

M I N N E S O T A

# SAR Salute



THE MINNESOTA SOCIETY SONS OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION NEWSLETTER • [www.MinnesotaSAR.org](http://www.MinnesotaSAR.org) • SUMMER 2018



## 128TH SAR NATIONAL CONGRESS REPORT by David Schrader

Houston, Texas – The Annual National Congress of the Sons of the American Revolution was held from Friday, August 13 to Wednesday, August 18, 2018. The weather was not made for Minnesotans. It was terribly hot and just as humid.

A number of patriots joined together for tours of NASA, the George H. W. Bush Presidential Library, the San Jacinto Battlefield, or the Houston Museum District. Sandy and I passed up the tours in favor of air conditioned hotel rooms. The Host Society Reception was held about a half hour west of Houston at the George Ranch Historic Park, featuring great barbecue, good fellowship, and good music.

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*MNSAR members, Michael Schenk (also Mississippi Society) and David Schrader (also Massachusetts Society).*

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## MNSAR COLOR GUARD SUPPORTING THE WAYZATA CHAPTER, C.A.R. AND 2018 MNSAR MEDALS AND AWARDS PROGRAMS

### Wayzata Chapter C.A.R. Annual Independence Day Event

Wayzata, Minnesota – The annual Fourth of July Flying Pancake Breakfast celebrating American Independence and also honoring US military veterans was again held at the historic depot in Wayzata, on the shore of Lake Minnetonka. This is a major event each year for the Wayzata Chapter of the Minnesota Children of the American Revolution and it has grown in popularity over the years. This year over 1,200 people attended.

Supporting the C.A.R. project were members of the Lake Minnetonka Chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution, the 7th Pennsylvania re-enactment group and the Color Guard of the Minnesota Chapter of the Sons of the American Revolution.

Mayor Ken Willcox of Wayzata was emcee of a short program to honor veterans.

The annual event features the “Flying Pancakes” where recipients stand back as their pancakes are tossed from the

grill onto their plates. For more photos of the event go to the MNSAR Color Guard Blog at <https://sarmnmcg.blogspot.com/>

### Minnesota Society ROTC Awards

The Minnesota Society presented ROTC and JROTC awards in all the 7 senior units and 12 junior units in Minnesota. The following members represented the MNSAR and presented the awards at the proper ceremonies:

Hon. David Sinclair Bouschor, Hon. William Raymond Johnson, MAJ Geoffrey Robert Bodeau, Christopher Willard Moberg, Marvin Lane Jansma, Christopher John Pizinger, LTC Allen Dean Shepersky, David Adriance Foster, Michael Ronald Bradley, John Charles Sassaman, Dennis Garvin Croonquist, and John Hallberg Jones

### Minneapolis and St. Paul Chapters Bronze Good Citizenship Medals

The Minneapolis Chapter presented Bronze Good Citizenship Medals to students

from 24 Minneapolis High Schools and one Naval Sea Cadet Squadron. This is one of the largest programs of any chapter in the nation.

Medals were also awarded to eleven St. Paul area high school students this year.

The criteria for the recipient of the Bronze Good Citizenship Medal is Scholarship, Leadership, Character, Service and an appreciation of patriotism.

### Flag Certificates

On Flag Day the St. Paul Chapter SAR President, Dennis Croonquist, presented five Saint Paul area businesses with flag certificates for showing patriotism and love of country by flying the flag. This years recipients were:

- Dick Petkoff State Farm Insurance Agent, Roseville
- Klecatsky and Sons Funeral Home, Eagan
- North Star Bank, Roseville
- Old National Bank, St. Paul
- TruStone Financial Federal Credit Union, Roseville

Minneapolis SAR President

Aaron Hale Printup presented a flag certificate to Orono Student Charlie Kieley of Charliescustomflags Kieley. Charlie makes American flag art out of recycled wood and pallets and he has decided he would donate 20% of all profits to the wounded warrior project. Since then he has been asked to donate a flag for the folds of honor annual golf charity. He also donated 20% of the profits from an event raising money for Minnesota veterans families and other great organizations.

What an honor, as President of the Minneapolis Chapter of the National Society of the Sons of the American Revolution and Commander of the Sons of the American Revolution Color Guard, to present this Certificate of Commendation – and on Independence Day – to Charlie Kieley. “In recognition of exemplary patriotism in the display of the Flag of the United States of America” Keep up the good work Charlie and Thank you!

