



# The Cradle of Texas Crier

Cradle of Texas Chapter # 33  
Sons of the American Revolution



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Dr. Don Pugh, Editor

## February Meeting in Angleton

### Marje Harris from Clayton Library will Speak

The regular meeting of the Cradle of Texas Chapter, Sons of the American Revolution will be held at the Smithart's Grill in Angleton Saturday, February 11 at 11:30 a.m.

Our program will be presented by Margaret J. Harris, usually known as Marje, who is the Manager of the Clayton Library, the genealogical research unit of the Houston Public Library. Marje has worked for the Houston Public Library for 34 years and at the Clayton Library for thirty of those years. Marje holds a BA in Library Science/Education from the University of North Texas and an MLS from Texas Women's University.

Harris holds memberships in the American Library Association, RUSA Round Table and the Genealogy Committee and the Texas Library Association where she services on the Genealogy Round Table. She is qualified as a Certified Genealogical Records Searcher, Board of Certification of Genealogists, 1982-1987. She holds membership in several patriotic and hereditary societies.

She is a member of the St. Thomas Episcopal Church in Houston. She also conducts numerous classes through the Houston Community College and Rice University, Continuing Education.

Smithart's Grill is located on Business 288 on the extreme north side of Angleton. If you come up Business 288 from the South proceed all the way past Walmart and Krogers in Angleton and you will shortly see the Smithart's Restaurant on your right. If you are coming from the north on Highway 288 exit on Business 288 then come about 5 miles and you will see the Smithart's on the left. From Angleton and West Columbia on Highway 35 you can come into Angleton until you get to Business 288, then turn north and follow the directions as if you were coming from the south.

### Minutes of the Last Meeting

The Cradle of Texas Chapter, TXSSAR met at 11:30 am at the Wurst Haus Restaurant in Lake Jackson, Texas on Saturday, January 14, 2006. The meeting was called to order by Mike Rees because of the absence of the President, Tillman Daniel. The following members were present: Mike Rees, Arnold Seidule, Don Pugh, George Easterling, Russell Dart, Milt Wing, Rev. L. L. Stevens, Thomas Mayerle, Clell Sechrest, Frank Seidule, Judge Garvin Germany, and Julian Taylor.

The following guests were present: Janice Seidule, Earlene Pugh, Wanda Duke Easterling, Sue Dart, Mary Wing and Mary Sechrest, Congressman Ron Paul and Penny Langford. Ms. Langford is Congressman Paul's legislative assistant.

The pledge to the United States Flag was led by Judge Germany, the pledge to the Texas Flag by Arnold Seidule, and the Pledge to the SAR was led by Rev. L. L. Stevens. Chaplain Roger Byerly led the invocation. Garvin Germany moved that the minutes as published in the Newsletter be approved, Julian Taylor, seconded. The motion passed.

The officers present -- Mike Rees, Vice President; Treasurer, Russell Dart; Genealogist, Judge Garvin Germany; Chaplain, Rev. Roger Byler were regularly installed in their respective offices by Past President George Easterling. The members of the chapter were admonished by the Installing Officer, George Easterling, to support our elective officers in their activities.

Russell Dart presented an overview of the finances of the chapter for 2005 and recognized the gift of \$100 to the Patriot fund in honor of Arnold Seidule by his daughter.

Congressman Ron Paul was the featured speaker. His address was a report on the federal system of monetary policy and how it relates to the international scene. He distributed copies of the U. S. Constitution to the audience.



Tom Mayerle led the chapter in the SAR closing and Chaplain Roger Byerly pronounced the benediction. The chapter adjourned at 1:25 pm.

## Upcoming Dates of Interest

February 23-26 National Trustees Meeting, Louisville KY

March 17-19 State Meeting, Sugar Land

Not only will our own Tom Green will be installed as the new State President the meeting will be in our own backyard. We should make every effort to support Tom in his presidency by attending this meeting. Our chapter and some of our members will also be honored at the meeting.

July 8 -12 National Congress, Dallas, Texas

This will be a great opportunity. The President General for the National Society will be former Texas State President Judge Nathan White. This will be a great opportunity for many of us to attend the National Congress.

## August BOM in Lake Jackson

The chapter is making plans now to host the BOM for August 4-6. Plan now to participate and assist in the administration of the tasks to host this meeting. Our ladies are planning a ladies' tour, a ladies hospitality suite, and to assist in the decorations. We will need our members to man the registration facility, to run the silent auction and to generally assist in all the functions. Please be prepared to assist us in this opportunity.

