



# The Valley Patriot

Tennessee Valley Chapter, Alabama Society  
Sons of the American Revolution—October/November 2009

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**Meeting Schedule**

All meetings are held at 11:00 am  
at the Ryan's on University Dr.  
unless otherwise noted

12 October 2009  
11:00am Regular Meeting  
Ryan's

9 November 2009  
11:00am Regular Meeting  
Ryan's

**President's Message**

We have much to celebrate about our Chapter! Let me share some "brag points" with you.  
**GREAT SPEAKER PROGRAMS.** This spring and summer Vice-President Larry Crabtree provided a great series of programs:

- May 11. Mr. Dave Christensen, "Huntsville's Role in America's Early Space Program;"
- June 8. George and Steven Wheatley of the John Hunt Society, Children of the American Revolution, "Patrick Henry and the Second Amendment;"
- July 13. Mr. Joe Berry, "1776;"
- August 10. Dr. Waymon Burke, Calhoun College, "How Alabama Became What it Is;"
- September 14. Father Les McAbee, "The Influence of Christianity on Our Country's Founding."

Please join me in congratulating Larry on these fine programs and the ones to come.  
**GREAT SERVICE PROGRAMS.** Our Chapter continues to be involved in great service programs. Here are some of our service programs:  
**Color Guard:** The Chapter Color Guard attended the grave dedication of Revolutionary War veteran John Whitaker of North Carolina. The Madison County ceremony was conducted by the Gunter Mountain Chapter, DAR, on 27 June at 10:00am at the Whitaker Cemetery near New Hope.  
**JROTC and ROTC.** We awarded 17 JROTC and ROTC awards to outstanding cadets at high school and universities in our area. The Committee is working again this year with high schools and universities in our area to identify outstanding and meritorious cadets.

**Knight Essay and Rumbaugh Oration:** Our Chapter's winners compete at the State level. The Committee has sent information packages on these two competitions to 27 Schools in Huntsville, Madison County, and the surrounding region.

**King Eagle Scout Scholarship:** Our Eagles fly with the highest. Chair Jody Creekmore sent congratulatory letters to 19 recent Tennessee Valley Eagle Scouts and invited them to participate in our Chapter's program in October 2009.

**Veterans' Affairs:** The Veteran's Coalition of twenty-four organizations of which our chapter is a part is emphasizing the "Missing in America Project."

**Outstanding High School Student:** Each year an outstanding high school student is selected from the Madison County high schools. Candidates are accepted from both public and private schools. The officials from each high school are requested to submit one candidate to represent their school. The selection is competitive and is based on academic accomplishment, extra-curricular activities, and social involvement in the school and community. The winning student receives a Bronze Good Citizen Medal and a certificate.

**Law Enforcement Commendation Medal:** Each year the Tennessee Valley Chapter honors a member of a local law enforcement organization by presenting him/her with the Law Enforcement Commendation Medal.

**Fire Safety Commendation Medal:** In our December meeting, the Tennessee Valley Chapter honors a member of one of the local fire departments by presenting the person with the Fire Safety Commendation Medal. The recipient is selected for



Dr. Waymon Burke gave a talk entitled "How Alabama Became What It Is" at our August Meeting

### Secretary's Report - August Meeting

**Opening:** President Billings opened the meeting leading the membership in the Pledge of Allegiance, and led the pledge to the SAR. Comp. Rev. McAbee gave the invocation. The following guests were recognized Mrs. Nancy Billings, Mrs. Linda Maples, Mrs. Abby Alexander, Mrs. Susan Crabtree, Ms. Kim Alexander, Mrs. Lavonne Conner, Mrs. Chris Johnson, Mr. Richard Tingle, Mr. Davis Scott Sanders and prospective members, Dr. J. Aunon and Mr. E. Bledsoe.

Members in Attendance: 26 Members (D. Billings, J. Maples, L. Crabtree, J. Alexander, B. Alexander, M. Alexander, H. Smith, O. Vaughn, L. McAbee, J. Conner, B. Adams, D. Byers, B. Hammond, C. Cook, R. Smallwood, K. Carpenter, S. Field, D. Adams, S. Pearce, M. Strickland, B. Pittman, B. Johnson, J. Creekmore, D. Milam, C. Griggs, B. Barnes)

**Motions and Resolution:** Comp. Smallwood made a motion to present twenty-five and plus year certificates and pins to chapter members. The motion was seconded and carried.

