The Patriot Newsletter

Connecticut Society

Sons of the American Revolution

May 2026, Biannual Newsletter

Historic Fort Griswold VIP Tour for Gov. Ned Lamont and British Members of Parliament. *By Marcus S. Larkin*



Lt.Col. Marcus S. Larkin, Capt. Nathan Hale Branch No. 6, and Governor Ned Lamont, 89th Governor of the State of Connecticut, at Fort Griswold Battlefield State Park.

25 MARCH 2026 — A VIP tour was led by Marcus S. Larkin for the Friends of Fort Griswold and Fort Griswold Battlefield State Park. The tour group included Gov. Ned Lamont and five British Members of Parliament (MPs). The MPs were very interested in the historic Battle of Groton Heights and the defense of Fort Griswold. Including a tour inside the fort, the group was briefed on key parts of the battle to include the massacre and death of Col. William Ledyard. Also discussed was the "Rebel Governor" Jonathan Trumbull and how Connecticut helped to keep Gen. George Washinton's Continental Army supplied. Washington has historically noted his appreciation of the vital support rendered by Gov. Trumbull and the State of Connecticut during the war. Explored also were Connecticut's fabled Privateers, who were then numerous at nearby New London and Norwich. Gov. Lamont was briefed on CTSSAR's varied agenda for America 250 activities, a highlight being the donation and distribution of Declaration of Independence print replicas to each town in the state, paired with a commemorative public reading of the historic document at each town around 4-8 July 2026. The Friends of Fort Griswold also mentioned that they will have numerous events planned this year and in the future. A staff member of the British Consulate General in Boston—and the MPs in attendance—expressed interest in actively supporting future America 250 events in Connecticut. Other tour dignitaries included City of Groton Mayor Jill Rusk and Groton Town Mayor Juliette Parker. The Channel Six News media outlet covered this VIP tour. It is unclear if these MPs were the first to officially visit Fort Griswold.

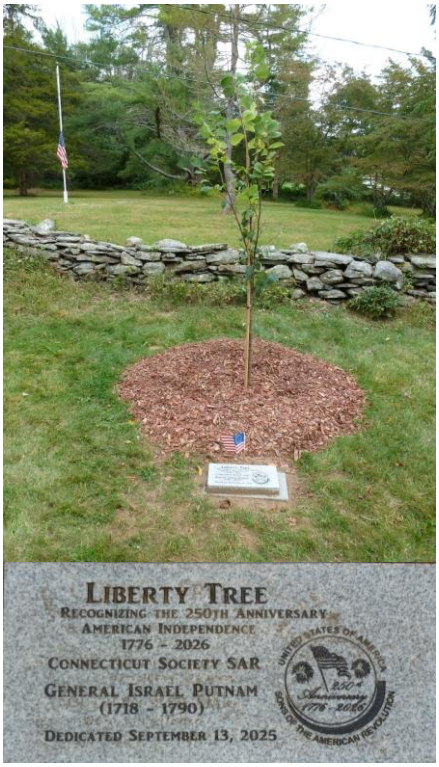


State of Connecticut and British MP dignitaries gathered at the America 250 Memorial Bench that commemorates the Battle of Groton Heights, 6 September 1781.

"The story of the United Kingdom and the United States is, at its heart, a story of reconciliation, renewal and remarkable partnership. From the bitter divisions of 250 years ago, we forged a friendship that has grown into one of the most consequential alliances in human history."

— Britain's King Charles III, 28 April 2026

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Huzzah! 23 Liberty Tree Dedications by CTSSAR Expected Before 4 July 2026

By CTSSAR Historic Sites & Celebrations—America 250 Committee

8 MAY 2026 — CONNECTICUT. By the end of May 2026, CTSSAR has planted and dedicated 13 Liberty Trees, and 10 more dedications are planned before the 4 July 2026 deadline. CTSSAR's first dedication was in 2024 and in alignment with the nationwide campaign to plant 250 elm trees across the county before the 250th Anniversary of the founding of the United States. During the American Revolutionary War, the Sons of Liberty often covertly convened under the nation's original Liberty Tree in Boston, to discuss and plan their opposition to British rule in the American colonies. This historic tree became a beacon of hope to colonists and a symbol of American freedom. In a failed attempt to stymie these defiant colonists, the British destroyed this original "Boston" Liberty Tree. In subsequent gestures of patriotic defiance, this martyred tree became a symbol of renewed spirit, and patriots throughout the 13 American colonies began to designate new Liberty Trees in their communities. The contemporary program of tree plantings honors these early gestures of patriotic defiance.

Upcoming Liberty Tree 250 Plantings and Dedications

10. Elisha Sheldon Sr. & Colonel Elisha Sheldon Jr. (Sheldon's Horse) Liberty Tree, Litchfield, 5/9/2026 – CTSSAR
11. Isaac Godfrey Liberty Tree, Weston, 5/16/2026 – Sherman Branch CTSSAR & Weston History & Culture Center
12. Patriots of the American Revolution Liberty Tree, Union, 5/30/2026 – CTSSAR & Union
13. Patriots of the American Revolution Liberty Tree, Sturbridge, MA, 5/30/2026 – CTSSAR & Old Sturbridge Village (to be dedicated on behalf of the New England District SAR)
14. Sergeant Daniel Myers Liberty Tree, 6/6/2026, Middletown, NY – Compatriot Dan Myers (CTSSAR)
15. Hillside Cemetery Revolutionary War Veterans Liberty Tree, 6/6/2026, Middletown, NY – Compatriot Dan Myers (CTSSAR)
16. Colonel John Durkee Liberty Tree, Norwich, 6/7/2026 – Hale Branch CTSSAR & Norwich 250
17. U.S. frigate Confederacy African American & Native American shipbuilders/sailors Liberty Tree, Norwich, 6/7/2026 – Hale Branch CTSSAR & Norwich 250
18. Lt. Jabez Smith Jr. (Continental Marine) Liberty Tree, Groton, 6/13/2026 – CTSSAR
19. Washington-Rochambeau Revolutionary Route 1780-1782 Liberty Tree, Bethel, 6/14/2026 – Baldwin Branch CTSSAR & Bethel Garden Club
20. Liberty Tree, Norwalk, 6/18/2026 – Sherman Branch CTSSAR & Old Well-St. Johns Masonic Lodge
21. Gov. Jonathan Trumbull/Col. Jeremiah Wadsworth Liberty Tree, Lebanon, 6/20/2026 – CTDAR & CTSSAR
22. Colonel Thomas Knowlton Liberty Tree, Ashford, 6/27/2026 – CTSSAR & Scouting America/Connecticut Rivers Council
23. Liberty Tree, Avon (Date TBD) – Wadsworth Branch CTSSAR

