



# THE SAN ANTONIO COMPATRIOT

SAN ANTONIO CHAPTER #4 • TEXAS SOCIETY OF THE SONS OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION

Compatriot Richard Weitzel, President - Compatriot Frank Rohrbough, Editor

May-Jun 2023



## PRESIDENT'S REMARKS



Compatriots: We continue to pursue our initiative to honor our past compatriots, participate in several Color Guard opportunities, make our annual presentation at the Hyatt Regency Hill Country Resort on July 3rd and participate in the Annual Independence Day Celebration at Ft. Sam Houston National Cemetery on July 4th, which is led by the Granaderos Y Damas. We will participate in the commemoration of the Battle of Medina on August 12, 2023 at the Leming School House at 9:00 AM; all members and their families are invited to attend this historic commemoration.

Our newly-elected State President Sam Massey shared his vision during his address at the 128<sup>th</sup> Annual Convention in April in Spring TX. His desire is to grow our membership and just as importantly, *mentor* our new members. He asked all chapters to grow membership in Texas Society.

Under the able leadership of Peter Baron the Chapter presented Law Enforcement Awards to San Antonio Police Officers during our May Chapter Meeting. **See Page 3.** Under the skilled leadership of John Bell we completed our Chapter Awards presentations to ROTC and JROTC Cadets at our local High Schools and Universities. **See Page 4.** With the help of our Registrar/Genealogist Larry Luckett and Compatriot Dustin Whittenburg we continue to recruit new members. At the May Chapter Meeting we inducted four new members as shown on **Page 4.**

On Saturday, May 27 Compatriot Frank Kebelman conducted a new event for us by organizing a Memorial Day Flag Placement Service at City Cemetery #1 in San Antonio for more than fifty military veterans. Their service included many of our wars — the Texas Revolution, the Civil War, the Mexican War, the Spanish-American War, World War I, World War II, the Korean Conflict and the Vietnam War. Seven of our members and two special guests participated in this event. For more information, see **Page 5.**

Major John Meehan, US Army (Ret) Artillery Officer, was the Guest Speaker for our June 21st Chapter Meeting. His topic was "Artillery of the American Revolution". He gave a wonderful and in-depth review of the evolution of the use of artillery during the American Revolution. For more information see **Page 6.**

I ask everyone to be on look for opportunities to present Flag Certificates to any neighborhood or business that you see flying our National Colors *appropriately*. If you see a likely candidate, please contact our Flag Committee Chairman, John Booth, so he can follow up on your lead. His email is [jvbooth@me.com](mailto:jvbooth@me.com).

Although we will take a couple of months off from our Chapter Meetings during July and August, we need to focus on those events which are planned for the Fall. Our Chapter continues to grow as our Registrar and Assistance Registrar are busy assisting potential members with the completion of their application.

As a reminder all members who are an Event and Committee Chairman please report chapter activities which take place during the year using the Chapter Activities Report Form. Use the URL noted below, then go to the "Docs" tab and click on "Society Docs & Forms". This Form must be sent to Compatriot Blair Rudy who is responsible for preparing the Chapter's Annual Report for 2023.

Please watch for upcoming activities either through email, our chapter website (<https://www.txssar.org/SanAntonio/>) or our Facebook page at: <https://www.facebook.com/sarsatx>.

Respectfully, *Dick Weitzel*

## GUEST SPEAKER FOR MAY CHAPTER MEETING

May is the month where SAR Chapters recognize local Law Enforcement Officers and presents deserving Officers with the SAR Law Enforcement Award. We were pleased to have two Officers from the San Antonio Police Department as our Guest Speakers for this meeting.

**(Photo Right)** Lt. Jacob Garza, Deputy Chief of Staff, who spoke about the current status of police security and public safety in San Antonio. He



addressed the issue of illegal immigrants coming across the Texas border into San Antonio, crime issues and the homeless residing in the city. In general, he stated that many of the immigrants are just passing through the city and moving on to other destinations. As for the homeless problems he noted that it was far less a problem in our city than in Austin, Dallas or Houston and that the Mayor and City Council have been supportive of the Department's actions to maintain safety across the city. He then asked SGT Baron to speak about the Wellness Unit. As a Guest Speaker President Dick Weitzel presented him with the Chapter SAR Challenge Coin.



