



George Washington Chapter Newsletter in Alexandria, Virginia

Volume 26, Issue 4

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April 2024



Photo by **Tom Roth**

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PATRIOT *Grave Markings*

President's Corner

Greetings, Compatriots.

Before looking back at an eventful March, I'd like to share my excitement for a couple of upcoming events. We'll be celebrating the George Washington Chapter's 70th Anniversary at our meeting on April 13. After a brief business meeting we'll enjoy lunch, followed by presentations by past Chapter Presidents Mike Elston, Ernie Coggins, Dave Thomas, and Tom Roth. Please plan on joining us for what promises to be a very special event. While spouses and other guests are always welcome at our meetings, we hope many will find this occasion particularly appealing. Did I mention the program includes cake and Champagne toasts?



*Chapter President
Scott Walker*

Memorial Day (May 27) will feature two events in downtown Washington, D.C. that you won't want to miss. We'll be marching again in the parade down Constitution Avenue, with President General John Dodd, Treasurer General Mike Elston, and Virginia Society President Bill Greaif joining our unit this year. Before the parade, a wreath-laying ceremony in Lafayette Square near the White House, hosted by the D.C. Society, is in the planning stages. These are both great events for the entire family. To facilitate participation, we'll prepare and distribute a Metro Rail itinerary. You can park for free at Huntington Station in Alexandria, and it's a straight shot from there into town for the events and then back out that afternoon.

At our March meeting, Dave Heiby, Superintendent of the Presbyterian Cemetery in Alexandria and owner of Gravestone Stories, gave a most enjoyable presentation on many of the notable individuals interred at the Wilkes Street Cemetery Complex and their sometimes surprising ties to the history of our city, state, and nation. Cadet Kamilla Welborn, winner of our Chapter's Enhanced JROTC Award and second place finisher at the state level, inspired us by reading her essay on what it takes to be a good citizen.



ABOVE: Our guest speaker at the March meeting was Dave Heiby, owner of Gravestone Stories and Superintendent of the Presbyterian Cemetery in Alexandria, Va. **RIGHT:** Cadet Kamilla Welborn of Lake Braddock Secondary School received our Enhanced JROTC Award and finished second place at the state level for her essay on what it takes to be a good citizen. (Photos by Compatriot Tom Roth)

We recognized the many contributions of our immediate Past President Rand Pixa; in addition to the Past President's pin and gavel, Rand was awarded the Virginia Society Medal. We also expressed our appreciation to last year's Vice President Bill Wilson, to whom we presented the Bronze Roger Sherman Medal for his many years of service.

We bestowed the title of Past President Emeritus to Don Reynolds, Past Virginia Society President, as well as Past George Washington Chapter President and Chaplain. As Past President Jay Henn stated in his letter nominating Don for this honor, Don "has made enduring contributions to the gentlemanly character of the Chapter while continuously making more tangible contributions." I encourage you to visit Compatriot Tom Roth's [Flickr page](#) for more photos of our March meeting and other certificates and awards presented.

Beautiful, springlike weather greeted a sizable crowd as we gathered the following weekend to pay respects to three Patriots buried in the Presbyterian Cemetery in Old Town Alexandria. This joint ceremony with the Fairfax Resolves Chapter paid tribute to Robert Adam, signer of the Fairfax Resolves; Lt. John Dundas, Philadelphia City Militia; and Capt. David Black, drummer boy for several New York regiments. In addition to the Fairfax Resolves and George Washington Chapter members present, we are grateful for significant DAR and C.A.R. participation. Both the Virginia Society and the National Society of the SAR were also represented. Kudos to Past President Paul Walden and Compatriot David Harrity for their work in planning and executing this moving ceremony.

I'm looking forward to seeing you soon.

