

Minutes of Meeting 19 September 2026

M. Graham Clark Chapter of the SAR

The meeting was called to order by President Hank Hammons at 9:00 a.m. in the Memorial Room of American Legion Post 202.

Led by Commander William “Billie” Voight, the Color Guard posted the colors.

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Scott Westoff. The Pledge to the SAR was led by COM Kevin Summers. COM Wayne Merrill offered the opening prayer.

Attending in uniform were COM Voight, COM Rob Ingram. COM Mitchell Moore, COM John Coutts, and COM Randy Palmer. A total of 26 members and guests were present. (See appended list).

At 9:05, after a meal blessing offered by COM Wayne Merrill, President Hammons announced a break for breakfast served in the ballroom by the ladies’ auxiliary of the DAR. The menu consisted of scrambled eggs, sausage, bacon, biscuits and gravy, blueberry coffee cake, and beverages for \$13, paid individually by members.

President Hammons reconvened the meeting at 9:42 a.m. The pledge of allegiance, pledge to the SAR, and a prayer were offered by members.

The program for the day was a Power-Point presentation by COM J. Y. Miller on “General Lafayette and the Liberty Tree Project”

The National Society of the Sons of the American Revolution (NSSAR) launched the 250th SAR Liberty Tree Program to plant 250 living tribute trees nationwide in honor of the United States 250th birthday..

Accordingly, spearheaded by COM Voight, the M. Graham Clark Chapter of the SAR arranged for the planting of a disease-resistant Princeton Elm at Fayette, Missouri’s City park on May 25, 2026. Our color guard and other members of the Chapter attended the ceremony and COM J. Y. Miller spoke at the ceremony.

Fayette, Missouri was, of course, one of many places in the United States named in honor of the Marquis de Lafayette.

COM J.Y Miller gave a brief presentation on General Lafayette, whose full name was Marie-Joseph Paul Yves Roch Gilbert du Motier, Marquis de La Fayette.

A wealthy aristocrat in France, his father died when he was 2 years’ old. Lafayette was so enthusiastic about the promise of the American Revolution that he defied the King of France’s admonition and set sail to help the Americans. In 1777 he personally purchased a ship and 5,000 muskets and other supplies.

Awarded the rank of major general at the age of 19, La Fayette fought with the Continental Army at the Battle of Brandywine where he was wounded but managed to organize an orderly retreat and served with distinction in the Battle of Rhode Island.

In 1781, troops under his command in Virginia blocked the British Army led by Lord Cornwallis until other American and French forces could position themselves for the decisive siege of Yorktown.

Following the American Revolutionary War, La Fayette returned to France and played a significant role in the French Revolution, from writing the “Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen”, with Thomas Jefferson's assistance, to being appointed commander-in-chief of France's National Guard. He was a fervent opponent of slavery.

Lafayette returned to America in 1824 and toured all 24 states to a hero's welcome. St. Louis hosted a large party for him. Lafayette returned to France 13 months later with soil from Bunker Hill as he wanted to be buried on American soil. Lafayette died on May 20, 1834, and is buried in Paris, under soil from Bunker Hill.

When General Pershing and American Forces landed in France in 1917 to help defeat the Germans in World War I, one of Pershing's officers at Lafayette's gravesite famously said, “Lafayette, we are here.”

On Aug. 7, 2002, Congress made Lafayette an honorary citizen of the United States, an honor afforded to only eight individuals, including Winston Churchill. Lafayette and Mother Teresa were made honorary citizens directly by an act of Congress.

Guests were introduced and included Ruanne Stamps, Ruth Miller, Linda Coutts, Waylene Hiles, and Angela Westoff.

Health concerns: COM Terrill Jones is recovering from surgery. COM Bob Bartlett has been under the weather. COM Charles Riley was present at the meeting after a summer of recovering from a health matter.

Patriots won significant victories in the Carolina's. Gen. Washington was forced to retreat from New York, which then suffered a terrible fire.

On July 4, 2026, in recognition of the 250th anniversary of the signing of the Declaration of Independence, the American Legion opened its doors to patriotic groups and their members to joined together to celebrate. The Chapter participated with display tables and COM J. Y. Miller read an excerpt from Washington's farewell address.

President Hammons reminded members to follow parliamentary procedure by raising their hand to be recognized by the president before they speak and, also, state their name for the record and to assist the secretary in preparing the record.

Treasurer Paul Whatley reported on funds in the bank and money market account. It is time to pay dues. COM Hiles moved the report be approved. COM Coutts seconded. Motion carried.

