

*National Society
Sons of the American Revolution*



*Originally titled Yankee Doodle, later known as The Spirit of '76
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COLOR GUARD HANDBOOK

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INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this handbook is to provide general information about Color Guards, and especially for the Color Guard of the National Society, Sons of the American Revolution. Much of the information in this handbook was published in various issues of *The SAR Guardsman* magazine, beginning in the year 2000. Some material has been obtained from the *National Society SAR Handbook*, the *National Society SAR History, Volume III (1983-2000)*. Some material has been borrowed from Color Guard handbooks prepared by various state societies and chapters across the country.

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The committee also wishes to acknowledge Mark C. Anthony of the South Carolina SAR for reviewing old issues of *The SAR Guardsman* and finding other sources of information that allowed him to compile the baseline draft of the *National Society SAR Color Guard Handbook*.

HISTORY OF THE COLOR GUARD

The Color Guard of the 21st century is primarily ceremonial in terms of purpose and duty. However, the origins of the Color Guard are based in military practicality. The following is a concise history of the origin of the Color Guard.

During the 18th and 19th centuries, flags were commonly referred to as “the Colors.” These colors were of primary importance to the military regiment or brigade as the line of battle was formed around the colors of the unit which were placed at the center of the line. These colors were easily seen through the smoke of battle. If the colors advanced, the line would advance. If the colors retired, the line would retire. As battles would progress and casualties mounted, the line would contract to the colors. In effect, the colors would serve as a rallying point if the line was broken or the men became dispersed. Thus, success in battle was often dependent on the handling of the colors.

The importance of the colors was so significant that a ceremony was performed before battle called “The Trooping of the Colors.” The men of the regiment or brigade were assembled on the parade ground in camp and the colors were paraded before them. This way, each man would see and thus be certain of *his* colors before taking the field of battle.

Likewise, while there could be many diverse objectives in a battle, one of the most important was capturing of the colors of the enemy unit. This would deprive the enemy of their primary means of control and rallying point during the battle. To prevent this, regiments and brigades would select the most valiant men to protect the colors and color bearer. These men comprised the “Color’s Guard,” a posting of great honor and source of pride. As in years past, this posting continues to be a position of honor.

WHAT IS THE NATIONAL SAR COLOR GUARD?

The National SAR Color Guard is made up of those Compatriots who participate in SAR meetings and events properly uniformed as either Continental Soldiers or Militiamen or attired as Revolution-era clergymen.

These men seek to visibly promote the stated objectives of the SAR which are declared to be Historical, Patriotic and Educational. Therefore, it is important that a Revolutionary War uniformed Color Guard fielded by the SAR to be historically correct to not compromise these objectives.

Every time an SAR Color Guard makes a public appearance, the members are fulfilling all three objectives. In fact, the Color Guard is one of the most visible and effective public relations tools available to the SAR.

A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE NATIONAL SAR COLOR GUARD

The National SAR Color Guard was first formed in 1989 during the term of President General James R. Westlake (GA) as the National Society Color Guard Committee under the chairmanship of Compatriots David Judson Gray and Donald Norman Moran. This first National Color Guard consisted of six compatriots representing five state societies. The initial purposes of the Color Guard were:

- To provide guidance to and coordination of the activities of the various State Society and Chapter Color Guards at National Congresses and Trustee meetings, and
- To provide assistance to the various State Societies and local Chapters in establishing their own Color Guards.

The National Color Guard grew to 32 members representing fourteen state societies by 2000 and now regularly has over 50 men representing over twenty-five state societies participate in the three annual meetings of the National Society SAR.

Today, the National Color Guard is the most visible public face of the Sons of the American Revolution. Color Guardsmen provide an easily identifiable and colorful focal point at parades and memorial events. The variety of uniforms and flags invite children, spectators, and potential members to come forward and ask questions about the American Revolution.

THE NATIONAL SAR COLOR GUARD COMMITTEE

The National SAR Color Guard Committee meets at each Congress and Trustees meeting. The primary order of business at each meeting is to organize the Color Guard for the various events that it must participate in during that meeting.

Other items of business include reporting on events the Color Guard has participated in since the previous meeting as well as discussing upcoming events and various safety, procedural and health issues. In addition to this, the committee elects the Color Guardsman of the Year during the Spring Leadership/Trustees Meeting.

The committee works closely with the National Historic Sites & Celebrations Committee in the determination of the battle commemoration or celebration events that are designated as National Events for earning points toward Color Guard Medals and which take priority in terms of attendance.

Coordination with the Chaplain General occurs in terms of planning the National Memorial Service as well as with the Surgeon General and Medical Committee in terms of safety and health regulations.

It should be noted that the National SAR Color Guard Committee is easily the largest committee of the SAR given that the policy of the committee is that every Color Guardsman is automatically considered a member of the committee. While there is a listing of committee members published by the SAR, it is by no means considered a complete list and is most often a reflection of those compatriots who have attended a meeting on the national level at some point in the year prior to the most recent National Congress. In other words, if a Guardsman's name is not listed, that does not preclude his membership on the committee or ability to attend meetings or events.

COMMAND STRUCTURE OF THE NATIONAL SAR COLOR GUARD

The National Color Guard Commander is the head of the National SAR Color Guard and serves as the Chairman of the National SAR Color Guard Committee. Due to extraordinary circumstances, initially, one Commander served for only one year while another Commander served for ten years. The standard term of service as the National Color Guard Commander was two years until the Color Guard adopted a new policy in 2018 to allow for shorter terms of service. Beginning with the change in command at the 2019 Annual Congress, the term of service for all National Color Guard Command Staff was shortened to one (1) year with the Commander being allowed the option of serving a second year which would in turn require the other staff members to serve that additional year in their post.

The Commander shall be assisted by a Vice Commander and at least one (1) but no more than two (2) Adjutants. The Vice Commander and Adjutants shall serve as Vice Chairmen of the National Color Guard Committee. The Commander, Vice Commander and Adjutant(s) are considered the officers of the National SAR Color Guard.

The Vice Commander shall command the National Color Guard in the absence of the commander. The Adjutants shall take attendance, take committee meeting minutes and perform other such administrative tasks as assigned by the Commander. In the absence of the Commander and Vice Commander, the senior Adjutant will command the Color Guard followed by the junior Adjutant. When no National Color Guard Officer is in attendance, the Host Society State Commander will act as commander at an event.

When the Commander steps down, he shall be succeeded by the Vice Commander and the Adjutant shall become Vice Commander. If the outgoing Commander had named two Adjutants, the senior Adjutant shall become Vice Commander. The new Commander shall then name a new Adjutant or Adjutants. (See section on *Change of Command*.)

In making his selection for new Adjutants, the new Commander should consider geographic diversity. For the good of the SAR and as much as it may be practicable, it is recommended that the command structure of the National Color Guard include men from across the country.

By protocol, the Commander, followed by the Vice Commander and each Adjutant in order of seniority, will have command of any Color Guard participating at any designated National Event (See section on *National Events*) or any event where the President General is in attendance. The Commander, or other ranking national color guard officer shall have the right to defer command to a State Society or local Color Guard Commander, but this is not automatically assumed. In the event command is deferred, the ranking national color guard officer(s) shall march at the head of the color guard along with the acting commander. If command is not deferred, the State Society Commander shall be allowed to march at the head of the color guard with the National Commander or other command staff.

In 2012, three (3) new positions were created. These positions are appointed by the Commander. The term of these positions is at the discretion of the appointee.

- *Quartermaster.* Responsible for maintenance of all National Color Guard equipment. Will also provide a list of all equipment that is no longer serviceable to the Commander so that it may be replaced.
- *Safety Officer.* Responsible for educating all guardsmen on the proper protocols with regards to safety at any event in which the National Color Guard participates. This includes, but is not limited to, inspecting all weapons for proper safety modifications and the ability to require a guardsman to not use unsafe equipment.
- *Artillery Commander.* Responsible for educating and training of all guardsmen on the proper protocols for the use of and firing of artillery at events in which the National Color Guard participates. In addition, when the National Color Guard utilizes artillery weapons, this compatriot will command such firings.

The President General may designate other compatriots as Vice Chairmen of the National Color Guard Committee, but these Vice Chairmen do not serve as Vice Commander or Adjutant, unless so named by the Commander. Vice Chairmen named by the President General serve as Vice Chairmen of the Committee only during the term of the President General who named them as Vice Chairmen, and do not proceed up the ranks to Vice Commander or Commander, unless the Commander has previously designated them as Vice Commander or Adjutant.

THE SAR COLOR GUARDSMAN

The SAR Color Guardsman is the official newsletter of the National SAR Color Guard. Publication began in the mid- 1990s as *The SAR Guardsman* under Editor Don Moran. Issues were produced through approximately 2005. The newsletter was restarted in 2011.

The SAR Color Guardsman is printed and distributed quarterly to every State Society Commander for distribution to the various State Society Color Guards. It is also uploaded to the National Society SAR website and can be found on the Color Guard Committee webpage.

Articles include reporting on various events that the Color Guard has participated in over the previous quarter and items of interest regarding the function of the Color Guard. In addition, announcements of upcoming events and local points of contact are provided.

