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The Halifax Dispatch

*The Newsletter of the Halifax Resolves Chapter, NC Society
Sons of the American Revolution*

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

Message from the President



Compatriots,

As we announced at our July meeting, our chapter recently was awarded “Best Small Chapter” status at the National SAR Congress held in July. We have won this award before, but it is always gratifying to receive further approval of our efforts.

With this beautiful certificate to add to our already nice collection, it would be very easy to sit back and take a rest for a while. We can’t afford to become too complacent, however, because our year never ends. It makes me think of a family story, but then – most things remind me of family stories. You would be disappointed if I didn’t do this, wouldn’t you?

My father farmed his entire life of almost 77 years, except for the few years he was in the Army during World War II. He was very big on tradition, I have come to realize. One of his big traditions was the annual farm dinner. I think a lot of farms held these sorts of dinners. They were usually in the late summer, after the crops had been harvested. The tobacco had been primed, cured, graded and sold. The cotton had been picked, ginned, baled, and sold. The peanuts had been dug, shaken, stacked and dried, and all the other crops otherwise completed and gone. The farm dinner was a sort of celebration to mark the end of a season.

On our farm, this dinner was our family’s turn to serve everyone who had worked hard on the farm all year. A pig was cooked, cornbread was fried, and my mother, her sister, and my grandmother made tremendous bowls of coleslaw and potato salad. My brother and I were sent to Rocky Mount to get huge tubs of ice cream, and we always stopped by the Merita bread factory to buy all sorts of cakes and cookies. Long tables were set out under a large shelter, and my father added special significance to the event by taking all the adult males on the farm out behind his shed and pouring them a drink of whiskey in Dixie cups. Now that is elegance to the max! Who needs Waterford crystal when you can have a Dixie cup?

At this point, those of you who grew up on farms are probably reminiscing about similar dinners. They were a child’s dream come true – tables groaning with food, and the adults so busy talking that you could snag a piece of hot cornbread off a platter and not even get caught. I’m salivating just thinking about it. The only thing comparable would be a church homecoming picnic on the grounds after a week-long revival.

But all of my memories of this fabulous event don’t pertain to our chapter, and it’s not a completely parallel comparison. This dinner signaled an end to a season, and it meant we could take it easy for a while, until it was spring and time to start a new growing season.

Here in the SAR, we don’t get that time off, because our growing season lasts all year long. We hope to have constant growth, but we have to work at it. I often nag you to talk up our chapter and the SAR in general, because we never know when it might pay

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The next meeting of the Halifax Resolves Chapter will be held on Wednesday, September 11, at 6:30 pm in the Fellowship Hall of the Halifax United Methodist Church in Halifax NC.

Our guest speaker will be Andrew Dupstadt, Program Development and Training Officer and Historic Weapons Program Coordinator for North Carolina Historic Sites. He will make a presentation on North Carolina Governor Richard Caswell. After the presentation we will have a brief business meeting. Our major task that night will be to vote on our slate of officers for 2020-2022 (see next page).

The ladies of the UMC always prepare us a delicious dinner, and to help them plan better they would like to have the head count no later than Friday afternoon before our meeting the following Wednesday. So, we will need to know if you are attending the meeting no later than noon on Friday, September 6. Please respect this deadline!

You may email President Gammon at 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.

off. Please don't hesitate to invite a friend or neighbor to one of our meetings. They don't have to be a member. Just get them there and we will try to do the rest!

Here's an example of what I mean when I say our year never stops. We just received this wonderful award, which signals a year done well. And we are already contacting our local schools to tell them about the various youth contests we sponsor for the coming year. No break – we just keep going. Ken Wilson has been heading up our youth contests for a long time, and he will continue to do so. He has already sent letters and emails out the schools in our area to tell them about the essay contest, the JROTC awards, the oration contest, and other events. Later in the year he will start advertising the poster and brochure contests. We can't pause!

And so I encourage us all to keep our efforts going. We hope to grow by at least three new members during 2019, and there are more members to add after that. Don't miss an opportunity to brag about our chapter, and I hope you will always speak of the chapter in a positive and enthusiastic light. We may be small, but we are doing great things. Let's all be proud and spread the good word!