The minutes were posted on the webpage. No corrections were suggested by members. COM J. Y. Miller moved the minutes be approved. COM Whatley seconded. Motion carried.

Genealogist COM John Coutts updated membership on the progress of several applications and supplements. COM Moore moved the report be approved. COM Ingram seconded. Motion carried.

Color Guard Commander William Voight reported on recent events including the planting of a Liberty Tree (a native elm tree) in Fayette, MO on May 23, 2026 at 10:00 a.m. and an event in Moberly on June 26, and on May 25, 2026 the CoMo Gold Star Memorial Day Parade at 10:00 a.m. immediately after the wreath-laying ceremony at the Boone County Courthouse. COM Ingram participated in the Color Guard at the opening ceremonies of the Missouri State Fair in Sedalia on August 13.

Four Color Guard members and COM Nicholas Barber participated in a history event at the Boone County library on August 9. On August 29, COM Voight attended a Chartering Ceremony in Linn Creek, MO for a new SAR chapter.

On August 30 COM Voight participated in a Color Guard at Busch Stadium and Ballpark Village in recognition of the Battle of Fort San Carlos. <https://mossar.org/battle-of-fort-san-carlos/>

The Spirit of St. Louis chapter of the SAR has purchased a cannon and will be training members interested in becoming qualified to operate it.

On October 17 at Ft. Leonard Wood there is a musket training program for members of Color Guards.

On October 10, the local chapter of the DAR has invited members of the Color Guard to attend their monthly meeting in uniform and give presentations about the uniforms.

Standard Bearer COM Voight announced the Color Guard will have a quarterly newsletter available on the Chapter website or to those who request it be emailed to them. It contains detailed reports on the Color Guard and many pictures.

COM Voight discussed the need for another set of flags and poles so that the ones kept at the American Legion stay clean. He also asked members to consider whether they would like to buy flag spreaders for the flags on display. A non-binding straw vote was taken and a majority of the members liked the idea of flag spreaders. COM Moore moved for approval of the Color Guard report. COM Randy Palmer seconded. Motion carried.

COM Moore moved the Chapter send a check for \$100 to the organizers of the Gold Star Memorial Day Parade who so graciously facilitated our participation this year. We will want to be supportive in the future as well. COM Coutts seconded. Motion carried.

COM Moore gave a “250 years ago today” update on his patriot ancestor, Jeremiah Greenmen, who served from 1775-1783 and kept a daily war journal.

On this week in 1776, Greenman was a POW on a ship in New York harbor awaiting release after 9 months as a POW, after the failed attack to take Quebec.

The journal describes cannonades from ships and the shores of New York and New Jersey and on September 20, 1776 great fires in New York; a couple of prisoners escaping; and daily promises of their imminent release, which finally happened the next week.

Members were reminded that they need to complete the Youth Protection Training, which takes about 30 minutes to complete. A link to this training is on the Chapter website. Those completing it should e-mail the completion certificate to COM Randy Palmer.

The 50-50 drawing of \$13 was won by COM Ingram.

The next meeting will feature a presentation by Retired Colonel John Clark on his experiences as a pilot and a POW during the Vietnam War. COM Scott Yost is preparing a program on the Whiskey Rebellion. COM J. Y. Miller is working on a program on Christmas symbols during the time of the Revolution and since. COM Charlie Lee and COM Hank Hmmons will present programs in April and May. COM Drayton Shepherd is preparing a program on his Southeast Asian experiences as a C-130 pilot.

The next meeting of the M. Graham Clark Chapter of the SAR will be **October 17, 2026 at 9:00 a.m.** at the American Legion Post 202 located at 3669 Legion Lane, Columbia, MO 65201: <http://mgcsar.org/legion.html>

The SAR recessional was led by COM Fred Bianco. The closing prayer was then offered by COM Merrill.

Meeting adjourned by President Hammons at 11:15 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Mitchell Moore, Secretary

Bianco, Fred	
Coutts, John & Linda	
Fowler, Gary	
Hammons, Hank & Val	
Hiles, Alan & Waylene	
Inghram, Rob	
Koppennal, J.	
Lee, Charlie	
Lucas, Luke	
Merrill, Wayne	
Miller, J. Y.	
Miller, Ray & Ruth	
Moore, Mitchell	
Palmer, Randy	
Riley, Charles	
Stamps, Terrell & Ruanne	
Summers, Kevin	NO MEAL
Voight, Billy	
Westhoff, Scott & Angela	
Whatley, Paul	