CTSSAR Offers 169 Connecticut Towns a Print Replica of the Declaration of Independence; Town Readings Encouraged for 8 Jul 2026

By Mark W. Sheldon, Sr., President, CTSSAR

25 APRIL 2026 — EASTFORD. In yet another ambitious program to commemorate and celebrate the 250th Anniversary of the Declaration of Independence, the CTSSAR America 250 Committee has written to or contracted 169 towns in the State of Connecticut to organize independent readings of the legendary state paper on or around the 250th anniversary of the original reading, which occurred in each of the original 13 American Colonies on 8 Jul 1776. Many of the towns will be contact by local CTSSAR Compatriots, and towns that received a letter were also offered a framed commemorative of said declaration, which shows atop of it the SAR 250th logo. During the recent Annual Meeting of CTSSAR, many volunteer members obtained some of these replicas to show their town's government leadership when coordinating these reading events. As part of the "Sharing the Spirit of America" initiative, much of this program started with a sponsorship by the Hawaii America 250 Commission. Early in March, CTSSAR Compatriot Marcus S. Larkin briefed Connecticut Governor Ned Lamont of the initiative during his April visit to the Fort Griswold Battlefield State Park.



Mark W. Sheldon, Sr. shows Compatriots the replica of the Declaration of Independence. Photograph by Barbara Stewart, CTDAR.

CTSSAR Presents Connecticut House of Representatives with Replica of the Declaration of Independence

By Mark W. Sheldon, Sr., President, CTSSAR

5 MAY 2026 — HARTFORD. Continuing with the CTSSAR initiative to highlight the historic signing of the Declaration of Independence, Society President Mark W. Sheldon, Sr. was invited to the House Floor of the historic Connecticut House of Representatives to present the framed Declaration. Thus, of the 169 towns identified to receive the replica, Hartford, the Capitol of Connecticut, was the first recipient on 5 May 2026. This historic replica is designed to hang prominently within the State Capitol in Hartford. This 169-town program will dominate CTSSAR attention in the countdown to 4 July 2026. While the Declaration was signed in July 1776, it took several days for the news to travel through the colonies; 8 Jul 1776 marks the historic date when people of the original 13 Colonies finally received word and held the first public celebrations of independence.



Accepting the Declaration replica on behalf of the People of Connecticut were Connecticut State Representatives Kurt Vail (R-Stafford), Pat Boyd (D-Pomfret), and Chris Stewart (R-Putnam). Compatriot Mark Sheldon is second from the right.

Special Thanks to the Compatriots Who Distributed the Declaration of Independence Replicas to Towns Within Connecticut!

By Mark W. Sheldon, Sr., President, CTSSAR

15 MAY 2026 — CONNECTICUT. It took twenty Compatriots to reach our goal to distribute the Declaration of Independence replicas to the many willing recipient towns within Connecticut. The number of replicas distributed is shown next to each name. What was at first ambitious is now nearly complete!

Mark W. Sheldon, Sr. – 46
Robert B. Carrara – 23
Richard W. Kendall – 20
Michael H. Bird – 16
Forrest L. Anderson – 13
Marcus S. Larkin – 9
David J. Perkins – 8
Michael A. Krenesky – 6
Thomas F. Upson, Esq. – 5
Timothy H. Hill – 4
James V. Whittemore – 4
Steven J. Chapman – 3
Todd L. Gerlander – 3
David A. Jones – 3
Ethan A. Stewart, Sr. – 2
David C. Wold – 2
Robert L. Clark, Jr. – 1
Joseph L. Hitchery - 1
Dayne E. Rugh – 1
Donald A. Wills – 1

2026 Connecticut Line & Living History Campaign Calendar

Date	Time	Event	Detachment	Contact
Sun May 17		Grave marking in Avon	Wadsworth	Robert Carrara
Fri May 22		Warren School Memorial Parade and Grave Marking, Warren, CT (N)	Wolcott	Mike Bird
Sat May 23		Lebanon Memorial Day Parade (N)	Putnam	Todd Gerlander
Sat May 24	11am	Memorial Day Parade in Warren (N)	Wolcott	Mike Bird
Mon May 25	8:30am	Naugatuck Memorial Day Parade (N) – State CG - Paid event $300 Donation		Dave Perkins
Mon May 25		Litchfield Memorial Day Parade (N)	Wolcott	Tim Hill
Mon May 25		Liberty Tree dedication in Avon	Wadsworth	Robert Carrara
Sun Jun 7		Shipbuilders & Sailors of the Confederacy Liberty Tree, Norwich	Hale	Dayne Rugh
Sat Jun 13		Jabez Smith Jr Liberty Tree & RevWar encampment, Jabez Smith House, Groton	Hale/Putnam	Marcus Larkin
Sun Jun 14		W3R Liberty Tree, Bethel Garden Club, Bethel, Rt.6 – Baldwin Branch	Baldwin Branch	Dave Perkins
Sun June 14	3:30pm	DAR/SAR Grave Marking Center Cemetery New Milford - 3 volley/post colors	Wolcott	Mike Bird
Wed June 17		251sth Anniversary of Bunker Hill, Charlestown, MA (N)		Dave Perkins
Sat Jun 20		250th Anniversary of CT Independence Day (June 18, 1776), War Office, Lebanon, CT		Todd Gerlander
Sat Jun 20		CTSSAR/CTDAR Liberty Tree 250 dedication at the Gov. Trumbull House/Wadsworth Stable		Todd Gerlander
Sat Jun 27		Col Thomas Knowlton Liberty Tree, Norcross Webster Scout Reservation, Ashford	Putnam	Todd Gerlander
Sat Jun 27	5pm	Beacon Falls Firemens Parade - Volley Salute to start the parade	Humphreys	Mike Krenesky
Fri July 3		SAR Parade in Philadelphia (N)		Dave Perkins
Sat July 4	9am	Grove Cemetery, New Haven CT (N) – with grave markings	Humphreys	Mike Krenesky
Sat July 4	11:30am	East Cemetery grave markings, Litchfield, CT. w/ local DAR chapter. (N)	Wolcott	Tim Hill
Sat July 4	1:30pm	Let Freedom Ring, Litchfield Green, CT, (N)	Wolcott	Tim Hill
Sun July 5	4:30pm	DAR Declaration of Independance Signing, New Milford & Let Freedom Ring Events	Wolcott	Mike Bird
Thu Jul 8	6pm	250th Anniversary National Public Reading Declaration of Independence		Mark Sheldon
Thu Jul 8	6pm	Reading of Declaration of Independence at Lebanon Town Hall		Todd Gerlander
Sat July 11	10am	Beacon Falls - Grave Marking	Humphreys	Mike Krenesky
Sat July 11		Simbury event	Wadsworth	Robert Carrara
Sun Sept 6	4pm	Grave Markings at Starr Burying Ground. Groton, CT	Hale	Marcus Larkin
Sun Sept 6	6pm	245th Anniversary - Battle of Groton Heights. (N)		Dave Perkins
Sat Sept 19		250th Anniversary Capt. Nathan Hale, East Haddam Schoolhouse & Gen. Spencer HS	Hale	Dave Packard
Sun Sept 20		Massing of the Colors – 1st Cong. Church, Bristol, sponsor NSDU (N)		
Sun Oct 11		Gov. Trumbull 316th Birthday/War Office in Lebanon, CT		Todd Gerlander
Sat Nov 7		Grave Marking in Farmington	Wadsworth	Robert Carrara
Wed Nov 11		NSSAR Veterans Day events (N)		
Sat Dec 19		NSSAR Wreaths Across America in Bantam and Milford and Lebanon, CT. (N)		

Monitor your email and check Facebook for more events. Subject to changes, additions and cancellations.

