



# LA GRANADA



OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF

The Order of Granaderos y Damas de Gálvez – Founding Chapter

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[www.granaderos.org](http://www.granaderos.org)

SAN ANTONIO, TX

## Now That's Real Dedication



On Thursday, September 27, Granaderos y Damas de Gálvez took part in a ceremony to dedicate a new plaque at the Bernardo de Gálvez statue in New Orleans, Louisiana. Those who made the trip to represent our Order were Governor General Joel Escamilla and other members of the San Antonio Chapter, Sylvia Escamilla, Robert and Lucila Flores as well as Richard Whynot, who was very instrumental in the development of the plaque. Two members of the Pensacola Chapter also made the trip to represent our Order. Kudos go out to these members and to all members who contributed to the funding

of the plaque. You are the ones who made it happen. The photo above shows Governor General Joel Escamilla presenting part of the ceremony with the Gálvez statue in the background. An article in the New Orleans Times-Picayune can be read at the following link:

[http://www.nola.com/military/index.ssf/2012/09/galvez\\_society\\_plants\\_a\\_plaque.html](http://www.nola.com/military/index.ssf/2012/09/galvez_society_plants_a_plaque.html)

The plaque, shown at right, is quite an improvement from the one that previously accompanied the statue. As you can see, it sports a full-color image of Gálvez, has an informative narrative as well as a map of New Spain during the time of the American Revolution. For too many years, people passed the statue not knowing who it is, Now, visitors will know who the statue represents and the Spanish aid provided to American colonists in our War of Independence.



**Bernardo de Galvez, 1746-1786**

Fourth Spanish Royal Governor of Louisiana, 1777 to 1782

Conde de Galvez; Viscount of Galveztown; Lieutenant General of The Royal Armies; Captain General of The Province of Louisiana; Viceroy, Governor, and Captain General Kingdom of New Spain. These were just some of the honours and titles won by Galvez for his outstanding military and administrative success in The Americas. He died in México City in 1786 and is buried at San Fernando Church.



Galvez was sent to New Orleans in 1776 to command the Spanish regiment and in January of 1777 was promoted to governor of the province of Louisiana. Working with the American agent in New Orleans, Oliver Pollock, he kept the Mississippi River open for navigation, so that supplies of ammunition, guns, clothing, money and other equipment could be sent to General George Rogers Clark, fighting the British in the upper Midwest and to Gen. George Washington in the East.

When Spain declared war on Britain, Galvez took to the field to defeat the British forces in Louisiana and the Gulf Coast.

On September 7, 1779 he won the battle at Fort Bate on Bayou Manchac, a river from New Orleans and on September 21, 1779 captured the British fort at Baton Rouge, as well as Fort Marmire in Natchez. These actions denied the British the ability to supply their forces on the upper Mississippi, which allowed Gen. Clark to defeat those forces.

Continuing his campaign, despite the setbacks of hurricanes, Galvez next captured Fort Charlotte in Mobile and then moved to the most important objective, the British stronghold of Pensacola.

Pensacola was heavily guarded by forts at the entrance of the bay and Galvez commanded his own warship, the "Galveztona"; in breaching the fortifications, thus allowing other ships to enter. The battle was won on May 10, 1781 when the British surrendered over 4,000 troops.

Assisting Galvez at Pensacola was the French fleet under Admiral De Grasse. After the Spanish citizens of Havana paid to have the French fleet refitted and provisioned, as well as paying back wages of the crews, De Grasse sailed to Yorktown, Virginia and helped Washington force the surrender of British Gen. Cornwallis, ending the American war of independence.

One of the key factors in the success of the Galvez campaign was the knowledge and experience he had gained in earlier assignments leading Spanish troops in the wilderness of northern Mexico and west Texas.

Knowing that a reliable supply of food was important to the troops in the field, he arranged, with his fellow governor in the Texas province, for long horn cattle from the vast herds around San Antonio, to be driven to his forces in Louisiana. As many as 15,000 cattle, from 1779 to 1782, were delivered to feed the Spanish army and its allies.



## TEJANO PATRIOTS OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION

1776 - 1783



BY JESSE O. VILLARREAL SR.

EDITED AND ANNOTATED BY JUDGE ROBERT H. THONHOFF

The Guest Speaker for our October meeting is Mr. Jesse O. Villarreal, Sr. Mr. Villarreal was raised on the “West Side” of San Antonio and graduated from Sidney Lanier High School. He had been interested in researching his genealogy for several years but only got around to it after a life-changing event.

What he discovered in his genealogical research surprised him. His ancestors were part of various expeditions into Texas in the 1700s. Mr. Robert H. Thonhoff wrote the Forward to Mr. Villarreal’s book and states, “*Descending from a number of founding fathers of Texas, Jesse has discovered that he has numerous ancestral Tejano relatives that read like a veritable ‘Who’s Who in Texas’ for nearly three hundred years!*”

This is a book that should be in the library of anyone interested in Texas history. Mr. Villarreal will have his book available to purchase for a special price of only \$20 at our October meeting, so be sure to come and get your copy signed by the author.

