



Pictured, from left, are Sons of the American Revolution chapter president Rodney Andrews; Colonel James M. Johnson, guest speaker; chapter secretary/treasurer Richard Wambach; and chapter vice president Timothy Middlebrook.

Contributed photo

# SAR conducts annual spring meeting

The Columbia-Mid Hudson Valley Chapter of the Society of the Sons of the American Revolution (SAR) conducted their spring meeting recently at Coppola's Bistro in Hyde Park. Forty five persons attended the meeting, including SAR members, Daughters of the American Revolution members, SAR spouses, potential SAR members and many guests.

The three DAR chapters that were represented were the Chancellor Livingston Chapter NSDAR, Rhinebeck; the Hendrick Hudson Chapter, NSDAR, Hudson; and the Wiltwyck Chapter, NSDAR, Kingston.

The event celebrated the 40th anniversary of the chapter in Columbia County, founded 1971 by seven SAR patriots. Two of the original seven members, Rodney Gage and Charles Nichols, were presented their certificates and pins by chapter president Rodney S. Andrews commemorating their 40 years of SAR service. An original third member, Robert L. French, was laid to rest April 8 of this year. French was remembered during the invocation.

Andrew Middlebrook, chapter election chairman, announced the results of the 2011-12 election. All elected

chapter officers were sworn in. Two new members, Leroy Carlson and Eric Winchell, received their SAR membership certificates and their 2011 membership cards from Andrews.

Eagle Scout Alex M. Palmiotti of Troop 50 in Poughkeepsie, Hudson Valley Council, was awarded the Gold Eagle Scout Medal, certificate and check for his winning essay in the Eagle Scout Essay Contest for the chapter. He took fifth place in the SAR state competition. He shared his essay on "Benjamin Franklin."

Two awards were given for the George and Stella Knight Essay Contest. Ryan Dalton of Red Hook placed first, writing on "The Battle of Saratoga," and will receive an Essay Medal, certificate and check from the chapter. In SAR state competition, Dalton placed third and will also receive a certificate and check from the state. His awards will be presented to him at a later date. The second place chapter winner, Ryan Van Schaack of Saugerties, also received a certificate and check and read his essay, "Freedom from Government," at the meeting.

Colonel James M. Johnson, PhD, executive director, Hudson River Valley Institute at Marist College, was the

guest speaker. Johnson is a history expert of the American Revolutionary War involving the Hudson River, a key issue for the Americans patriots to hold duration of the war.

During his presentation, Johnson told of several battles on the Hudson River and concluded that the "turning point" of the American Revolutionary War was the Battle of Saratoga in which General Gates defeated General Burgoyne. Many historians argue that it was that battle that gained for the Americans allies from other countries, especially France, the key factor in defeating the British. Some interesting discussions were expressed during the question and answer session that followed.

After discussion, Johnson summed up by praising the Sons and Daughters of the American Revolution for their continuing efforts to inform, educate and be involved with the historical events that take place on the Hudson River year after year. Johnson received a standing ovation. Andrews presented Johnson the SAR Silver Citizenship medal with a certificate.

The attendees then enjoyed a 40th anniversary cake for the special occasion.

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