



# Texas Society Sons of the American Revolution

## Arlington Chapter #7 Bulletin

Arlington #7 Chapter

Established 1938

Re-Chartered 1994



August 2026

Chuck Andrews, Editor

**Meetings:** 2nd Saturday of each month, **Visitors Welcome**

**Time:** 9:30 AM

**Location:** Skillet-N-Grill Cafe 1801 W. Division St. Arlington, Texas 76012

### CELEBRATING AMERICA! 250

On Sunday, June 7, 2026, hosted by the **Lucretia Council Cochran Chapter NSDAR** and the **Arlington Chapter TXSSAR**, Compatriots and guests gathered at the Texas Rangers Golf Club for a luncheon to commemorate the 250th anniversary of the signing of the Declaration of Independence. On display were documents from the two hosting chapters. Each in attendance received a mint condition America 250 quarter. Color Guard members from multiple North Texas SAR chapters posted the Colors, led a Toast to Patriots with a Cherry Bounce, said to be George Washington's favorite beverage. It is said that he packed a "Canteen" of it for a trip west across the Allegheny Mountains in September of 1784.

Speakers included TXDAR State Regent Susan Johnston, TXSAR President-Elect Kevin Kanter and Arlington SAR Chapter member Bill Covington. Each presented historical accounts of the state of affairs in the Colonies in 1776 and the significance of the courage and resolve of our Patriot ancestors on our current and future lives as Americans. They related the necessity for today's Americans to be vigilant and work to preserve the memories of our Colonial ancestors and their dreams for America.



**June 07, 2026** - Color Guard, led by Compatriot Dan Hamilton, offers a toast to Patriots during the America 250! Celebration.

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Lucretia Council Cochran, NSDAR  
and Arlington Chapter, Texas SAR

**AMERICA 250!**

**Celebration**



Celebration attendees Compatriots John Anderson, Joe Kohn and Speaker Bill Covington.



DAR members Peggy Martin and Nancy Bergvall, Lucretia Council Cochran Chapter Regent with Compatriots Richard Martin and Arlington Chapter President Bob Pope.



Susan Johnston, TXDAR State Regent.



TXSSAR President-Elect Kevin Kanter



Right– Speaker, Arlington Chapter Compatriot Bill Covington



## Lucretia Council Cochran, NSDAR and Arlington Chapter, Texas SAR

# AMERICA 250!

## Celebration



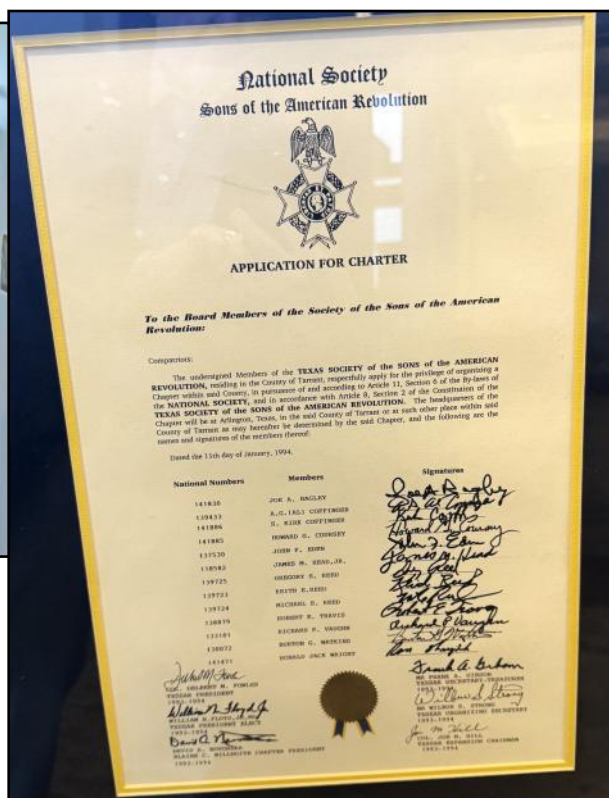
Color Guard members L-R: Brent Harshman, Steve Hole, Roger Hardin, Tom Van Fossen, and Bill Sekel (State Color Guard Commander) 2nd Row, L-R: Dan Hamilton, Dave Fautheree, Brent Murray, Ronald Carey & Jim McClain.



Chapter Chaplin Bob Wehr offers Benediction



To mark the end of the America 250! Celebration, the Color Guard formed an Honor Arch asking each DAR and SAR member to walk through the arch and honor their Patriot by stating his/her name.