Fraternally,

Scott Walker

President

George Washington Chapter



ABOVE RIGHT: Among the many awards I had the pleasure of presenting at the March meeting were the Past President's pin and gavel, as well as the Virginia Society Medal, to Compatriot Rand Pixa. I also had the honor of presenting the Bronze Roger Sherman Medal to last year's Chapter Vice President Bill Wilson for his many years of service and the title of Past President Emeritus to Don Reynolds, Past Virginia Society SAR President, as well as Past George Washington Chapter President and Chaplain. (Photos by Compatriot Tom Roth)

Battle of Guilford Courthouse Anniversary

Greensboro, NC, March 15 (By Compatriot Larry Lisle)

I ATTENDED the 243rd Anniversary Ceremony of the Battle of Guilford Courthouse March 15 at the Guilford Courthouse National Military Park, Greensboro, NC, representing the George Washington Chapter with a wreath. Aside from many North Carolina chapters presenting wreaths, there were a good number of Virginia chapters present, along with chapters from Georgia, Ohio, and South Carolina. Below is a picture of me at the ceremony with Virginia Society SAR President Bill Greaf, First Lady Elizabeth Greaf, and Pat Kelly, past state president (2018-2019). I plan to bring the streamer to the George Washington Chapter lunch on April 13.

I am not sure if it is of interest, but tomorrow, March 16, The General Francis Nash Chapter, NCSSAR, Durham, NC, is conducting its Rumbaugh Oration Contest, and as an associate member of that chapter, I will be attending and participating.

RIGHT: Former George Washington and Virginia Society SAR President Larry Lisle, far right, with (left to right) Virginia Society SAR First Lady Elizabeth Greaf, Virginia Society SAR President Bill Greaf, and past Virginia Society SAR President Pat Kelly. (Photographer unknown)

BELOW: The ceremony's color guard. (Photo by Compatriot Larry Lisle)



Grave Marking *with Fairfax Resolves*

Alexandria, Va., March 16 (Article By Compatriot [Paul Walden](#))

ON MARCH 16, 2024 at 1 p.m., the Fairfax Resolves and George Washington Chapters conducted a joint grave-marking honoring patriots Robert Adam, David Black, and John Dundas at the Presbyterian Cemetery and Columbarium in Alexandria. Fairfax Resolves President Jon Rymer and George Washington President Scott Walker served as masters of ceremony for the event. Nineteen DAR, C.A.R., and SAR chapters presented wreaths, which is one of the larger turnouts experienced for a grave-marking. Compatriot Michael Elston, NSSAR Treasurer General, gave greetings on behalf of NSSAR, and Darrin Schmidt, Virginia Society SAR 2nd VP, represented the Virginia Society.

Robert Adam (1731-1789) was a prominent merchant in Alexandria. Adam served as a trustee for the town and became a justice of the peace for Fairfax County in 1758, a position he held for the remainder of his life. He was sheriff of the county in 1765 and also became a captain in the militia. He served on the Alexandria and Fairfax Committees of Safety and signed the Fairfax Resolves in 1774. In 1782, he was instrumental in founding Alexandria's first Masonic lodge and in 1783 became its first Worshipful Master.

David Black (1762-1831) was a distinguished figure in the historic town of Alexandria, celebrated for his maritime prowess and deep-rooted civic dedication. Before his prominence as a ship captain, Black bravely served as a drummer boy during the Revolutionary War. For five pivotal years, he was part of the First, Second, Third, and Fourth New York regiments, serving under the esteemed leadership of Colonels Goose Van Schaick, Philip Van Cortland, James Holmes, and William Allison.

RIGHT: *Above, Compatriot Paul Walden unveils a new plaque placed by the Chapter at the Patriot grave of John Dundas (see below) in the Presbyterian Cemetery and Columbarium. Right, Compatriot Tom Roth narrates a portion of the ceremony. (Photos by Compatriot Rand Pixa)*





John Dundas (1759-1813) joined the Philadelphia City Militia during the American Revolution and first served in Captain Jehu Eyre's Company, 1st Battalion. Later, he rose to the rank of ensign in Captain John Kling's Company, 3rd Company, 2nd Battalion. By September 1780, he served as a lieutenant under Captain George Esterly's Company, 1st Company, 3rd Battalion, and at least through 1782 and likely remained so until the war's end.

The chapters are indebted to the Presbyterian Cemetery and Columbarium Board of Directors and David Heiby, Cemetery Superintendent for their support of this event.

More photos of the event can be seen on Compatriot Tom Roth's [Flickr page](#).

