



THE NORTH CAROLINA SOCIETY  
SONS OF THE  
AMERICAN REVOLUTION

Standing  
Operational  
Procedure  
for  
Color Guard

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Color Guard Commander

# NCSSAR COLOR GUARD STANDING OPERATING PROCEDURE 2010

## Foreword

All Chapters within the NCSSAR are encouraged to form color guards, within their means, and to participate in color ceremonies at the chapter level, which include posting the colors at meetings, grave markings, patriotic parades, as well as wreath laying ceremonies as part of a combined State Color Guard. To accomplish this, the recommended basic color guard element at the chapter level would be two color bearers and two riflemen. The chapter color guard commander may fill any of these positions.

1. Getting started: Step one is to acquire a color guard uniform portraying either Continental or Militia. Militia is perhaps less costly and more versatile as it may be worn in both warm and cold weather by simply adding layers of clothing, long underwear, thick socks and gloves in the winter time. It will normally consist of a Tri-Corn or other brimmed hat, Revolutionary War period shirt and pants, thick belt, moccasins or plain black shoes with buckles, and other simple items of equipment, i.e. a Knapp sack, canteen, hunting knife, powder horn, tomahawk, bayonet and other items as desired. Ideas may be gleaned from the selection of items offered by Jas. Townsend & Son, a recommended full range shopping site on line. Some items may already be found within the personal clothing of the individual member or may be easily manufactured by those with an available sewing machine and the skill to use it.

2. Suitable museum-quality non-firing weapons of the Revolutionary War Period may also be found on-line, in addition to period reproduction black powder weapons, slings and equipment - bear in mind that only one or two riflemen or none are needed to perform a basic color detail i.e. post the colors at a chapter meeting or event in which case only the National Colors (50-Star American flag or Betsy Ross), the State of North Carolina flag, and the Chapter S.A.R. flag need to be used.

3. Chapters should be aware that there is no standing NCSSAR Color Guard. For most events, including grave markings, the color detail will consist of members of the chapter in period dress with invited members of other chapter color guards to make up a combined Color Guard detail, in order to post the Colors and provide rifle escorts to participants who wish to present wreaths as part of the ceremony. A protocol has been established within the NCSSAR in which notice of the event is posted by the hosting chapter with details on the date, time, and location of the event, with a request for invited chapters to notify the hosting chapter of intent to participate, the number of participants, and intent to present a wreath. Such invitations should be answered by the date indicated by the hosting chapter. For planning an event, the host should check the SAR Calendar to assure that the planned event does not conflict with a key event that appears on the NCSSAR web site. Chapters should utilize their own assets first and then coordinate with the State Color Guard Commander for support from the State Color Guard Inventory of Flags, as detailed in paragraph 4 below:

4. State Color Guard Inventory of Flags under charge of the State Color Guard Commander, all sleeved and on 8 foot oak poles. Also in inventory are four indoor flag stands and four spiked outdoor flag supports. See below:

- a. U.S. 50 Star flag, fringed, topped by an Eagle.
- b. Betsy Ross 13 Star flag, topped with wooden period knob.
- c. State of North Carolina flag, fringed, topped w/spike.
- d. State S.A.R. flag, fringed, topped w/ spike.
- e. Grand Union (a.k.a. Continental Colors or Cambridge) flag, topped w/spike.
- f. Guilford Courthouse flag, topped w/spike.
- g. Gadsden (Don't Tread On Me) flag, topped w/spike.
- h. New England (Red Pine Tree) flag, topped w/spike.

5. The wearing of medals on uniforms is not in keeping with the tradition of the Revolutionary War era and as a matter of policy should not be worn. The time and place for the wearing of such awards include on a blue blazer, tuxedo, dinner jacket or formal military uniform, dress mess, service whites, dress blues, but not when dressing out as an S.A.R. Color Guardsmen. The official policy is not to wear them, including the S.A.R. neck ribbon. While most past presidents continue to do so, they are out of character. No insignia should be worn on any uniform that is not of the era being depicted. This includes name tags, S.A.R. Blazer Insignia, and similar badges.

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Reference:

A. The NSSAR Handbook, Volume III, Revision Date: 2009-08: Handbook Description: Volume III of the NSSAR handbook covers Insignia, Medals and Awards of the NSSAR. This is a must read for members. Main headings for this volume include: NSSAR INSIGNIA, MEDALS AWARDED FOR SERVICE TO THE SAR, MEDALS AWARDED FOR SERVICE TO THE COMMUNITY, CODE FOR WEARING MEDALS, DECORATIONS, BADGES AND INSIGNIA, CARE OF INSIGNIA AND MEDALS.