Chapter Charter



## MAY CHAPTER MEETING



**May 9, 2026**– Chapter members– L– Richard Martin, Richard Coffey, James Gibson. R– John Anderson, Ron Carter, David Friels, Dan Hamilton and Bob Wehr.



**May 9, 2026**– President Bob Pope addresses members regarding Revolution quarters to be presented to those attending the America 250! Celebration in June.



**May 9, 2026**– Chip Black is presented the Bronze Texas Chapter Service Medal by President Pope for his financial support of the Liberty Tree Fund.



**May 9, 2026**– Color Guard Member Jim McClian

## COLOR GUARD AT THE DALLAS PUBLIC LIBRARY FOR “SURVIVING 1776 PROGRAM”

For those attending “Survive 1776”, activity stations such as knot tying, candle making, drill demonstrations, gunnery station and spy-craft awaited. Color Guardsmen greeted the public at the sign in table (where folks filled out their “enlistment cards”). From enlistment, attendees rotated through stations where they received rank based on proficiency and skill. There was also an SAR information table to encourage participants to study their genealogy to find possible Revolutionary War era ancestors. Compatriot Tom Milson set up a Patriot trunk displaying artifacts from the 18th century.



May 23, 2026— Northern Command Color Guard was represented by: L-R— Tom Manning, Ron Carey, Randy Bush, Dan Hamilton and Dave Fautheree.

### A DECLARATION THAT ALMOST VANISHED—AND NOW LIVES IN DALLAS

On a quiet seventh floor of the J. Erik Jonsson Central Library in downtown Dallas, the usual city noise fades into the softer sounds of readers turning pages. Then, behind glass in the Rare Books and Archives area, history appears on a single sheet of eighteenth-century printing—almost stubbornly plain, yet astonishingly important. It is a Dunlap broadside of the United States Declaration of Independence, one of the earliest printed editions approved by the Continental Congress on July 4, 1776. And unlike nearly every other surviving copy, this one has a story that stretches across centuries and even an entire continent.

What makes the Dallas broadside feel so immediate is that it doesn’t look like the Declaration as many people imagine. There’s no ornate decoration, no heroic engraving—just dense columns of type set



May 23, 2026— Compatriot Randy Bush mans the Spy Craft exhibit.

quickly and efficiently. That plainness matters. This was never meant to be cherished like a relic. It was meant to move. In the summer of 1776, the colonies didn’t have the internet or instant news alerts; they needed a way to spread the message fast. These broadsides were printed overnight so the words could travel beyond Philadelphia. Riders carried them outward, and officials gathered crowds and read the Declaration aloud as the colonies absorbed

*(Continued on page 7)*





### July

2nd John Fehler  
 6th James R. McClain  
 10th Alexander E. Cole, Jr.  
 11th Grant A. Hamilton  
 15th Ray H. Wehr  
 20th Kevin S. Joffrey  
 21st Stan Kennedy  
 22nd Glen G. Foster  
 22nd Brent Houser  
 23rd Curtis L. Oliver  
 26th John D. Anderson, Jr.

### August

3rd Preston C. Kennedy-Jr.  
 9th Cameron Fairchild  
 11th Dr. Richard B. Fleming  
 11th Willard J. Sparks  
 14th Kyle A. Stephenson- Jr.  
 15th Aeden C. Cole  
 19th Wendell W. Black  
 23er David K. Setzer  
 26th Lee Bryan Ehrler  
 29th Ronald K. Carter

### September

3rd Daniel R. Hamilton  
 4th Michael B. Hutchins, Jr.  
 4th Wm. Laurance Oliver, DDS  
 5th James M. Gibson  
 6th Steven T. Anderson  
 6th Gayson D. Freeman-Jr.  
 29th Wm. J. McCoy

## MILESTONES

### Anniversaries

#### July

David R. Wells 07/18/2001 **25 years**  
 Willard J. Sparks 07/24/2009 **17 years**  
 James W. Benton 07/22/2016 **10 years**  
 Roland A. Brucks, II 07/29/2016 **10 years**  
 Daniel R. Hamilton 07/20/2018 **8 years**  
 Christopher S. Martin 07/20/2018 **8 years**  
 Dustin D. Decker 07/20/2018 **8 years**  
 William J. McCoy 07/24/2020 **6 years**  
 Jonathan T. Kennedy 07/01/2022 **4 years**  
 Stan Kennedy 07/01/2022 **4 years**  
 Grayson K. Kennedy, Jr. 07/01/2022 **4 years**  
 Preston C. Kennedy, Jr. 07/01/2022 **4 years**

