



## The Iowa Compatriot

The Journal of the Iowa Society, Sons of the American Revolution

April 15, 2024

*We the descendants of the heroes of the American Revolution, who by their sacrifice established the United States of America, reaffirm our faith in the principles of liberty and solemnly pledge to defend them against every foe.*

### Two Cedar Rapids Veterans Enrolled in the Purple Heart Hall of Honor

By Gary Everding

With some instruction on the process (and a lot of perseverance), I was able to help retired coach John Hegarty enroll two former Cedar Rapids Jefferson High School students in the Purple Heart Hall of Honor. On March 9<sup>th</sup>, Cpl. Dennis Anthony Gunder was enrolled. Then on March 13<sup>th</sup>, Sgt. Jon Richard Winger was enrolled. The school recently honored these veterans at a rededication ceremony in January. For more information, see the following video:

<https://www.kcrg.com/video/2024/01/29/cedar-rapids-jefferson-holds-rededication-ceremony/>

Before his death, Cpl. Dennis A. Gunder wrote the following letter to his mother:

*Before His Death*

Funeral arrangements are pending at the Turner chapel.

# Soldier Understood a Purpose

*(Written June 2, this letter by army Cpl. Dennis A. Gunder, 21, was one of the last received by his parents, Mr. and Mrs. Crimb Gunder of 3920 F avenue NW. Cpl. Gunder was wounded in action in South Vietnam Aug. 24. He died the next day.)*

Dearest Mother:

I write to you now in a very troubled state of mind. I read an article in an old magazine today about a group of young people who were protesting the war over here, and it makes me very sad to think of people in the States thinking of us as a lot of blood-thirsty warlords.

I, like a thousand other GIs would like nothing else than to be back home and not have to fight and maybe die in this faraway place. But, Mom, hasn't our freedom always been shaped by hardships and sacrifice?


The magazine said that America had no right to be fighting in Vietnam, and that what happens over here wasn't our concern. But if the United States is still a land of freedom, and if we still want that freedom, then yes, Vietnam is our concern. What would happen Mom, if we did pull out of Vietnam? Could you or I or any other true American hold his head up knowing that so many of our men have died for no purpose?

But there is even more of a commitment than to those men and that is to our country and for what it stands. Freedom is never had for a small price, and we are not only helping these people over here gain that freedom, but protecting our own.

Mom, what makes people think the communists will stop if they take Vietnam? What says the Philippines, Wake Island and Hawaii won't be the next stop in their movement for world conquest? And I would much rather see the bombs fall in the jungles of Vietnam than on the shores of California.

So, Mom, I want it to be very clear to you that your son is not fighting in a war for no purpose. Yes, I am doing my small part for a purpose—one very dear to me—my country, our freedom and our way of life that we all enjoy so much (yes, and the rights of protest marchers). I love you, Mother, and be proud that you have raised a son who loves his country so much.

Your son Denny



Dennis A. Gunder

## VA Stones to Be Installed in Chickasaw County

By Mike Rowley



On March 26<sup>th</sup>, new VA stones arrived for James Brock (Company K, 1<sup>st</sup> Wisconsin Infantry) and Charles G. Lane (Company F, 42<sup>nd</sup> Wisconsin Infantry).

Along with the VA stone for Elisha C. White (Company I, 9<sup>th</sup> Iowa Infantry), these stones are planned to be installed at the same time in Chickasaw County. We are branching out to all of Iowa!

## National History Day Contest in Cedar Falls

By David Nation

IASSAR member David Nation volunteered to be a judge for the 50<sup>th</sup> annual National History Day contest. This year's theme is Turning Points in History. He volunteered along with about a dozen individuals in the Sullivan Brothers District contest in Cedar Falls. The top three winners in each category in the districts go on to the state competition later this year in Des Moines. The annual competition is meant to help students think about a topic from an aspect of local, regional, national, or world history.

Mr. Nation and two other volunteers were assigned to evaluate projects by middle school students that involved creating a website or paper representing a turning point in history. The websites evaluated were "The Radium Girls Fight Back and Shine: A Turning Point for Workplace Safety," "Achoo! How the Spanish Flu Changed the Tide of Public Health," and "Hart-Parr Tractors: Turning the Soil and Cultivating Change in Agriculture Through Mechanization." The paper evaluated was "The Destruction of the Great Library of Alexandria."

The materials could be reviewed ahead of time and the student or students involved with each project were interviewed by the team for a fixed amount of time. The team was expected to ask the same or similar questions for each student. Evaluations were done for each project and they were put in rank order. Since there were fewer than three entries in each of the categories the team evaluated, they all were eligible to advance to the state level so a second round of evaluations was not necessary.