FORMATION OF A COLOR GUARD UNIT

Minimum Number in a Color Guard Unit. The optimum minimum number of men that form a Color Guard unit consists of four (4) men:

- Two (2) Color Bearers who carry the United States National Flag and the State or SAR Flag;
- Two (2) Musketeers / Riflemen who escort the Color Bearers.

(It is understood that many state and chapter Color Guards do not have Musketeers / Riflemen.)

A Color Guard may consist of a minimum of three (3) members with at least one Musketeer / Rifleman marching to the right of the National Colors. The left side of the National Colors should be covered either by a second Musketeer / Rifleman or another Color Bearer carrying another flag (most often a state flag).

In either situation, the Color Guard Commander will either be the Musketeer / Rifleman guarding the National Colors or the Guardsman carrying the National Colors. As the Color Guard grows, the Commander will march ahead of the National Colors separate from any other rank.

Equipment. Flags, poles, indoor flag stands, and related items are available through varied sources. Color Guard units are encouraged to purchase as much of equipment as possible from local sources. Since events are conducted both indoors and outdoors, the Color Guard should endeavor to purchase flags that can withstand the elements when used at outdoor events such as parades and grave markings.

In addition to indoor flag stands, the Color Guard should purchase or fabricate outdoor spike stands. These ground spike type may be fabricated from local sources using Rebar and pipe lengths of a diameter to allow insertion of the flag staff. When a Color Guard is participating in an outdoor event, they are responsible for bringing outdoor ground spike stands for each flag that is brought.

At formal national events such as Congress, the Leadership Meetings, and the National Memorial Service, the National Color Guard will provide all flags and equipment necessary for the event.

At state and/or chapter sponsored events, the host society or chapter is responsible for providing the National and State flags and the related equipment. For the sake of uniformity, all chapters within a state must purchase flag poles of the same height as those used by the state society. The most common flag pole length is seven (7) feet. While flag poles can be up to nine (9) feet, this length can become too difficult to carry outside in a moderate wind.

Financing the Unit. In general, uniforms and uniform accessories are purchased by the individual Color Guardsman. Funding of the following Color Guard equipment should come from either the chapter or society through an allocation within the annual budget or through donations:

- Flags;
- Flag Poles;
- Flag Stands;
- Parade Banner;
- Medals and other awards to recognize individual service;
- Streamers to be presented for participation in an event. (In general, streamers should only be presented for participation in events that are exceptionally significant, such as the 250th anniversary of a Revolution-era event.)

Continental or Militia Uniform. There are two types of Color Guard units that can be formed based on the type of uniform that the unit primarily uses. The first and most recognizable is the Continental Unit. This unit is comprised of men who are uniformed in the familiar tricorne hat, blue coat and knee breeches or fall-front trousers identified with the soldiers of the regular army during the Revolution.

The second type of unit is the Militia Unit. There is no set uniform associated with the Militia. As in the time of the Revolution, the Militia consisted of everyday men who wore the clothes that they wore in normal everyday activity when called to service. As such, there is more leeway in the type of clothing that the Militia Color Guard wears.

Please note, that while the above references separate units based on the type of uniform, this does not preclude having a mixture of uniform types in a single unit. As a matter of fact, most national events will have color guard members in a variety of uniforms – both continental and militia. The common practice

in this situation is that those wearing continental uniforms will be towards the front of the unit while those wearing militia attire will be toward the rear.

With respect to the uniform that is worn, many Color Guardsmen choose to wear a uniform like that worn by their patriot ancestor(s). However, this requires that the Color Guard member have performed the necessary research to determine the details of the uniform. This is necessary since, while the blue coat predominated, the coat could have a different facing color on the cuffs and collar, depending where the soldier was from and the hat could vary from unit to unit.

With respect to the Continental uniform, the basic uniform consists of the following:

- A tricorn hat;
- A blue coat with either a buff, red or white facing and trim;
- White shirt and waistcoat;
- White or buff knee britches or fall-front trousers;
- Buckle shoes;
- A pair of white gloves.

With respect to the Militia uniform, the basic uniform consists of the following:

- A hat – either tricorn or round;
- A hunting shirt;
- A white or checkered shirt;
- Long britches or fall-front trousers;
- Shoes (not necessarily buckle since the long pants leg will cover the buckle area).

In 2016, a uniform based on Scottish attire was approved by the National Color Guard Committee. This type of uniform is considered a militia uniform the basic uniform consists of the following:

- A hat – either tricorn or round;
- A white or checkered shirt with neck stock
- A waistcoat;
- A kilt (may be of a modern pattern since the actual tartans at the time are unknown);
- Knee socks with buckle shoes or knee socks with boot/moccasins

In addition to the items above, the following items were expressly excluded from the Scottish uniform:

- Modern hats
- Modern shirts
- Modern neck wear – long or bow tie
- Modern shoes
- Modern outer wear such as a sports coat or Prince Charlie Coat
- No Continental blue coat
- Sporran (a haversack is allowed)

While these are the basics for each uniform, variations will exist, and participation will not be discouraged based on these variations. Another important consideration of the uniform is the type of fabric used in making the uniform and the accessories that accompany the uniform. A discussion of these fabric and accessories will follow below.

Due to the time and expense of obtaining a uniform made from natural and more authentic material, many color guard members chose to obtain a less expensive uniform made from modern fabric, most often polyester or gabardine. These uniforms made from modern fabric are acceptable for all events except where the guardsman will fire a musket. For safety reasons, the SAR does not allow guardsmen in modern fabric uniforms to fire a weapon due the danger of melting fabric causing severe burns.

For those guardsmen who wish to fire a musket, the uniform should be made from natural fiber material such as wool and linen. If a spark from a fired musket lands on uniforms made of these materials, the fibers will smolder and can be easily extinguished before causing injury instead of melting quickly.

In addition to the uniform, many guardsmen seek to add to their appearance by adding equipment and other accoutrements. What follows is a brief discussion of common items:

Headwear: While many in the general public identify the tricorne hat as the exclusive headwear of the Revolutionary era, this was not the case. Many different types of headwear were worn including helmets (predominately cavalry units), woven caps, and flat round hats. If wearing a specific unit's uniform, the correct headwear must be worn. For purposes of the SAR Color Guard, a simple black tricorne will suffice.

Footwear: During the Revolution, most shoes were made to fit either foot with the determination of right and left coming only after long wear where the shoe molded to the foot. Obtaining period, buckled shoes can be expensive. As such, many guardsmen elect to purchase buckles that can slide over modern shoes and give the appearance of buckle shoes. Another option is to have the either gaiters made (secured with buttons and garters just above the calf) that cover the lower leg and tops of the shoes thus hiding the fact the shoes have no buckles or by having long pants made as part of the uniform that have facings that extend over the face of the shoe and are secured using either elastic or leather straps below the shoe that also obscure the lack of a buckle of the shoe. An important consideration is both the comfort and safety of the guardsmen in walking or marching in a parade since period correct footwear can cause blisters or may not provide appropriate traction on modern surfaces.

Rank Insignia: A variety of items were used to denote rank within the Revolutionary army. Most common were sashes, gorgets, hat cockades, and epaulettes. As a matter of note, the private in the army did not have any sashes or epaulettes on his uniform coat. Epaulettes denoted rank through both color and placement on a specific shoulder. If the guardsman wishes to include rank insignia, it is highly recommended that this be researched so that historical correctness is maintained.

Gorget: This ornamental metal device is worn suspended from the neck. This alludes back to its original purpose as the component of metal armor that protected the neck of the wearer from swords and other non-projectile weapons. By the time of the Revolution, this had become an ornamental accessory to a military uniform denoting a certain rank or as an indication of performing a certain duty. As such, research should determine if wearing a gorget is appropriate with the type of uniform that is worn. For purposes of the SAR, the gorget is most often worn by either a Color Guard Commander or a past commander.

Belts & Straps: When in the Continental uniform, all belts and straps used for carrying other equipment should be made of white leather or heavy white canvas. Equipment that was supported by a belt or strap included the cartridge box, the haversack, bayonets and canteens.

Cartridge Box: Continental soldiers used a cartridge box when in battle. The cartridge box should be made of black leather attached to a hanger.

Haversack: The haversack carried the necessities of the soldier including rations, smaller mess kit items, wallet, etc. Today, it is an ideal place for the guardsman to carry his wallet, cell phone, glasses or other necessary items. It should be made of linen or some similar material. It should be worn on the left of the uniform.

Canteens: Authentic Revolution-era canteens can be made of metal or wood.

Knapsacks: These should be made of linen, canvas or similar material and worn using white leather or canvas straps. While part of the Continental uniform, these are not commonly worn by members of the National Society SAR Color Guard.

Powder Horn / Tomahawks / Knives: These items are not parts of the Continental uniform. They are identified with the Militia uniform and should only be worn or carried by those guardsmen in that uniform. These items can be carried using rawhide or leather strings or other materials. They can also be inserted in belts or other woven sashes. As a matter of personal and corporate safety, edged weapons (including swords above) must have the blades covered or secured within an appropriate scabbard.

The final issue to be discussed with respect to the uniform is that of the side arms carried by the Color Guard. For the most part, most of the color guard should not carry side arms as their primary duty will be in bearing the various colors for presentation.

