



Sevier's Sentiments . . .

JOHN SEVIER CHAPTER TNSSAR, CHATTANOOGA, TN

www.johnsevierchapter.org

William L. Eubank, III, President

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James E. Couch, Editor

FROM THE PRESIDENT

I want to thank all members of the John Sevier Chapter family in making our chapter activities both Patriotic and most interesting to our members for the year 2009.

John Sevier Chapter did achieve a special recognition this year in that we had a Chapter sponsored young man from a Chattanooga high school win the Tennessee Society JROTC Contest and then place 1st at our National Congress held in Atlanta. Other year's activities included the Patriot grave marking at Falling Water Presbyterian Church and the presentation of 110 American flags for the new East Hamilton School. We were joined in this initiative by five DAR Chapters. These are specific examples of achieving the historical and patriotic goals of our Society .

Our membership growth through December 1st achieved an increase of 5% with a number of additional chapter applications still being reviewed at Louisville, Kentucky. Hopefully we can receive notification in a timely manner so we can welcome the new Compatriots at our George Washington dinner in February 2010.

Your efforts helped make 2009 a successful year for our chapter.

.Yours in Patriotic Service,

Bill Eubank

President, Tennessee Society
and John Sevier Chapter
TNSSAR

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John Sevier Chapter SAR dinner meeting

Next meeting:

Friday, February 12, 2010

6:30 PM

George Washington

Banquet

Marriott Hotel

Speaker:

**William L. Eubank, III
President TNSSAR**

Members, Wives, Prospective
Members, other Interested
Parties Invited to Attend

Please submit any articles, notices and/or
pictures (with captions)

to Jim Couch,
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WREATHS ACROSS AMERICA

DECEMBER 12, 2009



President William Eubank
presenting P.G. Butler's proclamation

The John Sevier Chapter participated in the Wreaths Across America program this year. The Chapter sponsored a total of 39 Wreaths and sent in

a total of \$585.00 to the main office in Maine. There were 1440 wreaths placed on graves in the Chattanooga National Cemetery this year. These wreaths were sponsored by the SAR, the DAR and many other organizations in our area. On December 12, 2009 an impressive ceremony was held at the Military Service Memorial pavilion. Tennessee President TNSSAR William Eubank presented the NSSAR President General Butler's proclamation concerning the Wreaths Across America event. Compatriot Terry Siler presented the U. S. Coast Guard wreath, and Compatriot Charles Dammann

presented the U. S. Merchant Marine wreath. Compatriots Stan Evans and James Stone of the Benjamin Cleveland Chapter participated in the color guard.

The attached photographs are of President William Eubank presenting P.G. Butler's proclamation, Compatriot Charles N. Dammann presenting the United States Merchant Marine wreath and a group photo of SAR members in attendance. This group included SAR members from the Hiwassee, Benjamin Cleveland and John Sevier Chapters.

Charles N. Dammann
December 12, 2009



Compatriot Charles N. Dammann presenting the
United States Merchant Marine wreath



A group photo of SAR members in attendance at the Wreaths Across America ceremony..
SAR Chapters represented were Hiwassee, Benjamin Cleveland and John Sevier

EDITOR'S CORNER



James E. Couch

The Man Who Thanked the Sea Gulls

Summary of the eRumor:

The story of a man who would routinely take a bucket of shrimp to the end of a pier and fed them to sea gulls. He would say "thank you" to them as he did. It turned out to be World War I military hero Eddie Rickenbacker who regarded a sea gull as the beginning of a series of events that saved his life while drifting for 24 days in a raft after a plane crash into the Pacific.

The Truth:

The story about the plane crash and the seagull is true and, as indicated in the eRumor, is an excerpt from a book by popular minister and inspirational author Max Lucado. The book is titled "In the Eye of the Storm."

Rickenbacker tells the story of the sea gulls in his autobiography. Rickenbacker was a pilot during WWI who became an ace and was presented with The Medal of Honor. The crash at sea took place in 1942 when he was sent

by the U.S. government on a tour of the Pacific theater. The four-engine B-17 bomber on which he was a passenger went off course and ran out of fuel at sea.

