



## The significance of black patriots in the Revolutionary War

By E. M. Anderson, Sr.  
LTC (Ret)

In his 2021 book entitled *List of Free African Americans in the American Revolution*, Paul Heinegg identifies by first and last names free men of color who served in the Revolutionary War. He states that, “over 420 African Americans who were born free during the colonial period served in the Revolution from Virginia.” He cites *The Library of Virginia, National Archives of Revolutionary War pension files, and Personal Property Tax Lists on microfilm at the Library of Virginia and <http://familysearch.org> as the sources of his information. Additionally, Heinegg states, “another 400 who descended from free-born colonial families served from North Carolina, 40 from South Carolina, 60 from Maryland, and 17 from Delaware.” Moreover, he says that at least 24 free-born African Americans from Virginia and at least 41 free-born African Americans from North Carolina died in the service of the colonies. Among other sources of information, he cites the North Carolina Archives Military Troop Returns and National Archives Revolutionary War pension files.*

From the onset of the war, both free and enslaved black men were all-in fighting for the colonies they now called home. The desired reward of the enslaved black men was to attain the same freedom as their white counterparts.

By 1775, there were two and a half million black people in the colonies. Although black people had proven themselves in combat during the previous years, and were members of state militias, many in the colonies were apprehensive about arming them. But, by the end of 1776, several colonies such as Massachusetts and Rhode Island chose to reconsider their policy, enlisting and arming black men.

South Carolina refused to legalize enlistment of enslaved blacks, as did Georgia, and they maintained the policy until the end, despite the fall of Savannah in late 1778.

In the latter months of 1779, the Patriots decided to take back the City of Savannah. Author, Lea Maguire, in her article entitled “Haitian Soldiers at the Battle of Savannah (1779), points out the Battle of Savannah, “...became

one of the bloodiest battles during the American Revolutionary War. At the time, the British forces numbering, 3,200 troops, were occupying Savannah.” General Benjamin Lincoln commanded a Continental force 600 soldiers strong and was supported by 3,500 French soldiers led by First Lieutenant Count d’Estaing. Ironically, included among the French forces was a force of 800 free black and enslaved men from Saint-Dominique (later Haiti). Maguire in her article points out, “...the French had agreed to ally with American Revolutionary forces following the royal ordinances issued by Louis XVI, the King of France on March 12, 1779.”

Maguire continued, saying, “On October 8, 2007, a memorial statue was unveiled in Savannah dedicated to the Haitian fighting force (the Chasseurs-Volontaires de Saint-Dominique) during the Battle of Savannah. The memorial pays tribute to the significant role these soldiers had during the Revolutionary War and recognizes the support they gave to the founding of the United States.”

Mark R. Salser, in his 1992 book entitled “Black Americans in Defense of their Nation” states that later in 1779, “...when Spain joined France as an ally, black troops from Louisiana comprised almost half the force commanded by Governor Bernardo Galvez who successfully drove the British from Louisiana and the Mississippi Valley – thereby preventing the southern flank of the Continental forces from being turned.” Salser goes on to say “...on July 9, 1781, when the Continental army passed in review, Baron von Cloisen, an aide to General Rochambeau, noted that ‘three-quarters of the Rhode Island regiment consists of Negroes, and that the regiment is the most neatly dressed, the best under arms, and the most precise in its maneuvers.’” It was the majority black Rhode Island regiment that fought with General George Washington at the Battle of Yorktown, the battle that ended the American Revolutionary War.

By the end of the American Revolution, more than 5,000 free and enslaved black troops had served in the Colonial army. There was much disappointment when full citizenship, with all the rights and privileges was not forthcoming for all.

## Third week of session with the Georgia General Assembly

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are incapable of making mental health decisions. The individual will have a psychiatric advance directive that will document:

- Emergency contact information
- Situations that have been known to trigger a mental health crisis
- Information about the individual that may help de-escalate a crisis
- Information to assist care providers if the individual enters a treatment facility
- Past and current medications
- Treatment expectations and if they have a designated a mental health care agent

Providers and treatment facilities would be required to comply with the directive to the fullest extent possible. Through HB 752, our state laws would help bring greater parity to mental health so that individuals who struggle with mental illness will be treated as equally as someone with a physical illness. This legislation is the result of over a decade’s worth of work, and I am proud of the bipartisan efforts that led to the passage of the Psychiatric Advance Directive Act in the House Chamber this week.