#### August

Robin D. Teagarden, Jr. 08/31/1977 **49 years**  
 Ronald K. Carter 08/09/2007 **19 years**  
 Robert H. Wehr 08/13/2012 **14 years**  
 Roger E. Wehr 08/13/2012 **14 years**  
 Jeffery D. Meller 08/11/2017 **9 years**  
 Scott D. Hamilton 08/30/2019 **7 years**  
 Phillip N. Roe 08/30/2019 **7 years**  
 Ian A. Yuhasz 08/30/2019 **7 years**  
 Alexander S. Hamilton-Jr. 08/30/2019 **7 years**  
 Douglas Scott Steward 08/07/2020 **6 years**  
 McCoy A. Salmon 08/06/2021 **5 years**  
 Adrian B. Cole, Jr. 08/13/2021 **5 years**  
 Aeden C. Cole, Jr. 08/13/2021 **5 years**  
 Alexander E. Cole, Jr. 08/13/2021 **5 years**  
 Brent Houser 08/05/2022 **4 years**  
 "Chip" Blumenfeld 08/18/2023 **3 years**  
 Chase Blumenfeld 08/18/2023 **3 years**  
 Lyman "Nick" Nichols 08/18/2023 **3 years**

#### September

Richard L. Martin 09/26/2006 **20 years**  
 James D. Friels 09/04/2012 **14 years**  
 Grant A. Hamilton 09/04/2014 **12 years**  
 Nicholas D. Hamilton 09/04/2014 **12 years**  
 Robert B. Pope, Jr. 09/08/2017 **9 years**  
 Bill C. Goodman 09/03/2021 **5 years**

## MEMORIAL DAY AT MT. GILEAD CEMETERY



**May 25, 2026**—16th Annual Memorial Day Celebration in Keller included: Music and was hosted by Mt. Gilead Cemetery Association, Golden Triangle Rotary Club and Keller Rotary Club. There was plenty of shade and people were free to bring lawn chairs. Flag raising was by the Scouts BSA with hot dogs & drinks provided by Keller Rotary Club. Outdoor seating was provided for 150 people. A Flag Retirement Ceremony was conducted by Scouts BSA and everyone was encouraged to bring flags that needed retiring. Memorial Day and historical speeches were presented as well as a cemetery tour.

**Brent Murray** and **Dan Hamilton** from the Arlington Chapter participated in the Rifle Salute made up of men in uniforms ranging from the American Revolution to the War of 1812 to the American Civil War, the First World War and Second World War.

(Continued from page 5)

a new reality: that they were no longer part of the British Empire.

Historians estimate that roughly 200 Dunlap broadsides were printed during that long night in July. But the survival rate has been cruelly low. The paper was made for public posting, handling, and display—not for long-term preservation. Time, weather, and ordinary use thinned the number drastically. Today only about two dozen copies are known to exist. Even more remarkable, the Dallas copy holds a distinction that still surprises visitors: it is the only surviving Dunlap broadside located west of the Mississippi River.

The journey of Dallas' sheet doesn't follow a neat, continuous record. After it was circulated in the eighteenth century, its trail disappeared for more than a hundred years. Then, in 1968, the "lost copy" surfaced again—far from the era that produced it. In Philadelphia, Leary's Book Store was liquidating its remaining inventory after more than a century in business. During that sale, a previously unknown copy of the Declaration was discovered waiting in storage. The document didn't just reappear—it exploded in value. When it sold in 1969 for \$404,000, *The New York Times* called it the high-

est price ever paid at auction for a printed or manuscript book or document at the time, roughly equivalent to millions today.

Two wealthy Texas executives—Joseph Driscoll and Ira Corn, Jr.—won the battle for ownership, beating out rare-book dealer Hans P. Kraus, who joked that if he fought with a Texan he was in for trouble, and that his wife might insist he "go home" rather than return empty-handed. While those competitors went home, the Declaration kept traveling. Discovered so close to the American bicentennial, it was sent on a nationwide tour beginning around 1976, earning its reputation as both the lost copy and the most-traveled copy.

Eventually, Dallas secured it. After years of travel, the city acquired the Declaration in 1982. At first, it was displayed in Dallas City Hall, where city leaders preferred it to remain close by. But a library director—described as a force of nature, Lillian Bradshaw—argued that the Declaration belonged somewhere more open and accessible. She advocated for it to be brought to the Dallas Public Library, and her push helped overcome resistance. When the document moved to the library, the Friends of the Dallas Public Library played a key role in helping acquire it and build the space to display it properly.