He went on to be a race car driver, an aviation consultant, and airline executive. Rickenbacker was not the founder of Eastern Airlines but was very influential in the General Motors acquisition of Eastern Air Transport, a compilation of North American Aviation and Pitcair Aviation Company that was owned by Clement Keyes. When General Motors acquired the company from Keyes they renamed it to Eastern Air Lines. In January of 1934 Rickenbacker began his term general manager for Eastern Air Lines and later served also as the company's president.

A real example of the eRumor as it has appeared on the Internet:

Old Eddie

It happens every Friday evening, almost without fail, when the sun resembles a giant orange and is starting to dip into the blue ocean. Old Ed comes strolling along the beach to his favorite pier. Clutched in his bony hand is a bucket of shrimp.

Ed walks out to the end of the pier, where it seems he almost has the world to himself. The glow of the sun is a golden bronze now. Everybody's gone, except for a few joggers on the beach. Standing out on the end of the pier, Ed is alone with his thoughts ... and his bucket of shrimp.

Before long, however, he is no longer alone. Up in the sky a thousand white dots come screeching and squawking, winging their way toward that

lanky frame standing there on the end of the pier. Before long, dozens of seagulls have enveloped him, their wings fluttering and flapping wildly.

Ed stands there tossing shrimp to the hungry birds. As he does, if you listen closely, you can hear him say with a smile, "Thank you. Thank you."

In a few short minutes the bucket is empty. But Ed doesn't leave. He stands there lost in thought, as though transported to another time and place. Invariably, one of the gulls lands on his sea-bleached, weather-beaten hat – an old military hat he's been wearing for years. When he finally turns around and begins to walk back toward the beach, a few of the birds hop along the pier with him until he gets to the stairs, and then they, too, fly away. And old Ed quietly makes his way down to the end of the beach and on home.

If you were sitting there on the pier with your fishing line in the water, Ed might seem like "a funny old duck," as my dad used to say. Or, "a guy that's a sandwich shy of a picnic" as my kids might say. To onlookers, he's just another old codger, lost in his own weird world, feeding the seagulls with a bucket full of shrimp.

To the onlooker, rituals can look either very strange or very empty. They can seem altogether unimportant ... maybe even a lot of nonsense. Old folks often do strange things, at least in the eyes of Boomers and Busters. Most of them would probably write Old Ed off, down there in Florida.

(continued on next page)

The Man Who Thanked the Sea Gulls

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That's too bad. They'd do well to know him better. His full name: **Eddie Rickenbacker**. He was a famous hero back in World War II. On one of his flying missions across the Pacific, he and his seven-member crew went down. Miraculously, all of the men survived, crawled out of their plane, and climbed into a life raft. Captain Rickenbacker and his crew floated for days on the rough waters of the Pacific. They fought the sun. They fought sharks. Most of all, they fought hunger. By the eighth day their rations ran out. No food. No water. They were hundreds of miles from land and no one knew where they were. They needed a miracle.

That afternoon they had a simple devotional service and prayed for a miracle. They tried to nap. Eddie leaned back and pulled his military cap over his nose. Time dragged. All he could hear was the slap of the waves against the raft.

Suddenly, Eddie felt something land on the top of his cap. It was a seagull! Old Ed would later describe how he sat perfectly still, planning his next move. With a flash of his hand and a squawk from the gull, he managed to grab it and

wring its neck. He tore the feathers off, and he and his starving crew made a meal – a very slight meal for eight men – of it. Then they used the intestines for bait. With it, they caught fish, which gave them food and more bait ... and the cycle continued.

With that simple survival technique, they were able to endure the rigors of the sea until they were found and rescued. (after 24 days at sea ...)

Eddie Rickenbacker lived many years beyond that ordeal, but he never forgot the sacrifice of that first lifesaving seagull. And he never stopped saying, "Thank you." That's why almost every Friday night he would walk to the end of the pier with a bucket full of shrimp and a heart full of gratitude.

(Max Lucado, *In The Eye of the Storm*, pp.221, 225-226)

PS: Eddie was also an Ace in WW I and started Eastern Airlines.

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