LEFT: Two of the plaques placed by the Chapter. (Photo by Compatriot Tom Roth) **BELOW:** Compatriots of the George Washington Chapter after the wreath-laying. (Photographer unknown)



James Madison Birthday Wreath-Laying Ceremony

Montpelier Station, Va., March 16 (Photos by Linda Blair)

ON THE SAME DAY the George Washington and Fairfax Resolves Chapters held their joint grave-marking at the Presbyterian Cemetery and Columbarium in Alexandria, the George Washington Chapter joined other SAR chapters, DAR chapters, the National Society of Madison Family Descendants, and the National Society of the Washington Family Descendants, in presenting wreaths at the grave of President James Madison on the 273rd anniversary of his birth. A detail from Marine Corps Base Quantico placed the President of the United States' wreath, in accordance with the Presidential order that a wreath be placed at the grave of each former President on his birthday. Compatriot John Blair, pictured below, presented a wreath on behalf of the George Washington Chapter. He reports that the weather was outstanding and the ceremony very well attended.



ABOVE: *James Madison, 4th President of the United States, born March 19, 1751.*

LEFT and BELOW: *Chapter member John Blair at the grave of President Madison, with the wreath he presented on behalf of the Chapter.*



George Washington Chapter *Outreach Table*

Historic Mount Vernon, Alexandria, Va., February 22



ABOVE: Chapter Vice President Scot Bryant, left, and Chapter member and fifer extraordinaire Don Francisco man the outreach table. Chapter members Richard Douglass and David Harrity, along with Scot's wife Vickie Bryant of the Nelly Custis DAR Chapter, also answered questions and shared the rewards gained from being involved in the two, closely aligned organizations. (Photo by David Harrity)

STILL TODAY, our Chapter's relationship with Mount Vernon continues to grow! We were welcomed by Mount Vernon to "set up camp" just outside of their Robert H. and Clarice Smith Auditorium, which flanks a primary exit path for Mount Vernon's visitors as they pass by the food court and then the gift shop. There we had the pleasure of greeting and conversing with quite a few of Mount Vernon's visitors that day, some being from the local area while others were from around the country. Our offer to assist them with SAR membership and application research was very well received by the folks that stopped by and, if nothing else, the George Washington Chapter received a considerable amount of exposure from many of Mount Vernon's more than 3,000 guests that day who looked our way as they continued past our table.

It looks favorable that Mount Vernon will invite our outreach table setup back two more times this year on two of their other most busy days of the year: the Fourth of July and Veterans Day! So, we anticipate another wonderful opportunity due to the historical attendance numbers at Mount Vernon on those two holidays. We staffed the table on Washington's Birthday from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. and the time flew by as it is known to do when having fun! The July 4th and November 11th engagements are already in the preparation stages. Plan to join us and meet some wonderful people who share the passion of heritage, history, and patriotism, just for starters.

JROTC Enhanced Cadet Award Ceremony

Alexandria, VA, March 18 (Report by Compatriot Jeff McCoy)



LEFT: Presenting our JROTC Outstanding Cadet Award certificate to Cadet Capt. Kamilla Welborn of Lake Braddock Secondary School. (Photo by Tom Roth)

EACH FALL, the George Washington Chapter invites JROTC battalion senior military instructors at six public schools in Alexandria (Alexandria Public High School, Hayfield Secondary School, Lake Braddock Secondary School, Mount Vernon High School, Thomas Edison High School, and West Potomac High School) to nominate one junior cadet from their program to be considered for our Chapter's JROTC Outstanding Cadet Award. This award recognizes a remarkable cadet who will become a leader in their community and serve their country. Cadets seeking this prestigious award must demonstrate leadership potential, military bearing, and scholastic achievement. They are asked to complete an extensive application form, provide reference letters from their school's principal and their JROTC senior military instructor, and write an essay of no less than 500 words on the topic, "how JROTC has prepared me to be a better citizen of the United States of America." Our chapter's JROTC Awards Committee then carefully reviews the submissions and chooses one cadet based on the strength of their application materials for our first-place winner.

