



# Lone Star Dispatch

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### ***Winner of the 2020 Col. Walter H. Taylor Award - Best Society Newsletter in the MOS&B***

#### **COMMANDER'S CORNER**

*by Johnnie L. Holley*



Compatriots:

I am pleased to announce that we had our first Texas Society Executive Council meeting this past weekend with the Chapter representatives in attendance. We had a great meeting and everyone appeared to be satisfied with the outcome. I believe this format will provide transparency and increase the flow of information between the Society and our Chapters.

As you know the National MOS&B Reunion will be held in College Station in July of 2021. This will be an amendment year, so if you have changes that you would like to see in the National By-Laws and Constitution, be working on them. I am a member of the By-Laws Committee and will be involved in this process.

The Society has been showing continuous growth and you are all to be commended. I hope all Chapters are working on getting renewals in so we can ALL be 100% on our membership renewals. We need all dues and rosters to be in the Adjutant's hands by December 15 so he can compile the Society report and get the dues in on time. Remember, your Chapter reports are due 31 December. You will find the routing information at the bottom of the form. If you have any questions, contact Adjutant McMahan.

This has been a trying year for our Society as well as our Nation. The virus has affected all of our lives and changed the way we all live. Many Chapters have seen their meetings delayed or canceled and we must work extra hard to be sure

this does not negatively impact our Society membership.

I want to take this opportunity to wish each of you a Happy Thanksgiving, A Merry Christmas, and a Happy and Prosperous New Year. Be safe and God Bless the South.

Johnnie Holley



*Society Commander Johnnie Holley receives the Col. Walter H. Taylor Award - Best Society Newsletter for the Lone Star Dispatch!*



# TEXAS HEROES

## COLONEL SANTOS BENAVIDES

1823 – 1891



Santos Benavides was a Confederate Colonel during the American Civil War and was the highest-ranking Tejano soldier in the Confederate military. Benavides was born in November of 1823 to José Jesús and Margarita (Ramón) Benavides in Laredo, Texas. He was the Great-Great-Grandson of Tomás Sánchez de la Barrera y Garza, the founder of the city of Laredo.

In the civil strife that marked the life of Texas border towns of the 1830's and 40's Benavides sided with the Mexican "Federalists," who desired a Mexican state and local autonomy against the "Centralists" who wanted all power in Mexico to reside in the capital at Mexico City.

He joined with and cooperated with the Texas forces under Mirabeau B. Lamar who occupied Laredo during the Mexican American War (1846 – 1848). At this time, he was also an active military leader,

leading successful expeditions against the Lipan Apache and other tribes that were harassing the outlying ranches near Laredo. During these campaigns he earned a reputation as a strong military leader and courageous soldier.

Benavides was also a successful merchant and rancher and in 1856 at the age of 33 he was elected mayor of Laredo and three years later in 1859, shortly before the outbreak of the War Between the States he was elected Chief Justice of Webb County.

Benavides opposed the annexation of the Laredo area by the United States, as called for by the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo after the Mexican American War, because he feared it would compromise the independent character of northern Mexico. So, it isn't surprising that when Texas seceded from the Union, Benavides and his brothers supported the Confederacy, whose States'-Rights principles were so close to their own beliefs of regional autonomy.

Shortly after Texas seceded from the Union on February 1st, 1861, Benavides was commissioned a Captain in the Confederate army and given command of the Texas 33rd Cavalry stationed in Laredo. Two of Santos' brothers, Cristobal and Refugio, were also commissioned as officers in the Confederacy and served under him in the 33rd throughout the war. On May, 22nd of that year Santos successfully repelled an attack into Texas from Northern Mexico by the Union sympathizer Juan Cortina at the Battle of Carrizo about 50 miles south of Laredo, near modern day Lake Falcon and Zapata, Texas. Cortina's troops suffered 18 casualties and never again raided in numbers across the border.