**Announcement** Comp Jim Alexander noted his possession of a manuscript history of the Tennessee Valley SAR Chapter written by Comp. John Rison Jones. He suggested the chapter publish this history. Excerpts from this work were presented in the chapter's fiftieth anniversary pamphlet.

President and Mrs. Billings invited chapter members and their wives to attend a picnic at their Jones Valley home on 29 Aug.

Dr. Jorge Aunon announced that his daughter had been accepted into the NASA astronaut program.

Pres. Billings read thank-you notes from Mr. J. W. Bragg Jr. and from the Hville-Madison Co. Library concerning the chapter's gift to the library of the work *The Chronicle of Thomas Stone*. This gift was given in memory of Comp. Henry Bragg.

#### Officer and Committee Reports

**Treasurer:** Past Pres. Jim Alexander: Checking acct. \$3648.10, Savings acct. \$1988.61.

**Secretary:** Sec. Carpenter read highlights from the minutes of the July meeting, noting the chapter meeting minutes are posted in the chapter newsletter. He informed the chapter that work commitments will not allow him to attend meetings from Sept. to Dec. He offered to continue secretarial duties providing a substitute record meeting minutes for his transcription.

**Registrar:** Registrar Comp. David Byers reported that twenty applications in development. One membership application and six supplemental line applications have been sent to the National Society for approval.

**Historian:** No report

**Eagle Scout Committee:** No report

**Student Essay and Oration Committee:** No report

**Color Guard:** Guard members Comps. J. Alexander, O. Vaughn, and J. Maples represented the chapter at the August DAR Reception for State DAR Regent, Mrs. Rita Horton.

**Meeting Activities:** Comp. Conrad Cook led the Youth Program Quiz, followed by contributions to the Youth Program by several members present. The subjects of the quiz were Ninety-Six, King's Mt., and Col. Tarleton.

**Awards and Presentations:** Pres. Billings and Registrar Byers inducted Comp. Bill Johnson into the SAR, and presented him with his membership certificate and rosette. Comp. Johnson spoke of his Patriot ancestor of the North Carolina militia who participated in the Battle of Moore's Creek Bridge and other actions.

**Program:** Vice Pres. Crabtree introduced Dr. Waymon Burke of Calhoun Community College. The title of Dr. Burke's presentation was *Alabama Politics: The Good, The Bad, and The Ugly*. This fascinating program was a review of Alabama political development during the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> Centuries, noting political leaders such as Vice President W. R. King, Sen. Oscar Underwood, Justice Hugo Black, Gov. "Big Jim" Folsom, and Gov. Geo. Wallace, among many others. Dr. Burke is the creator of Calhoun Community College's Center for the Study of Southern Political Culture. He also is a political analyst for WAFF television. Pres. Billings presented Dr. Burke with the chapter certificate of appreciation.

**Recessional, Benediction, and Adjournment:** Rev. McAbee gave the benediction. Pres. Billings led the recessional and adjourned the meeting.

### Secretary's Report - September Meeting

**Opening:** President Billings opened the meeting and led the membership in the Pledge of Allegiance. Comp. Jim Alexander led the pledge to the SAR. Comp. Pres. Billings gave the invocation. The following guests were recognized Mrs. Nancy Billings, Mrs. Linda Maples, Mrs. Abby Alexander, Mrs. Susan Crabtree, Ms. Kim Alexander, Mrs. Lavonne Conner, Mrs. Roselyn Maples, Mrs. Amanda Sanders, Mr. Davis Scott Sanders, and prospective members, Dr. J. Aunon, Mr. E. Bledsoe, and Mr. Charlie Maples. Members in Attendance: 19 Members (D. Billings, L. Crabtree, J. Maples, J. Alexander, B. Hammond, J. Conner, H. Smith, S. Pearce, S. Field, M. Alexander, O. Vaughn, D. Adams, L. McAbee, C. Cook, B. Adams, D. Byers, M. Byers, R. Smallwood, F. Holland)

**Motions and Resolutions:** None

**Announcements:** Treasurer Alexander announced SAR membership dues are due. Send the amount of \$60.00 to his address as noted in the dues announcement.

#### Officer and Committee Reports

**Treasurer:** Past Pres. Jim Alexander: Checking acct. \$3700.10, Savings acct. \$1988.00.

**Secretary:** Sec. Carpenter notes his appreciation to Historian Bob Adams for taking meeting notes in his work related absence, and to Pres. Billings and Tres. Alexander for their communication assistance.

