

## Texas Sons of the American Revolution

### Cradle of Texas Crier

Cradle of Texas Chapter # 33

[www.cradletxsar.org](http://www.cradletxsar.org)



Volume 22 Number 01

September 2020

Michael J. Bailey, Editor

### September

#### Next Meeting

10:30 a.m.

September 12, 2020

Virtual Meeting via Zoom

For Details Contact Carl M Wiggins

281-996-7976

[cmwiggins1@comcast.net](mailto:cmwiggins1@comcast.net)

Members will be asked to join the Zoom meeting 5 or 10 minutes prior to the scheduled start time. As members join the Zoom meeting, they will first be placed in a Waiting Room. The Zoom host admits each member into the meeting and records their names for the attendance list. Each attendee member and guest will be asked to enter their first and last name when joining so that it appears in the lower left corner of their video image.

#### Program:

**Jesse O. Villarreal, Sr.,  
Spanish Colonial History  
of Texas 1718 to 1783.**



Jesse O. Villarreal, Sr., a 9th generation Tejano, was born in Westside San Antonio, Texas on February 4, 1945. He attended Our Lady of Guadalupe Elementary School and then Sidney Lanier

High School where he graduated in 1964. He served in the U.S. Army from Sept. 1965 to Sept. 1967 and was stationed in Germany. After an honorable discharge, Mr. Villarreal worked with the U.S. Department of Defense at Kelly AFB in San Antonio. He married Connie Perez of San Benito, Texas in 1972. Mr. Villarreal graduated from Our Lady of the Lake University in 1975 with a B.A. in Social Work. In 1978, the family moved to Dallas, Texas, where he worked with the U.S. Department of Labor in the Bureau of Labor and Statistics. In 1980, he transferred to Austin, Texas where he continued working in the Federal Government with the U.S. Department of Labor, OSHA, as a Safety and Health Compliance Officer until his retirement in 2002 with 35 years of service to our nation.

In 2012, he was honored with the prestigious **Presidio La Bahia Award** by the Sons of the Republic of Texas for his first book, *Tejano Patriots of the American Revolution 1776-1783*. The San Antonio Conservation Society also presented Mr. Villarreal with their citation in 2013. Jesse has continued to receive other awards and commendations including the **Distinguished Citizen Medal** given by the Daughters of the American Revolution. He is also, a member of the SAR Patrick Henry Chapter in Austin

Please Note

#### Compatriot Devon Dull

Our compatriot Devon Dull has been having serious health issues since the end of June. The Family has started a Facebook page so that everyone can keep track of his

progress. Please remember him and his Family in your thoughts and prayers as they navigate their way through this time of difficulties.

### Meeting Minutes

Sons of the American Revolution  
Cradle of Texas Chapter #33  
February 8, 2020

The Sons of the American Revolution met February 8, 2020 at Swamp Shack Restaurant in Lake Jackson.

**Call to Order** - President Rodney Weems called the meeting to order at 11:35 A.M.

**Pledges** - Vice President Carl Wiggins led the pledges to the flags of the United States of America, Texas and the Sons of the American Revolution.

**Introduction of Guests:** President Weems introduced all guests - see below for complete list.

**Approval of Minutes:** Motion by Bill Griffiths with second by Carl Wiggins. All approved.

**Americanism Elementary School Poster Contest Winner:** Andrew Hillman was introduced by President Weems and read from the essay portion of his Poster.

### "Valley Forge"



After a few years of the Revolutionary War waging, Washington decided to set up camp in Valley Forge because it was on a slope that was easy to defend. When they arrived, Washington knew that they needed shelters to live in. He divided the army into groups of twelve, and each group had to build their shelter. Washington needed a place to meet with officers and plan attacks, so he rented a stone house from Deborah Hewes. In his house, he wrote letters to Congress, asking for them to send supplies. Connecticut and Massachusetts were the only generous colonies to respond with supplies.