You can check him out on Facebook: charliescustomflags Kieley



Minnesota SAR Color Guard and honored veterans at the annual C.A.R. Independence Day event. Steve Simondet, Assistant Principal of South High School, Ana Alarcon Gochez, and John Hallberg Jones. Chris Moberg at the University of Minnesota Mankato. Charlie Kieley and Minneapolis Chapter SAR President, Aaron Hale Printup.

# AMERICAN EAGLE

News of Yesterday Reported Today

Sunday July 5, 1778

## WYOMING VALLEY MASSACRE

Forty Fort, Pennsylvania – on July 4 – to mock American Independence – Colonel Sir John Butler struck at the Wyoming Valley in Western Pennsylvania. Hundreds of Patriots perished. Men were burnt at the stake or thrown on beds of coals and held down with pitchforks while their horrified families were forced to witness their torment.

As the Revolution rolled on, the British looked for any way possible to disrupt the American Patriots' war fighting abilities. While the frontier land of the Wyoming Valley in Pennsylvania may not seem to be ideal land to capture, it actually is a key location. The Susquehanna River is a crucial route to move important supplies to the army as it runs all the way from New York to Maryland. In addition to the ease of transportation, the Wyoming Valley is also a leading producer of grains and other crops that could be shipped to the army. These factors combined with the presence of several sturdy forts in the area made this region a "must have" for the invading British Army.

The responsibility of taking these pivotal areas in northern Pennsylvania fell on the shoulders of 50-year-old Colonel John Butler, a Connecticut Tory. He had gained favor with the English after fighting for them in the French and Indian War. With his extensive knowledge of Indian languages, he proved himself a valuable asset in organizing and communi-

cating with the native groups. His experience in this area also made him the prime choice for the mission at hand as he was instructed to recruit as many nearby Indians as possible. The Mohawks, one of the Six Nations of Iroquois from northern New York, were the primary source of recruitment for Major Butler. A total of 500 Mohawks volunteered along with a group of 400 Tories whom Butler also recruited locally.

With this force of about 900 men, Butler now had the military power to wreak havoc along the frontier of the Wyoming Valley. His campaign began by stirring up fear in the minds of surrounding settlers. His men headed south while stopping only to burn homes, attack settlers, and to raid settlements for much needed food and valuable goods. This guerrilla warfare was well suited to the Mohawk warriors under Butler's command. Settlers were murdered in their beds, frontier cabins and lean-tos put to the torch, and children abducted. The attacks seemed to reach a climax on June 30, 1778 when the force killed eight settlers working in a corn field along the Susquehanna River.

The Wyoming Valley is a very pro-Revolution region with most of its able-bodied men already away fighting for the cause. Manpower was therefore at a premium. The officers in charge of the safety of the Wyoming Valley frontier, Colonel Zebulon Butler (no relation to the British commander) and Colonel Nathan



Denison, were well aware of this fact. Colonel Butler was on leave from his position as lieutenant colonel in the 3rd Connecticut Continental Regiment and he was extremely wary of the task at hand. They were given only 400 militiamen to defend the entire Wyoming Valley from pending invasion. In many cases, the men who volunteered were older than ideal for the combat they were about to experience. These men were placed into the 24th Connecticut Militia Regiment under the joint control of both Butler and Denison.

One advantage that the Patriots did have on their side was the large presence of forts in the Wyoming Valley area. They included Wilkes-Barre Fort and Forty Fort in the south along with the northern forts of Wintermoot, Jenkins', and Pittston. These structures provided excellent defense against oncoming invaders if they were properly manned. With only 400 militia in service, however,

Zebulon Butler found it very difficult to appropriately use all the forts as they were intended. Fort Pittston had a garrison of only eight men to defend it from capture. The fort most important to the cause, however, was Forty Fort. This fort built along the Susquehanna River would be the main rallying point for Zebulon Butler and his band of Patriot militia. Upon hearing of the destruction caused by the invading Tories and Indians, Butler decided to assemble his men at Forty Fort to undertake the defense.

Colonel John Butler led his group of Mohawks and Tories into the heart of the Wyoming Valley. The force reached Wintermoot Fort in the early hours of July 1 and immediately sent an emissary requesting its surrender. Butler promised that no one inside the fort would be harmed if a prompt surrender occurred. Wintermoot quickly raised the white flag and Colonel Butler had conquered the first fort he desired. Not resting

on his laurels, the next day, Butler received news that Jenkins' Fort had also yielded to the power of his force. Having captured two forts in as many days, Butler gained confidence and demanded that all forts and militia in the area were to surrender immediately. In return for their surrender, Butler promised not to harm the militia as long as they never fought again in the War for Independence. Colonel Denison received the message from Butler and quickly assembled the militia and requested reinforcements. The response from the militia stationed at Forty Fort was determined and unified. They replied stating that they would, "never give up the fort over to the Tories and savages but stand it out to the last and defend it to the last extremity."