**Registrar:** Registrar Comp. David Byers reported that twenty-seven applications in development. Three membership applications and six supplemental line applications have been sent to the National Society for approval.

**Historian:** None

**Eagle Scout Committee:** None

**Student Essay and Oration Committee:** Comp. Alexander sent thirty contest letters to students and teachers, and reported receiving a positive interest from the recipients.

**Color Guard:** None

**JROTC/ROTC Awards:** Comp. Jim Alexander has ordered awards for the new year. Additional program volunteers are needed for presentations.

**Flag Committee:** None

**Veteran's Affairs:** None

**Meeting Activities:** Comp. Conrad Cook led the Youth Program Quiz, followed by contributions to the Youth Program by several members present. The subject of the quiz was the involvement of Spain in the American Revolution.

Pres. Billings discussed the an awards program recognizing

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### *Upcoming Events*

**12 October 2009** - 11:00 am, regular meeting, Ryan's on University Dr.

**9 November 2009** - 11:00 am, regular meeting, Ryan's on University Dr.

### *Revolutionary Questions*

1. Which battle in 1781 has frequently been compared to Hannibal's victory over the Romans at Cannae?
2. Who was the American general who led the militia and the Continentals in the above battle which has been described as "one of the most brilliant tactical operations ever fought on American soil?"
3. Who was the defeated British officer?
4. Who led the cavalry in the above battle?
5. Which two generals, one American and one British, were in what was later called "the race to the Dan?"



The Chapter had a picnic on Saturday August 29 at the home of David and Nancy Billings; 23 members, prospective members and guests had great fellowship. Participants said, "Let's do this again."



Fr. Les McAbee gave a talk at our September meeting entitled "The Influence of Christianity on Our Country's Founding."

### Minutes of Sep Meeting Continued from page 2

five, ten, fifteen, and twenty year chapter membership.

#### **Awards and Presentations: None**

**Program:** Vice Pres. Crabtree introduced Tennessee Valley Chapter Compatriot Rev. Les McAbee of Huntsville's St. Charles Anglican Church. Rev. McAbee addressed the influence of Christianity on the American Revolution. His presentation was followed with a group discussion of religion's practice and influence in the American Colonies. Pres. Billings presented Rev. McAbee with the chapter certificate of appreciation.

Vice President Crabtree announced that the speaker for the October meeting will be Comp. Col. Jody Creekmore, whose topic will be *Iraq Update*.

**Recessional, Benediction, and Adjournment:** Rev. McAbee gave the benediction. Pres. Billings led the recessional and adjourned the meeting.

### President's Message Continued from page 1

his/her outstanding contribution to the field of fire safety.

**Youth Quiz:** Each Chapter meeting has a 5 minute historical moment and quiz refreshing and/or testing members' memory of Revolutionary War history. Compatriots contribute to the Youth Program Fund to support the Chapter's Youth Program compete in the State competition.

**NEW MEMBERS.** We have received the Membership Certificates for five new members: Robert Hammond, William Lawrence Johnson, Marc Byers, David Edward Byers, and Clinton Byers. Please welcome them into the Chapter. We have 3 applications pending and 6 supplementals pending. We have 74 full members. We have 30 prospective members working on their initial applications. We have 107 full and prospective members. Our goal for the end of December 2009 is 100. Congratulations! Now we need to help our prospective members file their applications. Continue to encourage new prospective members to come to our meetings and ask for our assistance with their applications.

**DAR Award.** Prospective SAR member, Dr. Jorge Aunon, was awarded the DAR Americanism Medal by the National Society Daughters of the American Revolution. The presentation was on September 8<sup>th</sup> at the Twickenham Towne Chapter meeting at the Library. Dr. Aunon spoke about his coming to the United States from Cuba as a teenager, his difficulties and his triumphs. Jorge's story is truly one that illustrates the American Dream.

With great members participating in the Chapter's activities, we can continue to brag about our Chapter's educational and civic program's contribution not only to the Tennessee Valley but also to the State of Alabama and the nation.

*C. David Billings*

*Reception for DAR State Regent Rita Horton*



Members of the Tennessee Valley Chapter participated in a reception held in August for new DAR State Regent Rita Horton. The reception was hosted by the Hunt's Spring Chapter, DAR. Participating in uniform were Skeet Vaughan, Jim Maples, and Jim Alexander. Also participating were Bob Adams and Conrad Cook.



Jim Maples  
1501 Elmwood Dr.  
Huntsville, AL 35801

TO: