



THE IOWA COMPATRIOT

The Journal of the Iowa Society, Sons of the American Revolution Mar. 12, 2025

Essay Winners Share Their Works

2024 Arthur M. and Berdena King Eagle Scout competition:

First Place: Reid Yoder, of Troop 24, Illowa Council, Bettendorf



In 2024 Reid Yoder received 1st place for the King Eagle Scout Contest, which came with a medal and scholarship check for \$500. Reid is an Eagle Scout with Troop 24, out of St. John Vianney Catholic Church in Bettendorf, IA. Reid is currently a senior at Pleasant Valley High School and he will be attending Wheaton College in the Fall (majoring in biology/chemistry...pre-medicine track).

Reid's Scouting adventure has taken him to many Summer Camps across several states; high adventure treks to Philmont, Norther Tier (Boundary Waters), and Sea Base (a sailing trek circumnavigating St. John USVI). His Eagle project was building bleachers for a basketball court for the local Boys and Girls Club of the Mississippi Valley.

Outside of Scouting, Reid is a member of the PVHS swim team, plays tuba in the band, a member of National Honor Society, and he is a member of Coram Deo

Bible Church youth group. He also serves as a Sunday school teaching assistant at our church (Bridge Cities Church) weekly for 3-5 grade boys. During the summer, he works as a lifeguard at Davenport Country Club. His essay for the contest was about our ancestor Lt. Col. Robert Cochran.

Editor's Note: You recognize the picture from the February newsletter. Since then I found out that Reid is an Assistant Scoutmaster at Troop 24 and an Assistant Scoutmaster at Troop 1199 (his daughter's Scout Troop, out of Lourdes Catholic Church in Bettendorf). He is the District Committee Chair for the Kittan District (Scott County) in the Illowa Council. RL

LTC Robert Cochran; Green Mountain Boy, Patriot, and My Ancestor

Robert Cochran was born in 1738 and came to present-day Vermont in 1768. Before the Revolution, he was a captain in the Green Mountain Boys. This group, established in 1770 as an unauthorized militia, comprised New Hampshire landowners intent on engaging and defending their land from the control of New York lawmakers. This *de facto* government of friends and neighbors resisted the “Yorkies” authority to settle the emerging frontier. Many of the group’s leaders, including Cochran, had long-standing bounties issued for their arrest (as high as twenty pounds) by the governor of New York. In 1775, against the rising aggression of the British Army, the group joined the cause of freedom with their New York neighbors. With less than 100 men, they captured Fort Ticonderoga (or Crown Point) by surprising a small British garrison and capturing them. The supplies and armaments gained from this fort were then transported to Boston to break the standoff of its siege. Captain Cochran helped lead the Green Mountain Boys to one of its first Revolutionary victories.

He would come to leave the Green Mountain Boys in order to join Colonel Elmore's regiment in the Continental Army. He served as a captain under Elmore until July 29th, 1776, when he was promoted to major by the Continental Congress. By October, Cochran served in Tryon County, New York, commanding Fort Dayton. He also briefly served under the command of Horatio Gates, playing a part in the Battles of Saratoga in the Autumn of 1777. The Battles of Saratoga are widely thought to be the turning point of the Revolutionary War in favor of the colonists. The following year, Cochran served as a spy for General Washington. He was sent to Canada to obtain information on the British military status and their situation. Upon discovery, he was arrested and sentenced to execution. Cochran narrowly escaped and fled his pursuers, but a large bounty was placed on his head. He suffered from illness and hunger in his escape and was forced into hiding. He later recalled finding a small cabin where he overheard people discussing his bounty, but because of his need, decided to throw himself at the mercy of the cabin's housewife (knowing that if she betrayed him, she would gain a large reward). The woman, however, had mercy and nursed him back to health and hid him so that he could continue his journey back to the colonies. It is said that years later he sought out his benefactor and rewarded her for her aid.

In September of 1778, Cochran was in command of Fort Schuyler and actively assisted the efforts on the Mohawk Frontier. By 1780, he was promoted to Lieutenant Colonel for his continued service and was with the Second New York Regiment at the Siege of Yorktown and the surrender of Cornwallis on October 19, 1781. He returned to Ticonderoga after the war because he had forfeited his lands due to his inability to make payments during the war. He seems to have eventually found peace and some prosperity at Ticonderoga and then Sandy Hill. Cochran passed away on July 3rd, 1812, at the age of 73 and is buried at Union Cemetery, Fort Edward, New York.