**(Photo Left)** Sergeant Tina Baron, spouse of Compatriot Peter Baron, is the Director of the San Antonio Police Department Wellness Unit. She now leads this new Wellness Unit which is responsible for officer health and resiliency. It is a proactive unit to ensure that officers get home each shift and are strong enough to complete their tour and enjoy their retirement.

SGT Baron has served the SAPD for 24 years in a variety of positions to include Patrol Officer, Gang Unit, Instructor, Detective, Repeat Offender Program and Fusion Supervisor.

To learn more about the Law Enforcement Awards, see page 3.

## THREE MEMBERS INDUCTED TO THE TEXAS NAVY

Three of our chapter members were nominated by President Richard Weitzel for membership in the Texas Navy Association.

**(Photo Below L-R)** Compatriots Frank Kebelman, Frank Rohrbough and Kevin Kanter were inducted as Admirals by Admiral Jimmy Peet Squadron Commander of the Samuel May Williams Squadron at their Quarterly Luncheon Meeting on June 9, 2023 at the Petroleum Club. Their appointments were approved by Texas Governor Greg Abbott.

Other Compatriots of our Chapter who are Admirals in the Texas Navy Association are Richard Weitzel, Bob Hancock,



Dustin Whittenburg, John Baines and Kenneth McAnear.

The Navy Association salutes, preserves and presents the fabulous history of the officers and men who so gallantly served to free and protect the Republic of Texas.

## CHAPTER PRESENTS ANNUAL LAW ENFORCEMENT AWARDS AT MAY CHAPTER MEETING



**(Photo Left)** Compatriot Peter Baron read the Citation to accompany the presentation of the SAR Law Enforcement Commendation Medal to Officer Gabriel Mendoza. **(Photo Right)** The Citation reads: “Officer Gabriel Mendoza is a seventeen-year veteran of the San Antonio Police Department and is currently assigned to the Officer Wellness Unit.

Officer Mendoza graduated from the San Antonio Police Academy on 22 September 2006. He has served in the West & South



Patrol Divisions, the Mental Health Unit, and the Officer Wellness Unit. Officer Mendoza is a graduate of San Marcos High School Class of 2002. Officer Mendoza earned an Associate’s degree in Applied Science from Wayland Baptist University in 2009. Officer Mendoza has served with the SAPD Family Assistance team for 9 years. This voluntary assignment entails additional duties to serve the families of officers in the event of a line of duty death, active member death, catastrophic injury or illness, and retiree death. These challenges often overwhelm the families and it is essential that compassionate officers, such as Officer Mendoza, are present to see these families through.

Officer Mendoza has also served as a Tactical Medic for 13 years. This program allows officers to provide rapid medical care to injured civilians and officers. Officer Mendoza also volunteers as a member of the departments Peer Support Program. We recognize Officer Gabriel Mendoza for his honor, selfless sacrifice, and commitment to duty; these actions reflect great credit on himself, his family, the San Antonio Police Department, and the Citizens of San Antonio.

Recognized this 17<sup>th</sup> Day of May 2023 by the San Antonio Chapter, of the Texas Society Sons of the American Revolution.

**(Photo Right)** Compatriot Peter Baron also read the Citation to accompany the presentation of the SAR Law Enforcement Commendation Medal to Officer Frances Ochoa. The Citation reads: “Officer Frances Ochoa is a nineteen-year veteran of the San Antonio Police Department and is currently assigned to the Officer Wellness Unit.

Officer Ochoa graduated from the San Antonio Police Academy on 17 September 2004. She has served in the Prue & Central Patrol Divisions, the Vice Unit, the Mental Health Unit, and the Officer Wellness Unit.

Officer Ochoa is a graduate of Highlands High School and has a Criminal Justice Degree from Wayland Baptist University, Class of 2012.

Officer Ochoa has served with the SAPD Family Assistance team for over 10 years. This voluntary assignment entails additional duties to serve the families of officers in the event of a line of duty death, active member death, catastrophic injury or illness, and retiree death. These challenges often overwhelm the families and it is essential that compassionate officers, such as Officer Ochoa, are present to see these families through.

Officer Ochoa has also served as the San Antonio Hispanic Police Officers Association President for seven years. The SAHPOA provides scholarships to children of members, improves community ties through volunteering, and assists officers in their times of need.