In November of 1863 Benavides was promoted to Colonel in the Confederate States Army and authorized to increase the number of the Texas 33rd Cavalry to that of a full regiment. By now this unit was known as "Benavides' Regiment".

During the War Between the States, Laredo was most important to the South as a port. Cotton could be brought by wagon from all over Texas to Laredo, loaded on boats and shipped down the Rio Grande to

Brownsville/Los Brazos de Santiago (modern day Matamoras, Mexico, immediately across the Texas border from Brownsville). There the cotton could be transferred to ships bearing the neutral flag of Mexico and sent past the Union blockade of Texas ports to Europe to raise money for the cash strapped Confederacy.

A battle ensued on March 19th, 1864 when Union Colonel Edmund J. Davis ordered Major Alfred Holt and 200 troopers of the Texas 1st (Union) Cavalry to attack Laredo. Their mission was to destroy five thousand bales of cotton stacked at the San Agustin Plaza in Laredo. Colonel Benavides had only 42 soldiers at his disposal for this battle but on three separate occasions that day the 200 Union Cavalry troopers charged those 42 patriots of "Benavides' Regiment" at Zacate Creek just north of the Rio Grande on the south side of Laredo. Three times the brave men defending their city repulsed the attack. This defeat forced the Union troops to withdraw all the way to Brownsville. Benavides and his men had secured this vital cotton shipment and the commercial route to the Gulf of Mexico for the Confederacy.

On May 13th, 1865 Benavides and his men of the 33rd Texas Cavalry would fight in one last engagement for the Confederacy at the Battle of Palmito Ranch just east of Brownsville on the banks of the Rio Grande. Word had not yet reached south Texas that General Robert E. Lee had surrendered on April 9th or that President Jefferson Davis had been captured and imprisoned just a couple of days before on May 10th. As far as the brave soldiers of "Benavides' Regiment" knew the War Between the States was still going on and so they would participate whole heartedly in this engagement, considered the last battle of the horrific war.

The Battle of Palmito Ranch is rich with anecdote and legend. There was no real reason for the battle and rumors abound as to why the Union forces broke the gentlemen's truce that had existed there at the tip of Texas throughout most of the war. But break it they did, and they left their fortifications and

marched on Brownsville. There are also rumors that French Foreign Legion troops and artillery aided the Confederates and that Mexican Royalist troops also participated.

Those rumors aside, this much we know for fact about the battle. The Union forces under Lieutenant Colonel David Branson consisted of about 500 troops from the

2nd Texas Dismounted (Union) Cavalry, the 34th Indiana Veteran Volunteer Infantry and the 62nd Regiment U.S. Colored Troops (U.S.C.T.). They faced approximately 300 Confederates under Colonel John "Rip" Ford of the 2nd Texas (Confederate) Cavalry along with elements of Colonels' Anderson, Benavides and Giddings Cavalry Regiments.

The Union troops advance was stopped by the Confederates with the Union forces suffering the loss of 115 of their 500 men, with 105 of these being prisoners taken by the Confederates. The South lost only 3 or 4 men slightly wounded. Colonel Benavides and his men were in the center of the line that stopped this last Union advance of the war.

Santos Benavides went on to serve three terms in the Texas State legislature from 1879 to 1885, ably representing the wishes of the people of Laredo and Webb County. He was also appointed as a delegate to the United States during the reciprocity controversy of 1880. He was elected as one of the Texas delegates to the World Cotton Exposition of 1884. There is a historical marker, placed in 1995 by the Texas Historical Commission in the Catholic cemetery near where Santos Benavides is buried on Saunders Street in Laredo that honors this great Texans life and achievements. He died in his home on November 9th, 1891 leaving his family, his beloved Laredo and the state of Texas "Una Herencia de Honor" (A Heritage of Honor).