This meeting here will give our members the opportunity to see how our organization is administered at the State level and will gain a wider appreciation of the organization and our fellow compatriots from the other chapters throughout the State of Texas.

We will ask our membership to donate items for the silent auction. These are tax deductible contributions. The proceeds from the sale of these items will be used to fund the student scholarship activities on a state wide basis.

We will arrange a Friday night dinner for those who come early at one of the seafood restaurants in the area. You are encouraged to join us for an evening of relaxation and getting to know our compatriots from around the State. Whether you choose not to register for the meeting you are certainly welcome to attend the Saturday evening Banquet. We will have more information for you later so that you can reserve a place.

## President's Day in February

The federal holiday observed in the United States on the third Monday of February is officially designated as "Presidents' Day" is a false statement.

Back in our school days, February was an important month — not just because it included the eagerly-anticipated Valentine's Day, but because even though it was the shortest month of the year, it contained two (count 'em: **two**) holidays for which schools were closed: Lincoln's Birthday (February 12) and Washington's Birthday (February 22). Two school-free days for the kids, two days off for working parents, and terrific bargains on bedding, linen, and towels at department store white sales. What wasn't to like about February?

Nowadays, though, many of us — whether we be employees or students — don't get any weekdays off at all in February, or we're offered a single holiday that falls on the third Monday in February and is neither Lincoln's nor Washington's Birthday but some hybrid known as

"Presidents' Day." What happened to our traditional February holidays? And just what the heck are we commemorating on "Presidents' Day"?



Some of us think we're observing George Washington's Birthday (perpetually moved to more convenient Monday dates since 1971), some of us think we're celebrating the combined

birthdays of George Washington and Abraham Lincoln (two formerly separate holidays smushed into one), and some of us think we're honoring the memory of all U.S. presidents past and present. Which is it?

Throughout the 19th century, George Washington was the towering figure of U.S. history to the American public. In honor of the man who commanded the Continental Army and led the American colonies to victory in the Revolutionary War, served as first President of the United States of America, and earned the sobriquet "The Father of Our Country," Washington's Birthday, February 22, was celebrated with more patriotic fervor than any holiday save the Fourth of July. Accordingly, the observance of Washington's Birthday was made official in 1885 when President Chester Alan Arthur signed a bill establishing it as a federal holiday. (Washington was actually born on February 11, 1731, under the Julian calendar in effect at the time of his birth, but his birth date



is reckoned as February 22 under the Gregorian calendar which was adopted in 1752.)

However, the seeds of confusion were sown in 1968 with the passage of a piece of legislation known as Uniform Holidays Bill, intended to create more three-day weekends for federal employees by moving the observance of three federal holidays (Washington's Birthday, Memorial Day, and Veterans Day) from fixed calendar dates to designated Mondays, and by establishing Columbus Day (also to be observed on a Monday) as a new federal holiday. Under this act, from 1971 onwards the observance date of Washington's Birthday would be relocated from February 22 to the third Monday in February. (Oddly enough, this change guaranteed that Washington's Birthday would never again be celebrated on his "actual" birthday of February 22, as the third Monday in February cannot fall any later than February 21.)

So far, so good. The date of observance of Washington's Birthday might have been tinkered with a bit, but the holiday was still undeniably "Washington's Birthday." So what happened to Lincoln's Birthday? And whence came "Presidents' Day"?

The concept of combining Washington's and Lincoln's birthdays into one holiday called "President's Day" was floated as far back as the early 1950s, as the *New York Times* noted in 1968:

The first uniform Monday holiday plan was promulgated by NATO in the early 1950's. It called for combining Washington's and Lincoln's Birthdays into a single President's Day, to be celebrated the third Monday in February, and shifting Memorial Day to the fourth Monday in May, Independence Day to the first Monday in July and Veterans Day to the second Monday in November.

This initial effort met with sporadic success in a few states. But after several years of attempting to get the individual states to adopt uniform Monday holidays, it became apparent that a Federal bill was needed to serve as an example for state action.

Although early efforts to implement a Uniform Holidays Bill in 1968 also proposed moving the observance of Washington's Birthday to the third Monday in February and renaming the holiday "President's Day," the passed version of the bill provided only for the former. The official designation of the federal holiday observed on the third Monday of February is, and always has been, Washington's Birthday.