Works Consulted

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2024 George S. and Stella M. Knight Essay Contest:

First Place: Karli Roth, home-schooled, from Earlham, IA

Our Marquis: The Hero of Two Worlds

In October of 1776, George Washington wrote to the President of Congress, "that I am under no small difficulties on account of the French gentlemen that are here."¹ American Silas Deane had arrived in France in July of 1776, and he had been productive in recruiting French volunteers for the fledgling American cause, even though France was nominally neutral at the time.² George Washington and the Continental Army were tired by these recruits, who were often arrogant and hungry for high ranks and good pay.³ With this considered, it may be a wonder that one of the great heroes of the American Revolution was French nobleman Gilbert du Motier, marquis de Lafayette, who arrived on American soil as a nineteen-year-old with no military experience and the title of major general.⁴ Yet he had a passion for freedom that tied him to the American cause even against the objections of his country and family. To Americans, he became "Our Marquis," and to George Washington, he became a son.⁵

Born into wealth and descended from war heroes, Lafayette hungered for military glory.⁶ In J 775, he attended a dinner in honor of the duke of Gloucester, the younger brother of England's King George III and an admirer of the American cause for independence.⁷ From Gloucester, Lafayette absorbed a passion for America "When I first learnt the subject of the quarrel, my heart espoused warmly the cause of liberty, and I thought of nothing but of adding also the aid of my banner," Lafayette wrote.⁸ Lafayette connected with Silas Deane and persuaded Deane to grant him the title of major general in December of 1776, based on his rank and his offer to serve without pay.⁹ But shortly afterward, the French government ordered port authorities to prevent future French volunteers from sailing to America to aid the revolution.¹⁰ France wasn't ready to engage in war with England yet.

Lafayette faced a decision. With fervor for freedom pulsing in his blood, he planned to secretly leave France on a merchant ship he purchased called *La Victoire*.¹¹ His escape involved a ruse of a vacation to London and a secret exit from France that launched him into a voyage across the Atlantic from which there was no coming back.¹² In France, Deane wrote to Congress that Lafayette's rebellious departure "has occasioned much conversation here, and though the court pretends to know nothing of the matter, his conduct is highly extolled by the first people in France."¹³

Lafayette and his companions endured a strenuous journey to Philadelphia, the American capital, and yet Lafayette wrote to his wife, Adrienne, "The farther north I go, the more I love this country and its people."¹⁴ After Lafayette arrived in Philadelphia, Congress fulfilled Deane's promise to give Lafayette the rank of major general after consideration.¹⁵ However, the rank was honorary only. He would have to prove himself to General Washington

before he gained a position of command.¹⁶

Washington and Lafayette soon met, and Lafayette wrote, "It was impossible not to recognize the majesty of his [Washington's] face and countenance."¹⁷

However, when he witnessed a review of the American soldiers, Lafayette was stunned by their poor arms and clothing.

"I suppose we ought to be embarrassed," Washington remarked, "to show ourselves to an officer who has just left the French forces."

"I am here to learn, *mon general*, not to teach," Lafayette responded, and he won the heart of America's general.¹⁸

On September 11th of 1777, Lafayette saw his first action in the American Revolution at the Battle of Brandywine. He managed to rally a retreating American force, which was then pushed back again, and sustain a leg wound. Washington found him weak with loss of blood, but still organizing a defense of a bridge over Chester Creek. When Lafayette travelled to Philadelphia to obtain proper treatment, Washington told the physician to treat him as if he were his own son.¹⁹

After he healed, Lafayette joined a reconnaissance mission in which he led four hundred rifleman and captured a British outpost.²⁰ Washington's confidence in Lafayette grew, and as a signal of trust and of friendship toward all of France, Congress appointed Lafayette to command a division, a command that accorded with his rank of major general.²¹ Lafayette joined the Continental Army in its sufferings at Valley Forge. He recalled, "The army lacked provisions for entire days, and the patient endurance of the officers and men was a continuous miracle, constantly renewed."²² It was at Valley Forge that Lafayette was first called "Our Marquis," a name he retained throughout his life.²³

In May of 1778, America and France joined in an alliance.²⁴ Lafayette returned to his homeland in February of 1779 to ask for additional aid for the American colonies. He was reunited with his family, kept affectionate correspondence with Washington, and returned to America in April of 1780 proclaiming that 6,000 infantrymen and six ships would soon arrive from France.²⁵

Lafayette leapt back into action and soon led 1,200 men in protecting Virginia, fighting traitor Benedict Arnold, and resisting a British attack on Richmond. However, Lord Charles Cornwallis soon replaced Benedict Arnold in his fight against Lafayette.²⁶ Cornwallis was set on capturing Lafayette. "The boy cannot escape me," he said.²⁷ Lafayette was forced to retreat, but his troops engaged in skirmishes throughout the retreat, and Lafayette wearied the British troops with their chase.²⁸

