



First Citizen Award in Dubuque Goes to Local Leader of Veterans' Celebrations

Perry Mason, a local radio executive, was named the recipient of the 2025 FIRST CITIZEN AWARD by the *Telegraph Herald*.

Well-known among veterans' organizations in the tri-state region, the Dubuque radio executive has said gratitude powers his mission to honor the United States and the military members in its service. Mason has

been the driving force for years behind two local initiatives celebrating veterans and showcasing America's patriotism and freedoms — Dubuque's annual Fireworks & Airshow Spectacular and Honor Flight of Dubuque and the Tri-States.

Hearing of the celebration sponsored by the *Telegraph Herald*, Larry Hoelscher made all the necessary arrangements to meet-and-greet in uniform all those attending the formal awarding of the honor. Joining him was John Pregler, Camp Commander of the Robert Mitchell Camp #206, Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War.



Lots of Smiles

On Friday, January 16th there were loads of smiles in the Linn County Federal Courthouse in Cedar Rapids. Over two dozen former citizens of China, Somalia, Ukraine, Ghana, Vietnam, Canada, Mexico, Australia, and India came forward to take their oath of allegiance as they became American citizens.



American flags were handed out to members of two groups which took the oath either at 12:00 or 1:30. Each group had eighteen members and there were many family members and friends to witness the event.

One of Our Great Unsung Heroes

As a member of the IA SAR, 1812, SUVCW and other organizations I feel like I sometimes have a front row seat to see the best people have to offer in terms of service and commitment.

We all know of the parades, ceremonies, historical programs, speaker programs and special events. We see the volunteerism shared in terms of the different talents and resources our members bring when needed.

For one of our members, there is even more in terms of his outreach, but it largely goes unseen, except for those who need it most.

Randy Breese has not only stepped up to take on several officer roles in IA 1812, Sons of the American Revolution, and Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War, he also has been busy elsewhere.

Those of us SUVCW members knew that we were no longer seeing Randy at the meetings but not everyone realized that was because he was part of a group that prepares and distributes meals on those nights to many of the homeless in Des Moines.

On those Thursday nights, they often serve over 450 across 8 routes this time of year.

Seeing a need for even more, Randy and a smaller group are also making up and distributing about 60 bags of shelf stable food for Saturday deliveries. It takes some digging to get Randy to share more but this is what I was able to learn from Randy about his recent works...

"I've been doing a weekend delivery on my own for about 6 months because of reduced availability of food on the weekends for our friends on the street.

I am told this came up in a board meeting when they were discussing expansion options.

I like to think I made a little impact. How much influence, I don't know. I participate in the Saturday route, but I still make about a dozen bags of food (PB&J sandwich, turkey and cheese sandwich, fruit, water, chips, cookie) and lately I've been making a large batch of a hot casserole which I serve in 16oz coffee cups.

This weekend was tater tot casserole, which was very popular. And we had lots of blankets and some coats to hand out, along with hand warmers, foot warmers, etc. Thanks for sharing this story! We're always happy to have folks join us, even if it's just for one night."

Thanks, Randy. Your ancestors would be proud. Your fellow compatriots of IA SAR salute you!



In the new year Iowans will be celebrating the 250th anniversary of the American Revolution with projects large and small.

To represent and include all Iowans, the Iowa SAR & DAR are heading a project to **photograph all 934 Iowa towns with the Iowa 250 logo** and then create a collage from those photos.

America 250 Iowa- Community Collage Project

Goals-

1. To encourage and invite every Iowa community and organizations to participate in this America 250 Iowa project
2. To capture a local **photo of every community (all 934) in Iowa that includes the America 250 Iowa logo** by March 31, 2026
3. Arrange all 934 photos in a collage in the shape of Iowa
4. To share the finished product with all.

We need 100% participation. It may only take one person from every community or organization to take and send a photo. In other areas we may have volunteers that are willing to photograph several towns large, medium and small.

As this project does not require large committees or meetings, and can be completed with little or no funding, all we need is you and perhaps your organization's help.

If you can help, take a photo representing the town. Send photos and the completed form (see attachment) to Mike Rowley by email before March 31, 2026.

MJR1825@gmail.com

Here are some of the organizations that have signed on to help so far. We would love to add your organization to the list as well.

- 1. Iowa Society Daughters of the American Revolution**
- 2. Iowa Society Sons of the American Revolution**
- 3. General Society of the War of 1812 in the State of Iowa**
- 4. Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War, Grenville M. Dodge Camp # 75, Des Moines**

America 250 Iowa Photo Project Form

1. Name of town photographed _____
2. Location of photo taken _____
3. Subject or people in the photograph _____
4. Photo taken by _____
5. Your organization _____
6. Permission to use the photo in this project _____
7. _____

Essay Contests Being Judged

Judging is almost complete on the two essay contests involving senior high students. Winners will be announced in February.

This year a grand outpouring of support for the contest was shown in the numbers of members volunteering their time to read the papers. "Seasoned" as well as new judges included Merrill Allen Angell, Jeffrey Donald Deltering, James M. Fosse, Robert Max Hammann III, Robert Harris, David Michael Heath, Kevin Gail Parmenter, Mike Rowley, Matt Schwalm, Ryan Jeffrey Yoder, David Lee Little, Craig Steven Long, Randy Lyon, Stephen Charles McIntire, and David Nation.

Many thanks for all your efforts! Serving five times confers upon you a medal.

Stark Report Shows Great Membership Participation

The last article showing the large number of members participating as essay judges was reflected in the 2025 Stark Report as well.

Figures for 2025 indicated a large increase in the number of members participating in such events as ceremonial activities, gravestone restoration or fundraising with other organizations especially the Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War and the American Legion.

We were also a generous group financially.

This is a year when we could really “shine.” Activities involving the 250th celebration in Iowa will give us opportunities like we’ve never seen. Be sure to take a picture or two for the Iowa collage!

Community Projects for 250th Celebration

Mike Rowley forwarded the following two email addresses for you to use in advertising any community activities you have planned.

<https://www.desmoinesregister.com/story/news/usa250/2026/01/24/america-250-iowa-events/88286438007/>

<https://governor.iowa.gov/america-250/iowa-america-250-events>

Randy Lyon in Dubuque has entered his intention in both sources to offer on July 2 and 3 a program on the Riverwalk in Dubuque promoting the SAR plaque honoring Jean Marie Cardinal, “Iowa’s Paul Revere” of the American Revolution.

Learning of British intentions to move on St. Louis after they had captured the mining community of Dubuque, Cardinal paddled a canoe by himself all the way to St. Louis to warn the city. Given the warning, the residents were able to defeat the British in a battle which guaranteed the Mississippi River would not be in British hands when a peace treaty was eventually signed.

Register your program!

Thanks, Mike, for the heads up!

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