(Continued on page 8)



## ARLINGTON COLOR GUARD IN MANSFIELD



**June 4, 2026**— Walnut Creek Country Club, Arlington SAR Color Guard was invited to present the colors for the Mansfield Women's Club. If you are unfamiliar with this group of women, their main mission is charity and friendship. To this date, Mansfield Women's Club has given back over \$1,8580,000 to our community through various fundraisers including major gifts to Methodist Mansfield Medical Center, Mansfield Cares, Harvesting International Mansfield Food Bank, & Feed the Kids Summer Program. We also support the Mansfield Independent School District with scholarships to each of their high schools as a way to honor our past presidents.

Compatriots Brent Murray , Jim McClain & Dan Hamilton made up the Color Guard that presented the Colors to open the meeting.

(Continued from page 7)

Now it sits in a carefully controlled environment, protected from the threats that destroy fragile paper: light, humidity, and temperature swings. Yet even there, the broadside seems to preserve the urgency of its original moment. Up close, you can still feel the hurried energy behind its creation—letters and punctuation that vary between copies, a layout designed for fast reading rather than beauty. The famous lines don't arrive with ceremony. They simply unfold, building a case in plain language that the colonies had not only the right to separate from Great Britain, but the obligation to do so.

Today, the remarkable thing about the Dallas Declaration isn't just that it survived. It's that it returned to its purpose. This sheet was made to be read by the public. Nearly two and a half centuries later, Dallas has made sure that—unlike most surviving copies—it can still speak directly to anyone who walks into the library looking for history that doesn't stay behind a wall.



**June 13, 2026**— At right- Arlington Chapter Meeting- Chapter and State Historian John Anderson presents SAR Revolutionary Rarities and updates regarding upcoming state events.



### SONS OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION MISSION

*The Sons of the American Revolution honors our Revolutionary War patriot ancestors by promoting patriotism, serving our communities, and educating and inspiring future generations about the founding principles of our country.*





# NATURALIZATION CEREMONY

## AT

### GRAPEVINE PUBLIC LIBRARY

**July 1, 2026** –Courtesy of Gary Coleman, Plano Chapter SAR- At a U.S. naturalization ceremony, immigrants who have completed every step of the citizenship process take the Oath of Allegiance, surrender their green cards, and receive their Certificates of Naturalization, officially becoming American citizens. It is a moving moment that celebrates both the promise of America and the responsibilities of citizenship.

This ceremony featured an unforgettable performance of “America the Beautiful” and our National Anthem by Mezzo-Soprano Vanessa Todora Crixell, filling the room with patriotic spirit. Members of the Captain Molly Corbin Chapter of DAR proudly led the Pledge of Allegiance.

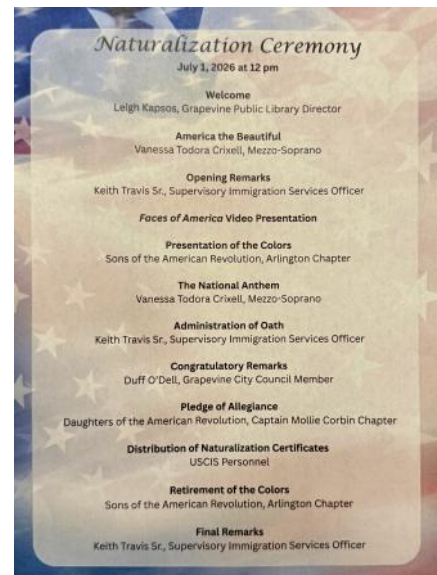
50 new citizens from several countries, with family and friends, celebrated the opportunity to become Americans, many smiling for photos with DAR and SAR compatriots in Revolutionary War–era attire. “Martha Washington” even made an appearance, adding a living-history touch to this meaningful day.

If you ever have the chance to attend a naturalization ceremony, we encourage you to go. It is a joyful, uplifting patriotic experience that reminds us all how special it is to call the United States of America our home.

The Captain Molly Corbin Chapter, Daughters of the American Revolution (Grapevine), was honored to welcome the Sons of the American Revolution Color Guard from the Arlington and Plano Chapters to present and retire the colors.



**July 1, 2026-** Compatriots Dan Hamilton, Roger Hardin, Brent Murray and Jim McClain posted the colors to open the ceremony.



