

SAR Meeting Minutes, April 11, 2026

Meeting was called to order at 10:00 AM by President Patrick Taylor, with welcoming comments.

Our Sergeant of Arms, Chuck Opferman, indicated that there were 68 in attendance.

The Invocation was led by Past President Jerry Byers, the Pledge of Allegiance by John Moore, and the SAR Pledge was led by Vice President, Don Hansen.

The March 2026 meeting minutes submitted by Secretary Rick Smith were approved as written and sent out.

Treasurer Lee Duff reported our Chapter balance was \$6,183.87 and our membership is 113, with 2 new applicants.

Lee also shared our new tablecloth and our roster which lists our members with their Patriots.



Michael Luttman was inducted into the Chapter.



Pat and Michael

This month's presenter was Villager Jack Ciotti. Although teaching was Mr. Ciotti's second career, retiring early from Verizon, it was always his first love. He has taught history, reading, drama, and dance to middle-school students in New York and Florida. He has also presented hands-on educational programs for historical societies, schools, and museums, appeared in several movies including "The Patriot " and "Gettysburg ", and he wrote and appeared in award-winning educational videos on both the Civil War and the American Revolution.

Jack was dressed as a British soldier during the Revolutionary War. Nicknamed "Redcoats", British soldiers wore distinctive, red heavy wool coats, white breeches or trousers, and black felt tricorne hats. The uniform included white waistcoats or vests, linen shirts that came down to the knees, long black gaiters for leg protection, and a white cross-belt to support a cartridge box. The long shirts also served as underwear and night shirts. Did you notice the large, metal buttons around the coat cuffs? The king mandated those buttons when he noticed his soldiers wiping their noses on their cuffs! Soldiers would also carry a furry backpack made from a goat, which was able to repel water. A soldier's pay was eight pence per day, below what a farm worker would receive.

British soldiers carried a "Brown Bess" muzzle-loading, flintlock, smooth bore musket; to which a bayonet could be affixed. Jack went on to describe the medical care a soldier would receive at that time, which was often horrific. A British soldier's uniform had two white straps that crossed in front making a good target! This gave rise to the saying: "Cross my heart and hope to die." If a soldier was going to be shot, they preferred to be shot in the heart and die quickly, rather than be shot in other areas and suffer a slow, lingering death due to infection and poor medical care.



Jack Ciotti



Pat and Jack

Announcements:

- 1. This month's Split-the Pot drawing was \$108, with the proceeds going to our Education Awards for local students.**
- 2. Next month, our chapter is pleased to host Henry Stish, the president of The Villages Genealogy Society and will discuss the AI tools for Genealogy Research.**
- 3. The Chapter will again be participating in the Memorial Day Flag ceremony at Florida National Cemetery in Bushnell, information forthcoming.**
- 4. The SAR Florida Patriot Magazine will no longer be mailed out, instead it will be available online at the following link: [FloridaPatriot-2026-Spring](#).**
- 5. Florida Sons of Liberty Brigade will be commemorating the nations 250th anniversary on June 26th at the Hardee Agri-Civic Center in Wauchula, FL, beginning at 5 PM.**
- 6. WWII Victory Club meets at the Eisenhower Center at 9:30 am on the 4th Wednesday of each month.**
- 7. Early American History club meets the fourth Thursday of the month at Bridgeport Recreation Center on Buena Vista Blvd. across the street from the Arnold Palmer Country Club and Golf Course. Doors open at 1:00 P.M.> The program begins at 1:30 P.M. and ends at about 3:00 P.M. There is a Question-and-Answer period after the presentation.**

UPCOMING PROGRAMS:

MAY - Bill Lau will present on "Aaron Burr."

- 8. DAR reminded of the upcoming casino night fund raiser at Eisenhower Recreation on April 19th from 1 to 3.**

Don Hansen led the SAR Recessional and Jerry Byers gave the Benediction.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:19.

Rick Smith

Secretary