

**California Society, Sons of the American Revolution  
2024 Annual Meeting**

Hyatt Regency – Burlingame, CA  
April 26<sup>th</sup>– 27<sup>th</sup>, 2024

**Call to Order:**

**Presentation of the Colors** – Brandon Villardi

**Pledge of the Allegiance** – Executive Vice President Don Littlefield

**SAR Pledge** – Vice President – South John Ferris

**Introduction of Guests** – led by President James Klingler

- Sue Fitzpatrick, Senior CA Society President of the CAR gave greetings and announced that the CA CAR recently elected a new Junior State Society President and looks forward to working with this year's CAR Liaison

**Remarks by National Officers and other Nat'l Guests**

- **President General John Dodd** – John Dodd gave greetings, reminded us that we are in the “Decade of the American Revolution” in regards to celebrating the 250<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of our Country's founding; the Boston Tea Party was recently commemorated and the Continental Congress is the next event to be commemorated; after, it will be the anniversary Lexington & Concord – there will be merchandise for each commemorated event; reminded members to wear SAR clothing as much as possible to raise our profile and that we're a dues-driven organization; announced that KY Legislature awarded \$5 mil for the SAR Museum construction in Louisville and reminded us of the “Liberty Tree Campaign” as an ideal way to donate toward this project; Registration for Annual Congress will be mid-May (currently reservations at venue are full but there is a Holiday Inn nearby); actively working toward finding another celebrity to present with membership certificate
- **Past President General Joe Dooley** – gave introductory remarks, reminding how much he appreciates his CASSAR membership and is happy to be able to attend; supported John Dodd's comments regarding 250<sup>th</sup> Anniversary events commemoration and informed us that the 1776 commemoration merchandise will include a visual depiction of Gen. George Washington's crossing of the Delaware;
- **Vice President (Western District) Rob Moore** – gave brief greetings from the side of the room, announcing that the Western District meeting will be on Saturday afternoon; recently visited HI and NV State Societies' Annual Meeting and thanked everyone for welcoming him here.

- **Vice President (International District) Derek Brown** – gave brief introductory remarks from the floor; informed us that the International District is growing (e.g., Chapters in Taiwan, Finland, Japan, Argentina).
- **Registrar General Allen Greenly** – arrived later; spoke in the afternoon session, thanked the membership for their understanding and reminded them that he's running for Treasurer General
- **Chancellor General Edmon McKinley** – thanked everyone for the hospitality and was happy to report that there were no serious problems facing the Society; thanked everyone for their support in his position as Chancellor General; invited members to contact him if there are any legal questions related to SAR; gave update on the George Washington Memorial Fund; encouraged more members to join the group of fund supporters (donation level starting from \$1,000); the purpose of the fund is to support unfunded and underfunded projects of the SAR
- **CA National Trustee Jim Klingler** – gave a brief update that the Finance Committee will give a proposal to the Exec. Committee in May; encouraged members to get involved in National committees to foster fraternal relations between members at the National level.
- **Spain Trustee Stephen Renouf** – gave greetings from the floor; noted that the SAR and DAR members in Spain have been active; there was a recent trip to Ceuta (Spanish enclave in North Africa).
- **Dr. Kent Gregory** – loaning artifacts from the SAR Museum to the US Army Museum for an upcoming exhibit; informed the membership about a recent increase in artifact donations to the Museum, including families that have collections related to individual Patriots; thanked recent donations from Brian Stephens, Edmon McKinley, David King (made a contribution toward procurement), Mark Kramer, Jim Klingler, Rob Moore, Dan McKelvie, Brandon Villardi, Scott Whitman, Riverside Chapter, Sacramento Chapter, Derek Brown congratulated Derek for the Minuteman Award this year), John Ferris, Phil Mitchell, Bill Nay, and Jon Dodd, as well as members from Ladies Auxiliary.
- **Brian Stephens, Secretary Western District** – addressed the membership from the floor; gave thanks to the NSSAR Officers/members and guests who were able to attend; informed members that the NV SAR held a raffle for an artifact and the winning bid was high enough to cover chapter operating costs in that State Society for the entire year.