Think About Active Duty in the Connecticut SAR Color Guard

By Col. David J. Perkins, Commander, State Color Guard



15 MAY 2026 — BETHEL. Any CTSSAR member is eligible to join the Connecticut SAR Color Guard. Also referred to as the Connecticut Line/Living History Unit, this unit participates in all events that the State Society sponsors, as well as events sponsored by the SAR National Society. These include Patriot grave markings, parades, commendations of historical figures and events, reenactments, and so much more. An annual calendar of these events is published on the CTSSAR website and is periodically updated. As for uniform requirements, sometimes referred to a colonial-era regalia, the Connecticut Line leadership will work with interested members in acquiring the basic uniform and equipment needed to perform as a color guardsman.

Contact: Col. David J. Perkins, Commander, State Color Guard.
Email: dperkinssr8@gmail.com

~ Pride – Precision – Tradition ~

Two Memorial Benches Dedicated So Far by CTSSAR for America 250

By CTSSAR Historic Sites & Celebrations—America 250 Committee

MAY 2026 — CONNECTICUT. Figurative cornerstones of recent America 250 activities of CTSSAR were the dedication of two granite Memorial Benches, which were engineered to last for perhaps centuries. Also called SAR America 250 Memorial Bench, the first was dedicated on 13 Jul 2025 at the Fort Griswold Battlefield State Park in Groton, Connecticut. The second was dedicate just a few days later on 17 July 2025 at the Governor Jonathan Trumbull War Office in Lebanon, Connecticut. Both dedication projects required exemplary logistical leadership and were key agenda activities related to the 135th National SAR Congress, which was held at the nearby Mohegan Sun Resort in Uncasville, Connecticut, and hosted by our CTSSAR. Cost of the Groton bench was about $10,000, and the war office bench came in at around $5,000.



America 250 Memorial Bench Commemorates the 250th Anniversary of the Gov. Jonathan Trumbull War Office (1775-2025).



America 250 Memorial Bench Commemorates the Battle of Groton Heights, 6 Sep 1781.

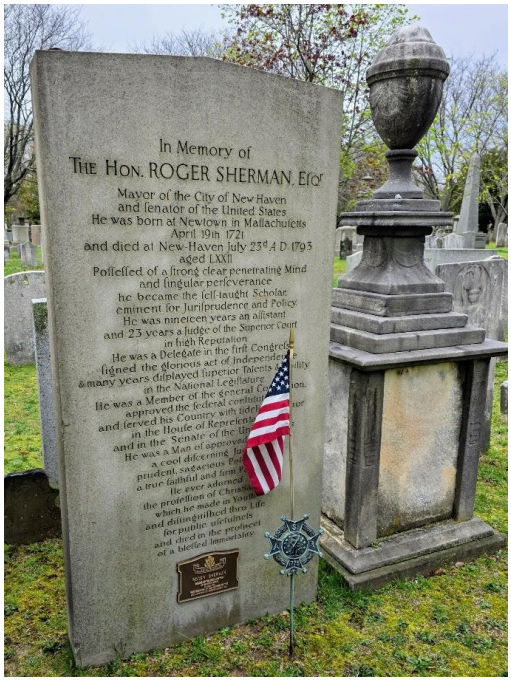


Gov. Jonathan Trumbull War Office, 149 West Town St, Lebanon, Connecticut 06429

Celebration Honors the Hon. Roger Sherman's 305th Birthday

By Ethan A. Stewart, Sr., Registrar, CTSSAR

19 APRIL 2026 — NEW HAVEN. Members of the CTSSAR, honored guests and interested citizens attended the 305th birthday celebration of the Honorable Roger Sherman, Sr., Esq. at his gravesite at the famed Grove Street Cemetery in New Haven, Connecticut. The event's organizer was New Haven's city historian Mike Moran, which included a Connecticut Color Guard 3-volley salute. After the ceremony attendees were invited to the amazing Beinecke Rare Books & Manuscript Library for an exclusive viewing of a large collection of Roger Sherman historical memorabilia.







Roger Sherman (19 April 1721 to 23 July 1793) served as the Mayor of the City of New Haven; Senator of the United States; and Delegate in the First Congress. He is the only person to sign all four great state papers of the United States: the Continental Association, the Declaration of Independence, the Articles of Confederation, and the Constitution. On the 4th of July each year, the CTSSAR conducts Patriot grave marking ceremonies at this same Grove Street Cemetery—an annual tradition that started about 1952.

Patriot Grave Marking Medal — Start Now!



The Patriot Grave Marking Medal recognizes both past efforts to identify and report data on Revolutionary War graves and to encourage new efforts to identify graves. To qualify for the Patriot Grave Marking Medal, the member participated in a prominent role during the planning and execution of the grave marking; participated in at least fifteen grave markings; and the submission of data on the Grave location, including but not limited to providing photographs, address, or GPS locations. Get involved and find out more!

"A Perfect Way to Stay Involved"

America 250 Committee Conducts Youth Education Event and Prepares for Connecticut Independence Day 250

By Todd L. Gerlander, Chairman, CTSSAR America 250 Committee

24 APRIL 2026 — LEBANON. Described as a good day in historic Lebanon, Compatriots Todd Gerlander, David Packard and David Jones conducted a youth education event for the 3rd Graders of Lebanon Elementary School. The five-hour school program at the Governor Jonathan Trumbull House and War Office included the inaugural raising of the new AMERICA 250 flag. After the school program, the Compatriots removed to the Gov. Jonathan Trumbull House/Wadsworth Stable with members of the Connecticut Society of the Daughters of the American Revolution (CTDAR). Compatriot Mark Sheldon picked up the "Jefferson" elm Liberty Tree, planted it behind the Wadsworth Stable, and set the commemorative granite marker. These activities were in preparation for Connecticut Independence Day 250 on 20 June 2026, when the both the CTSSAR and CTDAR will dedicate the Liberty Tree to both Gov. Jonathan Trumbull and Col. Jeremiah Wadsworth.









