

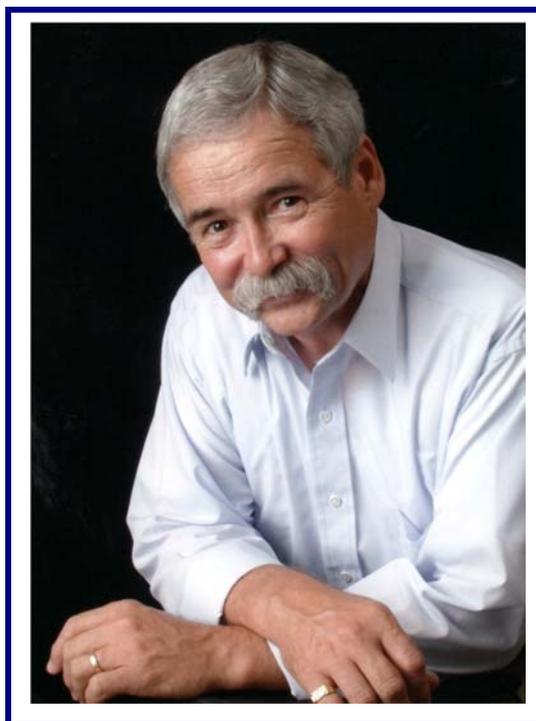
Missouri State Society Daughters of the American Revolution
Proudly “Spotlights” our February 2012
Patriot of the Month



Wally George

Sponsored by:

Marshall Chapter
Marshall, Missouri



Wally George is a life long resident of Saline County, Missouri, with the exception of his military service. He entered the U.S. Navy in November 1963. After basic training, he was stationed on the warship *USS Maddox (DD731)*. Home port for the *USS Maddox* was Long Beach, California. His assignment on the ship was the “Pointer” in the forward gun turret on the *USS Maddox*, which was a five inch thirty eight turret.

The destroyer, *USS Maddox*, was ordered into the Gulf of Tonkin off the coast of Vietnam to do electronic and surveillance operations. On August 4, 1964, the ship was attacked by Patrol Torpedo (PT) boats. The PT boats fired on the ship with fifty caliber machine guns and torpedoes over a non-stop period of twenty four hours. *USS Maddox* returned fire and sunk numerous PT boats by return fire from the ship’s gun turrets. They were then joined in the gulf by the *USS Turner Joy (DD-951)*, who was ordered in to give the *USS Maddox* attack support. Wally was in the forward gun turret during this attack. He stated, “During the attack I was scared, along with the rest of the crew, that we were going to sink. We could see the torpedoes heading toward us, and if the commander would have miscalculated either way we would have died. Our ship was like floating

dynamite, we had so much ammunition and fuel aboard that if one torpedo would have hit us we would have exploded.”

This attack was known as the Gulf of Tonkin Incident. Because of the attack on the *USS Maddox*, President Lyndon Johnson drew up a Gulf of Tonkin Resolution and presented it to Congress. Congress approved the Resolution giving the President the power to send troops to protect any ally of the United States, which ultimately led to the Vietnam War.

Wally’s awards and medals include:

- National Defense Service Medal
- Armed Forces Expeditionary Medal
- Navy Unit Commendation Ribbon

Wally is the elected Sheriff of Saline County, having had the honor of serving Saline County for the past thirty-three years, which makes him the longest serving Sheriff in Missouri. He is married to C. J., who is a retired Saline County Circuit Court Clerk.