

# VIRGIN VALLEY DAR NEWSLETTER

## *Regents Message*

### ***Literacy is the Language of Liberty***



Last month's newsletter highlighted historic preservation as one of the three pillars that DAR is founded on. This month with students returning to school, I feel it is appropriate to present education as the next pillar of DAR. Some of the ways the National Society promotes education is through DAR schools, Community Classroom, grants to local teachers and Literacy Promotion.

Most understand literacy to mean the ability to read and write, it also includes the ability to comprehend information, and express yourself verbally or through the written word. In addition, basic mathematics and being able to understand signs and symbols of your culture are relevant when it comes to literacy. Even today, people are still oppressed, exploited and remain in poverty due to illiteracy.

As of June 2024, Nevada has the sixth lowest literacy rate in the United States, with 74.7% of its adult population having basic or below basic literacy skills. This means that Nevada ranks 45th out of 50 states in the country for adult literacy. Additionally, only 44% of elementary school kids in Nevada are reading at grade level, and that number drops to 41% in Clark County.

The Virgin Valley DAR is working on forming a Literacy Promotion Committee in an effort to improve the literacy statistics in Mesquite, Clark County and Nevada.

Literacy specifically increases job opportunities and access to further educational opportunities. Literacy means freedom.

*Check Out Our Website*

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

## Chapter Officers

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## *Reminder*

*September 17-23 is  
Constitution Week and  
Virgin Valley DAR is hosting  
Bells across America.*

*Tuesday Sept. 17th at  
Veteran's Memorial Park  
starting at 12:15*

*Attorney and Author  
Mr. Jeffery McKenna will be  
our Guest Speaker*

*Bell Ringing at 1:00*

*Please bring a chair as  
seating is limited*



# *President Generals Message*

## *Pamela Rouse Wright*



Dear Daughters,

We are excited to **Celebrate Stars and Stripes Forever!** with you as we kick off the third year of the Wright Administration! What an honor it has been to serve together with you as we advance historic preservation, education, and patriotism in the runup to our nation's 250th anniversary.

This month, we hope all Daughters will take time to think about the upcoming year and ways to personally engage with the DAR's mission areas. Each member brings unique life experiences to the organization and whether it's simply recommending a deserving individual in your community for an award or working with the National Park Service, there's a place for everyone. Please communicate your areas of passion to your Chapter Regent to see if there are areas of need for the upcoming DAR year. The DAR committee webpages also offer a treasure trove of information and ideas to get started.

Although many chapters won't meet until September, August is a busy month for the National Society! As we detailed in last month's message, August marks the bicentennial of Marquis de Lafayette's Farewell Tour, which we will be commemorating together this year. Please check the DAR Franco-American Memorial Committee on the DAR website for resources and upcoming opportunities. Separately, the online application portal opens for 2024-2025 DAR Historic Preservation Grant applications on August 1st, and will remain open through October 31, 2024. These grants provide an amazing opportunity to augment financial support for local 501(c)(3) organizations engaged in historic preservation projects! Please see the DAR committee pages for other important fall deadlines.

We are also excited this fall as we anticipate celebrating the 100th anniversary of the Kate Duncan Smith (KDS) DAR School. This milestone celebration underscores DAR's legacy, impact, and enduring commitment to education as one of the three pillars of our organization's mission. As our nation's children prepare for the school year, please consider how your chapter might support education for all ages. The DAR Schools, American Indians, Community Classroom, and Literacy Promotion committees provide many avenues and ideas for tangible contributions that make a difference in the field of education.

Finally, as we reconnect before the fall, I encourage you to reach out to new chapter members who have joined during the summer months to get to welcome them and also to check in with those members you have not heard from recently. I am excited to **Rejoice in Our DAR Ties of Service and Friendship!** as we advance historic preservation, education, and patriotism for the 2024-2025 year.

Pamela Rouse Wright  
President General



# Agent 355

If you are a fan of spy stories and happen to be on Long Island, you could visit the regional center of spy activity during the American Revolution. Setauket, New York was an agricultural community founded in 1655 and home to several of America's first spy ring.