Swords (28 to 36 inches in length): Except for officers such as the Commander or Vice Commander, no guardsman should wear a sword. The wearing of a sword was a symbol of rank and social standing. With respect to the primary duty of the SAR Color Guard, wearing a sword is impractical and a matter of personal safety. It is impractical to wear a sword since both hands are used to carry the flag during a parade and one hand is needed to secure the sword so that it does not cause the wearer to trip. Likewise, a longer sword may be impractical when presenting colors in a smaller space such as a meeting room.

Hangers (25 inches in length): This is a specific type of sword that is suspended from a shoulder belt. It is a safer alternative for those guardsmen who wish to carry an edged weapon while bearing colors. Of note is that many historical belts contain carriers for both bayonets and hangers within the same belt.

Spontoons: Evolved from the much longer pike, the spontoon was used by sergeants or other noncommissioned officers as a both a symbol of rank as well as a signaling device to control the movements of a rank of men. With its edged blade, it was also a means of defending the colors as well as a means of personal defense. As such, only the Commander of the unit should carry this sidearm.

Musket / Rifle: When using a primarily Continental unit, the Brown Bess or French Charleville Musket is preferred to maintain historical accuracy. The musket can be either a nonfunctioning reproduction (usually less expensive) or a functioning reproduction. In either case, the guardsman should also have a bayonet on their person when carrying a musket as the bayonet was an essential part of that weapon system. Reproductions of rifles can be carried but this is primarily done by those guardsmen in militia attire. When carrying a rifle, the guardsman should not have a bayonet as these were not used with rifles (unless it was a plug bayonet). The usage of vintage heirlooms or antiques is strongly discouraged.

Pistols: Since these were primarily a weapon used exclusively by cavalry or mounted units, pistols should never be carried. Holsters for pistols were attached to the saddle and there are no known examples of belts or other devices for carrying a pistol related to foot soldiers.

FLAGS CARRIED BY THE COLOR GUARD

At a minimum, the Color Guard should carry the United States National Flag and the flag of the state in which the Color Guard resides and/or the SAR flag. Other flags can be added as the Color Guard grows. The question becomes one of what flags to add. While there is no set answer to this question other than the Color Guard should follow proper protocol when carrying the flags.

Proper protocol provides that flags should be carried in a specific order. The SAR has adopted the following protocol with respect to established flag regulations for usage by a Color Guard unit. The example below is what would be most common for state and local chapter meetings and events.

- United States National Flag;
- Betsy Ross Flag;
- State Flag of the Color Guard Unit;
- SAR Flag;
- Other historical flags of the Revolution.

Since the Color Guard participates in many events (such as Cowpens or Yorktown) and three (3) national meetings each year where the Color Guard will be made up of a combination of guardsmen from multiple states or units, the protocol is slightly different.

- United States National Flag;
- French National Flag;
- Spanish National Flag;
- Betsy Ross Flag;
- State Flag of the Host State Society;
- State Flags of other State Societies (carried in order of the state's date of admission to the union);
- SAR Flags (state society flags first, chapter flags last);
- Other historical flags of the Revolution.

If the President General is in attendance, *and if the flag of his state is available*, it is carried prior to the state flag of the host state society.

Note: Any official United States National Flag (13 star / Hopkinson up to and including the 49-star flag) would take precedent over the Betsy Ross Flag but would be behind the current 50-star flag. This should be noted when the Hopkinson and/or Star Spangled Banner (15-star) flags are carried.

COLOR GUARD PARTICIPATION AT EVENTS

Existing Events. There are many established events in which the National Color Guard participates. At these events, the event coordinator or host society will issue a formal invitation to other state societies. These invitations are then disseminated within the respective societies and chapters.

On the date of the event, the Color Guard is formed under the command of the National Commander, another National Color Guard Officer or the color guard commander of the host society (See the *Command Structure* section). Given that many of these events are similar in nature, a generic outline of a program can be found in the *National Society SAR Handbook* and is not replicated here.

Creating an Event. For those Color Guards who do not have a Revolutionary War site within their service area, an alternative to undertaking expensive and time-consuming travel is to create a unique

event in their area. Two specific examples of this are the California Massing of Colors in Los Angeles that celebrates George Washington's Birthday and the George Washington Parade in Laredo, TX where the local color guard has joined in with an established event and expanded into hosting other events in conjunction with this event.

Taking the example of the Massing of Colors, the following process was followed:

- Pick an individual or event to celebrate;
- Pick a date and time that does not conflict with other possible events already established to celebrate the individual or event (for example, if a Sunday is chosen, have the event at mid-afternoon to allow members and the general public to attend church and have lunch);
- Pick a central location such as a local Memorial Park where the general public is already used to gathering to celebrate or commemorate events;
- Invite other heritage, lineage, and military organizations to participate;
- Provide some recognition to participants – most commonly a certificate of appreciation or participation or presenting a streamer that can be attached to the organizations flag;
- Acknowledge as many participants as possible in a printed program;
- If possible and if the event is outside, reserve an indoor location in case of rain;
- Invite local speakers in addition to NSSAR General Officers;
- Be willing to evolve so that the program does not become stagnant.

Publicity. A key component to any Color Guard or other event is publicity. Publicity is very easy since the Color Guard uniform is unique and not often seen by the general public except on television and film. A common occurrence is for children and the general public to request guardsmen to appear in photographs or talk about the uniform. To build on this natural tendency, the Color Guard should be prepared to both promote a public appearance both before and after the fact.

Prior to an event, the Commander or his designee may coordinate with the host state society or chapter in developing a press release that includes photographs of color guard participation from previous years. This photograph is more likely to be used than a static picture of people in front of wreaths or monuments.

Similarly, after an event is completed (and in line with preparing the documentation required to be submitted with nominations for Color Guard Medals), a press release may be provided to local media if none attends the event.

In both cases, a press release may provide information on date, place, time and reason for the event. All pictures should have a caption identifying color guard members by name and city of residence. Finally, the press release should have a statement at the end providing basic information on the SAR and Color Guard with contact names and numbers.

During events, the Color Guard should be prepared to talk about the event, their uniform, the color guard and the SAR. In many organizations, a single guardsman should be identified as the primary media contact at the event.

COMMANDS

While many members of the SAR have a military background, some do not. Accordingly, this section is intended to familiarize all Guardsmen with commands they are likely to hear. The commands given below are a mixture of both modern commands and those commands used during the Revolutionary War. Some units may prefer to use all modern commands while some will use a mixture, and some will exclusively use those commands outlined in the Revolutionary War Drill Manual. A specific standardized set of commands has not been adopted as of the writing of this manual.

Posting the Colors & Other Indoor Events. The most common Color Guard activity will be posting of the Colors at a meeting or some other public event that occurs indoors. Given the wide variety of locations, meetings, and other details, there is no specific program that can be provided as an example. However, the basic commands that will be used in such an event are provided. In all commands where direction is given, the command should be timed so that the execution of the command begins on the left foot.

- *Color Guard, Attention.* Guardsmen come to attention with flags and firearms on the floor to their right.
- *Carry Arms.* Flags and firearms are lifted into position so that they can be carried.
- *Color Guard, Mark Time March.* Guardsmen march in place starting with the left foot so that tempo for subsequent commands can be established.
- *Color Guard, Forward March.* Guardsmen move forward starting on their left foot.
- *Color Guard, Mark Time March.* Front rank halts their forward progress and continues to march in place allowing for subsequent ranks to catch up to the final position if necessary.
- *Color Guard, Halt.* All marching ceases within two beats or steps.
- *Color Guard, Left / Right Face.* Guardsmen face the appropriate direction to face the audience as ordered by the Commander.
- *Present Colors.* All flags except the National are dipped and firearms are brought to the Present Arms position for pledges and the National Anthem.
- *Color Bearers, About Face.* All color bearers will turn to face toward the flag stands.
- *Post the Colors.* Color bearers place the flags in the flag stands and dress the flags appropriately. Color bearers are free to move forward and back one step as necessary. Musketeers continue to maintain the present arms position.
- *Present Arms.* Color bearers salute the posted Colors.
- *Order Arms.* All guardsmen return to the attention position.
- *Color Guard, Center Face.* All guardsmen face the appropriate direction to move out of the room in single or double column.
- *Color Guard, Post (or To your post).* All guardsmen move to a previously designated location or post.

Additional notes for indoor events:

- Musketeers will not fix bayonets for obvious safety reasons;
- The Commander must make all guardsmen aware of obstacles such as lighting fixtures;
- A drummer can be used to provide timing for commands;
- The National Colors should always either lead a column or process on the right of any rank;
- If ranks are used, a cross-over maneuver will be necessary after the Color Guard halts since the National Colors are always placed on the left (speaker's right);
- The same series of commands can be used for the Retiring of Colors at the end of the meeting except that there will be no Present Colors command and the Post the Colors command would be replaced by a Retrieve the Colors command.

Graveside / Outdoor / Other Outdoor Events. There are two common types of outdoor ceremonies in which the Color Guard most often participate:

- The commemoration or celebration of the anniversary of a Revolutionary War battle or event; and,
- The wreath-laying and/or marker dedication at the grave of a Revolutionary War patriot or a compatriot member of the SAR. The commands used at these ceremonies are the same as those outlined above.

The differences between the indoor posting of colors and the outdoor ceremony are that there are more program elements associated with the outdoor event, and the Color Guard will often remain in place after the presentation of Colors due to the lack of outdoor flag stands.