David

Slate of Proposed Officers for 2020—2022

President: Geoff Pittard
Vice-President: (vacant)
Secretary: Michael Cooper

Treasurer: Steve Avent
Chaplain: Rev. Duncan Jones
Registrar: Steve Avent

Highlights from the Minutes of July, 2019, Meeting

Minutes – July 10, 2019 Meeting
Halifax Resolves Chapter, NCSSAR

The Halifax Resolves Chapter of the NCSSAR met on Wednesday, July 10, 2019, at the Halifax United Methodist Church in Halifax, NC. President David Gammon called the meeting to order at 6:30 pm. Our Chaplain Rev. Duncan Jones gave the invocation. Vice President Geoff Pittard led the group in the Pledge of Allegiance and President Gammon led the SAR Pledge. The following guests were introduced: Bob Sigmon (Regional VP), Preston Fortin (new member), Linda Fortin, Bob Bittner (new member), former member Lonnie Edwards, and Phillip Hoyt (son-in-law of Ken Wilson)

Instead of a guest speaker after the meal, an extended business meeting took place.

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 \$2,397.51, of which the subcategories include the Youth Fund with a balance of \$890.00 and the General Fund with a balance of \$1,507.51. The Treasurer's report was approved.

During the President's Report, President Gammon thanked so many members for voting in the unofficial poll on the possible closure of the chapter. Of the 29 members, 23 voted. Of those 23, 18 voted to keep the chapter open, three voted to close, and two abstained. We never heard from the remaining five members, although ballots were sent them in the US mail, and two email reminders were sent out. President Gammon also announced that the chapter had recently won both the Liberty Bell Award for small chapters, and the President General's Cup for best overall programs, both at the national level.

Under old business, the following topics were discussed:

- * Compatriot Michael Cooper gave a report on the progress of locating Harrison Macon's grave. Work is still continuing. Joe Pearce reported that although he has been searching through the scrapbooks owned by the late Dr. David Smithwick, he has found no clues to the grave's location.
- * Compatriot Ken Wilson reported on chapter activities from Memorial Day 2019.
- * Compatriot Ken Wilson reported that it would be impossible for the chapter to keep the large wooden flag presented to us

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by Legion Post 308 of Littleton at last September's meeting. He suggested presenting it to Boy Scout Troop 144 in Roanoke Rapids. The membership agreed.

- * Compatriot Ken Wilson reported on the most recent flag retirement on June 8. After this, all flag retirements will be conducted by Boy Scout Troop 144 of Roanoke Rapids.
- * Vice-President Geoff Pittard gave an update on the plans for Halifax Day 2020, which will be held April 18, 2020. There is already a block of rooms reserved at the Hilton, the new President General Jack Manning has been invited to attend (he has a conflict and will send a designee), and the cooking team at the Halifax Methodist Church has been advised of the date. Vice-President Pittard encouraged all members to be involved in the event.
- * Compatriot Ken Wilson commented on a letter that had been distributed to everyone prior to the start of the meeting. He reminded everyone that health concerns will present him from doing many of the activities he has done for many years. The letter described his concerns for the future of the chapter, and the list of activities he will no longer do.
- * President Gammon reminded the members that they would be discussing this list at the September meeting, and he would be asking them to assume responsibility for the various activities.

Under new business, the following topics were discussed:

- * Compatriot Ken Wilson has discovered that three patriots are buried in our region: Francis Timberlake and Maj. Francis Taylor in Franklin County, and Judge Richard Henderson in Vance County. Since we do not know the condition of the cemeteries, the membership agreed to investigate to find out if a grave marking would be possible. Ken Wilson has contacted the DAR chapter in Oxford for more details.
- * New members Preston Fortin and Bob Bittner were introduced. President Gammon inducted Compatriot Fortin and presented him with his certificate. Compatriot Bittner will be inducted at the September meeting.
- * The slate of officers for 2020-2022 was introduced. They are: Geoff Pittard (President), Michael Cooper (Secretary), Steve Avent (Treasurer), and Duncan Jones (Chaplain). The office of Vice-President remains vacant. At the September meeting, we will take any additional nominations from the floor, and we will vote on this list.

President Gammon then led the members in the SAR Recessional, Rev. Duncan Jones gave the benediction, and the meeting was adjourned at 7:50.

David Gammon
Chapter President

David Gammon
Acting Secretary

New Member Inducted



At the July meeting President Gammon (on the left) inducted new member Preston Fortin into the SAR and the Halifax Resolves Chapter. Welcome, Preston!



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Steve Avent, Editor





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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

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Go to: www.ncssar.org, click "Chapters"