We recognize Officer Frances Ochoa for her honor, selfless sacrifice, and commitment to duty; these actions reflect great credit on herself, her family, the San Antonio Police Department, and the Citizens of San Antonio.

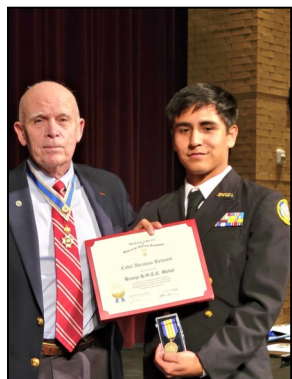
Recognized this 17<sup>th</sup> Day of May 2023 by the San Antonio Chapter, of the Texas Society Sons of the American Revolution.





## PRESENTATION OF ROTC AND JROTC AWARDS

Under the able leadership of John Bell, Chairman ROTC Awards Program, 48 JROTC High Schools and 3 ROTC Units at local Universities were sent SAR Medals and Certificates to recognize outstanding cadets for 2023. **(Photo Right)** Compatriots Michael Bowles and Bob Watson (in colonial uniform) attended the Judson High School JROTC Awards Program that was held on April 6, 2023 in the Performing Arts Center. They presented Cadet Dylan Barrett the Sons of the American Revolution Bronze Medal and Citation. Bowles also presented a Medal and Certificate to Cadet Emmett Decker, LEE JROTC Awards Ceremony on April 26, 2023.



**(Photo Left)** Compatriot Frank Kebelman presented the Sons of the American Revolution Bronze JROTC Medal and Certificate to Cadet Abraham Delmont at the Marshall High School Awards Program on April 12th. **(Photo Below Left)** Compatriot Tom O'Brien attended the Johnson High School Army JROTC Awards Program on April 14th. He presented the SAR Bronze Medal and Certificate to Cadet Connor Throckmorton for his leadership role in the JROTC Program.



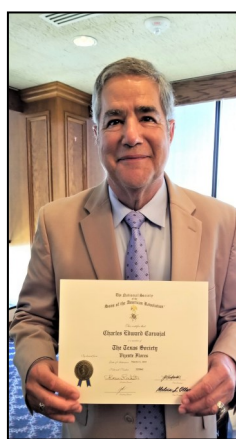
**(Photo Right)** On April 19th Compatriot George Harcourt presented Cadet Sergeant Jaxon Rutherford the SAR Bronze Medal and Citation for his leadership with Company Bravo as a Squad Leader.



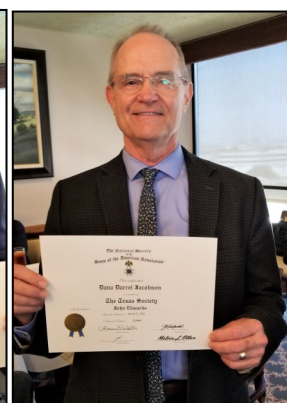
## INDUCTIONS OF NEW CHAPTER MEMBERS

At the June Meeting President Weitzel inducted four new members to the San Antonio Chapter.

**(Shown Below)** Mark E. O'Neal and Charles E. Carvajal, both sponsored by Past Chapter President



Dustin Whittenburg. **(Shown Right)** George L. Saidler and Dana D. Jacobson, both sponsored by Past Chapter President Kevin Kanter.



Each inductee has a Patriot Ancestor whose name is on the Certificate and their patriotic service is noted on their applications. Compatriot O'Neal's Patriot Ancestor is Pvt. Joseph

Cottle of Captain Warren Cottle's Company of the Vermont Militia. Compatriot Charles Carvajal's Patriot Ancestor is Vizente Flores of Texas who provided Patriotic Service by providing materials and cattle in support of the Revolutionary War Cause.

Compatriot George Saidler's Patriot Ancestor is William Louis Jouvet who assisted in establishing American Independence while acting in the capacity of Artificer of French Troops Count D'Estains in Rhode Island. Compatriot Dana Jacobson's Patriot Ancestor is John Edwards who assisted in establishing American Independence by acting in the capacity of Legislator in the Virginia House of Delegates.