If the Color Guard remains in place, the Commander should issue the following commands after the presentation of Colors:

- *Carry Arms.* Guardsmen return flags and muskets to the carry position.
- *Color Guard, Rest.* Flags and muskets are lowered to rest on the ground and the guardsmen may stand without being at attention.

If the program includes an honorary firing of muskets and/or the playing of Taps, the Commander should bring the Color Guard to attention and order the Color Guard to Present Arms using the appropriate commands. In most cases, the master of ceremonies will ask for the Retirement of Colors shortly after this event, so the Color Guard should remain at attention and be prepared for further commands.

Parades. Given that most parades will only entail simple movements, the commands associated with parades are:

- *Color Guard, Attention.* Guardsmen come to attention with flags and firearms on the floor to their right.
- *Carry Arms.* Flags and firearms are lifted into position so that they can be carried.
- *Color Guard, Mark Time March.* Guardsmen march in place starting with the left foot so that tempo for subsequent commands can be established.
- *Color Guard, Forward March.* Guardsmen move forward starting on their left foot.
- *Color Guard, Mark Time March.* Front rank halts their forward progress and continues to march in place allowing for subsequent ranks to catch up to the final position if necessary.
- *Color Guard, Halt.* All marching should cease within two beats or steps.

If there is a Reviewing Stand during the parade, the Commander should brief the Color Guard of the following additional commands that will be used:

- *Present Arms.* All flags are dipped except the National Colors and all guardsmen will turn their heads 45 degrees towards the review stand)
- *Carry Arms.* All flags are returned to the carry position and heads face straight ahead.

COLOR GUARD BEHAVIOR AT EVENTS

Hand Salutes. As with current military custom, only the Commander of the Color Guard and those members carrying muskets will Present Arms when called to salute. No Color Bearer ever renders a hand salute, unless specifically ordered immediately after the posting of colors, since the Commander is understood to present the salute for the entire unit.

The policy of the National Society Color Guard is that if a Guardsman is to render a hand salute, such as when presenting a wreath at an event or grave marking, the Guardsman shall only lift and dip their hat slightly. This more closely conforms with salutes during the Revolutionary Era when there was no accepted form of hand salute used by the Continental Army.

Prayers. Likewise, during prayers, Color Guard members only close their eyes. At no time does the Guardsman bow his head or remove his hat.

Wearing Medals. If a Color Guardsman insists on wearing SAR medals on his uniform because he would not otherwise have an opportunity to wear them, then they may be worn only during SAR internal events such as chapter, state and national meetings where the general public is not present. In any case, the Color Guard Commander in charge makes the final decision on the permission to wear medals on the Color Guard uniform during SAR internal events. It is the policy of the National Color Guard Committee that no medals or other decorations will be worn at official National Society events.

Deportment: At all times, a Color Guardsman must behave with the utmost decorum. This is interpreted to mean that the Color Guardsman may **not** break ranks even when at rest during a ceremony unless they are going forward to present a wreath / render honors or have a specific additional role during a ceremony. The Color Guardsman will **not** take photographs during an event or ceremony. A Color Guardsman **may** acknowledge the master of ceremonies if their name is called out for recognition during an event or ceremony.

NATIONAL SAR COLOR GUARD MEDALS

The following language should be identical to the National Society SAR Handbook section pertaining to National Society SAR Color Guard Medals. There may be some discrepancy since the National Society SAR Handbook is usually updated only once a year, generally after a National Congress and the National Society SAR Color Guard Handbook may be updated a few times a year depending on the actions of the National Color Guard Committee. In the event there is a discrepancy between the National Society SAR Handbook and National Society SAR Color Guard Handbook, the National Society SAR Color Guard Handbook shall be deemed to be more current, and therefore correct.

As clarification, the order in which Color Guard medals are earned is as such: the Bronze Color Guard Medal is earned first followed by the Silver Color Guard Medal. It is possible that both medals may be earned within the stated three (3) year time frame. If both are earned within that time frame, then the Bronze Color Guard Medal is always presented to the compatriot prior to the presentation of the Silver Color Guard Medal. After the Silver Color Guard Medal is earned, then the Von Steuben Medal for Sustained Achievement in the National Color Guard may be earned. There is no requirement for earning the Von Steuben Medal prior to earning the Gold Color Guard Medal.

As of July 2019, after the National Commander approves either the National Von Steuben Medal for Sustained Achievement or the Molly Pitcher Medal, the medals will be held for formal presentation at the next Color Guard Committee meeting held at the various National SAR meeting. This procedure was adopted by the Command Staff after confusion related to who was responsible for ordering and/or paying for the medal and its shipping cost resulted in many medals getting lost or never presented. If a State

Society wishes to present a medal prior to its formal presentation, then the State Commander or President should contact the National Commander to arrange for the delivery of the medal. This procedure does not impact the purchasing of an approved Silver Color Guard Medal. In fact, it is highly recommended that the presentation of the Silver Color Guard Medal be made at National Meetings when ever possible.

I. Earning the Bronze Color Guard Medal

Precedence: 42

Year Authorized: 1998

Presented By: State Society President or Chapter President

Approved By: State Awarding Authority (State Color Guard Commander)

Summary: The Bronze Color Guard Medal is for service at the Chapter and State level. Each medal is awarded for at least three (3) years of service. The three (3) years may be broken, not continuous. The medal may be awarded for retroactive service so any living compatriot may receive it even if he does not march anymore.

Qualifications: Each State Society shall determine for itself whether to employ a Points System or an Events System, as defined below, for earning the Bronze Color Guard Medal.

A. Point System

1. To earn the SAR Bronze Color Guard Medal, a Color Guardsman must accrue at least three hundred (300) points by participating in uniform at qualifying Color Guard events.
2. A Color Guardsman will earn five (5) points for participation in uniform in each Chapter event. A Chapter event shall be defined as an event hosted by a chapter where an invitation to the State Color Guard was not extended. Examples include but are not limited to: school assemblies/programs, presentations at civic clubs, churches and other public organizations, chapter meetings, flag retirement ceremonies, local veterans' events, local Revolutionary War event celebrations, local government proclamation ceremonies and similar local events. The Chapter President should approve a chapter event before the event may be counted.
3. A Color Guardsman shall earn ten (10) points for his participation in uniform in each State event. A State event shall be defined as an event in which the State Color Guard has been requested to participate. Examples include but are not limited to: Revolutionary battle and historic sites celebrations, grave markings, parades, State Society meetings. The State President should approve a State event before the event may be counted.
4. A Color Guardsman must document his participation in the various chapter and state events used to qualify for the SAR Bronze Color Guard Medal. Said documentation must be in written form list the date, the event name and the type of event. Said documentation will be retained by the State Color Guard Commander and passed to any succeeding Commander in the event it is requested as part of the approval of a subsequent SAR Silver Color Guard Medal application.
5. A Color Guardsmen whose State Society employs the point system may also earn points based on mileage, whether traveled by driving or by flying.
 - a. Up to 100 miles, 0 points,
 - b. From 101 to 200 miles, 5 points,
 - c. From 201 to 999 miles, 10 points,
 - d. From 1,000 miles and over, 20 points.

B. Events System

1. To earn the SAR Bronze Color Guard Medal, a Color Guardsman must participate in at least 50% of the scheduled Chapter and/or State Color Guard activities in each of three years which do not need to be continuous. A year shall be any period of twelve consecutive months.

2. A Chapter event shall be defined as an event hosted by a chapter where an invitation to the State Color Guard was not extended. Examples include but are not limited to: school assemblies/programs, presentations at civic clubs, churches and other public organizations, chapter meetings, flag retirement ceremonies, local veterans' events, local Revolutionary War event celebrations, local government proclamation ceremonies and similar local events. The Chapter President should approve a chapter event before the event may be counted.
3. A Color Guardsman must document his participation in the various chapter and state events used to qualify for the SAR Bronze Color Guard Medal. Said documentation must be in written form list the date, the event name and the type of event. Said documentation will be retained by the State Color Guard Commander and passed to any succeeding Commander in the event it is requested as part of the approval of a subsequent SAR Silver Color Guard Medal application.

Subsequent Presentation NOT Authorized: A Compatriot may receive this medal only once. Oak leaf clusters or other ribbon attachments are not authorized.

II. Earning the Silver Color Guard Medal

Precedence: 40

Year Authorized: 1998

Presented By: District Vice President General, State President or by the District or State Color Guard Commander (as appropriate). The President General or the National Color Guard Commander may also present this award.

Approved By: State or District Color Guard Commander and National Color Guard Commander

Summary: The Silver Color Guard Medal is for service at the District and National levels. The medal is awarded for at least three (3) years of service. The three (3) years may be broken, not continuous. The medal may be awarded for retroactive service, so any living compatriot may receive it, even if he cannot march anymore. An SAR Color Guardsman must have qualified for and received the Bronze Color Guard Medal before he can be awarded the Silver Color Guard Medal.

Special Application Required: SAR Color Guardsmen who believe they qualify for the Silver Color Guard Medal must complete the appropriate application form setting forth their qualifications. The application is available on the SAR website and must be submitted to the State or District Color Guard Commander for review and recommendation. It is then forwarded to the National Color Guard Commander for final authorization to award the Silver Color Guard Medal.