**July 8, 2026– Frisco, TX-** Compatriot Chuck Andrews, pictured with Reader Stuart Sax and Frisco Heritage Association President, Donna Schmitter, attended the reading of the Declaration of Independence which occurred simultaneously across all 50 states and U. S. territories. The event commemorated the 250th anniversary of the first public reading on July 8, 1776.

The Frisco Heritage Association, through the Frisco Heritage Museum, seeks to research, preserve and share Frisco’s rich history.



## OKLAHOMA BOUND



**June 9, 2026**– Duncan , OK– Pictured– L-R: Compatriot David Friels, DAR Chapter Regent Mary Kay Lenz and Compatriot and Presenter Bill Covington.

Compatriots Bill Covington and David Friels traveled north into Oklahoma to attend the **Duncan Indian Territory Chapter, NSDAR** Annual Flag Day Luncheon. Compatriot Covington presented a very informative program on the Declaration of Independence. This was the fifth year for Bill Covington's presentations to the Chapter. At completion of the program, the Chapter Regent, Mary Kay Lenz presented both compatriots with the DAR Hannah White Arnett Bronze Medal of Distinction for extraordinary cooperation and outstanding service to NSDAR. The Chapter Regent is Compatriot Friels' sister and his mother was a longtime member of the chapter.



**July 12, 2026**– Lake Charles, LA– Compatriot Chuck Andrews toured the America 250! Exhibit at the Imperial Calcasieu Museum depicting uniforms worn by Spanish Infantry and Acadian Militia at the Battle of Baton Rouge. He was accompanied by cousin, fellow Compatriot, LA Dual Member and Past President of LASSAR, Russ Godwin.

The Museum collection spans centuries, from the life of the Attakapas and other Native American tribes to the industrial and cultural developments of the modern era. The Museum's permanent art collection features works by John James Audubon, Boyd Cruise, Angela Gregory, and Lynda Benglis.

Calcasieu Parish was created in 1840 from St. Landry Parish, and the state's newest parish was by far the largest—larger than the entire state of Rhode Island. It carried the regal name *Imperial Calcasieu*. By 1870, the expansive area was divided into the five parishes we know today: Beauregard, Allen, Jefferson Davis, Cameron, and Calcasieu.



### ARLINGTON #7 MERCHANDISE

Keep in mind that Arlington #7 offers logo merchandise:

Challenge Coins- \$10

Lapel Pins- \$5

Coffee Cups- \$15

These can be purchased by contacting:  
Sergeant-at-Arms:  
Richard Martin

[furball2604@gmail.com](mailto:furball2604@gmail.com)





## CALENDAR

### 2026

20-23 Aug **MOKAT South Central District SAR Annual Meeting**– Hilton, Richardson TX (S) (CG)

29 Aug **Liberty Tree Dedication** – Montgomery, TX next to Nathaniel Davis Museum– 10:00 AM (N) (CG)

12 Sept **Arlington #7 Chapter Meeting**– Skillet-n-Grill Café-9:30 AM (C)

19 Sept **Honor Flight** - Hobby Airport, Houston, TX - 6:45 PM (N) (CG)

10 Oct **Arlington #7 Chapter Meeting**– Skillet-n-Grill Café-9:30 AM (C)

17 Oct **Honor Flight** - Hobby Airport, Houston, TX - 6:45 PM (N) (CG)

23-25 Oct **Texas SAR Board of Managers Meeting (BOM)**- Arlington, TX– Hilton Garden Inn Dallas/Arlington South, 521 E. Interstate 20, Arlington, TX 76018 (S)

7 Nov **Veterans Day**

14 Nov **Arlington #7 Chapter Meeting**– Skillet-n-Grill Café-9:30 AM (C)

12 Dec **Wreaths Across America**– Parkdale/Arlington Cemeteries (C) (CG)

### 2027

9 Jul **137th Annual Congress**– New Orleans (N)

(CG) = Color Guard , (C) = Chapter, (S) = State, (N) = National

### *Editor's Note*

The future of the Chapter newsletter is unclear. My desktop publishing expertise was and is limited. Compatriots John Anderson and Ron Turner were very supportive in helping me get started. I have been using Microsoft Publisher. It is going away in October. I am looking into many alternatives. At this time none of the options are intuitive and some require a significant financial outlay. A steep learning curve is not attractive.