In August 1776, after the battle of Long Island, a.k.a. the battle of Brooklyn, the Continental Army lost control of lower New York. Now occupying Manhattan and Long Island the British troops held a military advantage as Manhattan became a key naval base for England. In December 1776 Nathan Hale was captured and hanged as a rebel spy. Although there is no official record, he is remembered for saying, "I only regret that I have but one life to give for my country". Being a spy has always been a dangerous profession and in the late 1700s it was no exception. What was different about early espionage was that it was singular, meaning that basically a lone person would gather and deliver information from point A to point B. The death of Nathan Hale is where this story begins.

After losing control of Manhattan and Long Island, General Washington was in desperate need of British intel. In 1778 Major Benjamin Talmage, a former Yale classmate of Nathan Hale, was named chief of intelligence by General Washington. Talmage was from the small community of Setauket on the north shore of Long Island, where he recruited his childhood friends Abraham Woodhull, Caleb Brewster and Austin Rowe to form America's first spy Ring. Other members of this secret network included Mrs. Anna Strong, a local patriot whose husband was captured and being held by the British, and a New York City businessman named Robert Townsend.

Woodhull a farmer had a sister that lived in Manhattan and was able to maneuver into and around the city of New York without causing suspicion from British troops. There he would gather information from Townsend, return to Setauket and would leave the information at drop points in coves along the Long Island Sound. Brewster, a whaler, would retrieve the intel and sail across the sound to Connecticut, where the information was delivered to Talmage and then on to George Washington. Legend has it, that once there was a message from Woodhull, Anna Strong would hang a black petticoat on a clothesline and then hang 1-6 handkerchiefs to signal to Brewster as to which cove he would find the message.

## Agent 355 continued



Woodhall's codename was Samuel Culper, short for Culpeper which was the name of a town that a young George Washington surveyed in his youth. When Townsend was brought into the group, he was given the alias Culper Jr. The Culper spy ring had a book of approximately 763 numbers, all of which represented relevant words. Many of these numbers represented people and places. For example, 711 was code for Washington, while 721 was code for Talmage. Agent 355 is believed to mean "lady", and even today, historians do not agree upon who she was. Some speculate it was Anna Strong while others believe it was a female slave working in a house of a British Officer. In addition to coding words, the spy network also used advanced chemistry to develop invisible ink that could only be seen by applying a reagent.

In 1779, the Culper spy ring was instrumental in the outing of Benedict Arnold. After marrying a loyalist and being passed over for a promotion, Arnold's intentions were to surrender Westpoint to the British and join the Redcoats. Thanks to the Culper spies, even though Arnold got away West Point was not lost. Then in 1780 the British planned to destroy the continental currency by flooding the economy with counterfeit money. This scheme was uncovered by Townsend who delivered the plans through the spy ring in time for Congress to thwart the British objectives.

This Network was so secretive that it was not even known about until the 1930s (150 years later) and now after almost 250 years, experts still have not completely put all the pieces of this puzzle together. There is no doubt that the men and women of the Culper spy ring had a tremendous influence on America winning her independence. After the war ended, a British general was quoted saying "Washington did not beat us militarily, he simply out spied us".



**NATIONAL**



**DEFENDER**

*Louise Leigh, Patriot: Constitution Day "Every American comes with a set of guarantees by the United States Constitution," Louise Leigh*

*Louise Leigh was sponsored in 2005 by Martin Severance Chapter in Pasadena, CA, for the DAR's highest honor, the Medal of Honor. She was presented this medal by then-State Regent Carol Belcher at CSSDAR State Headquarters in Glendora on 18 February 2006. This story is a reminder to us all of what one woman can achieve with faith, perseverance, and a profound love of the Constitution. Louise Leigh was 6 years old when the 19th Amendment to the Constitution was ratified. Over the course of time she would attend college, marry, be widowed, work as a medical technician, and become involved in the California Republican Party. A woman of modest means but with great love for her country, she served on County Commissions, State Boards, and was a delegate to the California Republican Party's convention the year Pete Wilson was elected Governor of California. Yet, she felt her life's work was not complete. In the mid-1990s she began attending a course on the Constitution given by the National Center for Constitutional Studies. She was stunned by how little she actually knew. Concerned that the shift away from studying it in classrooms across the country would mean students would know even less than she did, she founded Constitution Day, Inc. in 1997, as a nonpartisan, non-profit organization. It had three goals:*