Qualifying Events: The SAR National Congress and semi-annual Leadership Meetings are National events, and Color Guardsmen are strongly encouraged to participate in them. Other qualifying events which may be substituted for National Congresses and Leadership Meetings shall include:

- An historic commemoration recognized by the NSSAR Historic Sites and Celebrations Committee, (see the published listings in *The SAR Magazine*, *The NSSAR Color Guard Handbook*, *The SAR Colorguardsman* and/or on the National Society SAR website),
- An Annual State Society Meeting at which the President General, or his official SAR General Officer designee, is present,
- An Annual District Meeting, Annual District Conference or any such event designated as a District event by the District Vice President General

Qualifications: Each State Society shall determine for itself whether to employ a Points System or an Events System, as defined below, for earning the Silver Color Guard Medal.

A. Point System

1. To earn the SAR Silver Color Guard Medal, a Color Guardsman must have participated in at least nine (9) District and/or National events. In addition, the Color Guardsman should earn a minimum of 500 points (i.e. 200 points for participation in District and/or National events in addition to the 300 points required for the Bronze Color Guard Medal). For those events that are both state and National events, it is the policy of the National Color Guard Committee that any such event can be counted only for the Bronze Color Guard Medal until it is earned, and only then can it count toward the Silver Color Guard Medal.
2. A Color Guardsman shall earn twenty (20) points for participation in uniform at each District or National event.
3. A Color Guardsmen whose State Society employs the point system may also earn points based on mileage, whether traveled by driving or by flying.
 - a. Up to 100 miles, 0 points;
 - b. From 101 to 200 miles, 5 points,
 - c. From 201 to 999 miles, 10 points,
 - d. From 1,000 miles and over, 20 points.

B. Events System

1. To earn an SAR Silver Color Guard Medal, a Color Guardsman must participate in at least three District and/or National events in each of three years, which do not need to be continuous. A year shall be any period of twelve consecutive months.
2. For those events that are both state and National events, it is the policy of the National Color Guard Committee that any such event can be counted only for the Bronze Color Guard Medal until it is earned, and only then can it count toward the Silver Color Guard Medal.

Subsequent Presentation NOT Authorized: A Compatriot may receive this medal only once. Oak leaf clusters or other ribbon attachments are not authorized.

III. Earning the National Von Steuben Medal for Sustained Achievement in the NSSAR Color Guard

Precedence: 39

Year Authorized: 2012

Presented By: District Vice President General, State President, or by the District or State Color Guard Commander (as appropriate). The President General or the National Color Guard Commander may also present this award.

Approved By: State or District Color Guard Commander and National Color Guard Commander

Description: The National Von Steuben Medal for Sustained Achievement in the NSSAR Color Guard is gold in color, and depicts a likeness of Baron Friederich von Steuben.

Summary: The National Von Steuben Medal for Sustained Achievement in the NSSAR Color Guard, authorized 2 March 2012 by the National Society SAR Executive Committee, may be awarded for sustained service to the Society as a Color Guardsman at the National or District Levels. Recipients must have already been awarded the Bronze and Silver Color Guard Medals.

Special Application Required: SAR Color Guardsmen who believe they qualify for the National Von Steuben Medal must complete the appropriate form setting forth their qualifications. This form is available on the SAR website and must be submitted to the State or District Color Guard Commander for review and recommendation. It is then forwarded to the National Color Guard Commander for final authorization to the National Von Steuben Medal.

Qualifications: Each State Society shall determine for itself whether to employ a Points System or an Events System, as defined below, for earning the National Von Steuben Medal.

A. Point System

1. To earn the National Von Steuben Medal for Sustained Achievement in the NSSAR Color Guard, a Color Guardsman must serve at least five (5) years after the date his application for the Silver Color Guard Medal was approved and he must accrue at least five hundred (500) points by participating in uniform at qualifying National or District Color Guard events. Color Guardsmen may take longer than five years to accrue at least five hundred points but may not be awarded the National Von Steuben Medal earlier than five years after the date his application for the Silver Color Guard Medal was approved.
2. A Color Guardsman shall earn twenty (20) points for his participation in uniform in each District or National event.
3. A Color Guardsmen whose State Society employs the point system may also earn points based on mileage, whether traveled by driving or by flying.
 - a. Up to 100 miles, 0 points;
 - b. From 101 to 200 miles, 5 points,
 - c. From 201 to 999 miles, 10 points,
 - d. From 1,000 miles and over, 20 points.

B. Events System

1. To earn the National Von Steuben Medal for Sustained Achievement in the NSSAR Color Guard, a Color Guardsman must serve at least five (5) years after the date his application for the Silver Color Guard Medal was approved and he must participate in at least twenty-five (25) National and/or District Color Guard events. The five years' service does not have to be continuous. Color Guardsmen may take longer than five years to participate in twenty-five qualifying events but may not be awarded the National Von Steuben Medal earlier than five years after his application for the Silver Color Guard Medal was approved.
2. The same events that count toward earning the Silver Color Guard Medal shall also count toward earning the National Von Steuben Medal.

Subsequent Presentation NOT Authorized: A Compatriot may receive this medal only once. Oak leaf clusters or other ribbon attachments are not authorized.

Retroactive Effectiveness: SAR Color Guardsmen who were active at the time this Medal was approved by the National Color Guard Committee (July 2011), and who had previously been awarded the Silver Color Guard Medal, may count the points earned from attending any qualifying National or District Color Guard event if using the points system, or the actual number of events if using the events system, in which they participated during the two (2) year period prior to the National Color Guard Committee approval, or from the date they were approved for the Silver Color Guard Medal, whichever is more recent, toward earning the National Von Steuben Medal.)

IV. The Gold Color Guard Medal

Precedence: 37

Year Authorized: 1998

Presented By: National Society

Approved By: National Color Guard Committee

Summary: The Gold Color Guard Medal may be awarded for SAR Color Guard service at the National Level. The National Color Guard Committee will be the final judge of who is qualified to be awarded the Gold Color Guard Medal. Waivers to these requirements will be granted only under very special

circumstances, and requests for such waivers must be submitted in writing to the National Color Guard Commander for committee consideration.

Authorized Presentations: The Gold Color Guard Medal is awarded as follows:

- A. *To the Color Guardsman of the Year.* Each year, there shall be no more than one (1) SAR Color Guardsman of the Year. He shall be selected pursuant to procedures set forth by the National Color Guard Committee. An SAR Color Guardsman must have both the Bronze and Silver Color Guard Medals before he can be considered for SAR Color Guardsman of the Year. The Gold Color Guard Medal should be presented by the President General during the Annual Congress Awards Night Program. The awardee should be escorted by the National Color Guard Commander and one other Color Guardsman of the awardee's choosing who shall carry the state flag of the awardee.

To be considered for SAR Color Guardsman of the Year, a Color Guardsman must have completed three years of service at the National level. Each State Society and Chapter Color Guard may nominate one compatriot each year for the SAR Color Guardsman of the Year. State Societies and Chapters should consider that Compatriot who best exemplifies both the spirit of the Sons of the American Revolution and the use of Color Guards to display that spirit. The SAR Color Guardsman of the Year must attend the SAR National Congress at which he is awarded the Gold Color Guard Medal and is expected to attend the subsequent National Congress as well. For the year following his election, the Color Guardsman of the Year will carry the National SAR flag at all National events.

- B. *For service in a leadership capacity at the National Level.* The Gold Color Guard Medal is presented to the outgoing National Color Guard Commander by the President General at the Color Guard Change-of-Command Ceremony. To qualify for the Gold Color Guard Medal for service in a national leadership capacity, the Color Guardsman must have served at least four (4) years total service in the command staff of the SAR National Color Guard. Such service shall include at least two (2) years as Adjutant, one (1) year as Vice Commander and one (1) year as Commander. The National Color Guard Commander may opt for a second one (1) year term. To qualify for consideration to serve in the command staff, a color guardsman must have participated as a guardsman in at least three (3) National Congresses and two (2) National Leadership Meetings.

Subsequent Presentation NOT Authorized: A Compatriot may receive this medal only once. Oak leaf clusters or other ribbon attachments are not authorized.

V. Earning the Molly Pitcher Medal

Precedence: 43

Year Authorized: 2012

Presented By: District Vice President General, State President, or by the District or State Color Guard Commander (as appropriate). The President General or the National Color Guard Commander may also present this award.

Approved By: State or District Color Guard Commander and National Color Guard Commander

Description: The Medal is silver in color and depicts a likeness of Molly Picher. It is available only in miniature.

Summary: Many women who are the wives, daughters, sisters, girlfriends, and other female relatives and companions of SAR Color Guardsmen routinely and with great dedication support their SAR Color Guardsman and the SAR Color Guard. The Molly Pitcher Medal may be awarded to women who have supported the SAR Color Guard at the State, District and National levels.

Special Application Required: Women who believe they qualify for the Molly Pitcher Medal must complete the appropriate application form, setting forth their qualifications. The application may also be completed by their husband or other male companion. The application is available on the SAR website and must be submitted to the State or District Color Guard Commander for review and recommendation, and then to the National Color Guard Commander for final authorization to award the Molly Pitcher Medal.

Requirement of Silver Color Guard Medal: Before a woman may be awarded the Molly Pitcher Medal, her husband or other male companion must have been awarded the SAR Silver Color Guard Medal.

