iowa Gray Beards. Most were privates and corporals. One was a drummer and fifer. They were born in Illinois, Indiana, Maine, Missouri, New York, Ohio, and Vermont. They all chose Iowa as their home after the war, where several worked as farmers and coal miners.



Extensive research from over 25 years ago by our own Stephen Stewart allowed us to pinpoint the locations of the graves. Local volunteer John Goode was persistent in seeing that these veterans were not forgotten and enlisted the local 4-H to assist in the installation of the stones.



## Urban Bicycle Food Ministry

Every Thursday night, Iowa SAR Registrar Randy Breese volunteers with the [Urban Bicycle Food Ministry](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qpam0Xklt0o&t=1183s) from 4:30 p.m. to 6:15 p.m. to prepare food for the homeless in Des Moines (800 burritos, 425 peanut butter and jelly sandwiches, and 425 turkey and cheese sandwiches). He often then goes out on a route to the various homeless camps from 6:15 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. to serve food and provide essentials (blankets, socks, flashlights, batteries, Band-Aids, etc.). Iowa PBS recently did a segment on this wonderful ministry, which you can watch at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qpam0Xklt0o&t=1183s>.



## Making An Impact on Holy Cross, Iowa

By Randy Lyon



Before you rush to your Google Maps to find this, Holy Cross is a wonderful small town northwest of Dubuque on Highway 51. One of our newest compatriots, Ken Smith, calls it home and he has brought the SAR to the community in a big way.

While working with several SAR and Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War members on gravestone rehabilitation, Ken learned more about what we do as organizations to aid our communities. He mentioned that an unnamed group of volunteers has for several decades taken it upon themselves to post flags on special days and maintain veterans' gravestones in the local cemetery. At our suggestion that this record of activity should be recognized, he volunteered to collect a list of names of people who had been involved.

Sponsored by the Iowa SAR, certificates of appreciation were purchased and filled out with the names. On October 25<sup>th</sup>, I drove to Holy Cross to get the recognition process started.

Edward Errthum lived down the street from Ken about two blocks. Ed is hospitalized right now, but as we drove up Mrs. Errthum met us in the driveway with one of the biggest smiles you have ever seen. Ken and I presented

her with Ed's certificate and left her with the decision whether to surprise him with it in the hospital or wait until he gets home. Either way, she was thrilled and very appreciative.

Among the others to receive certificates will be Patrick Maiers, Hank Lewis, Paul Ross, Barb Taylor, Hak Lucas, Jim Benkee, Jack Theisen, Bob Hayes, Jim Wulfekuhle, Ron Schultz, and Robin Ludovissy.

## Installation Complete for William M. Barr Headstone

By Tony Townsend

On Saturday, October 26<sup>th</sup>, we completed the headstone installation for Civil War Veteran Private William M. Barr (1842-1867) in Durant, IA. I had some great help with this one from several members of the Durant American Legion Post 430. We ran into an old concrete foundation that was in pieces about 12 inches down. Luckily, we had the tools there and a small tractor/loader to assist with the concrete.



Several of the guys pictured above are in their Color Guard and performed a ceremony at the gravesite on Veterans Day. Their Color Guard has won the American Legion state competition 15 times, and they just won their 6<sup>th</sup> National Competition.

## Henry Belmer, Union Veteran in Cedar Rapids

By Tony Townsend



I stopped by the Murdoch-Linwood Cemetery on October 31<sup>st</sup> and talked to Eric Londquist about Civil War Veteran Henry Belmer (1827-1900) who has a Confederate style headstone. Eric provided me with a couple more documents on this veteran. I also took a picture of the headstone to confirm what is shown on findagrave. All these have now been uploaded.

I had Eric sign the V.A. application and it is now in the mail, and I noted in the remarks this is to correct a Confederate Headstone that was issued by mistake. This one will be delivered directly to the Murdoch-Linwood funeral home/cemetery (they own both) as they do all the installations on that property. They will take out the Confederate headstone and install the proper Union Army stone probably in the April timeframe once the ground is thawed out. I would expect the headstone to be delivered in late February or March unless we have some delays.

This gravesite is on one of the grassy paths they use for maintenance and funeral processions, so it is very visible. You would think after 121 years someone would have noticed this and corrected it before, as it was installed way back in 1903.



## Gravestone Installation for Civil War Sailor Robert Cairns

By Mike Rowley

Civil War Sailor Robert Cairns, who served on the USS Benton gunboat in 1862 and 1863, finally had a military stone installed on his grave after 103 years. MOLLUS, SUVCW, and SAR member Mike Rowley joined with SUVCW and SAR member Bob Niffenegger to complete the project in Woodland Cemetery in Des Moines, Iowa, just in time for Veterans Day 2024. They also enlisted the help of a couple of the younger generation of the Andrew Ferin family of Des Moines.