When Cornwallis was ordered to build a deepwater port on the Virginia coast, Lafayette took advantage of the order to pursue Cornwallis to Yorktown. French naval forces arrived to trap Cornwallis from the sea, and the French admiral in command urged Lafayette to attack Cornwallis before Washington's advancing forces arrived and take for himself the glory of the battle. However, Lafayette's thirst for glory had grown tempered with wisdom, and he waited for Washington.²⁹ The combined forces sieged Yorktown, and on October 19th of 1781, British commander Cornwallis surrendered, ending the American Revolution.

Lafayette's role in this siege and the American Revolution won him the hearts of Americans and French alike. He became known as "The Hero of Two Worlds."³⁰ Bowers writes, "Arguably, they [Americans] held him in even higher esteem than any of their own Founders due to his tireless devotion to a country and cause that were not his own."³¹

Lafayette returned to France a hero. He visited America twice more before his death, reuniting with Washington in the first of these visits, and he became a prominent figure in the French Revolution before that violent revolution turned on him and he was imprisoned for five years and exiled for three. Finally, he was able to return to France and speak again about his passion for French liberty that was never actualized in his lifetime. Lafayette died in 1834 and was buried with American soil from Bunker Hill in a cemetery outside Paris.³²

Lafayette's legacy continues today. He gave of his money, efforts, and life to support a cause across the sea from his homeland. He played a significant role in the siege of Yorktown that ended the American Revolution. Perhaps most importantly, he never lost his fire for freedom, for which he was willing to sacrifice everything.

Sources:

¹ George Washington, *The Writings of George Washington, vol. IV {1776}* (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1889), <https://oll.libertyfund.org/titles/ford-the-writings-of-george-washington-vol-iv-1776>.

² Russel Freedman, *Lafayette and the American Revolution* (New York: Holiday House, 2010).

³ James R. Gaines, *For Liberty and Glory* (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, Inc., 2007).

⁴ Freedman, *Lafayette and the American Revolution*.

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ Harlow Giles Unger, *Lafayette* (Hoboken: John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 2002).

⁸ Marquis de Marie Joseph Paul Yves Roch Gilbert Du Motier Lafayette, *Memoirs, Correspondence and Manuscripts of General Lafayette* (Project Gutenberg, 2005), https://www.gutenberg.org/cache/epub/8376/pg8376-images.html#link2l;4_0005.

⁹ Unger, *Lafayette*.

¹⁰ Freedman, *Lafayette and the American Revolution*.

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² Ibid.

- ¹³ Freedman, *Lafayette and the American Revolution*, 26.
- ¹⁴ Freedman, *Lafayette and the American Revolution*, 30.
- ¹⁵ Freedman, *Lafayette and the American Revolution*.
- ¹⁶ Ibid.
- ¹⁷ Unger, *Lafayette*, 39.
- ¹⁸ Unger, *Lafayette*, 41.
- ¹⁹ Unger, *Lafayette*.
- ²⁰ Freedman, *Lafayette and the American Revolution*.
- ²¹ Ibid.
- ²² Freedman, *Lafayette and the American Revolution*, 40.
- ²³ Unger, *Lafayette*.
- ²⁴ Ibid.
- ²⁵ Ibid; Marc Leepson, "Marquis de Lafayette," *Brittanica*, December 21, 2024, <https://www.britannica.com/biography/Marguis-de-Lafayette>.
- ²⁶ Freedman, *Lafayette and the American Revolution*.
- ²⁷ Freedman, *Lafayette and the American Revolution*, 61.
- ²⁸ Ibid.
- ²⁹ Ibid.
- ³⁰ Gaines, *For Liberty and Glory*.
- ³¹ Courtney E. Bowers, "Man, Myth, Marquis: A Historiographic Essay on the Marquis de Lafayette," *The Histories* 5, no. 1 (2008): 26, accessed December 31, 2024, https://digitalcommons.lasalle.edu/the_histories/vol5/iss1/5.
- ³² Freedman, *Lafayette and the American Revolution*.

New Member Responsible for the Americanism Report

Arthur Sunleaf, a new member from Dubuque, has agreed to take on the responsibility of assembling the Americanism report for the Iowa Society of SAR. This task for many years has been “on the plate” with many other tasks of Mike Rowley who has done an outstanding job.