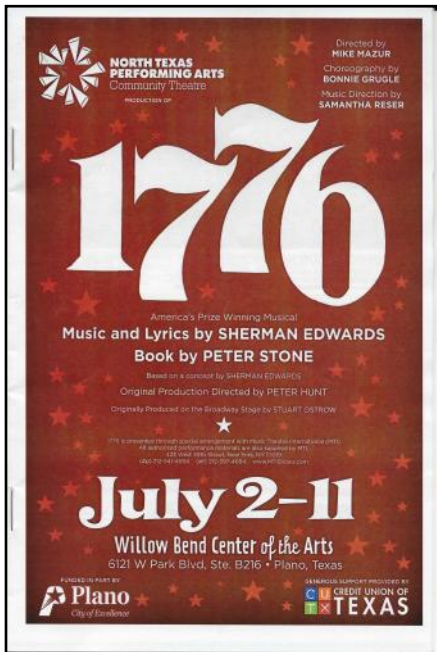
So, I cannot tell you what the future holds. I am continuing to try my hand at programs and if I get to a level of comfort I will make an effort to continue the endeavor. Many thanks to everyone who has contributed material and input over the last few years. Chuck Andrews, Editor

Assistance for this edition has come from David Friels, Dan Hamilton, Robert Wehr, Brent Murray and John Anderson. Claude and Gemini AI, escapehatchdallas.com, texasstandard.org and Charlie Sharpe, Mt.Gileadcem.org and MountVernon.org were utilized in preparation of the newsletter.

# COLOR GUARD PRESENTS COLORS

## AT

### 1776 PERFORMANCE



**July 2, 2026-** North Texas Performing Arts Community Theatre is performed *1776*, the musical, July 2-11, 2026 at the Willow Bend Center of the Arts in Plano, Texas.

*1776* shows the founding fathers at their outermost limits. These men were the cream of their colonies. They disagreed and fought with each other. But they understood commitment, and though they fought, they fought affirmatively. The show does not treat the central character as gods or cardboard characters chopping down cherry trees, or flying kites with strings and keys on them, it has a very affectionate familiarity. It's not reverential.

Sons of the American Revolution were proud and honored to be asked to participate in this production. SAR Arlington Chapter Color Guard members Brent Murray and Dan Hamilton attended opening night where they presented the colors and led the audience in the Pledge of Allegiance. For the remainder of the show runs, different members of the Northern Command representing Plano chapter and Arlington Chapter will be honored to present the Colors.







**July 11, 2026**– Chapter Meeting– Above– Bill McCoy provides the Comment of the Day, John Anderson, Richard Coffey, Richard Martin and Bob Wehr listen intently. At right – Jeff Sparks, 1st V.P. Maj. K.M. VanZandt Chapter and son of Chapter member Will Sparks, presents a talk about the writing of the Constitution.



**July 26, 2026**- Mansfield Philharmonic Orchestra offered a delightful evening of entertainment during their “America 250 Patriotic Pops” Concert performed at First Methodist Mansfield. The concert was a mix of pop and patriotic tunes including “The Star Spangled Banner”, “The Unanswered Question”, Rhapsody in Blue”, America the Beautiful”, “Adoration” ,“The Battle Hymn of the Republic” and “Stars and stripes Forever”

The Mansfield Philharmonic is an all-volunteer full orchestra consisting of high school and college students, teachers, active musicians, business professionals, and more!

Arlington chapter Color Guard members Richard Coffey, Jim McClain, Brent Murray and Dan Hamilton with an assist from Plano Color Guardsman Roger Hardin were honored to Present , post and retrieve the Colors for the Mansfield Philharmonic Orchestra’s “Patriotic Pops” concert.





## COLOR GUARD AT PLANO AMERICA 250! EXPERIENCE



**Aug. 8, 2026**– McKinney Sr. Living Center– Color Guardsman Brent Murray participated in the America 250! Colonial Experience featuring signing of the Declaration of Independence, viewing period artifacts and photos with costumed SAR members from the Arlington and Plano Chapters and DAR members of the John Abston Chapter of the NSDAR. Additionally those attending were greeted by Martha Washington and enjoyed Thomas Jefferson's favorite cookies.

In attendance were Color Guardsmen Michael Becker, Plano Chapter SAR and Brent Murray, Arlington Chapter SAR



**NATION'S  
250TH BIRTH-  
DAY — 4 JULY  
2026**





# PROFILES IN PATRIOTISM

## SOUTH CAROLINA

*South Carolina served as a primary theater of the Revolutionary War, hosting over 200 battles and skirmishes—more than any other state. The colony's strategic position, major deepwater port at Charleston, and fierce internal division made it central to the war's outcome.*