Hearing the news of Forty Fort's resistance, Colonel John Butler devised a plan to lure the Patriot militia out of their fortifications. He concluded that if his force left Forty Fort, the Patriots would infer that the Indians and Tories would continue to terrorize nearby communities. The garrison of men would then follow Butler's force in an attempt to protect their homes from destruction. On July 3, Colonel Butler had his men set fire to Jenkins' Fort along with several houses north

of Forty Fort in a demonstration of the destruction he was about to create. Butler and his men then left, heading back to Wintermoot Fort.

John Butler's ploy was executed perfectly and the militia was desperate to pursue the fleeing Tories and Indians. The commanding officers however were not as eager to follow. Both Colonels Zebulon Butler and Nathan Denison were of the opinion that waiting for reinforcements was their best option. Neither Butler nor Denison had any idea about the strength of their enemy and therefore elected to use caution. The men in the garrison did not agree with this decision and demanded action. They believed their homes and families were being destroyed and that attack was the only viable option. Denison and Butler soon conceded and the men headed out of the fort in pursuit. They caught up to the enemy and found the Tories in a long line behind a wood fence with the Mohawks nowhere in sight. Quickly, Butler and Denison formed their 400 militia into a single line to prepare for battle. The militia advanced upon the line of the Tories firing three volleys of musket fire with no reply from the enemy. The two enemies found themselves inching closer and closer

as the dense smoke filled the air. John Butler and his men were now ready to spring their trap. Before the Patriot militia could release their fourth volley of musket fire, the Tories let loose a volley of their own. At the same time, hundreds of Mohawk warriors came storming out of the nearby woods, enveloping the militia in brutal hand-to-hand combat. The Mohawks, carrying spears and tomahawks, were vastly more experienced and well equipped for this type of fighting. The militia's left flank began to crumble. Orders were given to refuse the line in order to create stability on the left flank, but these commands were not followed due to the confusion and panic of the situation.

The line of Patriot militia began to break and orders were given for retreat. The battle seemed to be reaching its conclusion with many militiamen escaping to safety, but the Mohawk warriors had other plans. They continued to pursue the retreating militia, scalping and slaughtering any soldier they could find. Many men made it as far as the Susquehanna River, but were either taken captive or butchered in the river. The men who were captured by the Mohawks encountered a terrible fate as they were soon tortured and tomahawked

by their captures; their scalps taken and later exchanged for a British bounty. Colonel Denison surrendered Forty Fort the next day and Colonel Butler promised not to harm any civilians in the fort. Most civilians however had packed up and left when news of the defeat reached them.

The Patriot militia experienced monumental casualties. Colonel John Butler claimed that his Indians took 227 scalps of the fleeing soldiers. Only 60 made it back to Forty Fort. Major John Butler stated, "On our side we lost one Indian killed, two rangers and eight Indians wounded." Butler defended the massacre by stating the Mohawks were out for revenge of a previous encounter between white settlers. He stated, "The Indians were so exasperated with the loss at Fort Stanwix last year that it was with difficulty I could save the lives of these few."

Sources:

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*George Washington's War*  
by Robert Leckie,  
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<http://pabook2.libraries.psu.edu/palitmap/BattleWyoming.html>  
html by Michael Fairchild

### *National Congress Report* *continued from page 1*

Sunday featured the Annual Memorial Service. Business was conducted in several sessions. Several noteworthy items of business were proposed:

1. A proposal to include children by adoption in our lines of descent;
2. A proposal to decrease the cost of Memorial Memberships and other proposals regulating

- Memorial Membership;
3. A proposal that the Board of Trustees not include General Officers or Past Presidents General;
  4. A proposal to expand categories of membership to include Emeritus Members.
- The first and third proposals were defeated by large margins. The proposals concerning Memorial Memberships were adopted by large margins. The final proposal was postponed until

next year.

Compatriots Peter Dixon and David Schrader were elected National Trustee and Alternate Trustee for the Minnesota Society. Compatriot Dixon was not able to be present at Congress. Compatriot Schrader was elected Vice President General for the New England District. Accordingly, while he will be pleased to provide reports to the Society, he will attend Trustees Meetings as Vice

President General instead of serving as Alternate National Trustee in the event of any absence on the part of Compatriot Dixon.

### Next Meeting

The Minnesota SAR's annual Constitution Day Luncheon will be held at Jax Cafe on Saturday, September 22, 2018. Watch for detailed information to be mailed to you.