*Left to right: Tony, Andrew, Vinny, Megan, Joe, and Louie Ferin.*

## Veterans Day Service by SAR and 1812 Member David Lamb

By Mike Rowley



Iowa SAR and War of 1812 member David Lamb continues the great tradition of VFW members "selling poppies" to benefit veterans in advance of Veterans Day 2024 in Grimes, Iowa.



## Gravestone Installed for Civil War Veteran James Saylor in Polk County

By Mike Rowley



On November 6<sup>th</sup>, 2024, members Bob Niffenegger and Mike Rowley installed a stone on the grave of Civil War veteran James Saylor of Company A, 23<sup>rd</sup> Iowa Infantry, who is buried in Pine Hill Cemetery in Polk County, Iowa. Flags were flown representing SUVCW Dodge Camp #75, the MOLLUS Iowa Commandery, and the Iowa Sons of the American Revolution.

## Never Looked Better

By Mike Rowley

The picture at right is the Woodland Cemetery Gold Star section after flag preparation and installation by volunteer Bob Niffenegger on November 10<sup>th</sup>, 2024, in honor of Veterans Day.

Bob painstakingly starches each flag, covers each staff with varnish, and paints the crown of the large flags before placing them. This allows for a longer life and ensures they still look great for the community-wide Wreaths Across America program each December.



## DAR Program at Iowa Veterans Cemetery in Van Meter, Iowa

By Mike Rowley



Members of the Iowa SAR including Jim Fosse and Mike Rowley joined with members of the DAR, C.A.R., local American Legion Honor Guard, as well as veterans and families at a ceremony in front of the DAR monument honoring the Revolutionary War patriots buried in Iowa at the Iowa Veterans Cemetery in Van Meter, Iowa. Shown at left are Mike Rowley and Jim Fosse with a wreath that was laid at the event.

There was a special moment after the ceremony as people were leaving. Looking directly above us in the sky we saw a beautiful American bald eagle.

## The SAR Honors Veterans

By Randy Lyon

It was one of the largest gatherings of musicians, veterans, and representatives of the community. The annual Veterans Day Celebration at the Mystique Ice Center certainly had the largest contingent of representatives from the branches of the military with an estimated 15 in uniform.

The crowd of approximately 150 heard a beautiful rendition of the Star-Spangled Banner and a speech by a young lady who had served in the Coast Guard. Pictured at right are Larry Hoelscher, Chaplain Charles Tharp of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Iowa Light Artillery and a new member of the SUVCW, Randy Lyon, and John Pregler, commander of the local camp of the SUVCW.



## Veterans Day at the Iowa Veterans Cemetery

By Mike Rowley

American Warrior Radio best described the keynote speaker at the 2024 Veterans Day ceremony at the Iowa Veterans Cemetery:



Special Forces Veteran Commander Sergeant Major Rick Lamb is somewhat of a legend in the community. He has led soldiers in operations spanning across 49 countries and five continents. He was involved in almost every major battle from Operation Eagle Claw to Operation Iraqi Freedom. Rick is a member of the SOCOM Commando Hall of Honor, the Ranger Hall of Fame, and was 2015 recipient of the Bull Simmons Award for soldiers who embody the true spirit, values, and skills of a Special Operations warrior.

*Left to right: Rick Lamb in the WWI uniform of his grandfather, David Lamb, and Mike Rowley*

To Iowa SAR members, Rick is better known as the nephew of Compatriot David Lamb. For an interview with Sergeant Major Rick Lamb, see <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gDu8XJpbGaM&t=63s>.

## Veterans Get Treated Well in Dubuque

By Randy Lyon

Thanks to the sponsorship of the Iowa Society SAR, the veterans in Dubuque were very well treated on the day after Veterans Day in Dubuque. Due to the holiday and the VA Clinic being closed, we scheduled our visit for Tuesday, November 12<sup>th</sup>.





First on our list was the Veterans Clinic in Dubuque. A quick inspection of the crowd of potential patients revealed that they were already being treated with donations from other groups. This gave us a chance to offer our thanks to the staff of the clinic which does such a great job of treating our former military. One staff member who we met in the hallway on the way to the lunchroom welcomed the opportunity of serving as a staff representative receiving our glazed donuts.

Our second stop proved just as satisfying. The Dubuque Veteran's Freedom Center is a huge one-story building which has quickly filled its space. It serves as a rehabilitation center for hundreds by offering shop classes (wood and metal work), a place to have a cup of coffee and chat, pool tables, fishing trips, a source of wheelchairs and other equipment, and a reclamation center for plastic bottles where the money is then reinvested in the center.