In an effort to lower prescription drug prices for Georgians, we passed House Bill 867, or the Truth in Prescription Pricing for Patients Act. This bill would specifically address how pharmacy benefit managers (PBMs), which are third-party administrators of prescription drug programs for health insurance plans, calculate the price for prescriptions that individuals and their health coverage plans pay in a way that is more transparent to consumers.

Under HB 867, PBMs would be required to:

- Calculate a prescription’s “true cost” based on what the drug cost to purchase at a pharmacy, minus any eligible rebates
- Require PBMs to communicate their calculations to consumers
- Reimburse any excess amounts to individuals if their final calculation would save the individual money
- Not hold the individual or pharmacy responsible for the underpaid amount if the PBM calculates a higher final cost than what an individual must pay

This bill would not apply to state administered health plans, including the State Health Benefit Plan, Medicaid, and Peach-Care for Kids. House Bill 867 would ensure that PBMs conduct their business fairly and transparently in our state, and ultimately, lower the out-of-pocket costs Georgians pay for prescription drugs.

My colleagues and I passed bipartisan legislation to help prevent wrongful convictions in criminal trials. House Bill 478 would change the standard for admissible court evidence and testimony in criminal cases to match the standard used in civil cases. Since the early 1990s, Georgia’s federal court system has used this same standard for expert testimony, but our state’s criminal courts have not. This new standard would provide a list of factors that a judge may consider to help determine the admissibility of scientific evidence or witness testimony. Without this standard, wrongful convictions have occurred in criminal cases due to unreliable scientific evidence. In the last 30 years, faulty scientific evidence admitted under the current standard has contributed to at least 25 out of nearly 40 documented wrongful convictions in Georgia. Fortunately, HB 478 would raise this standard and act as a gatekeeper to protect the integrity of the scientific evidence and expert witness testimony allowed in our criminal courts.

Members of the House Rural Development Council provided an update about their work while we were in the House Chamber last week. More than five years ago, Speaker David Ralston launched an initiative that specifically focused on the needs of our rural communities, and since then, this council has consistently produced effective, sound policies that have already benefited our rural regions. Last December, the council released its legislative recommendations for the 2022 legislative session, which include supporting agriculture, economic development, education, health care, and mental health needs across rural Georgia. This week, the council announced that 11 House bills that are based on its recommendations have been introduced and assigned to seven

different House committees. The council members also mentioned that eight other House bills are in the pipeline and will be introduced later this session. I look forward to providing further updates about these rural development initiatives as they make their way through the legislative process. You can learn more about the House Rural Development Council and its 2022 legislative recommendations at <https://www.house.ga.gov/Committees/en-US/HouseRuralDevelopmentCouncil.aspx>

In other news, the governor announced that the state will provide approximately \$408 million in federal American Rescue Plan Act funding to help provide faster and more reliable internet to homes and businesses in rural Georgia. These preliminary awards will support 49 broadband infrastructure projects that will impact 70 Georgia counties. These projects and their funding represent an investment of more than \$738 million in Georgia when matching funds are contributed. According to data from the Georgia Broadband Availability Map, 482,374 specific locations in Georgia are currently not served. However, these projects could expand broadband services for 183,615 homes and businesses, including 132,050 locations that do not have broadband at all. Georgia has been a major leader in broadband development for several years, and these funds go hand-in-hand with our efforts to provide a major boost to rural communities that are without adequate, high-speed internet. You can learn more about the governor’s announcement at <https://gov.georgia.gov/press-releases/2022-02-01/gov-kemp-announces-almost-408-million-awards-provide-broadband-access>

The bills that were passed in the House last week have all been sent to our counterparts in the State Senate for consideration, and my colleagues and I will vote on more legislation when we resume our business on Monday, Feb. 7. As we continue to make our way through the legislative session, I encourage you to contact me with your questions about the bills that have passed so far or any other policies that interest you.

## Book Review

By MORRIS BRANSON  
Staff Reporter

### The Lincoln Highway By Amor Towles

Published October 5, 2021

I remember picking up Towles’ previous book, *A Gentleman in Moscow*, and wondering how a novel about a Russian Count, sentenced to live in a hotel for the rest of his life, could possibly hold my interest for nearly 500 pages; I was proven wrong.