Faster Turnaround for Patriot Supplemental Applications; New SAR Member Applications Half-Price in July 2026

By Ethan A. Stewart, Sr., Registrar, CTSSAR

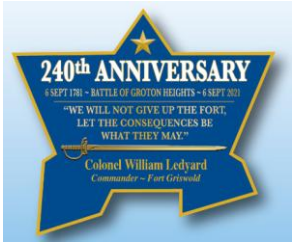
15 MAY 2026 — STRATFORD. If you have been holding back on submitting that new SAR supplemental application, NOW is the time to move that paperwork forward. Processing times for supplementals have decreased dramatically in preparation for America 250 demand. Also, remind your interested friends and family that the fee for NEW SAR membership applications is reduced by half for the month of July 2026, in honor of the 250th Anniversary of the United States—$76 application fee to honor 1776 (regularly $150).

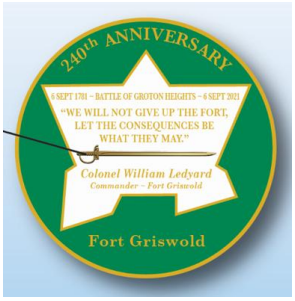
The Challenge Coins of SAR Connecticut — America 250 Limited Series

CTSSAR commissioned a limited series of Challenge Coins with one or more released each year leading up to the 250th Anniversary of the United States of America in 2026. A perfect gift or commemorative collectable. Dating back to the Roman Empire when they were presented to legionnaires for valor, they are now given as a token of appreciation, friendship or distinction—sometimes presented as part of a "secret handshake." Different designs shown on the backs (not seen here). Others were commissioned and not shown here. See Page 18 for more items. Challenge Coins are $10 plus shipping.



Connecticut Washington Rochambeau Revolutionary Route (2020)





Battle of Groton Heights 240th Anniversary — September 6, 1781 (2021)



Invasion of New Haven – July 5, 1779 (2019)

Special CTSSAR Annual Meeting Highlights America 250 Contributions

By Mark W. Sheldon, Sr., President, CTSSAR

25 APRIL 2026 — BERLIN. Over 50 members and guests attended the Annual Meeting of the CTSSAR at Casa Mia at the Hawthorne Restaurant in Berlin, Connecticut. Tagged also as the Patriots Day Luncheon, it commemorated the 19 April 1775 Battles of Lexington and Concord; with the third Monday in April of each year selected as the official Patriots Day celebration in Massachusetts. After establishment of a quorum and in alignment with bylaws, a new slate of State Society officers were elected and sworn-in by now-Past President Paul H. Selnau, who was awarded his Past President Pin with Certificate during the awards ceremonies. New Society President Mark W. Sheldon, Sr. was handed the ceremonial gavel and led the remainder of the meeting. The overall topic of discussions were the scores of projects and events involving CTSSAR during the home stretch to the 250th Anniversary of the Declaration of Independence on 4 Jul 2026; there won't be a free weekend between now and then for many of our Compatriots, who will be busy with the multitude of activities. The election of State Society officers and trustees, and a luncheon buffet was followed by adult and youth award ceremonies. Generous donations were collected at the door to cover the cost of our Youth Award Winners and their families. Three new members were sworn in and received their SAR member rosettes during the meeting. Other highlights of the business meeting included the adoption of amendments to the CTSSAR Constitution and Bylaws, and an interesting discussion about a proposed lease of CTSSAR property to an adjoining cemetery in East Haddam, Connecticut. New President Mark W. Sheldon, Sr. and Awards Committee Chairman David J. Perkins presented nearly 20 medals and certificates, with a large share related to contributions of individual members to the America 250 events and celebrations.

Group Photographs — Annual CTSSAR Meeting

Photographs by Barbara Stewart, CTDAR



CTSSAR Annual Meeting attendees at Casa Mia at the Hawthorne Restaurant in Berlin, Connecticut.



CTSSAR Annual Meeting attendees.

New Member SAR Oath & New Slate of State Officers

Photographs by Barbara Stewart, CTDAR



New Members are sworn in by then-President Paul H. Selnau (far right): Forrest L. Anderson (2nd from left) of Sherman Branch 5; John W. Alter, III (middle) of Sherman Branch 5; and Gerald A. Guild (3rd from right) of Hale Branch 6.



Newly-sworn State Officers, CTSSAR. Kenneth D. Roach not in attendance.

Celebration of Members at the CTSSAR Annual Meeting

Photographs by Barbara Stewart, CTDAR



Secretary David J. Perkins; 1st Vice President Timothy S. Hill; President Mark W. Sheldon, Sr.; and Auditor Brian J. Burland. Timothy and Brian both received a SAR Certificate of Appreciation with Certificate—Brian for one year as Auditor and Timothy for one year as 2nd Vice President.



Awards Committee Chairman David J. Perkins, President Mark W. Sheldon, Sr., and Kurt S. Potter, Humphreys Branch 1. Mark and Kurt both received a Silver Henry Knox Achievement Medal with Certificate—Mark for Liberty Tree projects and the Trumbull War Office's America 250 Memorial Bench; and Kurt for work with the 135th Congress Magazine.



President Mark W. Sheldon, Sr. Chancellor Peter G. Snyder was awarded the Silver Roger Sherman Medal with Certificate. Receiving the Silver Roger Sherman Medal Oak Leaf Cluster with Certificate were Robert B. Carrara, Auditor; Todd L. Gerlander, Chairman of America 250 Committee, Color Guard member, Website manager and Properties Committee; and David H. Packard, Chairman of the Properties Committee. Dayne E. Rugh stood in for Frederick W.F. Rivard, who was awarded the Gold 250th Anniversary Recognition Medal with Certificate.



President Mark W. Sheldon, Sr. awards three State Meritorious Service Medals with Certificates for outstanding service to: Ethan A. Stewart, Sr. for work as Registrar, SAR/DAR Liaison Committee and the 135th Congress Magazine. Michael H. Bird for work with 135th Congress; as ceremonial bugler; and recent facilitation of recent grave marking events. Frederick R. Lorthioir for work as CTSSAR Treasurer.

Celebration of Members at the CTSSAR Annual Meeting

Photographs by Barbara Stewart, CTDAR



Secretary David J. Perkins and President Mark W. Sheldon, Sr. Michael A. Krenesky receives the Gold 250th Anniversary Recognition Medal with Certificate. Todd L. Gerlander, Chairman, America 250 Committee.



Secretary David J. Perkins receives the Youth Education Medal with Certificate for delivering 15 educational presentations. President Mark W. Sheldon, Sr.