The Americanism Report includes the following:

<u>Category</u>	<u>Category Title</u>
1	Media Publicity
2	SAR Speakers Bureau
3	Support of the C.A.R. and DAR
4	Youth Programs
5	Public Service Programs
6	Historic Sites & Celebrations
7	Grave Markings
8	Color Guard Activity
9A	SAR Medals & Certificates Awarded to Non-Members
9B	SAR Medals & Certificates Awarded to SAR Members
10	National Society Service
11	Membership, Reinstatements, Supplementals, Dues & Secretarial Returns
12	Attendance at State, District, and National Meetings

The Americanism Report and the Stark Report together give us a great way of judging our society's activities.

Thank you, Art, for stepping up to take on this job!



Mike Rowley and Mary Christopher were recently honored by the Des Moines Park and Recreation Board for their fascinating book, **A History of Woodland Cemetery**. Be sure to listen to the

Youtube.

Volunteer Group of the Year

Mary Christopher & Mike Rowley

“Over the past three years, Mary Christopher and Mike Rowley have harnessed their passion for a local landmark, Woodland Cemetery, working together to write,

"A History of Woodland Cemetery in Des Moines" book. Christopher and Rowley have gone above and beyond, working with seven other individuals and Cemetery Manager Ganesh Ganpat, to bring the rich history of the cemetery to the public. The group's volunteer efforts included over 2,000 hours of service to bring this book from concept to publication. They were integral to central Iowa book launch events and were featured in the Iowan Magazine, as well as several media outlets (radio and television), while promoting the book. Over 1,200 copies of the book have been sold.

For their incredible passion and commitment to honor and remember the stories within Des Moines' Woodland Cemetery, we honored Mary Christopher and Mike Rowley with the 2024 Volunteer Group of the Year award."

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=95wewT9BMEI&t=1623s>

D.A.R. Plans Historical Marker for Bellevue on June 14th

Amy Sunleaf, regent of the Lawrence Vann Hook Chapter of DAR has announced the placement of a 30 inch by 30 inch America 250! historical marker in Bellevue on June 14th. The ceremony will take place near the Jackson County Freedom Rock at 1:00 p.m.

A Color Guard has been invited to participate. If you are able to attend wearing a uniform of the S.A.R., Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War, or Sons of the War of 1812 please contact Mike Rowley or Randy Lyon (randylyon1915@gmail.com) so that the D.A.R. will have an idea of how many will attend.

National Salute to Veteran Patients

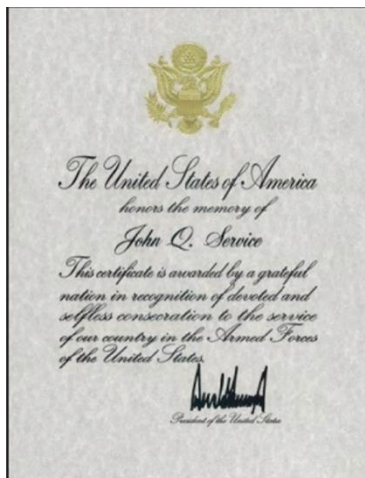
Gary Everding

This observance takes place every year during the week of 14 February (Valentines Day). This year, it ran from the 9th through the 15th of February.

It is to

1. honor and draw attention to the military veterans receiving medical care at the V.A. medical facilities.
2. It hopes to create more awareness of these centers and
3. encourage more people to visit and volunteer.

According to the statistics provided by the Department of Veterans Affairs, about 100,000 veterans visit the medical centers every single day. Annually, more than nine million veterans also receive medical treatment.



I submitted a proposal to the Iowa Veterans Home to file for a *Presidential Memorial Certificate* on behalf of their residents. The intent is to recognize them for their service and reward their families with the acknowledgement.

https://www.cem.va.gov/facts/Presidential_Memorial_certificates.asp

You may want to order a certificate for the vet in your family. See the February newsletter for details.



We Lost Our Best Friend

This thought was shared by nearly two hundred veterans who attended St. Patrick's Church in Dubuque in just the first hour of visitation to reminisce about Jim Wagner of Dubuque.



Jim was sent to Vietnam just days after being married. Wounded, he returned home with a Purple Heart and post-traumatic stress disorder which he admitted nearly cost him everything. He repaired cars in a rented garage with other veterans for companionship until he met Al Rowell (shown on the left). In 2009 they founded the Dubuque Veterans Freedom Center.