President Nixon is frequently identified as the party responsible for changing Washington's Birthday into President's Day and fostering the notion that it is a day for commemorating all U.S. Presidents, a feat he supposedly achieved by issuing a proclamation on 21 February 1971 which declared the third Monday in February to be a "holiday set aside to honor all presidents, even myself." Evidence of this proclamation remains elusive, however. Presidential records indicate that Nixon merely issued an Executive Order (11582) on 11 February 1971 defining the third Monday of February as a holiday, and the

announcement of that Executive Order identified the day as "Washington's Birthday."

Washington's Birthday has become Presidents' Day (or President's Day, or even Presidents Day; the usage is inconsistent) for many of us because federal holidays technically apply only to persons employed by the federal government (and the District of Columbia). Individual state governments do not have to observe federal holidays — most of them generally do (and most private employers and school districts follow suit), but federal and state holiday observances can differ. For example, former Confederate states have observed several holidays not recognized at a federal level (such as June 3, Jefferson Davis Day), and controversial Arizona governor Ev Mecham drew headlines in 1987 when one of his first official acts upon inauguration was to rescind an Executive Order issued by the previous governor that had established the Birthday of Martin Luther King, Jr. (a federal holiday) as an Arizona state holiday.

Although Lincoln's Birthday had never been designated as a federal holiday, it was observed as a state holiday in many parts of the country. However, after additional federal holidays were created for Columbus Day and the Birthday of Martin Luther King, Jr. (in 1971 and 1986, respectively), some states dropped the observance of Lincoln's Birthday as a separate holiday in order to maintain a fixed number of paid holidays per year. (And, of course, some states never observed Lincoln's Birthday in the first place.) As a result, we now have a hodgepodge of state holiday schedules in the USA: some states still observe Lincoln's and Washington's birthdays as separate holidays, some states observe only Washington's Birthday, some states commemorate both with a single Presidents' Day (or Lincoln-Washington Day), and some states celebrate neither. And there are odd exceptions such as Alabama, which has designated the third Monday in February as a day commemorating both George Washington and Thomas Jefferson, even though Jefferson was born in April. (A few states have even moved their observances of Washington's Birthday, Lincoln's Birthday, and Presidents' Day to November or December in order to lengthen the Thanksgiving and Christmas holiday periods without creating additional paid holidays.)

An attempt to clear up some of this confusion at the federal level was made through the introduction of the 'Washington-Lincoln Recognition Act of 2001' (HR 420) to Congress in 2001. The bill proposed that "the legal public holiday known as Washington's Birthday shall be referred to by that name and no other by all entities and officials of the United States Government" and requested "that the President issue a proclamation each year recognizing the anniversary of the birth of President Abraham Lincoln and calling upon the people of the United States to observe such anniversary with appropriate ceremonies and activities," but it failed to clear subcommittee and died without ever being voted upon.

*From Snopes.com*



## Announcements

### Early Newsletter

This edition of the newsletter is a little early because the editor will be out of pocket when the time comes to send it. You will have an extra responsibility to mark your calendar for the date for the meeting which is announced on the first page. Be there for the meeting. You will learn a lot.

### Veterans

From time to time we bring toiletries for out Veteran's committee to give to veterans in the hospital and in nursing homes. The next meeting will be a good time for you to bring some for their use. These items are sincerely appreciated by the veterans as well as the small United States Flags that we distribute for their rooms.



### FINANCIAL REPORT Consolidated Report for 2005

|  |                  |
|--|------------------|
| General Fund Balance January 1, 2005   | \$1079.97        |
| <b>Income</b>                          |                  |
| Historical Tour                        | \$385.00         |
| Guest Meals                            | 45.00            |
| Newsletter                             | 6.00             |
| Membership Dues                        | 589.00           |
| Donations (Austin 500)                 | 835.00           |
| Gala                                   | 1275.00          |
| <b>Total Income</b>                    | <b>\$3135.00</b> |
| <b>Disbursements:</b>                  |                  |
| Guest Meals                            | \$132.65         |
| Medals, Certificates, etc.             | 423.15           |
| Stamps                                 | 85.00            |
| Donation to Austin 500                 | 1100.00          |
| Gala Expenses                          | 921.37           |
| Engraving of Medals                    | 12.00            |
| <b>Total Disbursements</b>             | <b>2674.42</b>   |
| General Fund Balance November 28, 2005 | \$1540.55        |
| Balance for Historical Tour            | \$385.00         |
| General Fund Balance                   | \$1155.55        |
| <b>Total</b>                           | <b>\$1540.55</b> |

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