This year, that honor went to Cadet Captain Kamilla Welborn of Lake Braddock Secondary School's Army JROTC "Bruin Battalion." Cadet Welborn's dedication to her academics, JROTC program, and her community is extraordinary, and her nomination package speaks volumes about the person she is now and her future potential. She challenges herself with a tough course load replete with Advance Placement Courses, yet still maintains a 3.9 GPA. She speaks Russian and German, and she is learning Japanese. Cadet Welborn leads other cadets in her JROTC program as the Bravo Company Commander, and she's been an active member of her battalion's Color Guard, Drill, and JROTC Leadership and Academic Bowl, or JLAB, teams. Moreover, in her free time, which it is hard to believe she has any, she takes care of her younger siblings, weight-lifts, and practices Jiu-Jitsu. In the words of her senior military instructor, Capt. (USA, Ret.) Edward Guardo, Kamila "is a goal-directed and resilient individual with the willingness to participate and develop as a leader, which is a testament to her personal character, responsibility, unwavering commitment, and endless potential."

At our chapter meeting on March 9, President Walker presented Cadet Welborn with her well-deserved medallion, ribbon, certificate, and a \$500 cash award. She also led our Chapter in the Pledge of Allegiance and read her essay, where she underscored the value of JROTC, which gave her “experiences and lessons that are priceless, a deeper sense of community, and a stronger understanding of what being a citizen truly means.” Kamila was also awarded second place at the state level and will receive an additional \$500 award from the Virginia Society SAR. It was especially wonderful that our Chapter was able to share this special moment with Kamila’s parents, Johnathan and Malika, and her brothers and sister. Kamilla is truly carrying on the legacy of our Patriot ancestors through her leadership, patriotism, and dedication to her community and country. Our Chapter’s support of local JROTC programs is helping to build a future generation of Americans that believes in the SAR mission to promote patriotism, serve our communities, and advance the founding principles of our country.

Here is the text of her essay, *How JROTC Has Prepared Me to Be a Better Citizen of the United States of America*:

"No one is born a good citizen; no nation is born a democracy. Rather, both are processes that continue to evolve over a lifetime. Young people must be included from birth. A society that cuts off from its youth severs its lifeline."

The moment I saw this quote from Kofi Annan, I thought about JROTC. The youth are the future, and without the sense of accountability for the people and environment surrounding me that JROTC fostered in me so early in life, or the valuable lessons passed down to me from everyone I have worked with, I would not be the responsible citizen of the USA that I am today.

In my view, a good and active citizen should participate socially, environmentally, and politically. JROTC has provided me with immense guidance in the first two. My first year, I was amazed with the number of special teams our program offered, and admittedly a bit lost on where to start, so I started with everything I could fit in my schedule. I have gained

meaningful experiences from each team.

Through the strenuous activities of Raiders, a team that prepares for and competes in athletic competitions held by local JROTCs, I learned the importance of a tight bond with your fellow cadets and pride for your team. There’s no room for egotism, everyone must have each other’s backs. Through Color Guard, I gained a further understanding of the significance of our flag and a deeper respect for our country as a whole. As the whole stadium goes quiet, hand to heart for the flag I hold, it’s impossible not to see the value of the flag and what it represents, the powerful way it unites everyone under it. In drill, where success is dependent on the flawless execution of each move by each person, I saw the power of a functional team and indispensability of each individual.

JROTC and its special teams have taught me lessons that carry over into my duties as a good citizen. A good citizen must be encouraging and uplifting to their fellow citizens, have a sense of pride for their country and community, respect the country and the people within it, and honor the flag that represents it. Their community should be functional and tightly-knit. They should understand the immense impact a single person’s action can have on everyone else, and observe the successes and failures of those above them while actively taking input from those around them to become the best citizen they can be.

As for the environmental aspect, my battalion has a few special things we do that foster a wonderful environment in and out of the classroom. This land here is our country, our home, and we have to take care of it, from its ecological health to the spirit that brings our communities together. My battalion regularly does trash pick-up. Our service learning projects have been about the health of our waterways. We’ve relabeled countless drains in our area and spread awareness of pollution and how to fight against it. We focus on post-high school plans so our cadets emerge as productive citizens. Though we are a small battalion, we’ve worked tirelessly to create a beautiful environment for us and everyone around us.