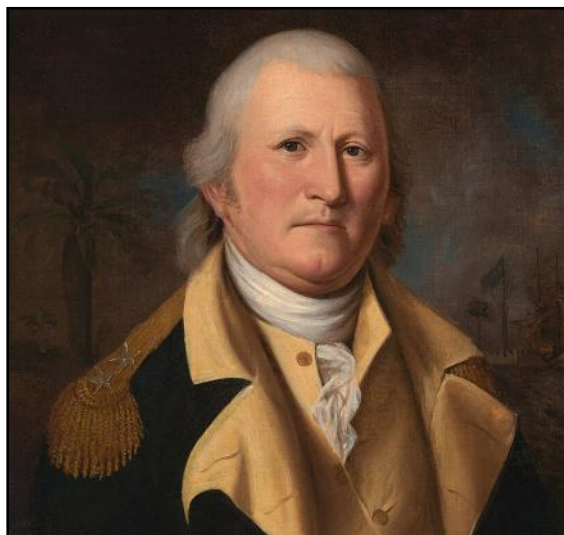
*South Carolina's resistance dismantled Britain's Southern Strategy, exhausting Cornwallis's army and forcing the retreat that culminated in the British surrender at Yorktown.*

### WILLIAM MOULTRIE: PLANTER, POLITICIAN AND REVOLUTIONARY

**William Moultrie** (November 23, 1730-September 27, 1805) Born in Charles Town to Scottish parents, William Moultrie spent his early life establishing himself as a South Carolina planter, running a sizeable slave plantation before stepping onto the public stage. His early military career began during the Anglo-Cherokee War in 1761, a conflict that prepared him for his growing presence in colonial politics as a representative for St. Helena Parish.

As tensions with Great Britain boiled over, Moultrie was commissioned in 1775 as colonel of the 2nd South Carolina Regiment. His defining moment came the following year on Sullivan's Island. Tasked with defending a small fort, Moultrie successfully turned back a formidable British fleet under Sir Henry Clinton and Sir Peter Parker, saving Charleston from capture. During the heavy bombardment, a blue flag of Moultrie's own design—featuring a white crescent and the word LIBERTY—was shot down. Sergeant William Jasper famously braved enemy fire to rally the troops and raise the banner back above the ramparts, transforming the Liberty Flag into an enduring symbol that eventually inspired South Carolina's state flag.

Commended by the Continental Congress and promoted to brigadier general, Moultrie continued to defend the South. He repulsed the British at Port Royal in early 1779 and later executed a vital tactical retreat to hold off a British siege on Charleston, staunchly refusing to surrender even when civilian leaders panicked. However, when Charleston ultimately fell in 1780, Moultrie was captured. While imprisoned, he oversaw the treatment of American prisoners of war and steadfastly rejected British offers to defect.



Following his exchange in 1782, Moultrie was promoted to major general—the final officer appointed to the rank by Congress during the war. He transitioned seamlessly into peacetime leadership, serving two non-consecutive terms as Governor of South Carolina (1785–1787 and 1792–1794) and heading the state's Society of the Cincinnati. Before his death in 1805, he published his *Memoirs of the Revolution*, cementing his legacy alongside the fort, county, and city that carry his name today.

# FRANCIS MARION :

## PLANTER, REVOLUTIONARY WAR SOLDIER, UNCONVENTIONAL WARFARE INNOVATOR

**Brigadier General Francis Marion** (c. 1732 – February 27, 1795) Born in Berkeley County, the life of Francis Marion was defined by the dense, river-threaded swamps of the South Carolina low country. Long before he earned the moniker that secured his place in American history, Marion spent his early years managing his family's Berkeley County plantation, surviving a shipwreck at fifteen, and serving in the militia during the French and Indian War. Those early campaigns against the Cherokee provided him with a brutal, practical education in woodland tactics, ambushes, and survival—skills that would soon transform him into the primary threat to British occupation in the South.

When the Revolutionary War erupted, Marion joined the 2nd South Carolina Regiment as a captain, fighting at Fort Sullivan and the siege of Savannah. However, his defining role in the conflict was set in motion by a stroke of sheer luck. In the spring of 1780, while recovering from a broken ankle outside of Charleston, the city fell to Sir Henry Clinton. With the regular Continental Army crushed or captured and the British sweeping across the state, the hobbling Marion organized a ragged band of twenty to seventy men. Operating with no pay and providing their own horses and arms, "Marion's Men" launched a relentless campaign of hit-and-run tactics against British regulars and local Loyalists from a hidden base on Snow's Island.