## How Lucky Can You Get?

By Randy Lyon

On a November afternoon in 2003, Dennis Geraghty, a former English teacher and coach in Dubuque, Iowa, who later coached for years in Western Dubuque Community School District, headed to the high school's gym. He was scheduled to work with Hempstead basketball player Drew Lewis. The two were midway through an individual coaching session recalled Lewis, when Geraghty suffered a heart attack. When Geraghty collapsed, Drew immediately suspected a heart attack. His own father survived two heart attacks in the past two years; he knew the signs.

Thanks to the quick actions of Drew, who provided life-saving aid along with Hempstead head boys' basketball coach Damon Rogers and assistant coach Tyler Schaul, Geraghty survived the incident but spent a lot of time recovering. While I interviewed Geraghty, the coach admitted, "The doctors in the hospital agreed that each of these three people were equally responsible for saving my life." Geraghty found out later that Drew immediately began life-saving techniques. Damon and Tyler heard the yells and came quickly. They also called for emergency help.



I provided three SAR Life Saving Medals and Certificates to the activities director, and the school district will present them at an awards program in the spring before graduation. I look forward to attending!



Left to right: Drew Lewis, Dennis Geraghty, Damon Rogers, and Tyler Schaul (photo courtesy of the *Telegraph Herald*)

## Ken Gillpatrick Celebration of Life in Waterloo

By Mike Rowley

On the day before Easter, several members of the Iowa SAR Color Guard were honored to be a part of the celebration of life of fellow Iowa SAR compatriot Kenneth W. Gillpatrick.

Any attempt by me to summarize the relationships this man cultivated in his nearly 102 years would be inadequate.

One thing he was known for was the passing out of \$2 bills. Of course, this gift also came with a story of the Founding Fathers and American history.

When I got home, I finally had time to open the pamphlet of this day and read of Ken's life. Included in each handout was also a crisp \$2 bill.

As I thought of a fitting way to pay tribute to what I had just learned of this interesting man, I decided that the \$2 would go to paying the postage to send in the VA stone application of a War of 1812 veteran (John Felcher Sr.) who lies in an unmarked grave in Nashua, Iowa.

Even after life our compatriot Ken has made it possible to preserve and share history with many he was yet to meet. I think he might like that.





*Color Guard members Larry Hoelscher, Mike Rowley, and David Nation honor WWII Veteran Ken Gillpatrick with an SAR member grave marker*

## **Celebrating the Life of an Iowa Hero**

By Larry Hoelscher and Randy Lyon



SCHLAMP, Raymond. (LeRoy, WI, Jan. 3, 1916–Dornot, France, Sept. 8, 1944) In 1941 at the age of 28, Private First Class Raymond Schlamp, by then a resident of Dubuque, was assigned to an infantry regiment in General George Patton's Third Army. His unit came under heavy German fire while attempting to cross the Moselle River in an area known as Horseshoe Woods near Dornot, France. It was reported that his fellow soldiers hid his body on the riverbank. When a medical unit returned the following morning, Raymond's body could not be found. After several attempts over several years to find his body, Raymond's name was recorded on the Walls of the Missing at Epinal American Cemetery in Dinoze, France. He was declared "unrecoverable."

In 2021, the Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency was carrying out ongoing research into missing soldiers listed in combat in and around Dornot when an unidentified body was found in the Lorraine American Cemetery in Lemey, France. Using anthropological, genomic, and dental analysis, the remains were identified





as Raymond's. His family members were briefed on the findings prior to a public news release. In France, a rosette will be placed next to his name on the Walls of the Missing to indicate that he was found.

A Celebration of Life was held on April 6<sup>th</sup>, 2024, at the Lawrence Community Center in Anamosa, Iowa. A gathering of approximately 300 family members, friends of the family, and community members witnessed military honors accorded by the United States Army. An honor guard was presented by members of the Anamosa American Legion, the Iowa SAR, and a dozen units of the American Legion from around the Midwest.

His remains were later buried that day in a private ceremony at Linwood Cemetery. (2)

Sources:

1. "Remains of Dubuque WWII Vet Recovered Decades After Death," *Telegraph Herald*
2. Obituaries "Raymond U. Schlamp" *Cedar Rapids Gazette*, March 19, 2024

## Presentation to King Eagle Scout Contest Winner

By David Nation



Megan Graves, a senior at Linn-Mar High School in Marion, received state first place honors of the Arthur M. and Berdena King Eagle Scout Contest by IASSAR member David Nation. The award consisted of a \$500 check and a trophy depicting an Eagle.

Among her other accomplishments, Megan's application cited her Scout National Youth Leadership training, mentoring other scouts, competing in archer tournaments at the local, state, and national levels, the Iowa Volunteer Wildlife Monitoring Program, Editor-in-Chief of her high school yearbook, and participation in the Iron Lions team with the FIRST Robotics Challenge. She has a Construction Safety and Health Certification, is certified to administer CPR, has an Amateur Radio Technician License, is a Level I Archery Coach in USA Archery, and completed the U.S. Congressional Award Bronze Certificate.

Megan also submitted an essay entitled "The Musket Legacy" describing how the musket was the primary weapon used in the American Revolutionary War on both sides and how it led to victory.

