



## The Iowa Compatriot

The Journal of the Iowa Society, Sons of the American Revolution December 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.*

### Hy-Vee Bell Ringing for the Salvation Army Sparks a Lot of Comment

By Randy Lyon



This was our best year at Hy-Vee ringing the bell for donations. A new aspect this year was the possibility of donations able to be given with the use of a debit card. In amounts of \$5, \$10, and \$15, donors only had to hold their card to the QR code on the kettle stand holding the donation pot and then add their own ID. Having kids ring the bell was lots of fun. We collected \$163.66 in two hours.

Larry and I have rung bells for several years, but to my memory this was one of the most memorable. The uniforms really attracted attention! Some walked past with a "looking good," "great looking uniform," or the perennial "the British are coming." Added to our list of comments, however, was the woman who hurried by us in the cold with the remark, "You look delicious!"

As ever... looking forward to next year!

### Caring for Our Investment

By Randy Lyon

The Iowa Society this year joined the growing list of state SAR societies planting or choosing a "Liberty Tree." Ours is a Burr Oak, which also happens to be the Iowa State tree. It is planted on a hillside in Linwood Cemetery overlooking the graves of many veterans.

October was among the many dry months we had this year. Matt Schwalm, who brought the project to our attention, purchased the tree with the funds you donated, and delivered the tree to the cemetery. We decided as soon as it was planted with lots of water that we would share the job of keeping it watered until the ground froze. This



was certainly recommended by the nursery from which the tree was purchased as well as online sources.

We maintained a twice a week schedule of waterings averaging approximately five to ten gallons each time since the planting. This meant transporting the water, since all the faucets in the cemetery have been turned off. The water is lifted over the plastic fence surrounding the tree and poured at the base. This should ensure getting the water down to the roots.

With the changing weather, we're probably at the point when this would be the last watering (November 20<sup>th</sup>). All we can do is wait for spring—fingers crossed.

## Flag Presentations: Rickardsville and Surrounding Turf

By Randy Lyon

It dawned on me as I left Dubuque headed north on Highway 3 that I could be using my driving time to good advantage. Grabbing a big grocery sack out of the back seat and hunting around for a pen, I pulled back on the road and began collecting house numbers of people flying American flags. As I drove into Holy Cross to visit compatriot Ken Smith, I couldn't help but see that he has his work cut out for himself next spring. There were flag poles galore. Few were flying flags at the moment. I don't know about the weather where you live, but the wind has ripped flags to bits around here.

If I did anything in my first hundred or so pictures of me presenting certificates, I proved beyond a doubt that I have no skill taking selfies but have a totally inexhaustible number of silly expressions. Enough is enough.

Awarded Flag Certificates in December were:



*Donald Stoffel*



*Leon and Rose Wolf*



*John and Linda Kennicker*



*Ronald and Mary Breitbach*



*Dennis and Deborah Roling*



Certificates were left in the door for Michael Steffen and Alan and Dorothy Gelhar. Wayne and Debra Steffen requested that no photographs be taken.

## **The Passing of DAR Member Judy McNamara**

By Mike Rowley

If you are fortunate, there are people in your life that inspire, prod, or otherwise show you how to do more. Then there are others that do this over and over and over by their own examples of commitment to serve others. For many members of the Iowa SAR, one of those people was Judy McNamara.

Judy was a great friend to the Iowa SAR and War of 1812 societies. She was a never-ending source of opportunities to volunteer, usually to benefit the lives of veterans and their families. Judy died on November 21<sup>st</sup>, 2024, and will be greatly missed and long remembered by the many lives she touched and made just a bit better. Below is a photograph from a bingo night at the Veterans Hospital in Des Moines from 2018.