B. The Illustrated Drill Manual and Regulation for the American Soldier of the Revolutionary War, First Edition ISBN: 0.913150.47.9 Edited by A.N. Schultz - Illustrated by R. T. Coleman. Available for \$6.00, plus postage, from:

Jas. Townsend and Son, Inc.  
133 North First Street  
P.O. Box 415  
Piercetown, IN 46562  
Telephone: (574) 594-5852 Fax: (574) 594-5580

C. BRITISH ARMY MANUAL OF ARMS 1764  
(may be viewed on YOU TUBE on-line)

D. The SAR Guardsman Year 2000 "How-to-do-it" publication by the NSSAR Color Guard Committee.

## 1. SITUATION

- a. Enemy forces: Omission of color guard presence at events.
- b. Friendly forces: All Chapters and Combined Elements of the NCSSAR

## 2. MISSION

"The Sons of the American Revolution is the leading male lineage society that perpetuates the ideals of the War for Independence. As a historical, educational, and

patriotic, non-profit corporation, we seek to maintain and expand the meaning of patriotism, respect for our national symbols, the value of American citizenship, and the unifying force of “e pluribus unum” that was created from the people of many nations -- one nation and one people.”

To that end, the color guard’s aim is to demonstrate our heritage and willingness to honor our ancestors by public demonstration as participants in Wreath Layings, Grave Markings, Parades, and other patriotic gatherings in Revolutionary War period dress as either Continental Soldiers or Militia by posting the colors and performing other actions as may be required.”

### 3. EXECUTION

#### a. Forming a chapter color guard.

(1) Size and composure: Ideal minimum: Two Color Bearers to carry National Colors and Chapter S.A.R. flag, with two riflemen as escorts, although individual chapter color guardsmen may participate in combined color guard activities as riflemen or individual color bearers. (If only one man is available for an event, he should carry the Chapter S.A.R. flag)

(2) If three flags are used, the State of NC flag may be pre-posted, the “Betsy Ross” flag may be used as the National Colors at Chapter meetings, in lieu of the U.S. 50-Star flag, and the Chapter S.A.R. flag should be carried.

(3) Uniform: Period Dress of the American Revolution (Militia) or Continental Uniforms are required for all combined National, District or State Color Guard events, but the S.A.R. Blazer with insignia may be used as a suitable substitute at chapter meetings. Color guard uniforms may be obtained through Jas. Townsend & Sons or other vendors on-line, as referenced in Paragraph B.

(4) Equipment: Flags, poles, indoor flag stands, and related items, are available through varied sources. Period Weapons, both firing (Black Powder) and non firing Museum Quality Reproductions are available through various on-line sources. Tomahawks, Long Hunters Knives, Canteens, Tri-corn Hats, Hunting Shirts and related items are available as referenced in Paragraph B. Outdoor Flag ground spike-type stands may be fabricated from local sources using Rebar and pipe lengths of a diameter to allow insertion of the flag staff. All chapters participating in combined events, where the colors are to be posted as part of the ceremony, should bring outdoor flag supports for each flag they will carry, i.e. Chapter Colors, Hornet’s Nest, Guilford, Betsy Ross, State of NC flag, etc. If only four flags are to be posted, i.e. the National Colors, the State Colors, the Host Chapter S.A.R. Colors, and the State S.A.R. Colors, then other participating Color Guard members may retain their colors in formation as directed by the Color Guard Commander.

(5) The hosting chapter is responsible for posting the National Colors (U.S. 50-Star flag) the State of NC flag, and their own Chapter flag with earned stream-

ers. The hosting chapter may request the State of NC flag and the U.S. 50-Star flag from the State Color Guard Commander if they are unable to provide these from their own resources.

All chapters should bring an outdoor flag support for each flag they plan to carry, as an event may require all flags to be posted in place. Alamance Battleground's Patriots Day and SCSSAR's Buford's Massacre are such events. Chapter planners should coordinate logistics in advance.

(6) All chapters who plan color guard activity should monitor the official web site and complete the RSVP notice in advance of all planned activities to assure that they will be listed in the program produced by the hosting chapter and plan their arrival at the event location in time to park, suit up and coordinate with the Color Guard Commander on site for the event.

## 4. ADMINISTRATION AND LOGISTICS

### a. ADMINISTRATION

(1) The Chapter commits to an event and plans to use it's own assets to complement a combined color guard or hosts a event and invites other chapters to participate by posting the date, time ,and location of the event in coordination with the NCSSAR Web Master using the standard Calendar of Events Format that may be seen in the NCSSAR section of the National SAR Web Site.

(2) If the host plans to give streamers to participating chapters, these items must be ordered well in advance.

(3) The Chapter President or his designated officer, should maintain a basic after action report format for the event, using the key word S-A-L-U-T-E, and post Size of the element, Activity (i.e. grave marking, wreath presentation, flag retirement, etc.) Location by address or map reference, Uniform worn by chapter participants (i.e. continental uniform, militia period attire, SAR blue blazer w/SAR insignia, medals, etc.) Time of the event (reported with the date of the event), and Equipment carried or used, to include flags, flag holders, uniforms and related weapons. The chapter color guard commander or the chapter president should maintain a copy of this report as a back up to the Chapter Activities Report submitted annually and should e-mail a copy of this report within one working day at the completion of the event. The report may also be submitted via telephone to the NCSSAR Color Guard Commander and the designated Area Vice President.