## CHAPTER CELEBRATES MEMORIAL DAY



On Saturday, 27 May 2023, seven members of our Chapter gathered at San Antonio's historic City Cemetery #1, to conduct a flag placement event for over fifty military veterans interred there. City Cemetery #1, the city's first public cemetery, was established in 1853, and among the heroes buried there are veterans of the Texas Revolution, The Mexican War, the Civil War, the Spanish-American War, World War I, World War II, the Korean War and the War in Vietnam. **(Photo Left from R-L)** The Color Guard included Frank Kebelman, Larry Loop, Frank Rohrbough, Stephen Rohrbough, Kevin Kanter, Blair Rudy and Peter Baron. Also shown are Diane Rohrbough and Bob Peterson (Bugler Bob Peterson from the Memorial Service Detachment at Ft. Sam Houston National Cemetery). Other members attending but not shown were Ron Finch and Mike Bowles, our photographer.

The chapter conducted an Opening Ceremony with Welcoming Remarks by First Vice President Blair Rudy, an Invocation by Chaplain Kevin Kanter and concluded with the playing of the National Anthem and Taps by Bugler Bob Peterson.

VP Rudy provided an overview of the Origins of Memorial Day stating "Memorial Day, originally called Decoration Day, is a day of remembrance for those who have died in our nation's service. Memorial Day was borne out of the Civil War and a desire to honor our dead. It was proclaimed on 5 May 1868 by General John Logan, national commander of the Grand Army of the Republic, in his [General Order No. 11](#), and was first observed on 30 May 1868, when 5,000 participants placed flowers on over 20,000 Union and Confederate soldiers graves at Arlington National Cemetery.

The first state to recognize the holiday was New York in 1873. By 1890 it was recognized by all of the northern states. In the era Southern states decided to recognize other days to honor their war lost, for example Texas was on 19 January. Following The Great War, otherwise named World War I, the holiday became further accepted and recognized as honoring All Americans who died fighting in any war. We continue the tradition today. It is now celebrated on the last Monday in May with Congressional passage of the National Holiday Act of 1971 (P.L. 90 – 363).

In 1915, inspired by the poem "In Flanders Fields," Moina Michael replied with her own poem: "We cherish too, the Poppy red, That grows on fields where valor led, It seems to signal to the skies, That blood of heroes never dies" She then conceived of an idea to wear red poppies on Memorial day in honor of those who died serving the nation during war.

Traditional observance of Memorial day has diminished over the years and many Americans have forgotten the meaning and traditions of the day. To most it is a three day weekend with no Monday mail service. In many cemeteries, the graves of the fallen are increasingly ignored or neglected. Not here and not today! To help remind Americans of the true meaning of Memorial Day, Congress passed the "[National Moment of Remembrance](#)" resolution in December 2000. It asks that at 3 p.m. local time all Americans "voluntarily and informally observe in their own way a Moment of Remembrance and respect, pausing from whatever they are doing for a moment of silence or listening to Taps."

Today on Saturday 27 May, 2023 our San Antonio Chapter #4 of the Texas Society of the Sons of the American Revolution along with DAR, CAR and friends take a few moments to honor the final resting place of 58 Veterans on these grounds of the Historic San Antonio City Cemetery No. 1. These heroes served Texas and our Nation reaching back from our Texas War of Independence through the Viet Nam war timeframe. We will say their names to keep green their memory in our hearts, recall a bit of their past and place a flag at the markers of these American Patriots."

Four Honor Guard Teams were formed and dispatched to conduct fifteen or more Flag Placement Ceremonies at each of the designated grave sites to show grateful appreciation of their heroic service to Texas and the United States of America. During each gravesite event the team leader would state the rank and name of the veteran and his Military Service, i.e., US Army, US Navy, US Air Force, US Marine Corps, or War Service such as the Texas Revolution, The Mexican War, the Civil War or the Spanish-American War. Then the SAR Marker, US Flag and bouquet of Flowers were placed at the foot of the headstone. The team leader stated "Thank you for your Service"



## JUNE CHAPTER MEETING

**(Photo Right)** Major John Meehan, US Army (Ret) Artillery Officer was our Guest Speaker for our June Meeting. His topic was “Artillery of the American Revolution”. He gave an in-depth review of the evolution of the use of artillery during the American Revolution.