Marion avoided pitched, frontal battles, relying instead on lightning-fast surprise attacks followed by immediate retreats into the impassable swamps. His intelligence network was exceptional, frustrating British commanders who found themselves unable to pacify the region. Sent to hunt him down in late 1780, British Lieutenant Colonel Banastre Tarleton pursued the militia commander over twenty-six miles through the bogs before giving up, reportedly declaring that "the Devil himself could not catch" the "old fox"—a pursuit that gave birth to Marion's legendary nickname, the "Swamp Fox."

Promoted to brigadier general of the militia by Governor John Rutledge, Marion waged a harsh, uncompromising war. While ruthless toward Loyalists and enforcing strict wartime measures against fleeing enslaved populations, his strategic value to the Patriot cause was undeniable. Coordinating with Continental officers like "Light-Horse Harry" Lee and General Nathanael Greene, Marion's forces captured critical British outposts like Fort Watson and Fort Motte, severing British communications and helping command the right wing at the Battle of Eutaw Springs.

When the British evacuated Charleston in late 1782, Marion returned to his home at Pond Bluff to find it destroyed and his enslaved labor force scattered. Rebuilding his plantation by taking on debt to purchase more slaves, he married his cousin Mary Esther Videau at age fifty-four and served several terms in the South Carolina State Senate. He was later appointed commander of Fort Johnson—a comfortable sinecure—before passing away in 1795 at the age of sixty-three. Though early biographers elevated him into a mythical figure and modern historians debate the harsh realities of his wartime conduct, the "Swamp Fox" remains fundamentally remembered as the master of guerrilla warfare who kept the Patriot cause alive in the South.



# THOMAS SUMTER :

## PLANTER, REVOLUTIONARY WAR SOLDIER AND POLITICIAN

**General Thomas Sumter** (August 14, 1734-June 1, 1832) Born in Hanover County, Virginia, Thomas Sumter was raised on the rugged American frontier with minimal formal schooling, spending much of his youth tending livestock and assisting at his father's mill. His early military baptism came during the French and Indian War, where he served in the Virginia militia and survived General Edward Braddock's catastrophic ambush near Fort Duquesne. In 1761, seeking new opportunities, Sumter joined the Timberlake Expedition to foster peace with the Overhill Cherokee. Demonstrating his relentless physical drive, he once swam half a mile through icy river waters to retrieve a drifted canoe. The journey culminated in a high-profile voyage to London, where Sumter helped escort Cherokee leaders for an audience with King George III. Debt problems briefly led to his imprisonment in Virginia upon returning, but a fellow soldier helped secure his release. Moving south, Sumter settled in South Carolina's High Hills of Santee, married Mary Jameson, and established himself as a prosperous merchant, land speculator, and slave-holding planter.



When the Revolutionary War broke out, Sumter was commissioned into the South Carolina Line, but his most vital contributions began in 1780. Following the fall of Charleston and the total collapse of formal Continental forces in the region, South Carolina was effectively occupied by British troops. Refusing to submit, Sumter organized a ruthless partisan militia. Operating with fierce determination, he launched aggressive raids against Loyalist outposts and British supply lines, securing victories at battles like Hanging Rock and intercepting critical British convoys. At the Battle of Blackstock's Farm, despite suffering a severe shoulder wound from a musket ball, Sumter successfully repulsed the feared British commander Colonel Banastre Tarleton. Tarleton famously grumbled that Sumter "fought like a gamecock," while Lord Cornwallis dubbed him his "greatest plague". That fieriness earned Sumter his enduring moniker: the "Carolina Gamecock." To bolster his forces, he even implemented "Sumter's Law", offering slaves confiscated from Loyalists as bounties for new recruits.

With independence secured, Sumter seamlessly transitioned into public service as a prominent Anti-Federalist politician. He was elected to the First United States House of Representatives, serving multiple terms before being selected by the state legislature to serve in the United States Senate from 1801 until his retirement in 1810. Sumter lived out his remaining years at his beloved "South Mount" plantation in Stateburg. When he died on June 1, 1832, at the remarkable age of 97, he was honored as the very last surviving general officer of the American Revolutionary War.

Sumter's legacy endures as one of the most prominent symbols of South Carolina's revolutionary heritage. Fort Sumter in Charleston Harbor—where the opening artillery salvoes of the Civil War were fired in 1861—was named in his honor, as were counties in South Carolina, Florida, Alabama, and Georgia, alongside the city of Sumter, South Carolina. His iconic nickname became the official mascot of the University of South Carolina Gamecocks, and his fiercely aggressive backcountry tactics provided a major historical blueprint for Mel Gibson's fictional protagonist in the 2000 film *The Patriot*.