*Ewell L. Loudermilk has been active in Confederate Heritage groups for over 20 years and is an avid reenactor with the 7th Texas Confederate Infantry. He is a founder and currently Adjutant of the "Major*

*John Loudermilk" Chapter of the Military Order of the Stars and Bars.*

## UPCOMING EVENTS

### MILITARY ORDER OF THE STARS AND BARS 84TH ANNUAL GENERAL CONVENTION

July 15-17, 2021  
College Station, Texas



Hilton Hotel College Station and Conference Center  
801 University Drive East  
College Station, TX 77840  
(979) 693-7500

### 2021 MOS&B CHAPTER DUES INVOICES TO BE MAILED OUT IN OCTOBER

RALEIGH, NC–The national organization will be mailing out 2021 Chapter Dues Invoices to all active chapters in the Order on October 1, 2020. These invoices will include a current chapter roster along with the dues owed by each member. Please begin invoicing your chapter members after October 15th. These state and national dues are due no later than December 15, 2020.

### Lieutenant Commander's Comments



There are many things that we can do as individuals, Chapters, and a Society to help grow the Military Order of the Stars and Bars. Although it will not grow the MOS&B but perhaps the Texas Society, some Chapters and perhaps even a new Chapter or two is an idea that I have of contacting MOS&B Members at large and inviting them to join existing Chapters or starting new ones. I recently received a roster from National showing all of the At Large members who live in the State of Texas. This roster contains some 210 names of individuals who are already members of the MOS&B, we just need them to become members of our Chapters, just think, if we could get only half of these men to join, we could increase our ranks by over 100 new members. Any camp wishing a list of at large members living in their area please contact me.

### CHAPTER 312 CELEBRATES FIRST ANNIVERSARY

*by Lee R Lance, Commander*



On August 12, 2020, the Col Briscoe Gerard Baldwin Jr Chapter 312 celebrated the first anniversary of its chartering in the MOS&B. But what better way than to honor the birthdate of their namesake, Col Baldwin – Robert E Lee’s Chief of Ordnance in the Army of Northern Virginia. Born August 12, 1828 in Staunton, VA, he graduated from VMI with the Class of 1848. He initially entered the US Military in 1851 and rose in the ranks to Captain by 1861. He joined the Confederate Army as a Lieutenant with the First Alabama Artillery in March 1861; promoted to Captain in Brigadier General R.E. Rhodes’ Field and Staff on 16APR1862; promoted to Major on 12JUN1862; and Lt Col in July 1862 while assigned to Sixth Alabama Infantry Regiment. By November 1862, he was transferred to Lee’s Field & Staff as Chief of Ordnance and promoted to Colonel. Paroled at Appomattox in April 1865, he moved to Texas in 1870.

Five of the nine charter members met at Bryan City Cemetery to pay tribute to Col Baldwin on a sizzling sunny afternoon accentuated by 100+ degree temperatures! Those present included Commander Lee Lance, Lt Commander Mike Smith, Adjutant Henry Mayo, Texas Society Chief of Staff & Chapter Member Bill Boyd, and Compatriot Member George Nelson. The group initially tended to the colonel’s marble tombstone by scrubbing the loose lichen from its surface; washing it thoroughly with water; then, spraying it down with a special “spray and forget” product that both kills the subsurface lichen and whitens the stone while doing no harm. Subsequent rains along with the sun will finish the work initiated by elbow grease and the product.

Following care for the tombstone, the group gathered around to discuss the history of Colonel Baldwin and how he ended up in Bryan/College Station. Following the war, he came to Texas in 1870 to take over the operations of a stage coach line between San Antonio and El Paso; however, that company went defunct by the time he arrived. Colonel Baldwin settled in Bryan where he was a cattle rancher on the Brazos River and eventually became the Superintendent of the Brazos County School District, a job he held until his death on September 28, 1898. Highly appreciated for his service during the war as well as his public service following the war, the UDC erected a tombstone over his grave on July 8, 1900. It is inscribed, “In memory of Col. B.G. Baldwin, Chief of Ordnance on Staff of Gen. R.E. Lee, C.S.A. Died September 28, 1898. This stone is erected by L.S. Ross Chapter, U.D.C., and other friends. Soldier, rest, they warfare o’er; Sleep the sleep that knows no breaking. Dream of battlefields no more – Days of danger, nights of waking.” The UDC ladies were joined by the men of Camp J.B. Robertson, UCV on that Sunday to dedicate the stone. A VA marker was added later.