### **Introduction of CASSAR Past Presidents**

- Bob Ebert
- Stephen Renouf

- Lou Carlson
- John Dodd – received an artifact from a French Society member during their trip to France (artifact was associated to Napoleon I)
- Jim Faulkinbury
- Kent Gregory
- Derek Brown
- Bob Taylor
- Don Littlefield
- Brian Stephens

**Roll Call:**

We had a Quorum of 29 of 40 Chapters present at the time of Roll Call (21 needed for a Quorum). The following 11 Chapters were not represented: Central Coast, Eagle, Kern, Monterey Bay, Mother Lode, Redlands, Santa Barbara, Silicon Valley, Sons of Liberty, South Coast, and Yosemite Chapters were not represented, as they did not have either a Chapter President or an Alternate attending.

--- Recess called: 9:51 AM ---

--- Called Back to Order: 10:01 AM ---

**Reading of the Minutes from the Previous Meeting**

- Scott Brooks announced that the Minutes from the 148th BOM posted online on the CASSAR website and moved that they be approved as posted; motion seconded by Randy Dhindsa and approved unanimously.

**CASSAR Officer Reports**

- **CASSAR President Jim Klinger** – gave remarks about the highlights of his term, including his many visits to Chapters throughout the State and his attendance at memorial services for those CASSAR Past Officers who have passed away during his term; many color guard events, and planning the 2023 BOM; proudly announced that the Eagle Scout winners from the McFee Family have joined the SAR, attended the Boston Tea Party, CAR meetings, and he thanked all his fellow members for their support during his term
- **CASSAR Exec. VP Don Littlefield** – gave summary of his visits to Chapter meetings throughout the state, youth award events (e.g., Poster Contest Awards, JROTC Awards), DAR meetings, two events that were co-sponsored with the American Heritage Partners group, participated in the 1776 Book Challenge project; published issues of the California Compatriot and closed his summary by noting that he will focus on attending Southern California events in the coming year

- **VP North Randy Dhindsa** – announced that he proudly attended Installation Dinner at Thomas Jefferson, participated in Color Guard events, presented Reps. Kevin McCarthy and Jim Costa with Good Citizenship Medals; participated in many parades;
- **VP South John Ferris** – indicated that he has been able to attend two Chapter meetings a month in addition to the other NSSAR and CASSAR events; has been able to attend Nat'l Committee meetings and has noted how enjoyable they could be, encouraging other members to consider doing the same; reminded members of the importance of joining the Color Guard and participating in those events; has proudly attended two CAR events and has encouraged other members to get involved with that aligned youth group
- **VP Membership Scott Whitman** – summarized his duties in this position and reiterated how prospective members may submit their inquiries; announced that in the last year there have been 364 prospective membership referrals (Sons of Liberty, Thomas Jefferson, and San Diego were the three (3) highest ranking Chapters in the number of referrals); a brief discussion was held about award incentives for the Chapter that receives the highest growth in membership in a given year
- **Secretary Chris Cerillo.** – noted how he is frequent contact with Genealogist, Registrar, and VP Membership; go to SAR.org and find the blue database to confirm the accuracy of membership profile and Chapter-level membership info; reminded the membership of reconciliation to fix inaccuracies in membership counts (e.g., transferred out of State but Chapter is still counting him as an active member when he is not, deceased members counted as active, etc.); reminded members of difficulty processing check payments after December 15<sup>th</sup>, he only has from Jan 1<sup>st</sup> to January 31<sup>st</sup> to get reconciliation numbers in; there were too many members that hadn't paid dues by the deadline that were still counted in the carry-over to the following year, which is troublesome due to the reinstatement fee; reminded Chapter Secretaries to start filling out reconciliation reports (obtainable under Reports, on the State Dashboard, of the National SAR website) in November, in order to stay ahead of schedule; reminded importance of becoming Life Members for National and State to avoid future issues with reinstatement fees during reconciliation process; reminded Chapters to send him lists of members who have received NSSAR and CASSAR medals and he'll update that information in their membership profile.
  - **John Dodd approached the podium** – informed the membership that NSSAR is currently working on a new “Dues Collection Program” (headed by Dues Billing Taskforce) that will eventually do away with the reconciliation process; estimates that it will be implemented in two (2) years

- **Treasurer Kevin Bidenkap** – ended year with \$46,704; noted that we could ramp up spending toward 250 events, noted over \$10,000 in donations, including one from Intel, and invited Don to speak about Intel’s philanthropy program,
  - **Don spoke from the podium** – encouraged fellow members to see if their employers have any non-profit matching donation (or contribution programs like Intel)

Summarized that finances are in good order, noted 25,000 donation toward the Museum project, and thanked the Trustees; presented Life Membership refund checks to qualifying Chapters based on the number of their Life Members