*The Lincoln Highway*, set in 1954, follows the story of

18-year-old Emmett Watson who has just been released from a juvenile detention facility. He was there because he accidentally killed another boy during a fight. His father has died and he is left to care for his younger brother Billy, a precocious pre-teen. Billy is insistent that they should follow the Lincoln Highway to California in search of their mother who walked out on the family 8 years ago. But there’s a hitch: Emmett’s beloved powder-blue Studebaker has been “borrowed” by a couple of boys on the run from the work farm. Duchess and Woolly, also 18, are driving it to New York City to raid Woolly’s trust fund and settle a few scores. Duchess, though likable and quick-witted, is hopelessly untrustworthy. He leads Emmett and Billy on a chase across the north-eastern US, with his sidekick, lost soul Woolly, simply hoping for a good meal and a safe home.

During their travels, the boys cross paths with a varied cast of characters: clowns, hobos, out-of-work actors, panhandlers, hucksters, prostitutes, and some ordinary folks. Pastor John, a crooked preacher, is the most dangerous, quoting Bible verses even as he plots to steal Billy’s prized possession: a collection of silver dollars. Towles even touches on the feeling of the times by including an atomic bomb drill.

The theme throughout is to be careful who you trust. Emmett

has such a good heart that he tends to give everyone, especially Duchess, the benefit of the doubt, to his detriment.

One subplot that I found contrived was that Billy, who just happens to be fascinated by a book of short stories about heroes, tracks down the author in New York. This elderly man travels with them to meet a taciturn loner named Ulysses (of course one of the heroes in his book) who is constantly moving around looking for “something” after his wife has died.

With its down-home style and ideas about love and loss, *The Lincoln Highway* is quintessentially American. It is a long, easy, enjoyable, if at times hokey ride on a highway filled with adventure.



The Roy L Burns Senior Center  
Schedule: Monday – BINGO 10 a.m., Wednesday – Exercise 10 a.m., Thursday – BINGO 10 a.m.

Stephen’s House Food Pantry (God’s Marketplace) is open every third Thursday of each month, 3-4:30 p.m. at The Sanctuary Church, 1365 Tignall Road. For more information, contact the church office at 706-678-3423.

## Letters Policy

The News-Reporter welcomes letters to the editor on matters of public affairs. It is the policy of this newspaper to be available as a forum for any opinion or point of view concerning issues of general interest.

Letters **must be signed** and must include a valid address and telephone number. However, addresses and phone numbers will not be published unless specifically requested for good reason. Addresses and telephone numbers will be used for verification purposes. Letters may be accepted by email but an original signature is still required on a hard copy.

Names may be withheld from publication upon reasonable request. For example, a fear for one’s personal or family safety, a fear for one’s job, or a fear of other retaliation may be grounds for withholding a name.

Letters must be limited to **500 words or less** unless specific arrangements for compensation are made in advance with the editor of this newspaper. Letters of more than 500 words may not be considered for publication and may also be edited for length.

No letter writer may have more than two letters published in any 30-day period. **Libelous or unsigned letters will not be considered for publication at all.**

The editor of this newspaper reserves the right to edit all letters for length, clarity, spelling, and grammatical correctness. However, occasionally letters are submitted in which meanings and/or intent are unclear. In such an instance, no editing will be done and the letter will appear verbatim as submitted. Letters deemed “in bad taste” or those dealing with private, personal, or family matters will not be published. Letters presenting unsubstantiated, unverified, or unattributed statements as fact will not be published. Letters deemed to be libelous or potentially libelous will not be considered. **LETTERS ATTEMPTING TO CIRCUMVENT THESE OR OTHER POLICIES OF THIS NEWSPAPER WILL NOT BE CONSIDERED.** The editor further reserves the right to cut off any series of letters dealing with a single subject.

**LETTERS FROM OR ENDORSING INDIVIDUAL POLITICAL CANDIDATES OR PARTIES WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED.**

Priority for publication will be given to letters concerning local issues. Letters should be addressed to: Editor, *The News-Reporter*, P.O. Box 597, Washington, GA 30673.