David J. Perkins and President Mark W. Sheldon, Sr. Paul H. Selnau received his Past President Pin with Certificate for three years of service. Paul also received an Oak Leaf Cluster to his State Meritorious Service Medal with Certificate for his outstanding work with 135th Congress, and with the Properties Committee.



David J. Perkins, CTSSAR Recording and Corresponding Secretary; Mark W. Sheldon, Sr., New CTSSAR President; and Paul H. Selnau, Past President, CTSSAR.

JROTC Cadet Honored for Top Essay at CTSSAR Annual Meeting

By David J. Perkins, Chairman, JROTC Committee



David J. Perkins, Chairman, JROTC Committee; Cadet Captain Ethan Rivas, JROTC; MSgt. John McMahon, US Air Force; and Mark W. Sheldon, Sr., President, CTSSAR. Photograph by Barbara Stewart, CTDAR.

25 APRIL 2026 — BERLIN. Cadet Captain Ethan Rivas from the Danbury High School Air Force Junior Reserve Officers Training Corps (JROTC) unit received the JROTC Enhanced Award as the State Level winner, sponsored by the CTSSAR. With his parents and younger brother in attendance, Cadet Rivas received the SAR JROTC medallion with neck ribbon, a ribbon bar with star device, and a monetary award of $500. The title of his award-winning JROTC essay *was "How JROTC Has Prepared Me to Be a Better Citizen of the United States of America."* Also attending and providing the cadet's introduction was United States Air Force Master Sergeant John McMahon. As a state essay winner, Cadet Rivas' nomination will also be submitted to the SAR National JROTC contest, where results will be announced at the 136th Congress this summer.

"How JROTC Has Prepared Me to Be a Better Citizen of the United States of America."

Wolcott Branch Celebrates 250th Anniversary of Thomas Paine's "Common Sense" with Town Green Bonfire

By Michael H. Bird, Governor Oliver Wolcott, Sr. Branch No. 10





William H. Spring and Michael H. Bird of Governor Oliver Wolcott, Sr. Branch No. 10.

17 JANUARY 2026 — LITCHFIELD. On the evening of 17 Jan 2026 on the snow-covered Litchfield Town Green—affectionately called "Litfield" by its admirers—members of the community gathered to celebrate the 250th anniversary of Thomas Paine's publication "Common Sense." Vitoria Sansing, a long-time Litchfield resident, led the celebrations with a roaring bonfire that was built on the closed off section of Litchfield's Town Green. Local politicians and members of several town organizations included the Mary Floyd Tallmadge Chapter of the Connecticut Society of the Daughters of the American Revolution (CTDAR), and the Gov. Oliver Wolcott Branch No. 10, CTSSAR, joined with about 100 people to celebrate the role that this publication played in American history.

General David Humphreys Branch Inducts New Member; Dinner Presentation on Battlefield Archeology

By Ethan A. Stewart, Sr., Registrar, CTSSAR; General David Humphreys Branch No. 1

20 APRIL 2026 — WEST HAVEN. The quarterly meeting of the Humphreys Branch featured the induction of new member and Compatriot Robert A. Martin. Ethan Stewart was the first line signer of Martin's membership application and presented him with his SAR member rosette. Greg Thompson swore him in by reading the SAR oath of membership and presented him with his membership certificate. Robert's certified Patriot ancestor is Pvt. Noble Saxton (1763-1829), who served in Col. Ichabod Alden's 7th Massachusetts Line Regiment of the Continental Army. Pvt. Saxton would later serve in Capt. Solomon Woodworth's New York Rangers Company of Lt.Col. Marinus Willett's 5th New York Line Regiment of the Continental Army.



New Compatriot Robert A. Martin with Ethan A. Stewart, Sr. and Gregory E. Thompson.



Dr. David J. Naumec, featured presenter, and Gregory E. Thompson.

After the dinner at App's Ristorante, the branch's preferred meeting venue, the featured speaker was Dr. David J. Naumec, who delivered the exciting illustrated presentation "Archeological Finds at the Battle of Ridgefield." Naumec was presented with a SAR Certificate of Appreciation for his presentation. Dr. Naumec is a Senior Researcher, Military Historian and Archaeologist who serves as Historian at Heritage Consultants. This meeting was led by Secretary Thompson in the absence of the branch president and vice president.



250th Anniversary Recognition Award—Bronze, Silver and Gold

Secure your place in SAR History… Or regret it later. Attend an event, accumulate points, receive the medal—It's that simple! Participation involves attendance, as well as the planning and execution of these events. All Branch compatriots are eligible to earn the America 250 Medals for participating in SAR activities. Each time you attend an event that features information about the 250th Anniversary of America, you will accumulate points to earn these medals: 25 points are required to earn the Bronze medal, 60 points will allow you to earn the Silver medal, and those with 150 points will earn the Gold medal.

Wolcott Branch, Library, Partner for Public Colonial Artifacts Display

By Michael H. Bird, Governor Oliver Wolcott, Sr. Branch No. 10







Michael H. Bird, Katherine Reilly, Library Director, and Laura Cunningham, Public Services Assistant.

MARCH 2026 – NEW MILFORD. During the month of March 2026 and in alignment with the America 250 celebrations, the Gov. Oliver Wolcott Branch No. 10 and the New Milford Public Library combined their resources to present to the public a display of Revolutionary War artifacts and educational materials. These items and books were sourced from the personnel collection of Compatriot Michael H. Bird of New Milford, Connecticut. These materials not only reflect the armed struggle for the Cause of Independence by the forces of the Connecticut Militia, but also the troops of the Continental Army. Many of the items and books reflect the daily life of colonial Connecticut families, so that today's public can perhaps experience what it took to survive and flourish during that era. Communicated through this display is also how Connecticut became known throughout the country as "The Provisions State;" this reputation and title refers to Connecticut's vital role in supplying food, cannons, men, and equipment to General George Washington's Continental Army.

