# January 2026

Officers

President: Dwight McEntire
1st Vice President: Art Hays
2nd Vice President: Kurt Spehr
Treasurer: Dean Chatlain
Secretary: Warren Wilson
Sergeant-at Arms: Russell Pebworth
Genealogist: Walter Arnold
Registrar: Walter Arnold
Chaplain: Dr. Bob Cundiff
Governors –at- Large: Bob Yarnell and James Grayshaw
Color Guard Commander: Robbie Robinson
Newsletter Editor: James Grayshaw
contact at Grayshawsr@aol.com

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Our Inspiration is from the Past,
Our Duty is in the Present,
Our Hope is in the Future.

SAR
SONS of the AMERICAN REVOLUTION

## *SAR Mission Statement*

***The Sons of the American Revolution honor our Revolutionary War patriot ancestors by promoting patriotism, serving our communities, and educating and inspiring future generations about the founding principles of our country.***

# *From the President*

## Compatriots,

HAPPY NEW YEAR!!

Looking forward, we have three main events happening in the first four months of 2026.

January 16-26 brings the Traveling Revolutionary War Exhibit and George Washington's Tent to the Clearwater Historical Museum. We are asked to participate daily by being available to discuss Revolutionary Battles and other aspects of the War. In February, the Traveling Exhibit will be at the Dunedin Historical Museum.

In March we will dedicate the First Amphibious Assault Memorial

In April we will dedicate a Liberty Tree at the Veterans Memorial section at Crest Lake Park in Clearwater.

But looking back, we accomplished so many things in 2025. We received approval from the Clearwater Parks Department and the Clearwater Veterans Park to dedicate a Liberty Tree in April. We finalized the creation of a Chapter Website (ClearwaterSAR.com). We reached the Silver Level for contributions supporting the First Amphibious Assault Memorial. Only two other chapters of the 32 chapters in the state contributed more. We changed our meeting location to Regency Oaks in Clearwater in 2025. Also, four Flag Certificates, twenty Good Citizenship/JROTC Certificates and Medals, and thirty Girl Scout project Certificates were presented. Bob Cundiff and I participated in a one hour talk radio show. We also completed a handout about the SAR and the Clearwater Chapter for a tri fold handout. We also had our first submission for the Youth Video Contest thanks to the efforts of Art Hays. Thanks to Warren Wilson, our dues notices and collections were accomplished well before the state deadline.

Finally, we were honored by a visit in November from the FLSSAR Senior Vice President Jonathon Hunt and in December by our FLSSAR President, Chris Washler.

A great big THANK YOU to Jim Grayshaw for all his hard work for putting together our Chapter Newsletter!!

Dwight McEntire, Col. USAF (Ret.)
President, Clearwater Chapter
Member of FLSSAR Financial Review Committee
Sons of the American Revolution

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# CLEARWATER CHAPTER SAR GENERAL MEETING

Date and Time: 12/17/2025 at 12:00 PM
Location: Regency Oaks Conference Center

Facilitator: Dwight McEntire

Minutes Prepared By: Warren Wilson

Attendees: Chapter Members

Points Discussed

1. Call to Order: The meeting was called to order by President McEntire at noon, followed by the invocation given by Dr. Robert Cundiff, chaplain. Members recited the Pledge of Allegiance and the SAR pledge which were followed by singing of God Bless America. December birthdays were announced and our chapter guest, State Society SAR President, Chris Washler was introduced.

2. Awards: The Bronze Henry Knox medal was awarded to 2nd Vice President Art Hays. Mr. Washler gave Walter Arnold a Meritorious Service certificate and medal with an oak leaf cluster for his service to the chapter and State Society. Tim Shaner was awarded the Distinguished Service Medal and certificate for his service to the chapter. Parks Honeywell was awarded the Distinguished Service medal from the State Society as well as the Silver Roger Sherman medal with an oak leaf cluster by Mr. Washler.

3. Meeting was recessed for lunch at 12:08 PM and reconvened at 1:08 PM.

4. Guest Speaker: President McEntire introduced the distinguished guests present at the meeting including State Society President Chris Washler. Mr. Washler invited the 2026 Board of Governors for the Clearwater Chapter to the front and inducted them. Mr. Washler then made a short speech discussing the importance of members contributing to the Chapter's various outreach efforts and community functions which the Chapter supports among other topics.

5. President's remarks: President McEntire awarded Mr. Washler a Certificate of Appreciation for his support and help of the Clearwater Chapter. Robbie Robinson discussed the status of the 1st Assault Landing Memorial efforts; Mr. McEntire discussed signing up to attend the DAR

traveling exhibit on the American Revolutionary War and Chapter Secretary Warren Wilson talked about the completion of the 2026 roster and reiterated that it is always updated and posted on the chapter website.

