



# The Musket Report



Newsletter of the Wiregrass Chapter, Alabama Society, Sons of the American Revolution

**ENTERPRISE, ALABAMA**

**January 2026**

**A Huge Turn Out!** The Chapter enjoyed a great Annual Chartering and Installation Banquet last month at the Enterprise Country Club with the majority of the Chapter's members in attendance. A special thanks to ALSSAR President & Mrs. Benny Hannah, ALSSAR Vice President Ron Dains, and representatives of several local Daughters of the American Revolution Chapters for joining our celebration. President Paul Olson presented awards to several of our Compatriots and associates who have selflessly served our Chapter and our Nation.



Distinguished Service Medal / 15 Year Service:  
Dr. Jack Anderson



Bronze Henry Knox Medal (2<sup>nd</sup> Award):  
VP Bob Cooper



War Service Medal: Compatriots  
Dr. Glenn Brackin, James Crabtree, and  
James Lewellyn



Military Service Medal:  
Compatriot Riley  
Oglesby



Good Citizenship Medal:  
Mr. Benny Pinkard (*accepted  
by Compatriot Malon Murphy*)



Certificates of Appreciation:  
Mrs. Jennifer Dallas & Mrs.  
Heidi Crabtree (*not pictured*)

## Wiregrass Chapter Officers 2025-2026

President:	Phillip Kitchens
Vice President:	Bob Cooper
Secretary / Registrar:	Jason Dallas
Treasurer:	John Cheney
Historian:	James Crabtree
Chaplain:	Dr. Jack Anderson
Sergeant-at-Arms:	Paul Olson



## From The President:



Greetings My Fellow Compatriots,

It is truly an honor to serve as Chapter President after being sworn in, along with the other Chapter Officers, by our esteemed ALSSAR President, Benny Hannah, at the Christmas Banquet last month. I believe this will be a great year for the Sons of the American Revolution and an even greater year for our nation.

As we move forward, we are entering a time that will bring much-needed attention to how and why our forefathers—through their courage, conviction, and sacrifice—gave birth to a nation founded on liberty. As descendants of Revolutionary War Patriots, our connection is not only through ancestry, but also through duty. The mission of the Sons of the American Revolution is to honor our Patriot ancestors by promoting patriotism, serving our communities, and educating and inspiring future generations about the founding principles of our country.

Every opportunity we have this year should be an opportunity to celebrate the **Semi-quincentennial of the American Revolution**. Our first such opportunity will be on April 18<sup>th</sup>, with the grave marking ceremony for **Captain William Brackin**, the direct ancestor of our fellow Compatriot, Glenn Brackin. Local DAR Chapters, ALSSAR Officers, and the Color Guard will participate in this special 250th commemorative event.

We have also applied for a **Pomeroy Foundation Grant**, and if approved, we will install a Hometown Heritage historical marker recognizing **13 Revolutionary War Veterans** who registered for pensions in Dale County. This marker will be placed at the **Ozark-Dale County Library Park** around Veterans Day.

I hope we can encourage local schools in all the counties we serve to participate in the SAR Poster Contest, Essay Contest, and Eagle Scout Contest. This year, we had the privilege of sponsoring **Knight Essay contestant Kate Cain** for her essay titled *France: The Catalyst for American Independence*. Her essay was forwarded to us by the Black Warrior Chapter and will compete at the ALSSAR level, with the opportunity to advance to NSSAR.

In closing, I am excited and honored to serve the Wiregrass Chapter. I am always available should you need anything—please feel free to call, text, email, or even write. I will respond and do all that I can to assist you.

HUZZAH!

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## Dates To Remember

**Thursday, 15 January 2026-** Wiregrass Chapter Monthly meeting. Enterprise Country Club at **1130am**.

**Saturday, 24 January 2026-** Continental Brunch in Troy, AL. **1030am** at The Corner Restaurant located at 64 East Court Square, Troy, AL 36081. If you plan to attend, please let the editor of this newsletter know so we can give the restaurant staff an idea of how many will be in attendance. [jrdсар@gmail.com](mailto:jrdсар@gmail.com) Thanks!

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## Forgot to Pay Dues?

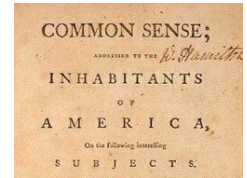
Holidays can be busy times. A lapse in membership affects your SAR benefits and future membership award qualification. Additionally, a failure to pay dues on time results in a member being **dropped from the rolls** at National HQ until that member is no longer in arrears. The good news is that this is easily remedied! If you were unable to pay your 2026 dues on time, please contact the Chapter Secretary Jason Dallas at [jrdсар@gmail.com](mailto:jrdсар@gmail.com).

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## Common Sense

January 1776. The loyalties of American colonists vary. An anonymous 47-page pamphlet is about to be published—and it will change everything. The author is actually Thomas Paine. He addresses a population still debating reconciliation with Great Britain, yet increasingly aware that the old relationship has become intolerable. Paine speaks directly to ordinary colonists, stripping away tradition and deference to monarchy, and urges them to judge their situation by reason and experience rather than habit.



Thomas Paine is an English-born writer and political thinker whose life experiences shape his role as the author of *Common Sense*. Born in 1737 in Thetford, England, he grows up in a modest household and receives little formal education. He works as a sailor, shopkeeper, and excise officer, gaining firsthand knowledge of economic hardship and government inefficiency. These experiences strengthen his opposition to inherited privilege and monarchy.

In 1774, Paine emigrates to America with the encouragement of Benjamin Franklin. He arrives at a moment of rising tension between the colonies and Great Britain and quickly involves himself in political debate. He becomes editor of the *Pennsylvania Magazine*, where he writes on politics, society, and reform. Paine believes political ideas should be expressed plainly so ordinary people can understand them. This belief defines his background and prepares him to address the American public directly.

In this pamphlet, Paine argues that the connection to Great Britain now brings more harm to colonists than protection. He points to the ongoing war, British blockades, and bloodshed as proof that the King has become an enemy rather than a guardian. In the present moment, Americans see their ports closed, their towns threatened, and their young men dying in a conflict not of their choosing. Paine insists that continued loyalty only deepens this suffering. Reconciliation he insists, once a reasonable hope, is now unrealistic and dangerous, as it would leave America vulnerable to renewed oppression.

Paine attacks monarchy itself by portraying it as an unnatural and corrupt system that concentrates power in the hands of one man. He contrasts this with the American situation, where the colonies possess the population, resources, and moral right to govern themselves. America is no longer a collection of weak settlements but a growing society capable of forming a republic grounded in law and representation.

Most powerfully, Paine reframes independence as an urgent necessity rather than a distant ideal. Delay, he argues, only strengthens Britain and weakens America's resolve. The present crisis demands decisive action. By declaring independence now, Americans can unite their efforts and give clear purpose to the war already underway. In *Common Sense*, Paine transforms widespread frustration into a call for immediate political separation, insisting that the time for independence is not in the future—it is now.

To view *Common Sense* in its entirety, click this link:

<https://oll.libertyfund.org/pages/1776-paine-common-sense-pamphlet>



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