Chapter 312 members then placed a specially made wreath of fall leaves; cotton sprigs replete with cotton bolls; a battle flag; and, banner with his birth/death years upon his grave and listened as Commander Lance read the Confederate Hero’s Prayer to honor not only Col Baldwin but also the many other Confederate Soldiers interned in the city cemetery. Lastly, the group gathered around their newly acquired Chapter Banner for photos and retired to Hooter’s where they drank a toast to our Confederate Ancestors whether officer or enlisted prior to partaking in a meal. The cold beer helped slake the parched palates of these dedicated members who suffered the heat of the Texas summer to honor their Chapter’s namesake – Col Briscoe Gerard Baldwin Jr.

What a great way to celebrate our first anniversary of chartering by celebrating the 192d anniversary of our namesake’s birthday!



## INTERESTING BIT OF HISTORY

### Who was Hayim Solomon?

On the rear of the One Dollar bill, you will see two circles. Together, they comprise the Great Seal of the United States. The First Continental Congress requested that Benjamin Franklin and a group of men come up with a Seal. It took them four years to accomplish this task and another two years to get it approved.

If you look at the left-hand circle, you will see a Pyramid



Notice the face is lighted, and the western side is dark. This country was just beginning. We had not begun to explore the west or decided what we could do for Western Civilization. The Pyramid is uncapped, again signifying that we were not even close to being finished. Inside the capstone you have the all-seeing eye, an ancient symbol for divinity. It was Franklin's belief that one man couldn't do it alone, but a group of men, with the help of God, could do anything.



The Latin above the pyramid, ANNUIT COEPTIS, means, 'God has favored our undertaking.' The Latin below the pyramid, NOVUS ORDO SECLORUM, means, 'a new order has begun.' At the base of the pyramid is the Roman Numeral for 1776. (MDCCLXXVI)

'IN GOD WE TRUST' is on this currency.



If you look at the right-hand circle, and check it carefully, you will learn that it is on every National Cemetery in the United States. It is also on the Parade of Flags Walkway at the Bushnell, Florida National Cemetery, and is the centerpiece of most hero's monuments. Slightly modified, it is the seal of the President of the United States, and it is always visible whenever he speaks, yet very few people know what the symbols mean.



The Bald Eagle was selected as a symbol for victory for two reasons: First, he is not afraid of a storm; he is strong, and he is smart enough to soar above it. Secondly, he wears no material crown. We had just broken from the King of England. Also, notice the shield is unsupported. This country can now stand on its own. At the top of that shield you have a white bar signifying congress, a unifying factor. We were coming together as one nation. In the Eagle's beak you will read, 'E PLURIBUS UNUM' meaning, 'one from many.'

Above the Eagle, you have the thirteen stars, representing the thirteen original colonies, and any clouds of misunderstanding rolling away. Again, we were coming together as one.

Notice what the Eagle holds in his talons. He holds an olive branch and arrows. This country wants peace, but we will never be afraid to fight to preserve peace. The Eagle always wants to face the olive branch, but in time of war, his gaze turns toward the arrows.

They say that the number 13 is an unlucky number. This is almost a worldwide belief. You will usually never see a room numbered 13, or any hotels or motels with a 13th floor. But think about this:

- 13 original colonies,
- 13 signers of the Declaration of Independence,
- 13 stripes on our flag,
- 13 steps on the Pyramid,
- 13 letters in, 'Annuit Coeptis,'
- 13 letters in 'E Pluribus Unum,'
- 13 stars above the Eagle,
- 13 bars on that shield,
- 13 leaves on the olive branch,
- 13 fruits, and if you look closely,
- 13 arrows.