Qualifications: To earn the Molly Pitcher Medal, a woman must be present at, and support, the SAR Color Guard at qualifying SAR Color Guard events. The same events that count toward earning the SAR Silver Color Guard Medal for SAR Color Guardsmen shall also count toward earning the Molly Pitcher Medal. In addition, participation in, and support of, State events, such as a State Society Annual Meeting or a State Society Board of Managers/Governors Meeting, shall also count toward earning the Molly Pitcher Medal.

A. Point System

1. To earn the Molly Pitcher Medal, a woman must accrue at least three hundred (300) points by participating in qualifying State, District and National Color Guard events for at least three (3) years. She may take longer to accrue the requisite 300 points, but even if she accrues 300 points or more within three (3) years, she may not be awarded the Molly Pitcher Medal for less than three years of service. The requisite three years do not need to be continuous; a year shall be any period of twelve consecutive months. A woman supporting an SAR Color Guardsman shall earn ten (10) points for her presence and support at each qualifying State Color Guard event, twenty (20) points for her presence and support at each qualifying District and National Color Guard event.
2. A Color Guardsmen whose State Society employs the point system may also earn points based on mileage, whether traveled by driving or by flying.
 - a. Up to 100 miles, 0 points;
 - b. From 101 to 200 miles, 5 points,
 - c. From 201 to 999 miles, 10 points,
 - d. From 1,000 miles and over, 20 points.

B. Events System

1. To earn the Molly Pitcher Medal, a woman must participate in at least three (3) State, District, or National events in each of three (3) years. The requisite three years do not need to be continuous; a year shall be any period of twelve (12) consecutive months.

Support Defined: A woman may be said to ‘support’ the SAR Color Guard by participating in SAR Color Guard events wearing Revolutionary-era attire, or by bringing refreshments for participating SAR Color Guardsmen, or by providing some other tangible support for her SAR Color Guardsman. However, merely attending an SAR Color Guard event shall not be deemed as ‘support’ for the purposes of earning the Molly Pitcher Medal.

Subsequent Presentation NOT Authorized: A Compatriot may receive this medal only once. Oak leaf clusters or other ribbon attachments are not authorized.

Retroactive Effectiveness: Women who were actively supporting an SAR Color Guardsman and the SAR Color Guard at the time this Medal was authorized may count any qualifying SAR Color Guard event in which they participated during the two (2) year period prior to the authorization date toward earning the Molly Pitcher Medal.)

VI. *Reporting Forms for Medals*

The following application forms are available on the NSSAR website on the Color Guard Committee web page. These application forms are the sole method for reporting nominations for the respective medals.

- Color Guard Reporting Form – use for nomination for Silver Color Guard Medal
- Von Steuben Color Guard Medal – use for nomination for the National Von Steuben Medal
- Molly Pitcher Medal – use for nomination for the Molly Pitcher Medal

The Navigation Tree to get to these forms is as follows:

- SAR Homepage / Compatriots Tab / NSSAR Committees / Color Guard

ELECTION OF THE NATIONAL SOCIETY SAR COLOR GUARDSMAN OF THE YEAR

Nominations for National Color Guardsman of the Year must be submitted to the National Commander by e-mail or U.S. Mail no later than the December 31 preceding the National Congress at which the SAR Color Guardsman of the Year is to be awarded the SAR Gold Color Guard Medal.

To be considered for SAR Color Guardsman of the Year, a Color Guardsman must have completed at least three years of service at the National level. Each State Society and Chapter Color Guard may nominate one compatriot each year for the SAR Color Guardsman of the Year. State Societies and Chapters should consider the Compatriot who best exemplifies both the spirit of the Sons of the American Revolution and the use of Color Guards to display that spirit.

From among all nominations, the SAR Color Guardsman of the Year is elected by the eligible voters attending the Spring meeting of the National Color Guard Committee. Eligible voters shall include:

- All previous recipients of the Gold Color Guard Medal;
- One (1) representative from each state society. This representative shall be selected by either the state society President or the state society Color Guard Commander. In the event the state society has not formally selected a voting representative, the Color Guardsmen from a given state who are attending the Spring meeting of the National Color Guard Committee may decide among themselves who shall vote for the SAR Color Guardsman of the Year.

For additional information about the Gold Color Guard Medal, please refer to the section on *The Gold Color Guard Medal* under NATIONAL SOCIETY SAR COLOR GUARD MEDALS.

CHANGE OF COMMAND

The following ceremony is observed at the National SAR Color Guard Change of Command. State societies and chapters may also use this ceremony or revise it for their specific circumstances. This ceremony takes place during the President General's Banquet on the Tuesday of Congress when a Commander completes his term of office.

Color Guard retires after the Posting of Colors and reforms so that the Color Guardsmen from the Outgoing and Incoming Commanders' State Societies are leading each respective column.

Outgoing Commander: "Color Guard: Post."

Color Guard enters and lines both sides of main aisle. Ideally, and if possible, the entire Color Guard will have formed up on the main aisle. The head of one line will be comprised of Color Guardsmen from the State Society of the outgoing commander while the other line will be led by Color Guardsmen from the State Society of the incoming commander.

Outgoing Commander: "Color Guard: Center Face."

The President General, the Outgoing Commander, the Outgoing Adjutant, the Incoming Commander and the Incoming Adjutant take positions. The Outgoing Commander, with the Outgoing Adjutant by his side, is on the left facing the Incoming Commander, with the Incoming Adjutant by his side. The President General stands in the middle, with his back to the head table.

Outgoing Adjutant: "Color Guard: Attention to Orders. The Command of the National Society, Sons of the American Revolution Color Guard is transferred from Compatriot _____ to Compatriot _____, effective the ____th of ____ 20__.

The Halberd is slowly and with much dignity passed from the Outgoing Commander to the President General and then from the President General to the Incoming Commander. The Incoming Commander shall carry the Halberd for the remainder of the ceremony and shall carry it out of the room.

Outgoing Adjutant: "The NSSAR Gold Color Guard Medal is hereby awarded to Compatriot _____.

The President General presents the Gold Color Guard Medal to the Outgoing Commander.

The Outgoing Commander passes the Gold Color Guard Medal and/or case and Certificate back to the Outgoing Adjutant to carry items out.

Outgoing Commander faces Color Guard and draws saber silently.

Incoming Commander: "Color Guard: Present Arms. Three Huzzahs for Commander _____."

The Outgoing Commander, slowly and with much dignity, marches to the end of the aisle of Color Guardsmen. Upon reaching the end of the aisle, he about faces, salutes the Color Guard with a saber salute, about faces, and waits to lead the Color Guard slowly out of the Banquet Hall.

Incoming Commander: "Color Guard: Order Arms. Forward March."

Incoming Commander leads the Color Guard out following the Outgoing Commander.

The Color Guardsmen remain facing center until passed by the Color Guardsmen from closer to the head table, whereupon they will turn and follow the other departing Color Guardsmen out of the Banquet Hall.

(If the President General wishes to make any remarks about the Color Guard Change of Command, he should do so at this time.)

The Color Guard returns to the Dining Room.

SAFETY POLICIES & PROCEDURES

Purpose

The purpose of this document is to establish standardized Safety Policy and Procedures for the National Society, Sons of the American Revolution to be adopted by the National, State and Chapter Color Guards to promote uniformity for multi-state events and to facilitate the acquisition of liability insurance coverage for the Color Guard. State Societies may in their discretion adopt more stringent standards if desirable or required by the laws of their state.

Policies

A. Insurance:

To be approved and published at a later date

B. Training:

1. Before carrying a weapon at an SAR event, all compatriots will be trained in the safe handling of that weapon even if they are not firing.
2. Any compatriot who will be firing shall be additionally trained in the safe operation and firing of their firearm.
3. The recognized standards for training shall be (1) the National Park Service *Manual of Instruction for the Safe Use of Reproduction Flintlock Rifles & Muskets in Interpretive Demonstrations (1/21/2010)*, (2) the NRA NMLRA Basic Muzzle Loading Shooting Course or (3) an equivalent training course taught by an instructor who has been certified by the appropriate State Color Guard Commander. If the color guardsman receives training from an outside source such as the NRA or NPS, the State Color Guard Commander or his designee will examine the color guardsman for familiarity with SAR uses of a firelock and provide additional training as necessary.
4. Weapons training is the responsibility of the State Society with competencies certified by the State Color Guard Commander or his designee based on the following criteria:
 - a. Demonstrated knowledge of and compliance with the recognized safety standards for carrying a weapon
 - b. Demonstrated knowledge of and efficiency in safely loading and firing a weapon

C. Firearm(s):

1. Only muskets and rifles of the Revolutionary War era, including but not limited to the British Brown Bess Musket, the French Charleville Musket, the Spanish M1752 Musket and American Long Rifles, are permitted.
2. Only reproductions that are manufactured for black powder shall be fired.
 - a. Firearms shall have a flash protector and frizzen cover/hammer stall.
 - b. Firearms shall always be pointed in a safe direction and never at another person.
 - c. Firearms shall remain unloaded until instructed to load. Charged weapons shall be carried at half-cock.
 - d. A finger shall never be on the trigger unless firing the weapon.