At the outbreak of the American Revolution in 1775 the colonists had only local militia and those leaders had little experience managing large forces. Any existing artillery in the hands of the colonists was old, with pitted bores and in generally poor condition. Initially, Washington’s

forces relied on what had been seized from the British. Continental Congress offered a bounty to American privateers for the collection of artillery and munitions. Colonel Henry Knox was appointed by General Washington as Chief of Artillery; he was subsequently approved by Continental Congress in November 1775. Large French bronze artillery pieces, designed for European wars and deemed by Knox as too cumbersome for Continental Artillery use, were recast at colonial foundries as 3-, 4-, and 6-pounder field pieces. Increasingly, American ironworks converted from producing domestic goods to casting serviceable artillery pieces and projectiles. Hopewell Furnace, near Valley Forge, converted from manufacturing cast iron stove plates to producing 115 cannons during the war. Warwick Furnace cast sixty 12- and 18-pounders in 1776, alone. In June 1777, Washington sent French artificers, specialists, to the iron foundry at Springfield, Massachusetts to improve cannon quality and production rate.

Artillery categories included guns (also called cannons), howitzers, and mortars. Guns were longer than mortars or howitzers, cast of iron or bronze and were designated by the weight of its round projectile. Most of the guns supporting infantry in the field were 3-, 4- or 6- pounders. The 4-pounder gun was well regarded among artillerists because of its combination of power with ease of mobility. With limited degree of elevation, cannons would fire projectiles along a relatively flat trajectory, useful for mowing down ranks of infantry deployed in tight formations. Gunners could also aim shots to glance off the ground and ricochet through enemy ranks. Solid shot was preferred against cavalry, troops in column, and flanked infantry lines. The little 3-pounder, with a light six-ounce charge fired at two degrees elevation, could send its solid shot ball over 400 yards. With a skilled gun crew, maximum effective range of 4-pounder firing solid shot was about 1200 yards. During battle, as distances to opposing forces shortened, gunners would switch from solid ball shot to case shot munition (tin cans filled with small iron balls) or to grapeshot (small balls stacked on a baseplate, enclosed in a tied-off canvas bag.)

American artillery regiments during the American Revolution were but one battalion in strength and each were authorized 12 companies. At full complement, a typical 12-company regiment comprised 768 men and officers (including staff and medical personnel) and had 48 guns. Knox favored light artillery (3-, 4- and 6-pound cannon) for deployment with foot infantry. The gun carriage, pinned to a limber, was pulled by one or more horses harnessed in line and led by a gun crew member. An artillery piece would travel no faster than the marching foot soldiers that it supported.

Assignment of an artillery company to each infantry brigade for direct support of infantry battalions and the concept of massed fires was demonstrated with the victory at **Monmouth** in 1778. As Continental Army soldier Frank Moore wrote in his journal at the time “our troops behaved with the greatest bravery and opposed the flower of the British army. Our artillery was well served and did amazing execution.”

In the war’s ultimate engagement at **Yorktown** in 1781, the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Continental Artillery Regiments, together with allied French artillery, crushed General Cornwallis’ defensive positions, employing field guns manned by crews that had received training in both field and siege work. Over six years of development, Continental Army’s field artillery had transformed from a motley collection of unskilled men employing hand-me-down guns into an effective fighting force that helped affect the war’s outcome.

For his wonderful presentation President Weitzel presented Major Meehan to book entitled “El Cazador, the Spanish Treasure Ship that changed the destiny of the world.” which was authored by former President-General (2009-2010) Edward F. Butler. Major Meehan’s application for SAR membership is pending.



## MEMBER ANNIVERSARIES

<u>5_yrs of Service</u>	<u>10_yrs of Service</u>	<u>15_yrs of service</u>	<u>20_yrs of service</u>
Robert Watson	Kenneth Watson	Ronald Graves	Sam Martin
Gale Ebie	Martin Cohick	Robert Clark	Albert Gallatin
Eilert Weitzel	Frederic Soupiset	John Hinnant	Stephen Metts
John Prather	Gerald Ball	Robert Cordova	Ben Sewell
Morris McKee	Robert Hancock	James Sutton	
John Jansma	Jake Lee	Peter Baron	
Christopher Janak	Lan Kelly	Rueben Perez	
Ernest Kerr			
Brian Scott			
Joshua Galaviz	<u>25_yrs of service</u>	<u>30_yrs of service</u>	<u>65_yrs of service</u>
Ryan Galaviz	James Hanavan	Mark Ware	Barent Dutcher
Kenneth McAnear	Ernest Hanavan III	Charles Howard	
Jason Green	Ernest Hanavan JR		
Patrick McCloskey	James Raymond		
Christopher Petty	Michael Raymond		
Brian Lavezzari	John Wilmeth		
Mark Lavezzari	Jerry 'Jay' Higginson		
Benjamin Lavezzari			
Jesse Royall			
Samuel Smith			
Jonathan Springer			
Matthew Springer			
Edward Elmer			
Matthew Elmer			