And finally, if you notice the arrangement of the 13 stars in the right-hand circle you will see that they are arranged as a Star of David. This was ordered by George Washington who, when he asked Hayim Solomon, a wealthy Philadelphia Jew, what he would like as a personal reward for his services to the Continental Army, Solomon said he wanted nothing for himself but that he would like something for his people. The Star of David was the result. Few people know that it was Solomon who saved the Army through his financial contributions but died a pauper.

I always ask people, 'Why don't you know this?' Your children don't know this, and their history teachers don't know this. Too many veterans have given up too much to ever let the meaning fade. Many veterans remember coming home to an America that didn't care. Too many veterans never came home at all.

I for one, plan to share this presentation with everyone, so they can learn what is on the back of the United States one-dollar bill - and what it stands for!



## **DISPATCH FROM CHAPLAIN GENERAL WALTER BLACKMAN**

The study of Confederate chaplains is always an interesting and inspiring part of the War of Northern Aggression. Perhaps most fascinating are the fighting chaplains. While a congressional act exempted recognized and authorized ministers of various sects of religion from military duty, many enlisted and served with great distinction.

Among them was an Episcopal priest, William N. Pendleton, who left his congregation and put on a Confederate officer's uniform at the age of fifty-one. He began as a captain but was quickly promoted as chief of artillery on the staff of Confederate Gen. Joseph E. Johnston. He was particularly proud of four six pounder, brass smoothbore cannon which he said, "spoke a powerful language." The canons were named Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. In light of this, the moment is captured in the movie God's and Generals when Gen. Jackson told Maj. Pendleton, "I'm sure your men will do their utmost to spread the gospel, wherever they encounter the enemy." Later, Brig. Gen. Pendleton was placed in charge of Gen. Lee's artillery. After the war, he returned to Grace Church in Lexington.

Bishop Leonidas Polk became a Confederate lieutenant general, fighting in battles stretching from Kentucky to Shiloh. He strongly disagreed with Gen. Bragg and might have been sent before a court

martial, but President Jefferson Davis came to the rescue of his longtime friend and sent him to Mississippi. He took his men to Georgia and attempted to stop Sherman's advance to Atlanta but was struck by a round from a Yankee Parrott gun.

A Catholic priest, Father Abram Ryan, wanted to become a Confederate officer, but was turned down. Nevertheless, he became a "freelance" chaplain and went from one battlefield to another administering last rites to dying soldiers. He would be remembered for a poem entitled The Conquered Banner.

I personally like Chaplain T. L. Duke of the Nineteenth Virginia Regiment who seized a musket and rushed into a battle. He took personal charge of a band of sharpshooters and directed their movements. After distinguishing himself as a fighting soldier, he was made a captain of scouts and served in Mississippi with them. Documents after the war dubbed him a "double-barrel patriot."

Many other chaplains served, and some died under arms, while continuing to offer spiritual guidance to the soldiers. Others did not take up arms, but also died with the soldiers, especially in the final months of the War. Still many others were seriously wounded and maimed for life.

May we be equally inspired to "get into the fight" and defend our noble ancestors as well as our heritage through our own personal conduct and character. Borrowing from the Apostle Paul, we do not wrestle (fight) against flesh and blood, but we do fight against ideas, falsehoods, and partial truths that are really lies about the War and why our ancestors took up arms, even men of God—to defend their homes, their states, and their country against soldiers from northern states. This is enlistment and retention time in our Society—so let us do our part to make this Order stronger, and if you are not already one—become a soldier of the Cross. Jesus is looking for those who will join Him in the most important cause—the spread of the Gospel.