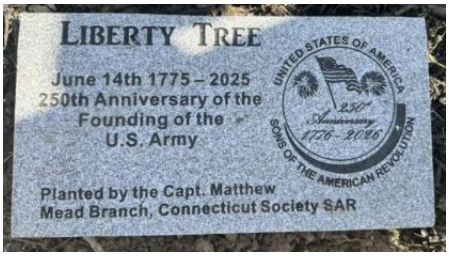
Sherman Branch Compatriot Delivers New Research on Historic Revolutionary War Sloop "Sally" and Nathan Hale's Final Journey

By Edd Eckert, Chaplain and Vice President, Roger Sherman Branch No. 5

11 APRIL 2026 — WESTON. During an afternoon presentation event hosted by the Weston History and Culture Center, Compatriot Edd Eckert of Sherman Branch 5 delivered the presentation *"The Sally - Exciting Adventures of a CT Merchant Sloop During the American Revolution."* The audience experienced the true story of the *"Sally,"* a Connecticut merchant sloop that was converted into a Continental Sloop of War. Attendees discovered Fairfield County's maritime importance during this critical period of our nation's history and heard about the exploits of the *Sally's* four successive captains, some of her crew and notable passengers, including Connecticut's State Hero, Captain Nathan Hale, as they and he dealt in espionage, raids against the enemy, and privateering along the treacherous "Devil's Belt" of Long Island Sound. Due to his research, Compatriot Eckert was instrumental in the placement of a stone with inlaid brass plaque on lower Main Street in Norwalk, Connecticut, telling of Nathan Hale's mission departing from Norwalk—and not Stamford as had been entered in Nathan Hale's brother's diary, with attendant confusion of the history. The *Sally*, re-rigged and re-dubbed *Schuyler*, left Norwalk taking Nathan Hale, making the patch of ground in Norwalk from which the mission commenced sacred and eternal as duly commemorated by the monument. The second presentation of the event was entitled *"Genetic Genealogy in Action: From Researching Patriots to Solving Cold Cases,"* given by Laura Clark Murray. Ms. Murray explored how DNA analysis, combined with traditional records, can resolve persistent family mysteries, reinforce lineage proof for patriot ancestors, and assist in identifying unknown individuals in cold cases.

Mead Branch Leads Town Proclamations and Liberty Tree Dedications

By David C. Wold, President, Captain Matthew Mead Branch No. 11



America 250 Liberty Tree Granite Marker in Stamford, CT.

26 FEBRUARY 2026 – GREENWICH. Mead Branch 11 starts the America 250 celebration year with thirty-seven members and continues its partnership in these events with local government and patriotic-based organizations. An initiative led by branch President David C. Wold resulted in a Proclamation from the Town of Greenwich declaring that February 26th, 2026, as *"General Israel Putnam Day."* This proclamation mentioned both the Sons of the American Revolution (SAR), America's 250th anniversary, and the Decade of the American Revolution. Earlier on 10 Oct 2025, in celebration of the United States Navy's 250th birthday and anniversary of 13 Oct 2025, Mead Branch 11 hosted a flag raising ceremony at the entrance of the Greenwich Town Hall, where a Proclamation was read by a member of the Town of Greenwich. As of the Summer of 2026, Mead Branch 11 has driven two notable America 250 Liberty Tree dedication projects. One event included the planting of a Liberty Tree on 14 Jun 2025 at Fort Stamford Park to honor the 250th birthday and anniversary of the founding of the United States Army (then the Continental Army), during Constitution Week. The final dedication ceremony for the "U.S. Army 250 Liberty Tree" was held on 22 Sep 2025 and included greetings from Caroline Simmons, Mayor of Stamford, Connecticut. A previous dedication included the placement of a granite marker at the foot of an elm tree planted at Putnam Hill Park in Greenwich.

Hale Branch Annual Meeting Features Presentation on Norwich During the Revolutionary War; Awards Presented to Compatriots and ROTC

By Dayne E. Rugh, President, Captain Nathan Hale Branch No. 6

21 MARCH 2026 — NEW LONDON. Following their 24 Jan 2026 business meeting, Hale Branch 6 held its branch's annual meeting on 21 Mar 2026, which featured guest speaker Patricia ("Tricia") F. Staley, who is the author of *"Norwich in the American Revolution."* Published in 2025, Ms. Staley's book explores Norwich as then a hotbed of radicalism, and an important trade and transportation center during the war. This book includes research on many famed personalities of the war, including Col. John Durkee, Samuel Huntington, MGen. Jedidiah Huntington, MGen. Benedict Arnold, and many more. During 2025 and 2026, Hale Branch 6 presented several medals with award certificates to its members in gratitude for their service. Timothy E. Burke received both the Patriot Grave Marking Medal and the Silver 250th Anniversary Recognition Medal. Matthew E. Fergione received the Silver 250th Anniversary Recognition Medal, the Patriot Grave Marking Medal, and the Silver Samuel Adams Congress Appreciation Medal. During the 135th SAR Congress, Compatriot Fergione was recognized with *three* NSSAR Public Service Awards by PG Darryl S. Addington: the Emergency Medical Services Commendation Medal, the Fire Safety Commendation Medal, and the Law Enforcement Commendation Medal. John K. Keeney received Patriot Grave Marking Medal. On 16 Apr 2026, Hale Branch 6 President Dayne E. Rugh presented the Silver ROTC Medal with Certificate to Cadet Rhys Thornell, who is a member of the University of Connecticut's (UCONN) US Air Force Reserve Officer Training Corps (ROTC) Detachment 115.

Baldwin Branch Plans Liberty Tree Dedications; Recent Meeting Includes Presentation on the 1777 British Raid on Danbury

By David J. Perkins, President, Chaplain Ebenezer Baldwin Branch No. 9

14 MARCH 2026 — DANBURY. The annual meeting of Baldwin Branch 9 was held at the John Rider House, which is the home of the Danbury Museum and Historical Society. Most topics of discussion centered around the pleasantly crowded agenda related to the America 250 celebrations. The featured speaker at this meeting was Robert Young, who gave an illustrated presentation entitled *"Why Danbury?"*, which explored the reasons behind the British raid on the town on 26 April 1777. Mr. Young is a Danbury Museum Trustee and Revolutionary War enthusiast. In partnership with the Bethel Garden Club, an America 250 Liberty Tree dedication is planned for 1:00 PM on Sunday, 14 Jun 2026 at Mitchell Park in Bethel. This will commemorate the historic Revolutionary War route taken through Bethel by Lieutenant General Comte de Rochambeau and his detachment of 5,000 French Royal Army soldiers from 1780 to 1782. Lt.Gen. Rochambeau's army marched through Bethel to join Gen. George Washington's Continental Army enroute to the decisive victory at the siege and Battle of Yorktown (Sep-Oct 1781). The sacrifices of these thousands of French soldiers helped to secure the end of the war and America's final independence. Celebrating the 250th Anniversary of America's Declaration of Independence (1776-2026), Liberty Tree dedications include the planting of an elm tree and the placement of a granite market at the foot of the site. The granite stone is about 14" x 8" and the approximate cost is $180. The actual "elm" Liberty Tree cost ranges between $85 to $100. Another America 250-related activity for Baldwin Branch 9 will be participation in the Spirit of America! This includes the ambitious CTSSAR program for the public reading of the Declaration of Independence in each town in the State of Connecticut around 4 Jul 2026.