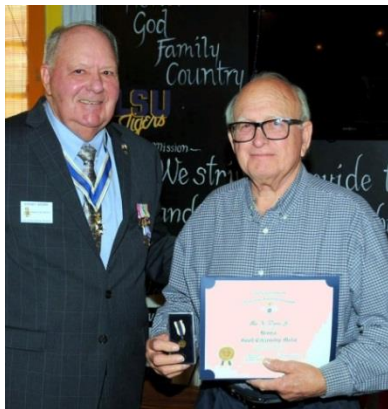


In January of 1778, Washington's troops were in terrible condition. Out of the 12,000 men, half were ready to fight. Sadly, nearly 1,800 died that winter. In the army, there were many diverse people. Some men had different cultures; some performed different jobs. On the outskirts of the camp lived the wives and girlfriends of the soldiers. They did the laundry, mended clothing, and cared for the sick. Most of the colonial army had neither shoes nor coats, so they encircled rags around their feet for shoes and used blankets as coats. Soap was in short supply at Valley Forge, so the soldiers sprinkled flour on their hair to groom it. When they used the flour, the flour attracted lice that caused the soldiers to become ill. Some well-known sicknesses

that spread around Valley Forge were pneumonia, typhoid, and smallpox.

On February 23, a Prussian leader named Von Stueben volunteered to help Washington train his troops. He soon realized American armies weren't like European armies. Von Stueben had to change how things were taught to them. Soon the soldiers looked more trained than the British. After that, Von Stueben decided to teach the soldiers how to use and attach a bayonet to their musket. During battles, the soldiers could hardly hear orders yelled out by Von Stueben, so they used drummers to give orders by using a certain rhythm for each order. On February 6, 1778, France became an ally of the Thirteen Colonies. On June 18, Washington departed from Valley Forge. A few years later, Washington led his army into a win at Yorktown to end the war once and for all."

**Awards Presentation:** Three citizens were recognized with the Sons of the American Revolution Bronze Good Citizenship Medal.



- Alex H. Weems, Jr. was recognized for his 2 plus-year project to bring the American Legion Hall, West Columbia up to date. He estimates the rehabilitation took somewhere around 750 hours. Originally constructed in 1947, the building, although well maintained, did not

meet the needs of today. Significant upgrades included: bringing bathrooms into compliance with the American Disabilities Act, revamped the kitchen, and increasing the amount of usable space by 200 square feet. The latter was accomplished by removing a support wall and installing an overhead support beam.



- William "Bill" C. Sanders, Sr., Sons of the American Revolution member, was recognized for his 7 plus-year and over 1600 hours of support to the Louise Graveyard Association. The Graveyard Cemetery Associated was established in 1897 by five local citizens and is located 1-mile north of Louise, TX on County Road 319. The board for the association is still working to develop a one-page history of the Cemetery and are proud of the upkeep improvements made over the past 7 years.





Winston C. Avera, Jr., Sons of the American Revolution member, was recognized for his 10 years of service in the Old Columbia Cemetery in West Columbia, TX. Site was given by Josiah H. Bell family out of their land grant. The first deeded to one of the "old 300" in Stephen F. Austin's first colony. It has graves of many heroes of the Texas Revolution of 1836. Deeded again in 1852 to Bethel Presbyterian Church, and since 1933 has been managed by the Columbia Cemetery Association.

#### TREASURERS' REPORT: Rodney Weems

##### General Fund

##### Beginning Balance

1/01/2020	\$2,481.51
Deposits (1)	100.04
Expenses (2)	-443.00
Ending Balance: --	
1/31/2020	\$2,138.55

##### Mc Alexander Fund (3)

##### Beginning Balance

1/01/2020	\$900.82
Deposits - Interest	.08
Ending Balance: --	
1/31/2020	\$900.90
Total Bank Balance -	
1/31/2020	\$3,039.45