As a citizen of the USA, I want to bring the incredible environment I have only ever seen in my battalion to the rest of my community. I want to

create a space for future citizens to truly live in, a beautiful space. JROTC gave me opportunities I would've never otherwise had, experiences and lessons that are priceless, a deeper sense of community and a stronger understanding of what being a citizen truly means. I hope to pass down my understanding, lessons learned, and values to the new cadets, so they can create their own ideas of what's important to them. I hope to be a citizen everyone can look up to, and I hope the role models I have learned from think of me as a good citizen; a good individual within a community I'm proud to say I'm a part of. I am a part of the United States of America.



April through the years with George Washington

- 1732** on the 5th--Washington baptized.
- 1743** on the 12th--Death of Washington's father, Augustine Washington.
- 1759** on the 7th--George and Martha Washington, along with her two children, Patsy and Jacky Custis, arrive at Mount Vernon.
- 1783** on the 15th--Congress ratifies preliminary peace treaty to end Revolutionary War.
- 1789** on the 16th--Washington leaves Mount Vernon to become president.
- 1789** on the 30th--Washington inaugurated as first president of the United States.
- 1792** on the 2nd--Washington approves legislation establishing U.S. Mint.

By signing the Declaration of Independence, the fifty-six Americans pledged their lives, fortunes, and sacred honor. Nine died of wounds during the Revolutionary War. Five were captured or imprisoned. Wives and children were jailed, mistreated, or left penniless. Twelve signers' houses were burned to the ground. No signer defected. Their honor, like their nation remained intact.



Upcoming Events

April 13: Saturday, 11 a.m.

**281st Birthday of U. S. President Thomas Jefferson,
Wreath-Laying**

*The Jefferson Memorial on the Tidal Basin,
Washington, D.C.*

*The D.C. Society of the SAR, in cooperation with the
National Park Service and Military District of Washington,
will sponsor a commemorative ceremony.*

April 13: Saturday, 11:30 a.m.

**April Chapter Meeting + George Washington Chapter's
70th Anniversary Celebration**

Mount Vernon Country Club

5111 Old Mill Road, Alexandria, VA 22309

*Along with the monthly Chapter meeting proceedings guests
are invited to enjoy a plated lunch complete with
celebration cake and "Champagne" for toasting yesterday,
today, and tomorrow.*

April 13: Saturday, 11 a.m.

Commemoration of John Champe + Patriots Day

Champe Farm

Champe Ford Road, Middleburg, VA

*Commemorate John Champe at an obelisk erected from
stone from his farmhouse on land he owned. Following will
be a commemoration of Patriots Day and the remembrance
of the first Patriots killed in action at the opening battle of
the Revolutionary War.*

April 19: Friday, 4 p.m.

Patriots Day Commemoration

Masonic Cemetery

1012 North Main Street, Culpeper, VA

*Culpeper Minutemen will conduct a Patriots Day
Commemoration at the Masonic Cemetery in Culpeper.
Wreaths will be presented.*

April 20: Saturday, 10 a.m.

**266th Birthday of U. S. President James Monroe
Commemoration**

In front of the James Monroe Birthplace House

4460 James Monroe Highway, Colonial Beach, VA 22443

Wreath-laying ceremony.



April 27: Saturday, 11 a.m. – 2:30 p.m.

Graves Mountain Multi-Chapter Meeting

205 Graves Mountain Lane

Old Blue Ridge Turnpike, Syria, VA 22743

*Preceded at 10:45 a.m. by a ceremony to gather and bless
soil for the Waxhaws Ceremony in May. Social time with
cash bar begins at 11 a.m., meeting starts at 11:30 a.m.,
and they will break for a "family style" lunch at about
noon. Distinguished guest will be Virginia Society SAR
President Bill Greaf and master of ceremonies will be
Jeremy Utt, President of the Colonel Fielding Lewis
Chapter. PLEASE NOTE: A final count of attendees is
required by Friday, April 19. Please have all checks
arrive by that time. (See gwsar.org/Events for the
downloadable form to complete and mail with your
check.)*

April 28: Sunday, 11 a.m.