Putnam Branch Awards SAR Flag Certificates, Volunteers at 135th SAR Congress, Inducts New Members, and Donates to a Local Food Shelter

By Michael F. Brothers, President, General Israel Putnam Branch No. 4

14 MARCH 2026 — UNION. Putnam Branch 4 held their annual meeting and luncheon at the Traveler Restaurant in Union, Connecticut, where they nominated and voted that Christopher Paradiso, of Paradiso Insurance of Stafford Springs, Connecticut, be awarded the SAR Flag Certificate for exemplary Patriotism in the display of the flag of the United States of America. Mr. Paradiso was nominated for the honor by branch member Robert F. Paakkonen and the presentation ceremony will take place later in 2026. On 26 Apr 2025, members of Putnam Branch 4 presented their 2025 SAR Flag Certificate to Woodstock Trading Post and Country Stand, which specializes as a country store with casual dining and an ice cream stand. The certificate was presented during the CTSSAR 250th Anniversary of the Lexington Alarm events held in Woodstock, Connecticut. This anniversary of the Lexington Alarm also commemorated the 30th anniversary of the Putnam Branch 4's living history/color guard detachment, the 11th Connecticut Regiment, now starting its 32nd year. Eleven Putnam Branch 4 members volunteered at the 135th SAR Congress at Mohegan Sun Resort in Jul 2025, which was hosted by CTSSAR. During their Fall 2025 meeting and luncheon held at the same Traveler Restaurant on 18 Oct 2025, then-President Mark W. Sheldon, Sr. inducted two new members into Putnam Branch 4 and presented them with their SAR member rosettes: Robert F. Paakkonen and James Dumaine-Savage. Also in 2025, Putnam Branch 4 donated $250.00 to the Cornerstone Food Shelter of Rockville, Connecticut. This Holiday Season donation is an annual branch tradition that dates back to the branch's rechartering in 1992.

Wadsworth Branch to March in Two Parades, Planning Grave Markings

By Richard W. Kendall, President, Colonel Jeremiah Wadsworth Branch No. 7

APRIL 2026 — HARTFORD. Minutes of the Annual Meeting of Wadsworth Branch 7 announced several events related to the America 250 celebrations, to include marching in the 25 May 2026 Memorial Day Parade in Avon, Connecticut; synchronized to this will be the planting of an America 250 Liberty Tree in Avon. Participation in another parade is planned in Simsbury, Connecticut, during their annual Independence Day Parade, held this year on 11 Jul 2026. Wadsworth Branch 7 has secured an invitation to hold a potential branch meeting at the Brig. Gen. Jedediah Huntington House, in Norwich, Connecticut, which is near the birthplace of MGen. Benedict Arnold. Built in 1765, this historic dwelling was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1970 and is a contributing property to the Norwichtown Historic District. On 17 Jan 2026, branch Compatriot Steven J. Chapman received the Patriot Grave Marking Medal with Certificate. During 2025, Past President Damien M. Cregeau received the State (Silver) Roger Sherman Medal with Certificate, and the Chapter (Bronze) Roger Sherman Medal with Certificate. Past Treasurer Lee A. Tryon received the Chapter (Bronze) Roger Sherman Medal with Certificate. Several members of Wadsworth Branch 7 volunteered during the 135th SAR Congress at Mohegan Sun Resort in Uncasville, Connecticut, and meeting minutes note that members of the Mohegan Tribe helped to build the Continental Navy frigate U.S.S. Confederacy during the American Revolutionary War. Several potential grave marking ceremony projects are actively being considered that cover the spectrum of individual Patriot markings; major cemetery markings, and a unique event to honor sailors of the French Navy during the Revolution.

MORE Challenge Coins of CTSSAR — America 250 Limited Series

Art, history and meaning are represented in these unique items. Give the gift of America 250! Also, items from the National Society are available for a nominal price at https://store.sar.org/ . “Put Patriotism in Your Pocket.” See Page 8 for more CTSSAR items.



Captain Nathan Hale — September 22, 1776 (2019)



General David Humphreys Branch No. 1 — Chartered May 22, 1891 (2019)



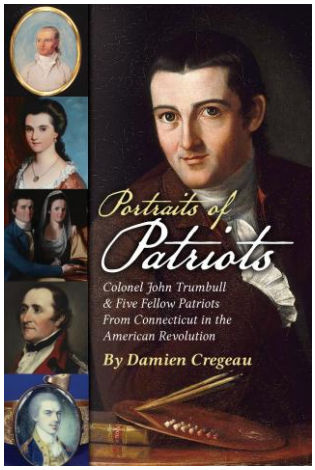
Governor Jonathan Trumbull War Office — 1776-1784 (2018)



Typical Design on the Back of Most Challenge Coins

Books by Compatriots—*"Portraits of Patriots: Colonel John Trumbull and Five Fellow Patriots From Connecticut in the American Revolution"*

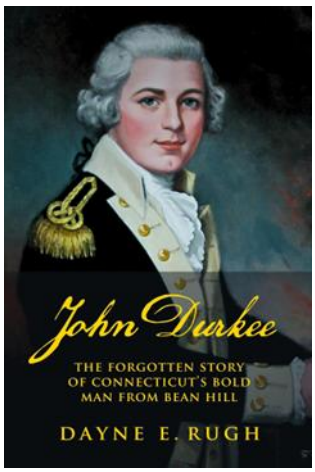
By Damien M Cregeau, Past President, CTSSAR; Colonel Jeremiah Wadsworth Branch No. 7



15 MAY 2026 — WETHERSFIELD. Damien Cregeau has enjoyed being on his national book tour (including Chicago) after publishing his new book, *"Portraits of Patriots: Colonel John Trumbull and Five Fellow Patriots From Connecticut in the American Revolution,"* for the 250th anniversary of the revolution. This 2025 book is unique as it looks at the lives and important contributions of five patriot officers and one wife, Faith Trumbull Huntington. It includes four US Army and one US Navy officer, namely, Faith's husband, Colonel later General Jedediah Huntington, his brother Colonel Ebenezer Huntington, Colonel Samuel Webb, Captain Seth Harding of the Navy (commander of the USS Confederacy, a frigate), and Colonel John Trumbull, who served in the Army including combat in 1778 while beginning his career as a painter that would lead him to national fame. John wrote in his memoirs that his sister Faith inspired him to become an artist. Damien has been giving presentations to various historical societies, groups and libraries. You can order a signed copy directly from Damien for $35 via his email: damien_cregeau@hotmail.com or cell: 203-648-1730. Damien is happy give a paid presentation to Compatriot Branches in person or via Zoom. You can also see his book on Amazon and his various presentations and podcast appearances over the years including the military leadership of Alexander Hamilton on C-SPAN on the internet. Damien is an award-winning, nationally-recognized historian specializing in the American Revolution. He has also been published in numerous journals and magazines over the past decade-plus, including Military History Quarterly and the Journal of the American Revolution. He received the national history award and medal from the DAR in 2021 in recognition of his many important contributions to the scholarship of the Revolutionary War era.