Jim wanted to 'create a safe place where veterans could be heard.' Through donations of wheelchairs and walkers, the Center became the place to go for needed equipment. The Center offers a leisure room for pool, darts, cards, a large screen television, and a computer station. Workshops full of donated power equipment and material keep veterans with special interests in metal or woodworking busy throughout the day. The coffee was always on with treats supplied by the SAR and untold numbers of businesses. The canteen is full of laughter. Among the many excursions planned by the Center are free fishing trips across eastern Iowa in the Center's van.

Jim's motto was "Live in such a way that if someone spoke badly of you, no one would believe it." The world needs a lot more just like him.

Honoring Our Wounded Warriors

Gary Everding

The number of U.S. military fatalities in wars is staggering.

WWI	53,402
WWII	416,800
Korea	36,574
Vietnam	58,222

The only military medal tracked by our government is the Medal of Honor.

Established in 1862 and first awarded to Pvt Jacob Parrott in 1863, the Medal of Honor has been awarded to less than 4,000 people. In September 2023 there were 3,536.

How many Silver Stars? Bronze Stars? Distinguished Flying Crosses? All unknown.

I've chosen to focus my attention on recognizing those who have earned the Purple Heart. Purple Heart (Badge of Military Merit) is awarded for:

*"Being wounded or killed in any action
against an enemy of the United States
or as a result of an act of any such enemy
or opposing armed forces"*

The Purple Heart was first awarded 22 Feb 1932. As of 5 June 2010 a total of 1,910,162 have been awarded. Of these a total of 430,000 were awarded posthumously.

As I've mentioned in earlier articles, my research continues to be fascinating as I attempt to uncover more information about these wounded warriors.

Vandalism Strikes Iowa Cemeteries

Relatives are seeing it for the first time — 700 pounds of desecrated bronze grave markers — all stolen from more than a dozen cemeteries in the area around Franklin County. The sheriff says the suspects used a grinder to cut apart 80 bronze markers from the gravestones. They removed all the names and lettering. They were sold for scrap, worth just a couple of thousand dollars.

Some of the markers date back to the 1800s. And if that's not bad enough, all of the graves belong to veterans like Joseph Brubaker. His daughter Barb Furman, of Hampton, was shocked to learn thieves stole her father's World War II bronze plaque from the small Maynes Grove Cemetery. She says the before and after pictures hurt the most.

The sheriff is urging families to reach out to their county veterans affairs office to try and get the bronze grave markers replaced. The Franklin County Sheriff's Office says they arrested Lauren Johnson and Brandon Smith in connection to the thefts. More arrests are expected.

Kevin Parameter has offered SAR help to restore the damaged gravestones. An update from him follows:

I called the Franklin County Sheriff's Office this morning and have a small update to pass on. The Sheriff's Office said they were progressing on the work getting replacements ordered from the VA for the bronze markers that people stole from at least 80 veterans' graves in multiple cemeteries in the area. I reminded them of our offer to help with finding relatives of those buried that had markers stolen or helping to place markers once they arrived if they needed assistance. They thanked me for the offer of help.

I passed on my name and phone number once again and they remembered me from previous calls, and I said they would not receive calls from other members, and they thanked me for this so they had a single point of contact as they did not wish to be bombarded with multiple people offering to help.

They assured me they would call when they could use any assistance and if I hear from them, I will reach out to others to see if they can provide assistance.

Memory Stone and Much More



On 1-29 -2025 Bob Niffenegger and Mike Rowley traveled to Monroe, Iowa to place a stone from the VA on the grave site of Ephraim Mortimore, a Civil War veteran, who was discharged in 1863 due to disability and died less than a month later.



When installing the stone, an original stone was found broken and buried. Plans are to repair it when weather permits.

A Memorial stone application was completed for William Minear, a War of 1812 veteran buried in Stuart Cemetery, Four Mile Twp in Polk County. The "**Memory**" stone was required since no original cemetery records still exist. We know his burial spot due to the previous existence of the original (pictured but no longer existing) stone on the grave

Thanks to all for sending your material for the newsletter by the 10th of the month!

[Your Iowa SAR Board of Managers](#)

President Chris Moberg moberg.chris@gmail.com

1st V.P. Randy Lyon randylyon1915@gmail.com

2nd V.P. Kevin Parmenter mail@parmenter.com

Secretary Doug Frazer dlfraser@yahoo.com

Treasurer David Nation davenation@gmail.com

Registrar Randy Breese iassar.registrar@randybreese.com

Chancellor Lance Ehmcke ldehmcke@gmail.com

Chaplain Justin Blood mrjbblood@gmail.com

Historian Doug Frazer dlfraser@yahoo.com

Newsletter Randy Lyon randylyon1915@gmail.com

Webmaster Chris Moberg moberg.chris@gmail.com