6. 50/50 Fifty/fifty and gift basket supplied by the Dunedin chapter of DAR drawings were held.

7. Adjournment: Dr. Bob Cundiff gave the closing benediction, members recited the SAR recessional and the meeting was adjourned at 2:08 PM.

Next Meeting: 1/21/2026 Regency Oaks Conference Center 11:30 AM

# Warren Wilson Secretary

# Photographs from December's Meeting

President McEntire and Florida State Society President Chris Washler.

State President Washler and Parks Honeywell

State President  Washler and Art Hays, who was awarded the Bronze Henry Knox medal.

State President Washler and Tim Shaner.

State President Washler and Walter Arnold.

Tim Shaner was awarded the Distinguished Service Medal and Certificate for his service to the Chapter by President McEntire.

State President Washler and the 2026 Board of Clearwater Chapter.

State President Washler installed President McEntire.

President McEntire presented Mr. Washler a Certificate of Appreciation for his support and help by installing the 2026 Officers of the Clearwater Chapter of SAR.

# Attendees

**James and Sara Stribling**

**Florida State Society President Chris Washler**

**Jerry Duncan**

**Bob Anderson**

**Robbie Robinson**

**John Anderson**

**Warren Wilson**

**Dean Chatlain**

**Art and Candace Hays**

**Jody Chatlain**

**Mark Santoro**

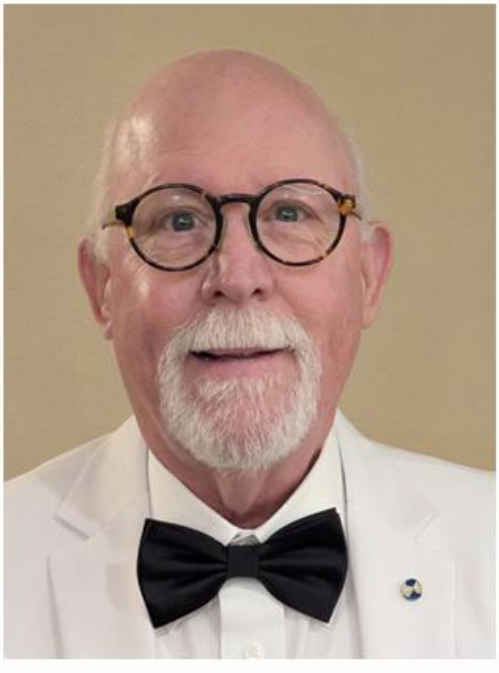
**Terry Delano**

**Eugene Girardi**

**Ron Eggers**

Russell Pebworth

Dwight McEntire



Tim Shaner

Marilyn (Micky) Halstead and Parks Honeywell

Marcy and Rob Moore

Jean Hancher

Connie Rogers and Jim Grayshaw

Tom Hancher

**Pat Golding**

**Walter Arnold**

**Bob Cundiff**

**Kurt Spehr**

## Links & Resources:

**Our Chapter website:**
**http://clearwatersar.com/**
Our Chapter Facebook page
https://www.facebook.com/SARClearwater/

SAR National website :
**https://www.sar.org/**
SAR Florida website:
**http://www.flssar.org/FLSSAR/Tabs.asp**

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## Death of Member
## James Emory Koontz

James Emory Koontz, affectionately known as Jim, passed away peacefully on November 29, 2025, at the age of 86.

He was born on April 13, 1939, in Braddock, Pennsylvania.

Jim honorably served in the United States Army, demonstrating the same dedication and sense of duty that would define his life. Following his military service, he began his professional career as a tool maker with Westinghouse, a role in which he took tremendous pride and excelled through skill, craftsmanship, and commitment.

After relocating from Pittsburgh to Florida, Jim continued to pursue personal and professional growth, earning his master's degree and serving his community as a social worker. His work in this field reflected his deep compassion and genuine desire to help others.

Jim was also a proud Freemason, valuing the fellowship, principles, and traditions of the organization throughout his life.

He is survived by his daughter Lori Pickett, his son Jay Koontz and his wife Minnie Koontz, and his son Jon Koontz and his wife Karen Koontz. He was the cherished grandfather of Janine, Andrew, Matthew, Jessica, Jason, and Jillian, and the beloved great-grandfather of Jayden, Arianna, and Treyvon.

In addition to his professional

for motorcycles and found great joy in riding and experiencing the freedom of the open road. He was an avid Civil War enthusiast, dedicating countless hours to studying history and exploring the past. Jim was also a devoted Pittsburgh Steelers fan, proudly supporting his hometown team throughout his life.

Jim will be remembered for his integrity, quiet strength, and unwavering devotion to his family. His legacy endures through the many lives he touched and the values he instilled in those who loved him.