## THIS DAY IN HISTORY

### CONGRESS MAKES ITS FIRST LAND ACQUISITION

On this day in history, July 5, 1776, Congress makes its first land acquisition when it purchases 96 acres of land south of Philadelphia to build a fort for the protection of the young nation's capital city. After the July 4th Declaration of Independence, Congress immediately began to think about its own safety and that of its host city, knowing that it would be a likely British target.

The modern city of Paulsboro, New Jersey encompasses the land Congress purchased for the location of Fort Billingsport, which sat on the high ground at the narrowest point of the Delaware River south of Philadelphia. Construction of the fort was intended to block, or at least slow, a naval invasion up the river from the Delaware Bay.

Polish engineer Thaddeus Kosciuszko had arrived in America in June and volunteered his services to the Continental Army. Kosciuszko's first assignment, given to him by George Washington, was to build Fort Billingsport. The fort consisted of a redoubt along the river adjacent to the larger fort. The defenses consisted of cannons trained over the river and chevaux-de-frise, which were long poles tipped with iron points to puncture the bottom of ships, placed in the river itself.

The attack came in the fall of 1777. An invasion fleet came up the Delaware River, but was unable to proceed due to the defenses of Fort Billingsport. British General William Howe had to land his 15,000 troops on the Chesapeake Bay side of the Delaware-Maryland-Virginia peninsula and march them overland to Philadelphia instead. The city was taken on September 26th after defeating the Continental Army at the Battle of Brandywine. Fort Billingsport, along with Forts Mercer and Mifflin further upriver still lie in American hands, however, and this prevented the supply of the British troops in Philadelphia.

Shortly after capturing Philadelphia, Howe sent 1,500 men to deal with Fort Billingsport. The fort, whose defenses faced downriver, was not equipped to deal with an assault from behind. On the morning of October 2nd, as the British force approached, Colonel William Bradford gave the order to abandon the fort. The crew of the USS Andrew Doria, afloat in the river, worked for hours transporting soldiers and weapons in guard boats to the ship. As the last boat sailed for the Andrew Doria, shots were fired as the British took the fort. The garrison was then transported to Fort Mercer upriver.

The British began clearing the chevaux-de-frise from the river, which was a major undertaking. Both Forts Mercer and Mifflin fell in November, clearing the way for the British to finally supply their troops in Philadelphia. The occupation of Philadelphia lasted until the following summer when the British were finally forced to abandon the city due to France joining the war on the American side.

The site of Fort Billingsport was the first acquisition of land by the Continental Congress and has been called the "Birthplace of Homeland Security." As the first federally owned installation of any kind, it has great historical significance. Efforts are currently underway to have the site reconstructed and turned into a tourist attraction.

## ANNOUNCEMENTS, COMING EVENTS AND REPORTS

**Independence Day Event:** Monday, July 3, 2023 at the Hyatt Regency Hill Country Resort, 10:30 AM. All members are welcome.

**Annual Patriotic Day Program:** at Ft. Sam Houston National Cemetery (Assembly Area) at 10:00 A.M., July 4, 2023. Please join us.

**Battle of Medina Event:** Leming TX School at 9:00 AM. All are Welcome.

**Next Chapter Executive Committee Meetings:** Scheduled for Au-

gust 9, 2023, La Fonda Mexican Restaurant, Alamo Heights (Meetings are held the 2nd Wednesday each month 11:30 A.M.)

**Chapter Meetings: No Meetings in July-August 2023!** We will resume our **Chapter Meetings on September 20, 2023** at the Petroleum Club (7th Floor), 11:30 A.M. Reservations are required via [txsarch4reservations@gmail.com](mailto:txsarch4reservations@gmail.com). (Meetings are usually held the 3rd Wednesday of each month.)

**For more information, please go to our Chapter Website at:**

[www.txssar.org/SanAntonio](http://www.txssar.org/SanAntonio)

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