- e. A safety inspection shall be performed prior to any event and, if the weapon has been fired, immediately after an event.
- f. Members of the general public shall not be allowed to handle a weapon that has been fired until the barrel has been swabbed out and the weapon has undergone a safety inspection.
- g. Members of the general public may handle a weapon that has not been fired or has been cleared after a firing provided that the compatriot maintains positive control of the weapon by keeping in positive contact with the weapon or its shoulder strap.

D. Powder:

- 1. Paper cartridge are preferred so as to maintain the appearance of historical accuracy; however, other materials used by reenactors may be utilized at the discretion of the local commander.
- 2. Powder loaded into a weapon shall not exceed the limits established by the National Park Service manual as follows:

“Brown Bess” Musket .75 Caliber	125 grains FFg
Charleville Musket .69 Caliber	125 grains FFg
American Musket .69 Caliber	90 grains FFg
Kentucky Rifle Variable	90 grains FFg
Pistols & Horse Pistols Variable	35 grains FFg
Fowler & Trade Guns .62 Caliber	80 grains FFg
- 3. While participating in SAR events a ball/projectile shall never be loaded into a weapon.
 - a. Wadding/patches are never to be used for Color Guard purposes.
 - b. Ramrods and/or other objects shall not be inserted into charged barrels.
- 4. Compatriots participating in a gun salute shall keep the powder cartridges in a leather covered pouch or box with a flap that completely covers the opening. The pouch or box should be worn external to the compatriot’s clothing (i.e. no cartridges should be kept in pockets or under coats).

E. Edged Weapons:

- 1. All edged weapons, including but not limited to swords, bayonets and tomahawks/hatchets, shall be kept in their scabbards until appropriate time for use.
- 2. At no time shall edged weapons be pointed at an individual.
- 3. Bayonets shall only be placed on muskets during outdoor ceremonies and parades.
- 4. Spontoons, halberds and pikes shall always be carried in the upright position and only pointed at the ground during a salute.

F. General Safety

- 1. Consistent with National Park Service Policy, natural fiber fabrics or leather should be worn if a color guard member is firing or is next to a member that is firing. No clothing shall contain any materials that are flammable or can easily melt.
- 2. Eye protection, to protect against flashes or sparks, may be worn at the discretion of the Compatriot and may include either period or modern glasses.
- 3. Hearing protection may be worn at the discretion of the compatriot.

G. Record Retention

- 1. All required paperwork, including but not limited to, copies of insurance policies, list of trainers and lists of trained compatriots, shall be maintained by each State Society and shall be provided to the National SAR upon request.
- 2. Lists of trainers and those trained should be updated annually by each State Society.
- 3. The National SAR will maintain all National Color Guard Staff documentation.

Event Procedures

A. General:

1. The Color Guard Commander, or his designee, shall be responsible for enforcing all policies to the extent possible; however, each compatriot is ultimately responsible for his own health and safety.
2. It is the compatriot's personal responsibility to be aware of their physical limitations and to excuse themselves from parades or events exceeding their capabilities.
3. The Color Guard Commander, or his designee, shall be responsible for ensuring that proper permits and permissions for Color Guard activities have been obtained.
4. At no time shall a compatriot be impaired by alcohol or medication while firing.
5. Provisions for adequate water for Color Guard participants should be made by the sponsoring State Society or Chapter in the event of high heat and/or humidity.

Site Safety:

1. The Commander, or his designee, shall inspect the assembly area, route of march, and ceremonial area and take such steps as might be appropriate to mitigate any existing hazards.
2. A minimum 150 feet buffer zone free of observers is in front of the firing team shall be established.
3. Careful consideration should be made when firing between buildings or structures that will contain the blast and resonate the sound.
4. A Safety Officer, who may be the commander, must be present at every event where firing occurs.

Firearm Inspection:

Pre-Event: The Color Guard Commander, or his designate, shall perform a musket safety check prior to any use of a weapon in a SAR Ceremony. Such safety check shall include, but not be limited to the following:

1. Weapons shall be confirmed to be in a safe and functional state with all parts being free of visible defects (including, but not limited to stock cracks or splits, secure bands and pins, etc.) and that all appropriate safety equipment is attached such as flash guards and frizzen covers / hammer stalls.
2. If the weapon will be fired, the lock must not fail in the half-cock position and the hammer not catch at half-cock when the trigger is pulled. If the lock fails, the weapon will not be allowed to fire.
3. During the safety check, weapons shall be confirmed to be unloaded by pinging the ramrod.

Post Event/Misfire Safety Check

1. After every firing event the weapon shall be confirmed to be unloaded by pinging the ramrod.
2. If the weapon still has a charge then that weapon shall be taken away to a point of safety. A safety officer shall watch the clearing to ensure that all safety precautions are observed.
3. The pan shall be re-primed and the musket fired.
4. If the weapon still does not fire, the charge will be removed from the barrel. Once the weapon has the charge removed, another ramrod check shall be done to assure there is no latent powder remaining in the barrel.

Firing Commands:

*It is encouraged that the firing commands be standardized to those presented in as presented in the National Park Service Manual of Instruction for the Safe Use of Reproduction Flintlock Rifles & Muskets in Interpretive Demonstrations (1/21/2010). **

Firing Muskets in parades:

1. The Color Guard Commander, or his designee, shall ensure that the parade officials will allow the firing of muskets and that appropriate precautions to inform adjacent units and public safety officials of any firing have been taken.
2. All other safety procedures shall apply during parades.
3. A Safety Officer shall be assigned to monitor the safety of the Color Guard and the public near the firing. This officer shall inform observers to taken precautions prior to any firing.
4. The Color Guard Commander, or his designee, shall ensure that the preferred distance of one hundred fifty (150) feet separates the participants in front of the color guard from the color guard.
5. Firing shall be aimed directly forward with muskets pointed upward with at a least a forty-five (45) degree angle and never over parade observers. Firings should only occur in open spaces, such as major intersections, where the concussion will not damage building windows.

*The National Park Service *Manual of Instruction for the Safe Use of Reproduction Flintlock Rifles & Muskets in Interpretive Demonstrations (1/21/2010)* may be found online by searching for it by name or at the following address <https://www.nps.gov/stri/upload/18thcmusketmanual2010-01-21.pdf>. This manual is incorporated into this Policy by reference.

MISCELLANEOUS INFORMATION

National Color Guard Events. The National Events listed below count toward earning the SAR Silver Color Guard Medal and National Von Steuben Medal for Sustained Achievement (See the *NSSAR Color Guard Medals* section). Dates published below are of the actual battle / commemoration date or the approximate meeting date. Guardsmen should confirm the actual date of the event listed below with published event invitations on the National Society SAR website or with the host state society.

<u>Historic Date</u>	<u>Event</u>	<u>Location</u>
January 17	Battle of Cowpens	Chesnee, SC
February 1	Battle of Cowan's Ford	Huntersville, NC
February 14	Battle of Kettle Creek	Washington, GA
February 14	Crossing of the Dan	South Boston, VA
February 22	Washington's Birthday Parade	Laredo, TX
February 27	Battle of Moore's Creek Bridge	Currie, NC
March 10	Last Naval Battle of the Revolution	Cape Canaveral, FL
March 15	Battle of Guilford Courthouse	Greensboro, NC
April 12	Halifax Resolves	Halifax, NC
April 18	Battles of Lexington & Concord	Concord, MA
April 18	Patriots Day	various
May 8	Battle of Pensacola	Pensacola, FL
May 11	Raid on Martin's Station	Ewing, VA
May 16	Armed Forces Day	various
May 17	Battle of Thomas Creek	Jacksonville, FL
May 25	Spirit of Vincennes Rendezvous	Vincennes, IN
May 25	Memorial Day *	various
May 25	National Memorial Day Parade	Washington DC
May 26	Battle of Fort San Carlos	St Louis, MO
May 29	Buford's Massacre	Lancaster, SC
June 11	Action at Machias	Machias, ME
June 17	Battle of Bunker Hill	Charlestown, MA
June 20	Battle of Ramseur's Mill	Lincolnton, NC
June 28	Battle of Monmouth	Monmouth, NJ
July 4	Independence Day *	various
July 4	Let Freedom Ring	various
August 2	Siege at Fort Laurens	Bolivar, OH
August 19	Battle of Blue Licks	Carlisle, KY
August 27	Battle of Brooklyn / Maryland 400	Brooklyn, NY
September 6	Battle of Groton Heights	Groton, CT
September 8	Battle of Eutaw Springs	Eutawville, SC
September 17	Vigil at Washington's Tomb	Mt Vernon, VA
September 25	Gathering at Sycamore Shoals	Elizabethton, TN
October 4-6	Point Pleasant Battle Days	Point Pleasant, WV
October 6	Battle of Chestnut Neck	Little Egg Harbor, NJ
October 7	Battle of Kings Mountain	Blacksburg, SC
October 17	Battle of Saratoga	Stillwater, NY
October 19	Yorktown Days	Yorktown, VA
October 22	Battle of Red Bank	Fort Mercer, NJ
November 11	Veterans Day *	various
December 9	Battle of Great Bridge	Norfolk, VA
December 15	Wreaths Across America	various
December 26	Ten Crucial Days	Princeton/Trenton, NJ

** A local event celebrating Memorial Day, Independence Day and Veterans Day may be counted as a National Color Guard event for the purposes of applying for a Color Guard Medal. Only a single event on each day may be counted. Multiple events on the same day cannot be counted multiple times. If the event is on a weekend nearest the actual holiday, that can be counted with respect to the single event limitation. For example, if a Veterans Day Parade occurs on a Saturday such as the 8th, then an event on the 11th does not count.*

The following National events can occur on any date and at any location:

- Massing of Colors
- Fields of Honor / Healing Field
- Honor Flight
- Liberty Tree Planting / Dedication

The following National Meetings are considered National events by Color Guard Policy due to the attendance of the President General:

- NSSAR Spring Leadership Meeting
- Annual NSSAR Congress
- NSSAR Fall Leadership Meeting

Note: As of the 2020 Spring SAR Leadership Meeting, a policy was adopted by both the National Color Guard and National Historic Sites & Celebrations Committees formally establishing that only the National Historic Sites & Celebrations Committee may designate National Historic Events based on that committee's established criteria. The only exception being that established Color Guard policy of recognizing President General, or his designated SAR General Officer representative, attendance at an otherwise unrecognized event will make that event a National Event.