Service arrangements will be announced by the family at a later date. The family extends their heartfelt appreciation for the support, prayers, and condolences offered during this time.

## Schedule of SAR Meetings 2026

January 21

February 18

March 18

April 15

May 20

September 16

October 21

November 18

December 16

## Art Hays
## 1stVice President

Speakers for coming months are;

**January 21**- Jim Grayshaw Part 2 Generals of the American Revolution

**February 18** - David Bramley, Author of "Washington's Guns".

**March 18 -** Debbie Smyth, DAR Caladesi Chapter Registrar, Women in the Revolution

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SUPPORT OUR FOOD PANTRY PROJECT: Please support our food pantry project by bringing cans or boxes of non-perishable food items to the next meeting. We provide these

food items to a local food pantry and all donations are greatly appreciated. The items can be placed in a green bag located near the registration table.

## Kurt Spehr
## 2nd Vice President

## Dean Chatlain
## Treasurer

## Walter Arnold
## Registrar/Genealogist

## Robbie Robinson
## Color Guard Commander

## Activities with our DAR partners

## The Bellaire Christmas Parade

**Bob Anderson**

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The DAR Caladesi Chapter is pleased to invite our SAR Clearwater Chapter guests and HoDARs to our popular salad bar. The DAR meeting and luncheon event will be on Monday, January 19 at 11:30 at North Dunedin Baptist Church. The DAR members provide a variety of salads and desserts for the event.
Tiffany Bodge will be speaking about Valor for Dogs, a program of The Battle Within, a non-profit which helps retired veterans and first responders regain independence through partnerships with trained canines.

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Let me know if you have any questions! Looking forward to seeing your cohorts there!
Thanks!
Lori Coffey
813-404-4597
Regent
*Daughters of the American Revolution*
*Caladesi Chapter*

# Books about the American Revolution - Two books about John Hancock

## John Hancock: First to Sign, First to Invest in America's Independence by Willard Sterne Randall

- **Publisher** : Dutton
- **Publication date** : June 10, 2025
- **Print length** : 288 pages

A contemporary of Samuel Adams, John Adams, George Washington, and the Marquis de Lafayette, Hancock had a list of contacts that read like a who's who of the American Revolution. But shockingly little has been written about Hancock himself. *John Hancock* tells the story of a man who deserves far more credit for his contribution to the American Revolution than he previously received—and award-winning scholar Willard Sterne Randall is determined to give him his due at last.

Born into relatively modest means, Hancock was sent to live with his wealthy uncle and aunt as a child. The couple raised him as their own and prepared him to take over the family company. A remarkably successful businessman, Hancock got involved in politics in the mid-1760s. He quickly rose in the ranks, eventually serving as the president of the Continental Congress and the first governor of Massachusetts.

*John Hancock* details all of the major moments in the Revolution, from the Boston Tea Party to the battles of Lexington and Concord to the signing of the Declaration of Independence. Hancock's actions fundamentally altered each of these events—and ultimately the course of the United States—in ways never taught in the history books. Randall also dives into lesser-known parts of Hancock's life with nuance and compassion, including his education and controversial work with Harvard; his long courtship and complicated marriage to

Dorothy Quincy; and his close relationship and eventual bitter rivalry with Samuel Adams.

John Hancock enjoyed great popularity in Massachusetts during the Revolution, but he left behind few personal writings, making it hard to tell his story. Through extensive research, Randall aims to restore Hancock to his rightful place, celebrated for his achievements as one of our Founding Fathers at last.

Randall is recognized as a first class historian.

## King Hancock: The Radical Influence of a Moderate Founding Father by Brooke Barbier

- **Publisher** : Harvard University Press
- **Publication date** : October 10, 2023
- **Print length** : 320 pages

A rollicking portrait of the paradoxical patriot, whose measured pragmatism helped make American independence a reality.

Americans are surprisingly more familiar with his famous signature than with the man himself. In this spirited account of John Hancock's life, Brooke Barbier depicts a patriot of fascinating contradictions—a child of enormous privilege who would nevertheless become a voice of the common folk; a pillar of society uncomfortable with radicalism who yet was crucial to independence. About two-fifths of the American population held neutral or ambivalent views about the Revolution, and Hancock spoke for them and to them, bringing them along.

Orphaned young, Hancock was raised by his merchant uncle, whose business and vast wealth he inherited—including household slaves, whom Hancock later freed. By his early thirties, he was one of New England's most prominent politicians, earning a place on Britain's most-wanted list and the derisive nickname King Hancock. While he eventually joined the revolution against England, his ever moderate—and moderating—disposition would prove an asset after 1776. Barbier shows Hancock appealing to southerners and northerners, Federalists and Anti-Federalists. He was a famously steadying force as president of the fractious Second Continental Congress. He parlayed with French military officials, strengthening a key alliance with his hospitable

diplomacy. As governor of Massachusetts, Hancock convinced its delegates to vote for the federal Constitution and calmed the fallout from the shocking Shays's Rebellion.