(4) Individual color guardsmen should also keep a log or journal of all qualifying color guard events in which they participate as a guide for the time they plan to submit their request for the Bronze or Silver Color Guard Medal as defined in the SAR Handbook, detailed below:

#### *NCSSAR COLOR GUARD MEDAL(S)*

*The SAR Color Guard Medal, authorized in 1998, may be awarded for ser-*

*vice to the Society at the National, District, State and Chapter levels. The Bronze Color Guard Medal is for service at the State and Chapter levels. The Silver Color Guard Medal is for service at the District and National levels. The Gold Color Guard Medal may only be worn by the National Color Guard Commander, his Deputy, and the NSSAR Color Guardsman of the Year. Recipients may only receive the award once at each level (once at State/Chapter levels, and once at District/National levels). Oak leaf clusters are not allowed. This medal is for three years service at the appropriate level. It may be broken, not continuous service, and award of this medal may be retroactive, so that any living compatriot may receive it, even if he cannot march anymore.*

*The Chapter, State Society, District, or National Color Guard Commander will be the final person who shall have the awarding authority of the medal at the appropriate level. The Chapter President, State Society President, the Vice President General, and the President General will award the appropriate medal at the appropriate level.*

*For Chapter and State Society level (Bronze medal), to have a satisfactory year, the participant must attend 50% of the scheduled activities of the Chapter or State Color Guard concerned.*

*For District and National level (Silver medal), to have a satisfactory year, the recipient must have attended a National Congress and one Trustees meeting in each year. A District Parade (i.e. Point Pleasant or Cowpens) will substitute for a Trustees meeting. Without a National Congress, you must have at least both Trustees meetings and two District Parades. The National Color Guard Committee, in consultation with the Historic Sites and Celebrations Committee, will designate the District Parades.*

*Special National and District events will qualify as a substitute for the Congress or Leadership Meetings as designated by the National Color Guard Committee. This will include such events as escorting the President General on overseas events, or special celebrations, such as Centennial Celebrations.*

*The Gold Medal will be awarded for three years service as National Color Guard Commander, Vice National Color Guard Commander, and no more than one per year to that individual who is selected as the National Color Guardsman of the Year by the National Color Guard Committee. Each Color Guard, State Society and Chapter, may nominate one compatriot each year for this award. It must be submitted at the same time as the application for the Color Guard Trophy. It shall be that Compatriot that best exemplifies both the spirit of the Sons of the American Revolution and the use of Color Guards to display that spirit. To be considered for National Color Guardsman of the Year, three years of service at Chapter, State Society, District, or National level is necessary before nomination may be submitted.*

*The National Color Guard Committee will be the final judge of who is qualified to be awarded these medals. Waivers to these requirements will be granted only under very special circumstances and must be submitted in writing to the National Color Guard Commander for committee consideration.*

**SUBMISSION OF NOMINATION FOR AN AWARD OF A MEDAL:**  
*Any nomination for an award of a medal for presentation at an Annual Con-*

*gress, unless otherwise stated in the description for the award, must be received by the Executive Director, not later than 30 days prior to the date of the Annual Congress. The Executive Director will forward any nomination received to the respective Committee Chairman for committee consideration.*

## b. LOGISTICS

(1) Chapters should plan transportation to and from the site, transport of flags, banners, stands and other equipment, as well as any wreaths and wreath stands or other items required. Car pooling is desirable. Maps to the location, including narrative directions, and if possible, an advance recon of the route, are desirable.

(2) Some events are over night, i.e. for Kings Mountain and Cowpens enlist the Super Eight Motel in Gaffney, S.C. as SAR Headquarters on the night before those events, which include a social hour, key meetings and other briefings concerning each site. The Cowpens agenda also includes travel to downtown Spartanburg, S.C. in the morning to participate in a Massing of the Colors and presentations at the General Daniel Morgan statue. Participants should plan to pay for meals during these events.

(3) A canteen with drinking water should be planned for and carried to events with personal items, medicines, etc., along with planned arrival time to allow for parking, donning equipment and the weather. (Cowpens is nearly always a “Cold Weather” event)

## 5. COMMAND AND SIGNAL

### a. COMMAND

The Hosting Chapter is usually the command authority with National SAR Officers recognized by protocol order. In North Carolina, the NCSSAR Color Guard Commander is the usual commander of marching assets, i.e. the assembled combined color guard.

### b. SIGNAL

Electronic coordination by e-mail, using the planning criteria presented in this SOP, and by telephone. Chapters use their own established means of coordination in planning and reporting. The method of contact for the NCSSAR Color Guard Commander is: [decadel@embarqmail.com](mailto:decadel@embarqmail.com) or (910) 864-1279.

### ACKNOWLEDGE:

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### Annexes:

1. Color Guard SOP for NCSSAR Forward

Prepared By  
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for the betterment of the  
North Carolina Society, Sons of the American Revolution