National Society SAR Color Guardsmen of the Year. The National Society SAR Color Guardsman of the Year is elected at the Spring Color Guard Committee meeting (See the *Election of the NSSAR Color Guardsman of the Year* section). The Gold Color Guard Medal is presented at the subsequent National Congress. In addition, the Color Guardsman of the Year will carry the National Society SAR Flag at the subsequent Fall Leadership Meeting, Spring Leadership Meeting and Annual Congress. The following compatriots have been elected as the National Society SAR Color Guardsman of the Year.

1998	Lowell Nichols	Indiana SAR
1999	Edgar Grover	Kansas SAR
2000	Robert Grover	Missouri SAR
2001	George Lamp	West Virginia SAR
2002	James McCafferty	Maryland SAR
2003	Ray Zimmerman	Maryland SAR
2004	CDR Charles R. Lampman, USN (Ret)	California SAR
2005	Lester Foster	Maryland SAR
2006	Col. Andrew M. Johnson, USA (Ret)	Virginia SAR
2007	George Thurmond	Georgia SAR
2008	Charles F. Bragg	Indiana SAR
2009	Charles Newcomer	Georgia SAR
2010	John H. Franklin	Ohio SAR
2011	Paul I. Prescott	Georgia SAR
2012	Thomas B. Green	Texas SAR
2013	Gerald R McCoy	Missouri SAR
2014	Dr. Samuel C. Powell	North Carolina SAR
2015	Robert P. Cunningham	Indiana SAR
2016	Karl Jacobs	California SAR
2017	Paul Wilke	Ohio SAR
2018	Dr. Edward P. Rigel Sr	Georgia SAR
2019	Lt Col Gary O Green, USAF (Ret)	North Carolina SAR
2020	Robert Alvyn Sapp	Georgia SAR

National Society SAR Color Guard Commanders

1989 – 1990	Donald N. Moran	California SAR
1990 – 2000	CAPT David J. Gray, USN (Ret)	Massachusetts SAR
2000 – 2002	Garrett Jackson	California SAR
2002 – 2004	Edgar Grover	Kansas SAR
2004 – 2006	COL Peter K. Goebel, USA (Ret)	Empire State SAR (New York)
2006 – 2007	CDR Charles R. Lampman, USN (Ret)	California SAR
2007 – 2009	Larry Perkins	Ohio SAR
2009 – 2011	Joseph W. Dooley	Virginia SAR
2011 – 2013	J. Michael Tomme	Georgia SAR
2013 – 2015	Michael J. Radcliff	Texas SAR
2015 – 2017	David W. Hoover	Maryland SAR
2017 – 2019	Mark C. Anthony	Georgia SAR
2019 – 2020	James Fosdyck	California SAR
2020 – 2021	Lou Raborg	Maryland SAR

REVISION HISTORY

As the *National Society SAR Color Guard Handbook* is updated, a brief notation may be made below to track revisions made to the Handbook.

September 2020

(1) Added requirement for state level documentation for the Bronze Color Guard Medal. (2) Updated Silver Color Guard Medal section to include listing of event calendar locations and policy update to allow PG to designate another general officer as his official representative for National Event consideration. (3) updated Molly Pitcher Medal language from “form” to “application”. (4) Added Safety policy as approved by National Executive Committee. (5) Amended Events Calendar to reflect Historic Dates of the events and added language about the process to propose new National Events. (6) Updated “Colorguardsman of the Year” and “National Color Guard Commander” sections. (7) Updated Table of Contents.

September 17, 2019

(1) Updated "Command Structure of the National SAR Color Guard" after change approved for minimum time in service. (2) Updated "Commands" section to reflect that provided commands are recommended. (3) Updated "Color Guard Behavior at Events" section to add approved hand salute. (4) Added language to "National SAR Color Guard Medals" section outlining new procedure for presentation of two medals. (5) Updated "The Gold Color Guard Medal" section to reflect change in minimum service requirements with respect to the National Commander and adding language for presentation of the medal. (6) Updated "Change in Command Ceremony" to add specific language reflecting current practices. (7) Replaced "Health & Safety Regulation" section with "Safety Policies & Procedures" section to reflect policies and procedures adopted at the 2019 Annual Congress committee meeting. (8) Updated "List of National Events" section. (9) Updated "National SAR Color Guardsman of the Year" section. (10) Updated "National SAR Color Guard Commanders" section. (11) Added language to the "National Color Guard Committee" section explaining membership of the committee. (12) Updated "Flags Carried by the Color Guard" section to add French and Spanish Flags in order of precedence. (13) Reformatted "Miscellaneous Information" section so that National Events are found on a separate page for ease of distribution. (14) Updated & expanded Table of Contents.

November 8, 2016

(1) Added safety information regarding the use of muskets and rifles to the Equipment Section and Health and Safety Section. (2) Updated states of the SAR Color Guardsman of the year and National Color Guard Commanders to be in compliance with SAR Branding Standards.

September 21, 2016

(1) Reformatted paragraphs to save lines. (2) Added section on New Scottish Uniform under "Continental or Militia Uniform" which was approved at Spring 2016 Leadership Meeting. (3) Added clarifying language to Department Policy. (4) Added clarifying language under Command Structure section. (5) Updated "National Society SAR Color Guardsmen of the Year" section. (6) Updated Table of Contents.

December 1, 2015

(1) Updated references from “NSSAR” to “National Society SAR” in accordance with the SAR Branding Task Force recommendations announced at the 2015 Fall Leadership Meeting. (2) Corrected various grammatical errors throughout the Handbook. (3) Added clarifications to the awarding of Color Guard Medals. (4) Expanded definition of Events criteria for the SAR Color Guard Medals. (5) Added National Color Guard events approved at 2015 Fall Leadership Meeting. (6) Updated Table of Contents.

June 4, 2015

(1) Edited "The SAR Color Guardsman" section. (2) Expanded the "Command Structure of the National Color Guard" section by adding policy on command at events and Adjutant duties. (3) Expanded "Color Guard Behavior at Events" section by adding policy on wearing medals and adding a "Department" section. (4) Updated "National Society SAR Color Guard Medals" section to match updated section of National Society SAR Handbook. (5) Updated the National Society SAR Color Guardsman of the Year section. (6) Updated National Society SAR Color Guard Commanders Section. (7) Updated Table of Contents.

July 22, 2013

(1) Reformatted paragraphs to save lines. (2) Corrected misspellings. (3) Added section on *The SAR Color Guardsman*. (4) Corrected orders used during a parade. (5) Corrected order of precedence of SAR Color Guard Medals. (6) Added clarifying language approved at the July 2013 National Color Guard Committee meeting concerning the retroactive effectiveness of the National Von Steuben Medal for Sustained Achievement and the Molly Pitcher Medals. (7) Amended language in the Change of Command section. (8) Updated the National Society SAR Color Guardsman of the Year section. (9) Updated National Society SAR Color Guard Commander section. (10) Updated Table of Contents.

November 12, 2012

(1) Reformatted paragraphs to save lines. (2) Added language for the newly created, appointed positions of Quartermaster, Safety Officer and Artillery Commander to the "Command Structure" section. (3) Corrected a protocol error in the "Flags Carried by the Color Guard" section. (4) Eliminated the repetitious phrase "With this command" in the "Commands" section. (5) Add documentation for the National Von Steuben Medal for Sustained Achievement and the Molly Pitcher Medals in the "National Society SAR Color Guard Medals" section. (6) Updated the National Society SAR Color Guardsman of the Year table. (7) Removed Color Guard Reporting Form. (8) Updated Table of Contents.

July 10, 2011

(1) Addition of Color Guard Reporting Form. (2) Revision to language pertaining to the wearing of medals on SAR Color Guard uniforms. The commander in charge of an SAR event now determines whether SAR Color Guardsmen shall be permitted to wear medals. (3) Approval of National Von Steuben Medal for Sustained Achievement, pending approval by the NSSAR Medals & Awards Committee. (4) Added Field of Honor and Healing Field programs to list of events that count toward earning the SAR Silver Color Guard Medal.

March 11, 2011

Revised the language pertaining to SAR Color Guard Medals. State societies may now choose a 'point system' in lieu of an 'event system.'

September 24, 2010

Approval of baseline version of *National Society SAR Color Guard Handbook*.

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