Larry and I have been here before for the same Veterans Day celebration. When the receptionist asked whether our food needed refrigeration, I commented that I doubted it would last that long. Those in the canteen proved us right.



## The DAR in Marion Welcome a Program

By Randy Lyon



Last year, at a reinternment ceremony in Monticello for a sailor killed at Pearl Harbor, I was asked if I would consider presenting a program on the activities of the SAR in Iowa. I had no idea how lucky I was to agree.

The day started off wonderfully as the manager of the McDonald's in Marion stopped to chat. He was interested in the uniform, and being a veteran himself, was interested in all things military. He shared with me a picture of the gravestone of a Revolutionary War soldier he had found near Milwaukee. I could have stayed a lot longer, but I had a job to do.

I was given good directions to the home of the DAR member in charge of the meeting. Once I was driving along South 11<sup>th</sup> Street, it took only a moment to see the yard festooned along the street with eight good-sized American flags in addition to the one on the house.

Kara Shelton, the woman who had invited me, did not live at the address, but she was quick to welcome me into the room where the meeting was to be held. I did not know until a bit later that she had some especially great news to share. Her son, Lance, had just received confirmation of his being approved for membership in the SAR. I had worked on his application with Randy Breese.



My 38 years in the classroom telling stories quickly kicked in. I recounted the accomplishments of our society across the state with an emphasis on working with others to achieve our goals. From the creation of the memorial of Jean Marie Cardinal to the repositioning of gravestones and the enormous amount of activity getting new stones researched, ordered, and delivered. I doubt any of them will comment on “all the stuff in the garage” to their husbands after hearing of the dozens of gravestones delivered to the house of Mike Rowley. They attempted to reimburse me for travel expenses, but I gave them back the money with thanks, telling them that I should be the one paying them!

As soon as I got back in my car, I called Lance Shelton to congratulate him on becoming a member.

## **Installation of Two Gravestones in Appanoose County**

By Mike Rowley

On November 14<sup>th</sup>, 2024, the research and work started by Centerville native Larry Wright allowed the marking of the graves of two Civil War veterans of Appanoose County, Iowa. Lieutenant Nathan N. Snedeker, who served in Company G of the 36<sup>th</sup> Iowa Infantry and died in 1866, and William J. Conger, a private in Company I of the 36<sup>th</sup> Iowa Infantry who died in 1862, are both buried in Hism Cemetery, near Exline, Iowa.

Ron Eddy, the local cemetery trustee, joined with Larry Wright of the Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War (SUVCW), Mike Rowley, a member of the SAR and the Military Order of the Loyal Legion of the United States, and Tom Sager of Seymour, Iowa, and a member of the SUVCW and the General Society of the War of 1812 to install the 240-pound granite stones provided by the Veterans Administration. These local organizations have placed over 380 stones over the last several years.



*Left to right: Ron Eddy, Mike Rowley, Larry Wright, and Tom Sager*

## **Work Toward a Silver Color Guard Medal During Your Next Trip**

By Randy Lyon and Chris Moberg

SAR Color Guard members who participate in chapter or state Color Guard activities for three years are eligible to receive a Bronze Color Guard Medal. But did you know that Color Guard members can, during the same three years, earn a Silver Color Guard Medal also? To earn a Silver Color Guard medal, you must participate in three district or national Color Guard events per year for three years.



National Color Guard events come in two varieties. The first type consists of events that are designated as National Color Guard events in the SAR Color Guardsman Magazine. For a list of these events, see the latest SAR Color Guardsman Magazine (<https://www.sar.org/committees/color-guard-committee/>) and go to the National Color Guard Events page. Most Revolutionary War activities occurred in the East and therefore many of the events are held there, although spring and fall leadership meetings in Louisville, Kentucky, and summer Congresses held at different locations each year are also possibilities.

The other type of National Color Guard event can be participated in locally. Washington's Birthday, Memorial Day, Flag Day, Independence Day, Veterans Day, Wreaths Across America, Massing of the Colors, Honor Flights, Fields of Honor, Healing Field, and Liberty Tree events all count as National Color Guard events. If you have a continental or militia uniform, begin now to photograph yourself in uniform at one of these events. Send the picture and a description of the event to Chris Moberg for inclusion in the newsletter.

If you happen to be planning a trip East next summer, look at the list of National Color Guard events in the SAR Color Guardsman Magazine. Pack your uniform and you are on your way! Email the state society hosting the event and tell them of your interest in participating with their Color Guard. Randy or Chris can find an email address for you to contact the state society. Your family will enjoy watching you participate, the opportunity to "sleep in," or a chance to do a bit of exploring on their own. Again, get a picture of you being there and send it to Chris Moberg for inclusion in the newsletter. These events bring in hundreds of visitors and are great fun. Add one to your trip next year!