To read more from the national defender scan this QR code



## Dates of Note

*September 1620: The Mayflower sets sail from Plymouth, Devon, carrying the Pilgrim Fathers to America*

*September 9, 1776: The Continental Congress changes the name of the American nation from the United Colonies to the United States*

*September 22, 1862: President Abraham Lincoln issues a preliminary Emancipation Proclamation, threatening to free enslaved people in states that don't return to the Union by January 1, 1863*

*September 1887: America observes its first Labor Day Weekend*

*September 11, 2001: Nineteen al Qaeda terrorists hijack four planes and carry out a series of suicide attacks, killing nearly 3,000 people*

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and also receive the Daughters Newsletter**


## **FALL CALENDAR**

- September 17th – Bells Across America
- September 18th – Mr. Jeff McKenna presentation at City Hall 5pm
- September 20th – Liberty Bus Tour @ Beaver Dam Elementary School  
students starting at 9am, DAR members 12 noon
- September 21st – Flag Retirement Ceremony 9-10:30 at the  
Mesquite Veterans Ctr Followed by  
**DAR Regular Meeting at 10:30 am**
- October 10th – DAR day of Service
- October 12th – **DAR Regular Meeting 10 am**
- October 16th – Vets Chat at Mesa Valley Estates 10:30am
- October 18th - Veteran's Day Card Making 11am
- October 26th – Sun City Garage Sale
- November 2nd – **DAR Regular Meeting 10 am**
- November 6th – 10 am Wreath Laying at Veteran's Memorial Park  
10:30 am Wreath Laying at Mesquite City Cemetery
- November 9th – 5th Annual Veterans Fundraising Party  
“A Country Western Jamboree”
- November – No Vets Chat
- December 14th – **DAR Regular Meeting 10 am**

**\*\*Remember to log your Service to America hours**

<http://services.dar.org/members/committees/ServiceToAmerica/>





**COME JOIN THE VIRGIN VALLEY  
CHAPTER**  
*DAUGHTERS OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION*  
**BELLS ACROSS AMERICA**

**TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 17, 2024**

VETERANS MEMORIAL PARK  
501 HILLSIDE DR, MESQUITE, NV

**SHORT PROGRAM BEGINNING AT 12:15 P.M.**

GUEST SPEAKER: JEFFREY J MCKENNA, HISTORIAN  
AUTHOR OF SAVING DR. WARREN... "A TRUE PATRIOT"



**BELL RINGING AT 1:00 P.M.**

IN COMMEMORATION OF THE SIGNING OF THE US  
CONSTITUTION, BELLS WILL RING OUT ALL ACROSS  
AMERICA AT 4:00 P.M. (EDT). IT WAS AT THIS TIME THAT  
THE SIGNERS OF THE CONSTITUTION USED A QUILL PEN  
AND INK TO SIGN THIS FAMOUS DOCUMENT.

BELLS WILL BE AVAILABLE FOR A DONATION OR BRING  
YOUR OWN. BRING A LAWN CHAIR IN WHICH TO SIT.



August 2024



**THE DAUGHTERS OF THE  
AMERICAN REVOLUTION,  
VIRGIN VALLEY CHAPTER  
&  
THE MESQUITE POKER BOYS  
PRESENT**

★ *5th Annual Veterans Party* ★  
**“A COUNTRY WESTERN JAMBOREE”**



**A tribute to the Veterans of Mesquite to raise  
funds for the Mesquite Veterans Center.**

**Featuring live country music, buffet,  
cash bar, silent auction & more!**

**Tickets \$25.00 per person**

**Saturday, November 9, 2024  
2:00pm - 5:30pm  
Virgin River Event Tent  
100. E Pioneer Blvd**

**Tickets available at the  
Mesquite Fine Arts Center**

**Western Attire Encouraged**



**MESQUITE GAMING**  
*Casino* *Virgin River*