<sup>1</sup> Interest \$0.04/Chris Wendel -- \$100.00 Donation

<sup>2</sup> Nelson Leopold \$98.00 Meal Reimbursements over three meetings/\$100.00 Cash Reimbursement for Essay Contest Winner - Sophia Landry/\$245.00 Rodney Weems SAR Certificates/Medals

<sup>3</sup> Available for purchase of uniforms for SAR Color Guard Members

#### REPORTS OF OFFICERS AND COMMITTEES:

**Registrar:** Bill Sanders

Applications Approved: 1

Applications Awaiting

National Approval: 5

Applications Actively Working: 40

**Webmaster:** Carl Wiggins

**Chairman of Education and Community**

**Outreach:** President Weems noted dates for school contests and encouraged new members to provide bios to Carl for placement on the website.

#### PROGRAM:



The speaker, Eileen Benitz Wagner, and her daughter Deniece, were introduced by Vice President Wiggins with a short biography of Ms. Wagner. Her talk concerned the Confederate blockade runner "Acadia". She was a steam powered River-Clyde side wheeler built in Sorel, Quebec in 1864 as a mail carrier/passenger ship. "Acadia" sailed under a British maritime flag, the Red Ensign. In November, 1864, she left Halifax, Nova Scotia on her maiden voyage, headed to the Bahamas, then to Cuba, which she reached early in 1865. Failing to sell her (as had been the plan), the captain, Thomas Leach, decided to run the Union blockade which had closed Southern ports since 1861. Attempting to reach Confederate forts at the mouth of the Brazos River near San Luis Pass and Velasco,

Texas, the "Acadia" ran aground in dense fog February 6, 1865. She was subsequently destroyed by gunfire from USS Virginia, the Union ship on patrol in the area. Much of her cargo was salvaged by shore parties. In the late 1960's and early 70's, the wreck site was examined by Wendell Pierce under permit from the Texas Antiquities Commission under the supervision of Frank Holt, a Rice University archeologist. Multiple artifacts were salvaged and are held by the Brazos County Historical Museum.

**NEW BUSINESS:** None

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Rodney Weems, Carl Wiggins, Russell Dart, Win Avera, Tim Hall, Chris Wendel, Bill Sanders, Bill Griffiths, Tom Taroni, Sandy Weems and Michael Bailey.

**GUESTS PRESENT:** Andrew Hillman, Gregory Hillman, D'Ann Hillman, Eileen M. Benitz Wagner, Deniece Herrod, Caroline Wiggins, Connie Avera, Alex Weems, Heidi Wanaaf, Holly Heble, Carroll Griffiths, and Christine Miller.

**NEXT CHAPTER MEETING:** March 14, 2020, El Campo Seafood and Grill, 110 C West Railroad Street, El Campo, Texas 77437. Guest speaker will be Mr. Jessie O. Villarreal, presenting on Spanish Colonial Spanish History, 1718 to 1783.

**SAR RECESSIONAL:** Carl Wiggins

**MOTION FOR ADJOURNMENT:** The meeting was adjourned on a motion by Bill Griffiths, second by Michael Bailey, and approved by all.

**BENEDICTION:** Chaplain Tim Hall



We mourn the passing of our recently departed compatriot Rev. Lawrence Lavin Stevens. Please keep the Family in your thoughts and prayers. A memorial can be found at <https://www.dignitymemorial.com/obituaries/clute-tx/lawrence-stevens-9327296>

2020

Officers of the  
Cradle of Texas Chapter #33

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***Cradle of Texas Bank  
Activity 1 Feb 2020 – 31 Aug 2020***