An insightful study of leadership in the revolutionary era, *King Hancock* traces a moment when passion was on the side of compromise and accommodation proved the basis of profound social and political change.

# 250 Years Ago

## 1776

1 January: American forces besieging Boston reorganized in accordance with Congressional resolve of preceding November, making this portion of patriot Army "Continental in every respect"; but only about 5,500 were present and fit for duty.

1 January: First patriot flag bearing seven red and six white stripes raised at Cambridge, Massachusetts, in recognition of reorganization of Continental forces before Boston.

1 January: Governor Dunsmore, following patriot refusal to allow him to send ashore parties for provisions, bombarded and set fire to Norfolk, Virginia's largest town.

5 January: New Hampshire adopted new written constitution replacing its colonial charter, first of the 13 colonies to do so.

5 January: Continental Congress ordered work on Constitution Island (opposite West Point) suspended and emphasis placed on Fort Montgomery.

6 January: Alexander Hamilton's New York artillery battery constituted organization that became only Continental Army unit to have officially recognized modern active

army descendant, the 1st Battalion, 5th Artillery.

10 January: Royal Governor Josiah Martin of North Carolina, from aboard British sloop *Scorpion*, urged loyalists to gather near Wilmington on Cape Fear River to collaborate with forthcoming British Army offensive in the South.

10 January: Thomas Paine's pamphlet *Common Sense* was published in Philadelphia, urging Americans to declare independence.

12-14 January: Sailors from British ships stationed at Newport raided Patience, Hope, and Prudence Islands in Narragansett Bay, Rhode Island, and on Prudence engaged militia from Bristol and Warren in a 3-hour fight.

20 January:
Patriot General Philip Schuyler in New York, leading 3,000 militia, forced Sir John Johnson of Johnstown, New York, and 700 other loyalists, to surrender, thereby breaking back of loyalist resistance in Albany area and assuring neutrality of neighboring Indians for some time to come.

20 January: General Henry Clinton left Boston with about 1,200 troops to lead British expedition against Carolinas.

23 January: Patriot group from Elizabethtown (modern Elizabeth), New Jersey, led by William Alexander (better known, if inaccurately, as Lord Sterling) and Elias Dayton, captured British supply ship *Blue Mountain Valley* 40 miles off Sandy Hook.

24 January: Col. Henry Knox, Washington's artillery chief, who on preceding 15 November had been sent to fetch cannon captured at Ticonderoga, returned to Cambridge, Massachusetts, with 55 guns.

# Birthdays

| | Name of Member | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **January** | | | |
| **1** | Kersey | James | Hubert |
| **13** | Heiden | Joseph | Robert |
| **14** | Heiden | Jacob | Thomas |
| **18** | Davis | Gary | Lee |
| **18** | Richardson | Robert | Neil |
| **26** | Gibson | James | Lewis |
| **27** | Shaner | Timothy | Richard |
| **29** | Santoro | Mark | Vicent |
| **29** | Greene | Merwin | Veral |

# OUR NEXT MEETING

When: Wednesday January 21, 2026
Where: at The Regency Oaks, 2nd floor conference room, 2751 Regency Oaks Blvd., Clearwater, Florida 33759.

Time: 11:30 A.M. for in person dining only.

Menu: TBA; Accompaniments: Rolls/ Iced Tea/coffee- Regular and Decaf

Note: If you have any dietary restrictions (such as gluten free, vegan, vegetarian, etc.), or questions, be sure to mention them when you make your reservation
Cost: $25

Program: Generals of the Revolution Part 2
James Grayshaw

For reservations contact Dwight McEntire at 727-460-5308

Until we meet again, let us remember our obligations to our forefathers, who gave us our Constitution, the Bill of Rights, an independent Supreme Court, and a nation of free men.

**The Sons of the American Revolution is a historical, educational and patriotic non-profit, United States 501 (c) 3 corporation that seeks to maintain and extend (1) the institution of American freedom, (2) an appreciation for true patriotism, (3) a respect for our national symbols, (4) the value of American citizenship, and (5) the unifying force of e pluribus unum that has created, from the people of many nations, one nation, and one people. We do this by perpetuating the stories of patriotism, courage, sacrifice, tragedy, and triumph of the men who achieved the independence of the American people in the belief that these stories are universal ones of man's eternal struggle against tyranny, relevant to all time, and will inspire and strengthen each succeeding generation as it too is called upon to defend our freedom on the battlefield and in our public institutions.**