**Birthday Observance Wreath-Laying Ceremony at 5th
U. S. President James Monroe's Tomb**

Hollywood Cemetery

412 S. Cherry St., Richmond, VA

*The official 2024 birthday commemoration, coordinated
by the Department of the Army in accordance with White
House protocol rules. Historical Note: President Monroe
is the only President other than George Washington to
have actively served in the regular army during the
Revolutionary War, participating in six major battles (as
well as wintering at Valley Forge, crossing the Delaware
with George Washington, and being seriously wounded at
Trenton and cited for conspicuous bravery).*

April 29: Monday, 7 – 9 p.m.

Research Revolution Workshop

*Virtual Event via ZOOM. Click here to Register. 1st hour:
Research workshop, presented by Pat Hannum of the
Norfolk Chapter. 2nd hour: The Patriot Research System,
presented by Jamie Callender of the George Washington
Chapter.*

May 11: Saturday, 11:30 a.m.

May Chapter Meeting

Mount Vernon Country Club

5111 Old Mill Road, Alexandria, VA 22309

*Guest Speaker: Ellen Denning Smith, local Nelly Custis
NSDAR Chapter member and wife of GW Chapter
Compatriot David Smith, will share the story of her
Revolutionary War Patriot Ancestor from her new book -
The Court-Martial of Captain John Armstrong: Life,
Death, and Politics in America's First Regiment.*

May 27: Monday (Memorial Day Holiday), Time: TBA
National Memorial Day Parade
 National Mall, Washington, D. C.
 NSSAR President General, John L. Dodd, is slated to join us this year! Details and the Parade Release Agreement will be provided as they become available.

Note: Details for "Events" are updated on the [Chapter website](#).

*Please remember that you must be logged in to view SAR members-only events in addition to the public events.

Please see the [Virginia SAR calendar](#) for upcoming, statewide SAR events.

Chaplain's Corner

COMPATRIOTS,

I offer this prayer on the 70th anniversary of our Chapter's founding:

Almighty God, we thank you for your gifts, our heritage, and for the fellowship of compatriots in this great Chapter. Cause us to show our thankfulness by giving as freely as we have received, in service to our country and helping those in need. Grant us the ties of friendship and new opportunities of service through our fellowship in the Sons of the American Revolution.

Lord, remember us this month as we celebrate the George Washington Chapter's 70 years of faithful service to the SAR and our nation. We are thankful for our past and current members and officers, for their tireless efforts, support, enthusiasm, dedication, and commitment to the Chapter and the SAR.

We are thankful for our Chapter's history of many successes. We rely on you, O Lord, for a future full of accomplishments. Inspire us to follow in the footsteps of our Patriot ancestors who founded this great nation. May we honor their memory and honor You by promoting liberty and justice for all through the activities of this Chapter. Bless this anniversary; grant us wisdom and courage for the tasks ahead. *Amen.*

For God & Country,

Paul McComb
 Chaplain, George Washington Chapter SAR Assistant
 Chaplain, Virginia Society of the SAR



"A citizen, first in war, first in peace, and first in the hearts of his countrymen."

*Henry "Light Horse Harry" Lee,
 December 26, 1799.*

<i>President</i>	<i>Scott Walker: 703-216-4798</i>
<i>Vice President</i>	<i>Scot Bryant: 703-922-4431</i>
<i>Treasurer</i>	<i>Jonathan Coles: 570-449-8197</i>
<i>Secretary</i>	<i>Jaymie Cook: 202-570-2008</i>
<i>Registrar</i>	<i>Richard Sherman: 301-654-6319</i>

The George Washington Chapter was chartered in its present form April 2, 1954. With over 250 members, it is Virginia's largest SAR chapter.

Meetings customarily are held at 11:30 a.m. on the second Saturday of each month (June, July & August excepted).

Immediate Past President:

Rand Pixa: 703-622-7001

Ride Share: Members in need of a ride to a Chapter meeting or a Chapter-sponsored event may contact the Amenities Committee Chairman, Paul McComb, Chapter Chaplain, at 202-403-4463.

Editor: Eric Atkisson. Submissions from Chapter officers, committee chairmen and fellow Compatriots are always needed. Please send submissions and comments to Secretary Jaymie Cook at vasargwsecretary@gmail.com.