- **Chancellor Michael Hirman** – no report
- **Genealogist David Morrow** – noted a genealogy seminar with Terry Briggs that they had held during his term and the successful turnout and participation at that event; noted that they would like to have another such event before the BOM
- **Registrar Terry Briggs** – gave Registrar’s report that 331 applications received, of which 296 were forwarded to NSSAR HQ for review; 35 applications returned to Chapter Registrar due to errors/omissions. 34 pended applications at the start of his term was reduced to 18 pended, thanks to his effort and cooperation with other Chapter Registrars. He frequently supports Chapter Registrars by training them on completing full and complete applications, in accordance with the National application preparation guidelines. He also noted that two Chapters did not have Registrars yet; in these cases, Terry has done applications on their behalf until they can find members willing to step into that position.
  - Jim Faulkinbury and Joe Dooley spoke from the floor regarding the DNA policy
- **Historian Scott Brooks** – encouraged local Chapters to keep a running history of their activities throughout the year, including archiving digital copies of past issues of newsletters, newspaper articles/announcements related to local SAR activities; reminded attendees of the CASSAR storage unit (Archives) in Roseville and welcomed Chapters to send to him any documents/records that they would like added to the Archives. Scott thanked everyone for reading the posted Minutes prior to meeting to be able to vote on them.
- **Chaplain Rev. Scott Elliott** – Rev. Elliott gave a “word of the day”: Remember. Noted how each of us have done so much family research, let us keep in mind our fellow members who have passed away and the legacies they have left behind; encouraged the members to ask themselves what we can do as Chapters to remember their Chapters’ departed members and to feel free to contact him if they have any questions about how to best remember/memorialize the departed.

- **Surgeon Dr. Matthew Bowdish** – reiterated the duties of the position and noted how he has fulfilled those duties; informed the membership of the various medical talks he has given at Chapters throughout the state; supporting the medical committee, and writing biographies of the following Patriots (Constituent Society in parentheses): Samuel Prescott (MA), Benjamin Rush (PA), James Tilton (DE), Jean Francois Coste (FR), John Cochrane (NJ), Thomas Tucker Tucker (SC), Lyman Hall (GA), Nathaniel Alexander (NC), Don Juan Vives (SP), Gustavius Brown (MD), Hugh Mercer (VA), Josiah Bartlett (NH), Solomon Drowne (RI), John Jones (NY), and Leverette Hubbard (CT).
- **Investment Fund Trustees** – Tabled until Saturday; spoke on Saturday morning; Stephen Renouf noted that their financial advisor reported a favorable outcome and noted that bonds are paying higher yields and that the advisor will schedule a call in the coming weeks to discuss these portfolios further; advised no changes to allocations in the near-term

--- Recess for Public Service Luncheon: 11: 27 AM ---

--- Called Back to Order: 2:01 PM ---

## Chapter Reports

- **Central Coast** – Absent
- **Coachella Valley** – Chris Cerillo proudly announced the membership that their Chapter is growing and that a new member has volunteered to serve in the Registrar's position; noted that their Chapter regularly cooperates with the local DAR Chapter in community events, such as Wreaths Across America, and that their Chapter annually receives donations from local businesses to support Wreaths Across America
- **Delta** – Scott Elliott informed the membership that they recently had to change venues (from Lathrop to Modesto); the Chapter lost three (3) members; one member is now serving as Chapter Registrar; one member has recently stepped in to the VP position; the Chapter will soon hold an event on genealogy and family history research; spoke to the importance of having a robust and ongoing Awards programs recognizing members' volunteerism on various projects
- **Eagle** – Absent
- **Gen. George Patton Jr.** – Steven Andrews informed the membership that two active members have passed away over the past year; noted that their Chapter participates in the Wreaths Across America event in Ojai and regularly supports the Sea Cadets Awards programs; recently, their Chapter has been using social media more to raise their Chapter's profile locally

