

2014 & 2016 winner – 1st Place Nationally (single sheet)—Carl F. Bessent Newsletter Award

## Message from the President



Compatriots,

I don't suppose it's possible to be too patriotic. But I confess I almost pushed the limits last week on Halifax Day. What a day full of excellent reasons to be proud of our heritage!

In the morning, the ceremony and traditional wreath-laying at the site of the colonial courthouse went beautifully. The weather was mostly perfect, with some wind and few pesky raindrops at the very end. We had guests from several states, and it was the largest attendance we have had. We had experienced a moment of trepidation early in the week, when we learned that our keynote speaker Jack Manning was ill and could not attend. Fortunately, our compatriot Ken Wilson stepped up, re-worked some presentations he had previously given, and gave a wonderful presentation entitled "Highlights of Halifax County History." Aided by his wife Jan, he held the audience in the palm of his hand, and even had everyone laughing heartily with his amusing anecdotes. Ken did all this with almost no notice, but it came off without a hitch. Thank you, Ken!

At the luncheon, we had more than fifty present, and the food was wonderful as always. Several of our guests made a point of thanking the cooks personally, and our chapter got lots of good press from it. We are always proud of the Methodist Ladies who prepare such great meals for us, and we are grateful to them for their efforts.

Many people stayed on for the Charters of Freedom ceremony that same afternoon, held on the lawn of the former courthouse. Here we saw the unveiling of the beautiful markers commemorating the Declaration of Independence, the Constitution, the Bill of Rights, and the Halifax Resolves. When I saw the marching band from Roanoke Rapids High School coming up the street, its drums giving a steady beat, I felt proud indeed. When they played our national anthem, I almost had a lump in my throat. And when I saw the Color Guard passing by with all the flags, and we pledged allegiance to our

flag, I admit I found myself standing a little bit taller than usual. What a great feeling!

So many of our members were on hand, and so many helped. Geoff Pittard brought the tent, chairs, flags and flag stands, marched with the Color Guard, and presented the chapter wreath. Rives Manning led the SAR Recessional and presented a wreath for the County Commissioners. Ernest Bobbitt presented a wreath for the Am Vets. Michael Cooper manned the table with the flag streamers, and also led the SAR Pledge. Steve Avent drove the distance to be here, and handled all the money collection at the luncheon. Duncan Jones offered an invocation and benediction. And Ken Wilson, in addition to being our almost impromptu keynote speaker, arranged for the fifth grade class from Halifax Academy to lead the Pledge of Allegiance and give honors at the wreath laying, arranged for all the streamers to be on hand, coordinated with Sam Powell to have the podium on hand, made arrangements with the State Color Guard, and did more things behind the scenes than can ever be counted. He also was the keynote speaker that afternoon for the Charters of Free-

(cont. on next page)

The next meeting of the Halifax Resolves Chapter will be held on Wednesday, May 8, at 6:30 pm in the Fellowship Hall of the Halifax United Methodist Church in Halifax NC. Our speaker will be Traci Thompson, Certified Genealogist and Librarian at Braswell Library in Rocky Mount. Her topic will be "John Evans: A Case of Mistaken Identity."

As you know, the ladies of Methodist Church always prepare us a delicious dinner, and we appreciate all their efforts. To help them plan better, they would like to have the head count no later than Friday afternoon before our meeting the following Wednesday. Because of this, we will need to know if you are attending the meeting no later than noon on Friday, May 3. Please respect this deadline!

You may email President Gammon at [thepinnacle@ec.rr.com](mailto:thepinnacle@ec.rr.com), or call him at 252-732-6476. You only need to contact him if you plan to attend. The cost of the dinner will be \$10 per person.

dom Ceremony. I'm sure he slept well that night!

Many people told me that the entire day seemed easy and effortless. It really wasn't, but it looked that way because of the efforts of so many of our members and friends. Thanks to everyone who helped!

But even with this warm glow behind us, we still must look ahead. We face the very real challenge of not having enough officers to continue. As I am writing this, I am sad to say we have nobody willing to serve as Vice-President for the 2020-2022 term. We really need to have a full slate of officers to continue as a chapter. Won't you please consider serving as an officer for the coming term? The current terms for officers will end December 31, but we will have to present the slate to the membership at the September meeting. The clock is ticking. Anyone interested in serving can call me, email me, or corner me at the next meeting.

I am grateful to everyone in our chapter who helps to make it great.

**David**

Highlights from the Minutes of Mar., 2019, Meeting

The Halifax Resolves Chapter of the NCSSAR met on Wednesday, March 13, 2019, at the Halifax United Methodist Church in Halifax, NC. President David Gammon called the meeting to order at 6:30 pm. In the absence of our chaplain Rev. Duncan Jones, Compatriot Carlton Garner gave an invocation. Compatriot Ernest Bobbitt led the group in the Pledge of Allegiance and President Gammon led the SAR Pledge. The following guests were introduced: Knight Essay Winner Amber Silver and her mother, History Teacher of the Year Renny Taylor and his wife, JROTC Essay Winner Albert Tyndall and his mother, and his JROTC Commander.

After the meal, Essay winners Amber Silver and Albert Tyndall read their essays to the members. Afterwards, the students, their parents, and their teachers left the meeting.

In the absence of Secretary/Treasurer Steve Avent, President Gammon briefly discussed the minutes from the previous meeting, which were approved. The Treasurer's report indicated a total balance of \$2,886.36, of which the subcategories include the Youth Fund with a balance of \$1190.00 and the General Fund with a balance of \$1,696.36 The Treasurer's report was approved.