*Left to right: Mike Rowley, Judy McNamara, Ron Rittel, Don Corrigan, Rick Hickman, Mrs. Wenger, Alan Wenger, and George DeMoss*

## **Twelve Extra-special Iowa Graybeards**

By Tony Townsend

One of the more legendary units in the Civil War was the 37<sup>th</sup> Iowa Infantry, known as the “Graybeards.” Less is known about the 12 men from this unit who also served in another conflict long before their service in the Civil War.

The 37<sup>th</sup> Iowa was mustered into service in the Civil War on December 15<sup>th</sup>, 1862, at Muscatine under the command of Colonel George W. Kincaid. Consisting of men that ranged in age from 45 to 80 years of age, they were affectionately known as the “Graybeards” in the Union Army. A total of 1,041 men served in the unit which had missions that primarily involved serving as prison guards and also guarding and supporting the supply trains for the Union Army. While only three men died in action, 145 died from disease during the war. Known for their unwavering loyalty and high morale, this unit was heralded by all in the Union Army for their efforts. They served until May 24<sup>th</sup>, 1865, when they were mustered out of service at Rock Island, Illinois, at the conclusion of the war.

Of these 1,041 Graybeards, there were 12 who deserve special mention. Fifty years prior to the Civil War, and probably before they had whiskers, the men listed below also served during the War of 1812. They were a very rare breed that served in both wars.

| <b>Soldier</b>                | <b>War of 1812 Unit</b>        | <b>Burial Location</b> |
|-------------------------------|--------------------------------|------------------------|
| Nehemiah Blake (1786-1876)    | U.S. 27 <sup>th</sup> Infantry | Morning Sun, IA        |
| James C. Butts (1799-1886)    | NY Militia                     | Dyersville, IA         |
| Henry Dairy (1796-1881)       | U.S. 6th Infantry              | Dayton, OH             |
| Peter Fisher (1795-1890)      | U.S. Infantry                  | Mt. Pleasant, IA       |
| William Henshaw (1796-1884)   | NY Militia                     | Howard, KS             |
| Jacob Oswalt (1785-1871)      | OH Militia                     | Colfax, IA             |
| Henry Pate (1792-1883)        | IN Militia                     | Springville, IA        |
| Nicholas Ramey (1789-1882)    | U.S. Infantry                  | Kirkville, IA          |
| Silas Reynolds (1799-1882)    | NY Militia                     | Unknown                |
| Richard B. Rians (1798-1890)  | Unknown                        | Iowa City, IA          |
| Roswell B. Rice (???? – 1864) | NY Militia                     | Rock Island, IL        |
| Henry Weatherby (1796-1880)   | MA Militia                     | Jackson City, IA?      |

Another special mention goes to Peter Fisher (1795-1890), who also served in the Mexican-American War (1846-1848). Also, Nicholas Ramey served in the French Army under Napoleon before he migrated to the United States.

Thank you to Ron and Marilyn Rittel, who have done tremendous research on Iowa War of 1812 veterans and helped compile this list. They continue to do research and have set up a virtual cemetery for these 1812 veterans which has many documents and photographs regarding these men (see <https://www.findagrave.com/virtual-cemetery/1890943>).



Above is a recent photograph of the Henry Pate (1792-1883) gravesite in Springville, Iowa. There is a newly installed War of 1812 flag holder on the left and a GAR flag holder on the right. Thanks to Shelby Northrup, ex-Marine and Deputy City Clerk from Springville and local Springville historians Karen Taylor and Wes Bender, American Legion Post 331, for their assistance.



# The Iowa SAR Praises a Dubuque Initiative in the Healthcare Field

By Randy Lyon

On December 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2024, compatriots Larry Hoelscher and Randy Lyon honored the staff of Paramount EMS Academy, a pioneering program of EMT training initiated by Loras College and Paramount EMS, both in Dubuque.



Pictured above are three of the four staff members from Paramount and Dr. Mollie Figgins of Loras. There were four EMTs honored with SAR EMT medals and certificates. Dr. Figgins received a Certificate of Appreciation for her role in establishing the program. In attendance at the ceremony, in addition to the president of Loras College, were members of the faculty. In the two years the program has been active, there have been approximately 20 graduates.

In March 2023, Loras College of Dubuque and Paramount EMS announced the formation of the Paramount EMS Academy, a training program in medical emergency services. Hailed as a partnership that would help address an emergency medical services staffing shortfall, the program would be open to students from Loras, other schools, and community members interested in this rewarding field.

At the current time, there continues to be a shortfall of EMS personnel locally and nationwide. An American Ambulance Association survey of more than 100 emergency medical services agencies nationwide found that 11% of the full-time EMT positions went unfilled in the summer of 2022. The Journal of Emergency Medical Services has stated that the annual turnover for EMTs ranges from 20% to 30% resulting in an estimated 20,700 EMT and paramedic positions being open annually.

Andy Ney, director of operations at Paramount and one of those who helped establish the Academy at Loras, stated that his company had nine open full-time positions at the time the Academy opened. Active in the Iowa EMS Association, Ney stated that most EMT training had been based at hospitals or Iowa community colleges.

The legislatively designated power to create an academy like that at Loras came in 2021. The Iowa Legislature passed a bill allowing the Iowa Department of Health and Human Services to certify ambulance services to provide initial EMT training. After Paramount received approval to provide this training, company officials

envisioned an academy as a means of developing apprenticeship programs like those used to fill shortages in many trades.

Sandy Neyen, director of employee education and development at Paramount and another initiator of the Academy, has said the goal of the program is to educate and employ at the same time—"An earn-and-learn model." The plan is to employ sponsored participants at Paramount while they attend classes at the academy. Sponsored students will be provided with structured after-school education involving tutors and time in an ambulance.

Dr. Molly Figgins, program initiator and director of the graduate athletic training program at Loras, sees benefit to her program at Loras as well. Citing the fact that athletic trainers and EMTs work together in real life, embedding EMS programming into the athletic training program fits naturally.

## DAR Assists in Gravestone Installation of Civil War Veteran in Polk City

By Mike Rowley



On December 4<sup>th</sup>, 2024, dedicated Camp Dodge Chapter DAR members Karla Wright, Sharleen Newton, and Karla Kasper braved the six below zero wind chill weather to assist members of the Iowa Society of the SAR in the installation of a gravestone to mark the grave in Polk City, Iowa, of 2<sup>nd</sup> Lt. William P. Meekins, a member of the 10<sup>th</sup> Iowa Infantry during the Civil War.



The Iowa SAR continues to encourage anyone with knowledge of an unmarked veteran grave in Iowa to join with us to honor the veterans.

## Year-end Grave Marking News

By Mike Rowley



Even though it is December in Iowa, membership commitment and active volunteerism continues to be strong.

Two more stones (at left) have been delivered and are ready to install. The Isaac Johnson stone is due to the work of his descendant and fellow Iowa 1812 member Terry Thompson. This stone will be placed in Woodburn, Iowa. The Frederick Barrows stone owes much of the credit to researcher Marilyn Rittel and descendant Peggy H. This stone will be placed in Cox Cemetery near Osceola, Iowa.



The William Barnhill stone (at right) was recently installed in Page County by John and Barb Butcher of the SUVCW Kinsman Camp.

Two notices from the VA announced the approval of stones for Seaburn Hinton and William Low. After arrival in the next month or so, both will be installed in Webster County.

Thank you to all our members and partners for making 2024 a very productive year. We are not done yet!



## DAR Memorial

By Gary Everding



My wife Carol and I attended the Revolutionary Dames chapter of the DAR memorial for my mother, Ann Everding, on December 9<sup>th</sup>, 2024. The memorial included a candle lighting, recitation of Bible verses, and prayers.

The presentation for her was very well done!