- Jim Klingler, John Dodd, and Joe Dooley reminded the membership that there are many resources posted on the NSSAR website (e.g., Membership Guides)
- **Gen. George Washington** – Absent
- **Gold Country** – David Gillard noted that they are meeting regularly with strong attendance, will be handing out awards to local students in their area, regularly participates in parades and Wreaths Across America
- **Harbor** – Brandon Villardi proudly announced that the Chapter gained 22 new members and that they are on track to reach more than 100 members; indicated that they will participate in the local Armed Forces Day parade on May 18<sup>th</sup> (including a trailer for those who cannot march), and that they will have an event in the Museum of Flight in Torrance on May 22<sup>nd</sup>, they will also hold an event commemorating Merchant Marines on June 13<sup>th</sup>
- **Kern** – Absent
- **Monterey Bay** – Absent
- **Mother Lode** – Steve Belden announced that the Chapter lost one active member, who had passed away, Tom Adams, who had led the Brochure Contest effort for the Chapter; gave a Flag Certificate to the Mayor of Folsom, participated in the Constitution Day event in Nevada City, attended several local DAR events, and the American Heritage Partners event (Guest Speaker: Stanford Professor of History, Prof. Winterer) at the end of last April, noted as a point of interest that one of his Chapter's members (Steve Olney) is a descendant of a Patriot who was a friend of Marquis de Lafayette in light of the France Society's upcoming delegation visit to Rhode Island later this year
- **Orange County** – Lawrence Stratton noted how Dan McKelvie has led the Chapter's participation in Color Guard events, how their Chapter has held several America 250 events, a couple of re-enactor guest speaker events, hosted a visit by a Japanese American veteran who was interned during WWII and fought in the Korean War
- **Redlands** – Absent
- **Redwood Empire** – Bill Nay had to leave early, so Kevin Bidekap spoke on his behalf that "the report is in the Book".
- **Riverside** – Michael Mann noted participation by their Chapter in many Color Guard events, including events that had a "firing team"; their Chapter presented several America 250 awards; for their December meeting, they had a guest speaker give a presentation on Valley Forge, noted a loss of 15 members

- **Sacramento** – Larry Brasher noted that the Chapter lost 20 members by the end of the year but gained 5 new members since the beginning of the year; shared how the Chapter has regularly held Color Guard events locally, that the School Guard is planning on making 10 visits this year, and that the 1776 Book Challenge has been successful, encouraged other Chapters to have a book program of their own, one Chapter-sponsored student was selected for the Spirit of America program at Valley Forge, one teacher nominated by our Chapter to go to Valley Forge program
  - Scott Brooks gave supporting comments regarding how other civic organizations (e.g., Masonic Lodges, Elks Lodges, Moose Lodges, Rotary, etc.) can sponsor books with bookplates
- **San Diego** – Jim McAdory noted how he would send “Sorry to See you Go” cards to members who did not return and that elicited several replies and reinstatement; shared that they will soon be celebrating their 130<sup>th</sup> anniversary and praised the local DAR Chapters’ past involvement in events and contributed toward turnout; planning grave-marking ceremonies for Spanish soldiers who are eligible *soldado* ancestors (the descendants of whom would be eligible for SAR membership), confirming that they’ve identified at least 17 such gravesites, so far; announced that their Chapter is currently in talks with the House of Spain at Balboa Park to put in a commemorative plaque in the entry way, noting that several Spanish *soldados* were buried in that area which was formerly part of the Presidio of San Diego during the Spanish Era; Lexington and Concord commemorative event will be on April 19<sup>th</sup> next year
- **San Francisco Chapter** – Andy Martinez is currently looking at other venues to hold their monthly meetings that would have less risk of break-ins; considering Zoom virtual meetings, as well, to allow a hybrid option; their Chapter has been actively refilling positions that have been vacant for some time; noted that they meet primarily for lunch and how they are in contact with the local Sea Scouts group to revitalize that Awards program; working on Google Workspace for scheduling and task assignments, as well as for succession planning
- **Santa Barbara Chapter** – Absent
- **Silicon Valley Chapter** – Terry Briggs noted regular 250 minute speeches at their Chapter meetings and that they are revitalizing their Awards program to recognize active members who have volunteered to support Chapter projects and events; announced that their Chapter has awarded 3 JROTC awards and has presented several certificates for their Eagle Scouts program; indicated how turnout and Officer succession have been challenging, with Terry serving again as Chapter President for a third term



