



# George Washington Chapter Sons of the American Revolution



## Newsletter

Volume 8, Issue 9

December, 2008

### New Officers Will be Installed at the December 13 Luncheon

The next meeting of the George Washington Chapter, SAR, will be held on Saturday, December 13, at the Belle Haven Country Club. VASSAR President Arthur D. Batten will be on hand to conduct the installation formalities. Our new officers, elected at the last meeting to serve a one year term, are:

President David Walker - who will become our Chapter's 48<sup>th</sup> president. He will be assisted by:

Vice-President Vern McHargue,  
Treasurer Paul Briggs, and  
Secretary Michael Elston.

It is an honor to have VASSAR President Batten participate in our meeting and he has agreed to serve as our guest speaker. We look forward to his presentation.

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### NOVEMBER MEETING HIGHLIGHTS

#### Guest Speaker Ms. Christina Keyser

Ms. Keyser is an Assistant Curator at the Mount Vernon Estate and the guiding force in the preparation of an extensive exhibit of dinner-ware used in the White House by past American presidents. That exhibit, which is titled *Setting the President's Table: The Robert L. McNeil Collection at the Philadelphia Museum of Art*, opened in Mount Vernon's museum last February. Ms. Keyser reviewed the history of the porcelain pieces which graced the tables of our presidents from George Washington to Ronald Reagan. Her lively, slide-illustrated presentation held the attention of a crowd which included the wives of several members. Her impressive and interesting display will continue at

Mount Vernon until January 21, 2009. This would be an interesting place to visit during the Christmas holidays.



Ms. Keyser accepts the coveted bust of General Washington from President Torrans.

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#### Neal Charles Davis Joins our Chapter

At this meeting, we welcomed Compatriot Neal Charles Davis to the SAR and specifically to our Chapter. Neal is the son of Charles (SAR # 170459) and Virginia Davis. He was born in Chattanooga, Tennessee, on April 24, 1957. At the early age of 8, Neal became a Christian. He graduated from Ooltewah High School in May 1975, and was named Athlete of the Year by the Fellowship of Christian Athletes.

After attending Carson-Newman College for two years, Neal graduated from Western Kentucky University in August 1980 with an AB in Government with

minors in Business Administration and Economics. He ran cross-country and track, specializing in the 10,000



Compatriot Neal Charles Davis receives his Membership Certificate from President Torrans.

meter and marathon. In March 1984, he graduated from the University of Tennessee with an MS in Agricultural Economics and in December 1993 from Auburn University with a PhD in Economics.

Neal taught part-time at Middlesex Community College and Suffolk University while his wife Ginger finished law school. He was a visiting assistant professor in economics at Western Kentucky University for two years while he finished his Ph.D. dissertation. After graduating from Auburn, Neal was hired as a contractor of the Energy Information Administration (EIA), the statistical agency of the U.S. Department of Energy. A few months later he was hired as a federal employee, becoming an industry economist upon being promoted.

Neal is in his 14<sup>th</sup> year at EIA, all working with the Financial Reporting System, a survey used to collect financial and operational data from the U.S. major oil companies. The data are used to prepare an annual report (*Performance Profiles of Major Energy Producers*) to Congress.

Compatriot Davis' membership in the Sons of the American Revolution is based on his bloodline descent from Patriot James Davis who assisted in establishing American independence while acting in the capacity as Private in the Wilkes County Militia and

served under General Greene at the battle of Eutaw Springs.

Neal resides in Alexandria VA with his wife Ginger. In addition to yard work and a few miles of running daily, Neal edits the newsletter of Washington Farm United Methodist Church, accompanies Ginger (a season-ticket holder) to Auburn football games, and organizes annual reunions of former - Western Kentucky University cross-country runners.

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### Election of Officers for 2009

As noted above, the annual election of officers was conducted during this meeting.

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### Veterans' Day Ceremony at Mount Vernon

At 2:00 pm on Wednesday, November 11, approximately 100 people gathered at General Washington's Tomb for a traditional wreath-laying ceremony. As you will recall, this ceremony is



A large crowd assembled at General Washington's Tomb for the Veterans' Day ceremony.

sponsored jointly by our Chapter and the Kate Waller Barrett Chapter, DAR, with the ladies having the led role. As master of ceremonies, Ms. Linda Lyons, opened the ceremony. Chaplain Richard Townes (USN) offered a prayer and 1LT Kristene Harris, USAF, lead the pledge of allegiance. Remarks were made by Lessli





More than 200 service members and veterans signed the guest register at General Washington's Tomb on Veterans' Day.

Nielson, Vice-Regent of the Kate Waller Barrett Chapter and our own President Kenan Torrans. Dane Adams, USN, and Josh Perez, USN, were selected from the crowd to present our Chapter's wreath at the Tomb. The ceremony was concluded by a reading of Washington's *Prayer for Our Country* by Barbara McJoynt.