## Preparations for Wreaths Across America

On Wednesday, December 11<sup>th</sup>, Mike Rowley and other volunteers helped take delivery of nearly 1,200 wreaths to be placed at Woodland, Glendale, and Harvey Cemeteries in Des Moines, Iowa.



## The National Guard's 388<sup>th</sup> Birthday

By Gary Everding

Friday, December 13<sup>th</sup>, 2024, was the 388<sup>th</sup> birthday of the National Guard. On December 13<sup>th</sup>, 1636, in Massachusetts, the first militia regiments in North America were formed.



## Ancestry.com Virtual Classes

By Randy Breese

Did you know that Ancestry.com offers free education classes via Zoom? If you are interested, you can register for Zoom classes or watch prerecorded videos at <https://www.ancestry.com/c/discover/education>. You can find other educational content in the "Curiosity Center" at <https://www.ancestry.com/c/discover>.

## Wreaths Across America at Woodland Cemetery in Des Moines

By Mike Rowley



30-year and retired veteran Donald Richardson and daughter Sgt. Sarah Richardson both volunteered as service branch wreath presenters at the Wreaths Across America program at Woodland Cemetery in Des Moines, Iowa.

After the program, volunteers placed over 1,000 wreaths on the graves of veterans from the War of 1812 to modern day veterans.

## SAR Certificate of Appreciation for Dana Moen

By Gary Everding

Dana Moen, a mother and grandmother with historical interests, has worked with indexing genealogy records and has found time to help many people with their ancestral research. Her dedication to helping others is like the old saying, "the children of the cobbler are the last to have their shoes repaired." It relates to how she has not been able to trace her Bentley line to become a member of the Daughters of the American Revolution. Hopefully she will make time for herself to be successful in this quest.

Dana founded and is the administrator of a private Facebook group called "Bentley Family Genealogy and Research." There are currently 143 members spread all over the world. With this group, we have identified approximately 50 Bentleys killed during WWII. We have taken on the enrollment process of these veterans to enter them into the Purple Heart Hall of Honor as a project. This effort requires documentation of their demise. For example, we have some killed in car accidents—eliminating the qualification for enrollment. In some instances, we are attempting to locate family members to have them submit the enrollment forms to receive a thank you letter personally naming them on the Purple Heart Hall of Honor letterhead. Dana has gone even farther by linking the family members on Find a Grave. We do hit dead ends once in a while, such as when a photograph of the enrollee's tombstone does not appear on Find a Grave. Often the tombstone is proof of the purple heart medal.



*Dana Moen receives an SAR Certificate of Appreciation*



Dana and I split the list and have spent many hours researching to ensure the potential enrollee qualifies. Her dedication is really evident when she researches and then links family members on Find a Grave. This is a large venture of which her dedication is invaluable and greatly appreciated. Thank you, Dana!

## **Boston Tea Party Day**

By Randy Lyon



It was December 16<sup>th</sup>, 1773, when a group of colonists dressed up to look like Native Americans raided ships carrying British tea into Boston Harbor.

Encouraged by Justin Blood's experience last year, Larry Hoelscher and Randy Lyon bravely went without disguise in bright sunlight to the Ice Harbor in Dubuque to reenact this memorable occasion.

## **Wreaths Across America Has a Slow Start in Dubuque**

By Randy Lyon

One miserable ice storm hit Dubuque at 8:00 a.m. Saturday morning, December 14<sup>th</sup>, and left traffic at a complete standstill. Plans to place the wreaths at Linwood Cemetery, which had been delayed from Saturday morning, were again postponed until late Saturday and then completely canceled with family coming.

The intrepid team of Dennis Geesaman, Larry Hoelscher, and Randy Lyon (who are all retired) could get out Monday morning to fulfill their obligations. The hills of Linwood would never have allowed travel any earlier. We have worked through snow and chilling cold before, but this was really a time to remember.



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The Bill of Rights, an independent Supreme*



*forefathers, who gave us our Constitution,  
Court, and a nation of free men.*