- **Sons of Liberty Chapter** – David Morrow noted the challenges in turnout post-COVID and the recent decline in Chapter membership; in spite of this, the Chapter has welcomed three new members and held a commemorative event on Forest Lawn; the Chapter announced that they've booked on venue at a good rate for the next two years;
- **South Coast Chapter** – Scott Whitman proudly announced an increase in membership, the Chapter's participation in several regional and local Color Guard events; presented ROTC and ROTC medals to worthy cadets at 4 high schools and 1 university in Orange County, gave 250 minute speeches, and participated in Wreaths Across America; sponsored one 11<sup>th</sup> grade teacher for the Williamsburg and Valley Forge programs;
- **Thomas Jefferson Chapter** – Derek Brown spoke on behalf of Dan Shurtz, noting a net loss of one member; encouraged Chapter members to contact members that have not renewed over the past 5 years, by going to the Blue Database and retrieve the Chapter information to ID those members who did not renew during that timeframe; noted attendance/cooperation with local DAR Chapters and the SF Chapter, pushing toward forming a new Color Guard, will celebrate 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary in October 2025
- **Yosemite Chapter** – Kevin Bidenkap spoke on behalf of Randy Dhindsa, noting the Chapter report "is in the Book"

--- Break: 3:31 PM ---  
--- Reconvened: 3:43 PM ---

## Youth Program Reports

- **Youth Activities** – Dan McKelvie is recovering from an illness
- **Poster Contest** – David Gillard will announce the winners at tomorrow's luncheon; next year's theme will be Lexington & Concord; noted that there was one entry from South Coast Chapter-sponsored teacher for the Tom and Betty Lawrence Teachers Program (a national program that has a high-level of competition between teachers for \$5,000 worth of awards and workshops), encouraged Valley Forge award teachers to apply for this program, as well; Shelby Anderson was a finalist in the national program but did not win, which led to discussion to form a State-level version of the program
- **Brochure Contest** – one awardee who will be announced tomorrow
- **Eagle Scout** – Bill Nay had to leave early; Jim Klingler spoke on his behalf and noted that the report is "in the Book", an awardee will be present at tomorrow's lunch; for the Sea Scouts program, there is one applicant who is currently under National review;

- **NSCC/NLCC** – Nothing to report.
- **Knight Essay** – Nothing to report.
- **Orations Contest** – the winner Daniel Hernandez (SD Chapter) will be here for the luncheon tomorrow
- **ROTC/JROTC** – Brandon Villardi made a report and has a list of participating high schools throughout California, encouraged members to contact him if a Chapter doesn't know any local programs; two winners for the State-level award – one from Sacramento and one from San Diego; noted that the eligible applicant needs to be in the top 10%; currently considering changing the requirement to a GPA level of over 3.8 in hopes of getting more applicants
- **Spirit of America Award High School Program** – Larry Brasher noted that he had included that point in the Sacramento Chapter report
- **Spirit of America Award Middle School Program** – Bob Taylor noted that there are currently 5 schools in the Camarillo area that will be receiving certificates for these in their graduation ceremonies; spoke to how they contacted the Pleasant Valley School District
- **Valley Forge Teacher Program** – Bob Taylor noted how one Program awardee spoke at the BOM in Nov. '23; reiterated the importance of the program and how awardees will bring that experience back to the classroom and proves that the program adds value to those teachers skills in the history classroom

## Committee Reports

- **America 250 Committee** – proudly announced how the America 250 program has grown over the past three years; noted legislation for Statewide recognition in SB 1214; noted CA and TX society members have been the top two societies in number of Gold Medal recipients;
- **Americanism Program** – Brandon Villardi spoke about the program's Report, which contains all of the Chapters' respective activities, to see which programs are successful and which need more assistance, there is a committee video in the members section of sar.org website
- **Audit Committee** – Don Littlefield reiterated the audit process, noted that they carried out audit from Nov 1 to March 31 period and all Chapters were "clean"; thanked Kevin Bidenkap for his cooperation.

- **California Compatriot Committee** – Don Littlefield reminded members of the importance of regularly submitting more informative notes for photos and carrying out the release forms for those in the photo who are under 18 years of age;
- **Chapter Activities Committee** – Brandon Villardi reminded the membership of the purpose of this committee, i.e., receives emails from Chapters regarding how to file committee reports; the most of what he does is issue Outstanding Chapter awards. The following is the list of Awards issued:

**Outstanding Chapter Awards issued to the following Chapters:** Eagle, General George S. Patton Jr., Kern, Orange County, Redwood Empire, Sacramento, San Diego, Silicon Valley, Thomas Jefferson, Yosemite

**Outstanding Chapter Color Guards issued to the following Chapters:** Eagle, General George S. Patton Jr., San Diego, Yosemite