## **REQUEST FOR ARTICLES** for upcoming Editions of the **Lone Star Dispatch**

Please consider writing or submitting an article that can be included in future issues of the Lone Star Dispatch. Send your articles to the attention of our Editor Joe Reynolds, whose email is [Joe.Reynolds@txmosb.org](mailto:Joe.Reynolds@txmosb.org)

The preferred submittal is one in which the articles are in MS Word format and that all pictures are in jpeg format as this makes it easier to format to the proper scale within this publication.

Note that references and footnotes are requested to support where the original information is acquired as it is up to the article writer to provide such material.

If there are any questions, please feel free to contact me. Thanks.



## **2020 TEXAS SOCIETY CONVENTION**

The 2020 83<sup>rd</sup> Texas Society Convention of the Military Order of the Stars and Bars was held on August 15<sup>th</sup> at the Hilton College Station & Conference Center, College Station.







At the Awards Luncheon our guest speaker, Scott Bowden, author, and Robert E. Lee expert, gave an interesting and informative speech. Past Commander General Byron Brady presented the following Awards:

## **2020 AWARDS RECIPIENTS**

### **The Winnie Davis Award**

Jeri Dee Putman

### **Thomas Jackson Award**

Larry Joe Reynolds

### **Confederate Legacy Citation of Honor**

Johnnie L. Holley, Jr.

Devin C. Lindsey

### **Lt. Charles Read Meritorious Service Medal**

Lee Roy Lance

James G. Putman

George Ward Williamson

### **Col. John Pelham Legion of Merit Award**

Dennis David Brand

### **Major General Patrick Cleburne Service Award**

Dr. James A. Newsom

### **Commander General's Award**

Devin C. Lindsey

Larry D. Martin

Larry Joe Reynolds

### **Varina Howell Davis Award**

Golda Foster-McMahon

Jo Anne Siler

### **Col. Walter H. Taylor Award - Best Society**

#### **Newsletter**

1<sup>st</sup> Place – *The Lone Star Dispatch*

### **Henry Timrod Southern Culture Award**

Judge Edward F. Butler

#### **Rebel Club**

#### **Gold Certificate**

Larry D. Martin - 31 new members

Sanford Christian Reed - 15 new members

#### **Silver Medal and Certificate**

Lee Roy Lance – 6 new members

#### **Bronze Medal and Certificate**

David Dennis Brand - 6 new members

David Paul McMahon, Texas - 4 new members

### **Lt. Gen. Simon Buckner Award - Membership**

#### **Retention**

Lone Star Chapter 137

General Lawrence Sullivan Ross Chapter 184

Colonel Richard Hubbard Chapter 261

### **Col. Walter Hopkins Distinguished Chapter**

#### **Award**

Winner - General Sullivan Ross Chapter 184

3<sup>rd</sup> Place - Major Benjamin F. Ficklin Chapter 310

### **Southern Cross of Honor**

Larry Joe Reynolds

#### **Gold Star Awards**

#### **ATM Department**

Johnnie L. Holley, Jr.

On behalf of the Texas Society, I would like to extend a hearty Congratulations to each of you!



## Texas Society Leadership

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Judge Edward F. Butler

### Inspector General

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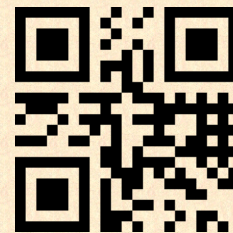
## MILITARY ORDER OF THE STARS AND BARS

*We, the posterity of the Officer Corps and civil officials of the Confederacy, do pledge ourselves to commemorate and honor the service of leadership these men rendered in the cause of the fundamental American principles of self-determination and states' rights and to perpetuate the true history of their deeds for the edification of ourselves, our society and for generations yet unborn.*



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Opinions expressed by individual writers are their own and do not necessarily reflect official positions of the Texas Society, Military Order of the Stars and Bars. Letters and articles may be submitted to: [Joe.Reynolds@txmosb.org](mailto:Joe.Reynolds@txmosb.org) (Cutoff for articles is 15th of the month)