## Turbulent Symbol: The Liberty Tree

By Randy Lyon



England see than a stampman hanging on a tree!"

A crowd of protestors took the effigy of Oliver to his house. They proceeded to behead and burn the effigy before breaking all the windows in his home that were along the street. Oliver resigned as the stamp collector in response.

The celebration of the 250<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the American Revolution sparked a renewed interest in the famous Liberty Tree of Boston, Massachusetts. State societies of the Sons of the American Revolution were asked as early as 2023 to identify a tree or plant one in memory of the original. In October of 2024, members of the SAR bought and planted a burr oak on the grounds of Linwood Cemetery in Dubuque, Iowa. The tree, the first "Liberty Tree" planted in Iowa, is also the state tree.

The original Liberty Tree was a large elm tree located near the Boston Common at the modern-day intersection of Washington Street and Essex Street. It was planted in 1646 and was nearly 120 years old by the time of the American Revolution. The area under its branches became a popular meeting place of Boston citizens in the 1760s. The Sons of Liberty, a secret society of men who advocated for the rights of the colonists, met at the tree and staged protests to British taxation and rule.

In 1765, large protests were made at the tree to argue against the Stamp Act. The first of these protests resulted in an effigy of a stamp collector, Andrew Oliver, hung from the tree. A boot was painted green with the depiction of a devil holding a paper reading, "What greater joy did ever New



The next year the Stamp Act was repealed. Bostonians gathered at the Liberty Tree, lanterns were hung in the branches, and the Sons of Liberty fastened a copper sign to the tree that read, "This tree was planted in the year 1646, and pruned by order of the Sons of Liberty, Feb. 14<sup>th</sup>, 1766."

The Liberty Tree continued to be a place for protests and public displays throughout the 1760s and 1770s. In 1770, the funeral parade for the Boston Massacre victims traveled past the tree. In 1774, a customs official and staunch loyalist named John Malcolm was stripped to the waist, tarred and feathered, and forced to announce his resignation under the tree. One Loyalist protested that the tree "was consecrated as an idol for the mob to worship; it was properly the tree ordeal, where those, whom the rioters pitched upon as state delinquents, were carried to for trial, or brought to as the test of political orthodoxy." Other towns and cities across colonial America began designating liberty trees for places to protest British taxation.

In 1775, during the Siege of Boston, Boston Loyalists and British soldiers cut the elm tree down and burned it. For a time, the remaining wood was called the "Liberty Stump." After Patriots regained control of Boston in 1776, a liberty pole was erected. While the Liberty Tree no longer existed, it continued to be a strong symbol in America.

In 1825, during his tour of America, the Marquis de Lafayette proclaimed to the citizens of Boston that, "the world should never forget the spot where once stood Liberty Tree, so famous in your annals." Today the place where the tree once stood has a small plaza with a plaque saying: "Sons of Liberty, 1766; Independence of their Country, 1776."

The Liberty Tree has been used as a symbol for the ideal American nation-- a place where citizens outside the establishment could gather, create a sense of unity, share political ideals, and finally work to have their voices heard. The history of the Liberty Tree must also play an important role in understanding the fine line that exists between justified calls for liberty and violent mob rule.

## Is There an Ordinary Keeper in Your Past?

By Randy Lyon



The tavern in Colonial America (the "ordinary" as it was called in Puritan Massachusetts) was the center of the social, political, and travel lives of colonial citizens from the earliest days. Samuel Cole of Boston opened the first tavern on March 4<sup>th</sup>, 1634. Before long there was a demand and necessity for taverns throughout the colonies. In 1656, the General Court of Massachusetts levied fines on communities if they did not provide "an ordinary."

The tavern served many purposes in colonial towns. For travelers, taverns were sources of directions, places where they could eat and drink, and relatively safe places to spend the night. Travelers and local residents could play

games, enjoy entertainment, participate in discussion, and receive the latest news and debate the issues. Taverns were also used as meeting places for assemblies and courts.

Taverns were used by local governments to regulate by law the distribution of alcohol. This important but indirect use of taverns to control has led some historians to suggest that taverns were used by ministers and elected officials to monitor conversations to determine threats to their authority. Other historians have countered with the idea that tavern conversations were primarily among an uninfluential group of people and that merriment was the primary motivator of tavern attendance.

The debate continues through registers of people served in the tavern and letters. Motivations aside, the role of the "ordinary" provides a fascinating read for those of us in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. For those seeking further familial links to the past, there is a Flagon and Trencher society seeking membership based upon being able to prove your lineage from an "ordinary" keeper long ago.



## Your Iowa SAR Board of Managers

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*Let us remember our obligation to our  
The Bill of Rights, an independent Supreme*



*forefathers, who gave us our Constitution,  
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