After the award presentation, Megan received two other awards. She received recognition for completing her Ranger award, which is through the Venturing Scouts BSA program. She had to complete eight core outdoor focus areas, four elective areas, and a conservation project. Her electives included Ecology, Shooting Sports, First Aid, and Plants and her conservation project led the establishment and growing season of two Monarch tents. She also received the Jacob Giles Memorial Scholarship in memory of a previous Venture Crew 2000 member.

## Installation of Two Gravestones in Boone

By Mike Rowley



Steve Holmes of the Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War (SUVCW) and Mike Rowley of the SUVCW, Iowa SAR, and Iowa War of 1812 saw to the research, documentation, submission of applications, receiving of delivery, and installment of VA gravestones for two Civil War soldiers at Linwood Park Cemetery in Boone, Iowa, on April 10<sup>th</sup>, 2024.

## Installation of Gravestone in Monticello

By Mike Rowley

On April 10<sup>th</sup>, 2024, a new VA stone for a Civil War veteran was hauled 135 miles from Clive, Iowa, to Monticello, Iowa. SAR members were met by Vietnam veteran Steve Hanken (photo at right), a Monticello resident who for years has helped research and find War of 1812 veterans buried in Iowa. Now 101 years after the death of Andrew Cassady, his final resting place is marked in part due to your Iowa SAR membership and generosity.



## DAR Open Prairie Chapter Honors Sherrif Warren Wethington in Tipton

By Randy Lyon



April 13<sup>th</sup>, 2024, was a joyous occasion in Tipton, Iowa. The Open Prairie Chapter of the National Society of the Daughters of the American Revolution was holding its America 250<sup>th</sup> Celebration by honoring one of the county's finest: Sherrif Warren Wethington.

In 1778, Benjamin Wetherington signed the Oath of Fidelity in Charles County, Maryland. As part of the oath, he pledged to "the utmost of my power support, maintain, and defend the Freedom and Independence thereof and the Government as now established against all open enemies and secret and traitorous conspiracies."



Warren, at last count, has 14 ancestors who fought in the American Revolution. On April 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2007, he took office as Cedar County Sheriff through a unanimous vote of the Cedar County Supervisors, thus perpetuating the oath taken by his ancestor.

In the program, it was stated that he had fought against political corruption, rogue law enforcement officers, and commercial companies who had worked to trample upon the rights of his constituents. Larry and I were asked by the DAR Regent to attend this program and we were very honored. The Distinguished Citizen Medal was given by the Open Prairie Chapter of NSDAR for the first time locally in their 84-year history.



*Left to right: Regent Melinda Beekman, Honorary State Regent Harris, Randy Lyon, Sheriff Warren Wethington, and Larry Hoelscher*

## **Enrolling Bentley Veterans in the Purple Heart Hall of Honor**

By Gary Everding

I have sent a request to a website administrator to see if we can jointly engage the talents of over 100 members for researching a list of 51 Bentley's killed in WWII. The goal would be three fold:

1. To identify the personal information of each individual (date of birth, place of birth, date of death, and place of death).
2. To determine the location of the body, such as buried at the Normandy American Cemetery, buried at sea, or if the remains were brought back to the U.S.
3. To determine whether they are enrolled in the Purple Heart Hall of Honor and if not, get them enrolled.

Those who learn the process will hopefully go on to recognize others from their families and communities. Armed with the knowledge they have gained from the process, the "find one more" message of involvement can be promoted.

The Facebook administrator is the founder of The Bentley Family Genealogy and Research group, with members numbering over 130. The Bentley name is my Patriot ancestor's surname (Tillinghast Bentley). The people in this group pose questions and work to solve queries of fellow members.

My ultimate goal is to recognize Iowans Susan Josephine Pitcher from Lake City and Carsten Linnevold Ode for the POW medal. Both were Japanese POWs at Los Banos in the Philippine Islands for over 3 years. The granting of these medals posthumously will undoubtedly have to go through a congressional office.

# Flag Certificate Presentations

By Randy Lyon



James Hannah and I met previously because his wife and I taught at the same school. It took him a minute to recognize me given my uniform and he was certainly pleased about receiving the flag certificate.



Andrew Lugin and his wife proudly fly their flag every day and enjoy being on a street where several landowners follow the same habit.



Linda L. Burgess and her husband are proud fliers of the American flag—and not just on patriotic days, she noted.



David Rokusek has proven as elusive as the “Dubuque bear,” which is spotted annually at this time of year but then disappears. Leaving the certificate in his storm door seemed the only plan.



Roger was mowing the lawn, but didn't seem at all displeased to be interrupted by his son and wife when I arrived. A veteran himself, Roger really was pleased by the flag certificate. After the break, he announced that it seemed a good time to grab a beer.



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*Let us remember our obligation to our forefathers, who gave us our Constitution,  
The Bill of Rights, an independent Supreme Court, and a nation of free men.*