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## Social & Welfare

Our prayers go out to Roland Cantu’s mother who suffered a severe heart attack. Thankfully, she is now at home recovering. We hope that her health continues to improve and that strength be provided to Roland and all his family members as they help Mrs. Cantu through her recuperation.

Joe & Elizabeth Perez extend their sincere gratitude to all who offered prayers for the recovery of their daughter (and Granadero Secretary) Briana Perez. Briana suffered severe asthma attacks on successive days and was rushed to the emergency room. With Briana passing out en route, Elizabeth had to pull over and call 911. Thankfully, an ambulance arrived soon, got her on oxygen and was able to rush her the rest of the way to the hospital. Briana is now back at home and recovering and hopes to be very active again soon.

Our thoughts are with Mr. Robert Thonhoff and his wife Victoria as they transition from their former home in Karnes City to their new home in San Antonio.

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## South Texas Heritage Center Witte Museum

San Antonio’s Witte Museum on Broadway offers interesting interactive exhibits as part of their South Texas Heritage Center, which serves as the permanent home of the museum’s South Texas collections. The painting shown at right is of vaqueros tracking animals on the trail and is part of the exhibit. Some of the demonstrations there are titled: *Tools of the Trade*, *Dressing for the Job* and *A Portable Feast*.



# Sincerely Yours

By Joe Perez

In the eighteenth century, average citizens were not educated enough to write a letter, nor did they have the need. However, those who did write letters were known to use a certain flair in composition and salutations uncommon in our current correspondence. Of particular note to this writer are the formal salutations provided by military officers in the closing of their memorandums.

Today, it is common to close a message with “Sincerely” or “Regards” or “Respectfully” followed by a title, if necessary, a name and even a cell phone number. In the 18<sup>th</sup> Century, officers were much more flamboyant.

General Bernardo de Gálvez, Governor of Louisiana, sent a letter to Domingo Cabello, Governor of Texas, requesting and authorizing the first official cattle drives out of Texas. Governor Cabello then wrote to Commandant General Cavallero de Croix in regards to the cattle and ended his letter with *“May the Lord protect the life of Your Lordship many Years. Bexar, June 20, 1779, Your Lordship’s most devoted and faithful servant kisses your hand”*.<sup>1</sup> This is the type of ending salutation that was common in correspondence between men with official titles.

In the buildup to Gálvez’s siege of Fort George in Pensacola, he and British General Campbell exchanged several messages. It was common for Gálvez to end his correspondence to Campbell with, *“May God preserve your Excellency many years.”*<sup>2</sup> General Campbell had requested from Gálvez that he spare the nearby town of Pensacola and its residents during his siege of Fort George. However, the British commander at Fort Barrancas, on the other side of the bay, burned several houses near the fort. This incensed Gálvez, who wrote a measured response to Campbell expressing his displeasure and accusing Campbell of acting in bad faith. Gálvez closed his letter with, *“...I shall see Pensacola burn with the same indifference, as I shall see its cruel incendiaries perish upon its ashes. God keep your Excellency many years.”*<sup>3</sup> Even when expressing indignation, Gálvez closed with a respectful salutation.

During the siege of Pensacola, General Campbell had written to his superiors requesting reinforcements but did not receive any. On May 12, 1781, one week after his surrender to Gálvez, Campbell wrote a letter to Sir Henry Clinton. Even though Campbell felt he was not supported by Clinton with timely reinforcements, he ended his letter with: *“I have the honour to be with the highest respect and esteem, Your Lordship’s most obedient and faithful humble servant, John Campbell, L.T. Gen.”*<sup>4</sup>

There was a time when elaborate narrative and flowery salutations were not only common but expected in written correspondence, especially between 18<sup>th</sup>-Century military officers who were to maintain a high level of decorum. There has been a progressive decline in letter writing due to technology, so the days of ornate writing have given way to email’s with “Whas’ up?” and texting with “C U L8er”. In spite of the noticeable decline in flowery salutations, I remain your most devoted, faithful, humble and loyal editor of La Granada.

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1. Jesse O. Villarreal, Sr., *Tejano Patriots of the American Revolution 1776-1783*, Page 51.

2. N. Orwin Rush, *Battle of Pensacola, Spain’s Final Triumph Over Great Britain in the Gulf of Mexico* Page 60.

3. John Walton Caughey, *Bernardo de Galvez in Louisiana 1776-1783*, Page 205.

4. Virginia Parks, *Siege! Spain and Britain: Battle of Pensacola March 9 - May 8, 1781*, Page 36.