<i>Checking</i>			<i>Savings</i>			<i>Total</i>
	<i>1-31-020</i>	<i>2138.55</i>		<i>1-31-020</i>	<i>900.90</i>	<i>3039.45</i>
<i>Dues</i>	<i>2-5-020</i>	<i>98.00</i>	<i>Int</i>	<i>2-29-020</i>	<i>.07</i>	
<i>Int</i>	<i>2-29-020</i>	<i>.03</i>			<i>0.0</i>	
<i>Feb Expenses<sup>4</sup></i>	<i>2-8-020</i>	<i>-220.27</i>			<i>0.0</i>	
<i>Int</i>	<i>3-31-020</i>	<i>.03</i>	<i>Int</i>	<i>3-31-020</i>	<i>.08</i>	
<i>Int</i>	<i>4-30-020</i>	<i>.03</i>	<i>Int</i>	<i>4-30-020</i>	<i>.07</i>	
<i>Dues</i>	<i>5-15-020</i>	<i>820.50</i>	<i>Int</i>	<i>5-31-020</i>	<i>.08</i>	
<i>Int</i>	<i>5-31-020</i>	<i>.04</i>			<i>0.0</i>	
<i>Int</i>	<i>6-30-020</i>	<i>.05</i>	<i>Int</i>	<i>6-30-020</i>	<i>.07</i>	
<i>Int</i>	<i>7-31-020</i>	<i>.05</i>	<i>Int</i>	<i>7-31-020</i>	<i>.08</i>	
<i>Int</i>	<i>8-31-020</i>	<i>.05</i>	<i>Int</i>	<i>8-31-020</i>	<i>.08</i>	
<i>Total</i>		<i>2837.06</i>	<i>0.0</i>	<i>0.0</i>	<i>901.43</i>	<i>3738.49</i>

***Abigail Rose Arias  
Honored Posthumously***



Chief Garivery, Ruben Arias,  
James J. Clements, Jr.  
Captain Danny Gillchriest



Presentation Attendees

Abigail Rose Arias was nominated for Posthumous award of the Sons of the American Revolution "Silver Good Citizenship Medal" by Cradle of Texas, Chapter 33, Sons of the American Revolution. The award was approved and issued by Texas Society President, Drake Peddie. On Monday, 24 Aug 2020, the Medal was presented to Abigail's family, represented by Ruben Arias, at Chief Robert Garivey's offices, Freeport Police Department. The presentation was officiated by James J. Clements, Jr., Secretary, Texas State Society, Sons of the American Revolution, and was attended by

<sup>4</sup> Andrew Hillman \$100.00 SAR Supplies \$40.00 Five Meals \$80.27

Cradle of Texas members, Rodney Weems and Carl M. Wiggins, III, and several members of the Freeport Police Department to include Chief Garivey.

Criteria for award of the Silver Good Citizenship Medal, in part, is as follows:

**“Summary:** The Silver Good Citizenship Medal recognizes outstanding and unusual patriotic achievement and service that is of a more local degree (state or regional level). The medal is presented to persons of prominence in the areas of government (including military service), religion, education, business and other professions, and other fields of endeavor.

**Non-member Service Requirements:** In the case of a non-member, the National Society or a state society determines the qualifications.”<sup>5</sup>

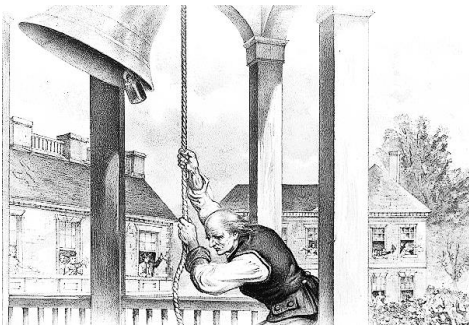
As Secretary Clements stated this Medal is the highest recognition of service that a State Society can award to a non-member of the Sons of the American Revolution.

Three articles from “The Facts” were submitted to our Society President, Drake Peddie for consideration.

1. Dream Come True, 8 Feb 2019
2. Obituary, Abigail Rose Arias, 10 Nov 2019
3. Honor Abigail by helping others fight cancer, 12 Nov 2019

Rodney Weems, President  
Cradle of Texas, Chapter 33

## Constitution Day September 17, 2020



<sup>5</sup> Sons of the American Revolution, Official Handbook, Vol V, Individual Medals and Awards