Under old business, the following topics were discussed:

- President Gammon reminded the members of the upcoming State Convention (April 5 and 6) and Halifax Day (April 12) and urged all to attend.
- President Gammon mentioned that a slate of officers is being developed, but there is still a need for a Vice President. He urged everyone to consider serving as an officer, and reminded them that a chapter without officers cannot continue.

Under new business, the following topics were discussed:

- Compatriot Ken Wilson mentioned the beginnings of our efforts to locate and mark the grave of Patriot Harrison Macon in Franklin County. Compatriot Michael Cooper will try to track down the location of the grave.
- Compatriot Bill Schewtke spoke briefly to the group about the upcoming 2020 Congress, to be held in Richmond.
- The group then viewed the brochures and posters and selected winners and honorable mentions in each category.
- President Gammon corrected an error on the agenda, reminding members that the next meeting would be May 8, 2019.

President Gammon then led the members in the SAR Recessional, Compatriot Carlton Garner gave the benediction, and the meeting was adjourned at 8:00.

Welcome to our new member, Preston Fortin! Here's a brief bio:



I was born on October 6, 1942 in Norfolk, Virginia to parents who had moved from Laconia, New Hampshire for employment. I graduated from Granby High School and later obtained an Associates Degree from Old Dominion College.

On February 22, 1964, Linda and I were married in Norfolk, Virginia where we lived for approximately five years.

Having always wanted to follow in my father's footsteps, I applied and was subsequently employed by the Commonwealth of Virginia in August, 1969 as a State Trooper. This position took us to several cities in Virginia, eventually settling down in Rockingham County/Harrisonburg City for 27 years.

In July 1983 I was promoted to the position of Special Agent and Senior Agent in July 1987. During this time I was tasked to design and implement a Multi-jurisdictional Drug Task Force which I supervised for approximately nine years. Coming close to retirement, I accepted a transfer to Mecklenburg County to supervise the local drug task force for my final year of employment. On April 1, 2000 I retired after 31 years with the Virginia State Police.

Linda and I have two children and have 4 grandchildren.

Upon retirement we moved to the Lake Gaston area of Mecklenburg/Brunswick County, Virginia; where we have enjoyed our retirement years. Our favorite things to do are traveling and genealogy research. This research is what led to my joining the Sons of the American Revolution.

This poem was written by one of our 5th graders at Halifax Academy and given to Ken Wilson during his recent talk there on the US Flag:

Our country, our country,  
Our country is great!  
With freedom,  
Freedom in our fifty states!

Thanks to our Founding Fathers  
And the Revolutionary War,  
We have freedom and liberty,  
And so, so much more!

Our Government elected by the people, it is  
No kings, No queens  
That's just how it is!

Our three branches of government  
Hold power which equals,  
So not one single person can  
Rule all the people!

Our country is fair and just as you see,  
I love my wonderful, lovely country!

*Chloe Morris*

5th grade  
Halifax Academy  
Roanoke Rapids, NC  
March 8, 2019

Recent Chapter Activities



(clockwise l-r) Outstanding JROTC Cadet from Nash Central HS, Daniel Parker; Ken with brochure contest winner Connor Johnson, an 8th grader from Caloner MS, in RR; Ken with poster contest winner Carolina Corum, a 5th grader at Halifax Academy, President David Gammon with Ken at the NC SAR Annual Meeting—we won 95% Retention, 1st place Electronic Scrapbook, Honorable Mention Paper Scrapbook, Flag Certificate Streamer, 1st place Small Chapter Americanism, 1st Place Small Chapter Nat Clark Outstanding Small Chapter Award; (bottom) Ken showing the proper folding of the Flag at Halifax Academy.






# The Halifax Dispatch

The Newsletter of the Halifax Resolves Chapter, NCSSAR,  
Steve Avent, Editor





**The Halifax Dispatch**  
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**Steve Avent, Editor**  
42 Fox Grape Ln  
Southern Shores, NC 27949  
(252) 955-2103  
savent917@gmail.com



*The Sons of the American Revolution* is a **PATRIOTIC** organization formed in 1889 and chartered by the U.S. Congress in 1906. with more than 25,000 living members from all 50 states and 23 foreign countries. Throughout its 120-year history, the SAR has admitted more than 155,000 members. Among them are 16 **PRESDENTS** of the **UNITED STATES**, including George W. Bush and his father George H. W. Bush, Jimmy Carter, Dwight D. Eisenhower, Harry Truman and Theodore Roosevelt. The SAR also has had among its members Sir Winston Churchill and King Juan Carlos I of Spain, both of whom trace their ancestry to **REVOLUTIONARY WAR** patriots. Membership requires proof of descent from a person who aided in the **PATRIOT** cause. Some of the activities in which we engage are:

- \* commemoration of Patriot graves and monuments
- \* educational programs in the schools and elsewhere on the ideals of our Patriot ancestors and the American Revolution
- \* recognition of outstanding law enforcement officers and JROTC cadets
- \* sponsorship of Boy Scout troops

## Chapter Officers

**President: David Gammon**

817 Lord Granville Dr  
Morehead City, NC 27557  
(252) 732-6476, thepinnacle@ec.rr.com

**Vice President: Geoff Pittard**

7651 Highway 48 S, Roanoke Rapids, NC 27870  
(252) 532-0664, geospittard@gmail.com

**Secretary/Treasurer: Steve Avent**

42 Fox Grape Ln, Southern Shores, NC 27949  
(252) 715-3902, savent917@gmail.com

**Registrar: R. Allen Brahin, Waynesboro, VA**  
starline@ntelos.net

**Chaplain: Rev. Duncan Jones**

our website:

Go to: [www.ncssar.org](http://www.ncssar.org), click "Chapters"