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### **President Torran's Remarks at the Ceremony**

I am Kenan Torrans, and I presently serve as President of the George Washington Chapter of the Virginia Society of the Sons of the American Revolution.

Today, Veterans' Day, is a very special day. Each year, the George Washington Chapter of the SAR joins with the Kate Waller Barrett Chapter of the DAR to honor our nation's veterans in this ceremony. Today is perhaps made even more special because of the fact that we now have troops in the field, along with many who have recently come home. That so many of you have taken the time to come here and be with us today,

to honor George Washington and our veterans, only reaffirms the significance of this date.

There are 25 million living American veterans today. Many have put their lives on the line to defend our nation. Many are doing so today. In fact, since the terrorist attacks of 9/11, more than 700,000 members of our National Guard and Reserves have been mobilized to serve in Iraq and Afghanistan on multiple deployments. And nearly 600,000 of those troops have returned. Closer to home, soldiers of the 266<sup>th</sup> Military Police Company based in Manassas and the 180<sup>th</sup> Engineer Company based in Powhatan of the Virginia Army National Guard will soon be deploying to Iraq. We wish them Godspeed and a safe return, and please let's remember them in our thoughts and prayers. Quite a number of veterans, many of whom have recently returned from overseas and combat tours are here with us today. They are our neighbors, they are our friends, and they are our parents, our brothers and sisters; they are us. In a short time, most of them will go back to living their normal lives, raising and caring for their families, and pursuing civilian careers. But before they embark on that next adventure, I would like you all to join me in offering thanks for their service, and to welcome them home. Thank you.



Chapter President Torrans at the podium during the Veterans' Day ceremony at Mount Vernon.

The face of our military has changed; it will continue to change; but the purpose remains the same as it did in 1775. George Washington and our founding fathers undertook to fight for and secure our freedom at great personal cost and risk. They risked losing their lives if captured, and many of those brave individuals lost everything they had, ultimately facing financial ruin after the war was over. But this did not prevent them for standing up for the values they believed in—values including justice and liberty which are now embodied in our Bill of Rights and in our Constitution. The great moral courage that George Washington and our founding fathers showed in 1776 has echoed down through the ages, and we as Americans can be very proud of the way our soldiers, sailors, marines, and airmen have consistently upheld that ideal in every conflict we have fought since that time. And when you think about it, things really haven't changed that much. At the outset of our military service, we still take the same oath our forebears did to protect and defend this country and its Constitution against all enemies, foreign and domestic. The bonds forged between our comrades in arms are as strong as they ever were.

Veterans' Day was originally called Armistice Day, and marked the date, November 11, 1918, that the guns fell silent on the Western Front, at precisely 11 a.m., thus ending the "War to End All Wars", what we now call World War I. Most allied units continued offensive operations up until the last minute of that war—literally – incurring some 11,000 casualties. A U.S. Army field piece, dubbed "Calamity Jane" fired the last round at exactly 10:59 a.m. on that day. Prior to our entry into World War I, and prior to our debut as a world power, this country was primarily focused on domestic issues, and had little interest in becoming involved in world affairs. In fact, the leaders of many nations expressed doubt as to our ability and resolve to fight and win on a modern battlefield. Those doubts were confronted at places like Chateau Thierry, Langemark, Belleau Wood, and the Argonne. Any notion that American troops were not up to the task of defending our liberty were quickly put to rest.

And how things have changed. Today, we have U.S. Army troops deployed in some 130 countries around the world, engaged in peacekeeping, counter-terror operations, training, and other missions. And we maintain approximately 737 military bases worldwide. This country now has huge global commitments and

responsibilities—critical to protecting and maintaining our freedom. And those responsibilities are being shouldered by a relatively small number of our citizens—members of our armed forces.

I now want to read to you an excerpt of remarks offered by Marine General Peter M. Pace when dedicating the Wounded Warrior Project Sacrifice Center on November 6, of last year. His thoughts that day were so well put that they deserve to be read in their entirety and do not bear any revision. He said: "There are those who speak about you who say; 'He lost an arm; He lost a leg; She lost her sight' . . . I object – You gave your arm. You gave your leg. You gave your sight. As gifts to your nation. That we might live in freedom. Thank you. And to your families. Families of the Fallen and families of the wounded. You sacrificed in ways that those of us who have not walked in your shoes can only imagine."

We really do ask a great deal of those individuals, so when they return home, please let's work together to help make their transitions from military to civilian life as smooth as possible. It's not a lot to ask, and is probably the best way to show our appreciation for what they have done for us.

We are a peaceful nation, and we are the oldest democratic republic in history. Since this country's founding in 1776, we have gained our independence from Great Britain; overcame a titanic struggle that was the American Civil War (or the war of Northern Aggression); we have dealt with Manifest Destiny; have defeated Hitler and his Axis; and we have triumphed over communism. But notwithstanding our past victories and triumphs, we can never rest on our laurels or take our freedom for granted. To do so is to invite defeat. We must all understand that the preservation of our values and our way of life is an ongoing struggle. We will always face new challenges from individuals and groups who would seek to do us harm and take away those rights and freedoms upon which our Constitution is based. There must never be any doubt among any of our potential enemies as to our resolve to defend our nation, our values, our national interests, and our Constitution whenever necessary.

Each of us here today owes a great deal to our veterans who have fought so hard to preserve our liberty. We all have an affirmative duty to honor and show appreciation for what they have done for us. Because of our veterans and service members, we are the envy of

the world. Their service has inspired people in every nation, even those who criticize us, to want to come to America, because they want to be like us! We set the example for other nations to follow! And let's continue on that road!

So at this ceremony, and in activities conducted throughout the day here at Mount Vernon and around the nation, let's all pledge to remember our veterans, and to recognize the contributions and sacrifices they have made, including our men and women who are in uniform today who are deployed around the world to protect us.

Thank you, and once again, **WELCOME HOME!!**

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### **Registrar's Report**

#### **New Members**

No new member applications have been received during the past two months. At present, four (4) new members are awaiting induction. Three (3) either live out of the area or are in school. There are five (5) new member applications at National awaiting approval. Three of these were "Pended" by NSSAR under their new policy for use of DAR applications as supporting documentation. Additional supporting information has been provided to VASSAR in each case. There is the possibility of one new member being inducted at our December 13, 2008, meeting – approved but awaiting receipt of official certificate. There is one (1) new transfer request in process and one (1) in hands of the transferee for his signature.

#### **Supplemental Applications**

Presently there are two (2) supplemental applications at National awaiting approval with twenty nine (29) supplemental applications in process. This backlog is the result of priority being given to processing all new member applications ahead of supplemental applications.

There are other members with supplemental applications to submit. Those members should submit their supplemental in order to get in the queue. Please submit only one supplemental at a time.

#### **Application Notes**

Any Compatriot having the name of someone who is interested in joining our chapter, please e-mail me ([capt7cs@aol.com](mailto:capt7cs@aol.com)) their name and address and I will send them an information packet along with a letter

explaining the application procedures and the benefits of being a member of our chapter. If you would like to have a New Member packet to give to someone, see me at the meeting and pick up a packet.

### **SAR National Web Site**

I encourage all Chapter members to log on to the SAR National web site at [www.sar.org](http://www.sar.org). There is a significant amount of information concerning Chapter, State and National "goings-on". You can set up a password and enter into the George Washington Chapter roster, held by National, and see what information they hold on you. Most times I have found this information needs updating and for some fields you can update on line. Our Chapter is working to have its own web site linked to the national site thus allowing anyone interested in joining or transferring to the chapter to contact us directly. Currently we receive all web inquiries through the State or National web page via the State Secretary.

Bob Carr  
Registrar

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### **Care Package Project**

Please don't forget Compatriot Dick Kusserow's Care Packages project. Mailing addresses of military men or women now serving in Afghanistan or Iraq are still needed. If you have current addresses of senior NCOs or company grade officers who can distribute the goodies, please forward that information to Dick.

His e-mail is [rkusserow@strategicm.com](mailto:rkusserow@strategicm.com); phone is 703-683-9600, ext 411.

If you would like to participate in this project, Dick will happily accept your contributions at our monthly meetings. In the event that Dick is unable to attend, Don Kraft will ensure that your contributions are delivered to Dick.

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This monthly newsletter is published for members of the George Washington Chapter, SAR. It is edited by Don Kraft, who depends heavily on inputs from Chapter officers and committee chairmen. Inputs from others are always welcome. Please send you inputs and comments to [kraftdon@att.net](mailto:kraftdon@att.net).

**December 13, 2008**  
**Luncheon Meeting Reservation Form**

Please use this form to make a reservation for the Chapter's lunch at the Belle Haven Country Club, 6023 Fort Hunt Road, Alexandria, Virginia. The lunch cost is \$35.00 per person. Check in and social time begin at 11:30 a.m. The meeting will be called to order at 12:00 noon. Feel free to invite your wife and friends as your guests. ***RSVP no later than Monday, December 8th.***

Walk-ins will be accommodated if possible, but note that to cover the Club's charge for serving those without a timely reservation a walk-in price of \$37.00 is required.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

A check for \_\_\_\_ persons in the amount of \$\_\_\_\_ payable to **G. W. Chapter SAR** is enclosed.  
Mail this reservation form with your check to:

Vern McHargue, Treasurer  
6846 Ericka Avenue  
Alexandria, VA 22310

You may also phone (703) 313-0671 and leave a message or e-mail

[vern.mchargue@heritage.org](mailto:vern.mchargue@heritage.org).

**It is important to provide advance notice of attendance to be sure you get a seat.**

**Valet parking is available.**