Books by Compatriots—*"John Durkee: The Forgotten Story of Connecticut's Bold Man From Bean Hill"*

By Dayne E. Rugh, President, Captain Nathan Hale Branch No. 6



15 MAY 2026 — NORWICH. Dayne Rugh's 2024 book, *"John Durkee: The Forgotten Story of Connecticut's Bold Man from Bean Hill,"* brings to audiences a story of a long-forgotten Connecticut Colonel who served with distinction in the French and Indian War and the American Revolution. Since his death in 1782, Colonel John Durkee of Norwich, Connecticut became a virtual footnote in American History, yet his legacy forever shaped the history of Connecticut and the nation. He was a lifelong soldier, leader, and answered the call to fight the King of England. From the Sons of Liberty, to General Washington's Army, this is the story of a man whose life fell into obscurity, but forgotten no longer. Dayne has authored content for the *Connecticut History Review*, *Connecticut Explored*, *Norwich Magazine*, the *Norwich Bulletin* newspaper, Mystic Seaport Museum, and the *Journal of the American Revolution*. He has been a featured speaker for both the Sons and Daughters of the American Revolution, Three Rivers Community College, and many civic organizations. Copies are available to be purchased on Amazon.

Distinguished Compatriot Spotlight — Kenneth D. Roach Biography

By Kenneth D. Roach, Past President, National Trustee, CTSSAR



Kenneth D. Roach

Kenneth D. Roach was born February 14, 1949, in Springfield, MO. He entered the U. S. Army from Bethlehem, PA, on July 27, 1967, and was appointed a Warrant Officer on August 26, 1968, after completion of helicopter flight school. He was assigned to B Co., 101st Aviation Battalion, 101st Airborne Division in the Republic of Vietnam (RVN). He served with B Co. from September 1968 to June 1969. He completed his first tour with HHC, 101st Aviation Battalion. After completion of his first tour, he served as an instructor pilot at Hunter AAF, Savannah, GA. In August 1971, he returned to RVN and was assigned to A Co., 101st Aviation Battalion, 101st Airborne Division. In December 1971 he was transferred to B Co., 101st Aviation Battalion and remained there until the Division stood down. He completed his tour serving as an advisor with the 239th Vietnamese Air Force (VNAF) Squadron and a member of Air Force Advisory Team 1.

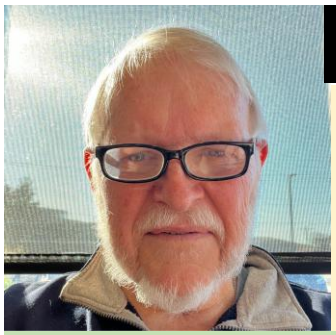
During his two tours of duty, Ken was awarded the Silver Star, the Distinguished Flying Cross, the Bronze Star with Oak Leaf Cluster, the Air Medal with two "V" devices for Valor and the numeral 27, the Army Commendation Medal, the Vietnam Cross of Gallantry, the Vietnam Air Service Medal, and Vietnamese Air Force Wings.

Ken served for over 20 years as a Supervisory Aviation Safety Inspector with the Federal Aviation Administration at Bradley International Airport. He served in the Connecticut Army National Guard flying the CH-47D helicopter for over 20 years. In January 2009, he retired from the FAA with over 29 years of total service. He also retired from the Connecticut Army National Guard in December 2008 with over 41 years of total military service.

Ken served as a volunteer wrestling coach at Windsor High School for 9 years and served as a girl's softball coach for 12 years. He served on the Vestry and as Junior and Senior Warden at Grace Church (Episcopal), Windsor, CT. He continues to serve as Junior Warden today.

Ken is a member of the Distinguished Flying Cross Society. He is a life member of the Vietnam Helicopter Pilots Association and the 101st Airborne Division Association. He served as the National President of the 101st Airborne Division Association from 2001 to 2002. He is also a member of several hereditary societies.

He joined the Connecticut Society of the Sons of the American Revolution on May 24, 1990, and has held many offices in both the state and national society. He has served as Vice President of the Wadsworth Branch, Secretary, Vice President, and President of the State Society. Additionally, he has served as Alternate Trustee and Trustee for Connecticut for many years, as well as Vice President General for New England.



A Prayer for America 250

By Richard W. Kendall, Chaplain and Assistant Treasurer, CTSSAR

Below is a prayer adapted from Gen. George Washington's Circular Letter to the States, which he wrote on 8 June 1783 as the Commander in Chief, at his headquarters in Newburgh, New York. Legacy spelling and syntax are left as is.

"I now make it my earnest prayer, that God would have the United States in his holy protection, that he would incline the hearts of the Citizens to cultivate a spirit of subordination and obedience to Government, to entertain a brotherly affection and love for one another, for their fellow citizens of the United States at large, and particularly for their brethren who have served in the Field, and finally, that he would most graciously be pleased to dispose us all, to do Justice, to love mercy, and to demean ourselves with that Charity, humility and pacific temper of mind, which were the Characteristicks of the Devine Author of our blessed Religion, and without an humble imitation of whose example in these things, we can never hope to be a happy Nation. Amen".

In Our Memory

	Died	
Mr. Laurence J. Hansen	28 Feb 2026	Wolcott 10
Mr. John R. Harrison	7 Oct 2025	Wolcott 10
Mr. John R. Marshall	6 Sep 2025	Wolcott 10
Mr. Charles W. Boyle	8 Jul 2025	Humphreys 1
Mr. Truman W. Bassett	29 May 2025	Sherman 5
Mr. John P. Archibald	9 May 2025	Mead 11
Mr. Garrison F. Lane	23 Feb 2025	At Large

New Members 2026

Mr. John W. Alter	Sherman 5
Mr. Forrest L. Anderson	Hale 6
Mr. Trevor R. Chillson	Wadsworth 7
Mr. John T. Cilio	Wolcott 10
Mr. James F. Ciquera	Sherman 5
Mr. Patrick J. Ciquera	Sherman 5
Mr. Nathan L. Colkitt	Mead 11
Mr. Andrew H. Griffin	Sherman 5
Mr. Henry R. Griffin	Sherman 5
Mr. Gerald A. Guild	Hale 6
Mr. Claud R. Hooker	Sherman 5
Mr. Michael P. Keigher	Mead 11
Mr. Timothy J. Klauser	Sherman 5
Mr. Robert G. Leary	Mead 11
Mr. Robert A. Magovern	Hale 6
Mr. Robert A. Martin	Humphreys 1
Mr. Howard A. Rochon	Wolcott 10
Mr. Jerry C. Shaw	Humphreys 1
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Mr. Michael E. Sonderman	Mead 11
Mr. Oliver R. Sonderman	Mead 11
Mr. Keith L. Stock	Mead 11



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