**This year’s Color Guardsmen of the Year Award was awarded to:**  
Scott Nichols - Yosemite Chapter

- **Chief of Protocol** – nothing to report
- **Color Guard Committee** – Brandon V. thanked Russ Kaiser and Duncan Campbell for their work as Adjutants North and South, respectively; announced that Duncan Campbell has declined reappointment but Kevin Forest has agreed to serve as Adjutant – South; encouraged Color Guards to cooperate with local CAR Chapters to get them involved; announced that there were 3 Von Steuben Medal recipients, and reminded Color Guards to submit photos to the State and National newsletters/magazines
- **Color Guard Adjutant – North** – tabled due to Russ Kaiser being out of the room; arrived later on Saturday morning to speak from the podium; reminded that the Color Guard is the “icing on the (SAR Membership) cake”; indicated that if Chapters’ Color Guards are struggling, then they should contact him to coordinate obtaining the necessary attire to serve in the Color Guard
- **Color Guard Adjutant – South** (see above report for Color Guard Committee)
- **CAR Liaison** – absent

--- Recessed: 4:27 PM ---

**Saturday, April 27<sup>th</sup>, 2024**

--- Reconvened: 9:02 AM ---

**Invocation** – Scott Elliott

**Pledge of Allegiance** – Randy Dhindsa  
**SAR Pledge** – Kevin Bidenkap

## **Roll Call**

27 present at the time of Roll Call; Quorum reached for the reconvening of business.

**\*Note:** South Coast Chapter did arrive for Saturday

- **Compliance Committee** – Michael Hirman, Riverside, Sacramento, Silicon Valley, and South Coast were the only Chapters deemed to be “compliant”; Gold Country, Kern, and Mother Lodge are “partially compliant”. (990N, 190N, etc. to remain compliant for the 501(c)(3) status; warned Chapters that are not compliant that they are running a high risk of getting audited by the IRS.
  - **Chancellor General** McKinley approached the podium and reaffirmed the importance of Compatriot Hirman’s remarks and underscored the importance of each SAR Chapter abiding by the requests from the Compliance Committee
- **Congress Planning Committee** –
- **DAR Liaison** – Brian Stephens spoke to the DAR’s recent establishment of the SAR/SR Relations Committee; noted the importance of keeping strong relations with the DAR, as meeting details are not widely publicized; informed that his report is “in the Book”; DAR Finders Program is going strong, awards going to select DAR members for 5 or more referrals of prospective members to the SAR for membership;
- **Ethics Committee** – Scott Elliott noted that there were three (3) issues pending with the Ethics Committee, one of which may need legal support from the CASSAR Chancellor; reminded the membership of the value of modeling our principles in our communications and in our conduct;
- **Flag Committee Co-Chairmen** – John Ferris and Randy Dhindsa reported that over 15 Chapters have participated in the Flag Cert. Program and noted that over 100 Flag Certificates have been issued; reminded the membership of how the Flag Certificate Program is another effective profile raising program
- **Handbook Committee** – Derek Brown took a quick voice poll of who was familiar with the Handbook; reminded the membership of its utility as an essential source of information, oriented towards everyone on a variety of topics (e.g., setting up State Meetings, etc.);
- **Information Technology Committee** – absent; Jim Klingler reaffirmed our appreciation for all of the work that Greg Hill does on this Committee

- **Medals and Awards Committee** – vacant; recruiting
- **Media and Public Relations Committee** – David Gilliard reminded membership that if they had any questions, to contact him
- **Membership Committee** – Scott Whitman announced that his report is “in the Book”
- **Operations Ancestor Search** – absent; open
- **Public Service and Heroism Committee** – Brian Stephens thanked those Chapters that presented Heroism awards to qualifying members of their local communities
- **Patriot Research Project Committee** – Terry Briggs noted that there are 10,700+ copies of patriot lineage record copies that have been entered into the system; started in 2018, noted that there were approx. 70 volunteers from CA that were doing data entry, most volunteers have discontinued; remarked that with his duties as Registrar, he does not have the time to enter the data relating to supplemental ancestor lineage record copies in the system; asked members to work with their Chapter presidents to find coordinators to help with data entry into the system on a flow basis; current 229, 800 memberships from 1889 to present (over 100,000 have been entered into the system); announced that our CASSAR needs a new volunteer to serve as Chairman to oversee data entry into the PRS; Randy Dhindsa volunteer
- **Spanish Patriot Research Project** -- absent
- **Veterans Programs Committee** –Phil Mitchell noted that there are people helping NSSAR in its PRS efforts, so reminded the membership that there may be Chapter members who are already assisting; reminded Chapters that they need to submit a list of veteran members to him, along with the proper forms and documentation to be registered as veteran members with NSSAR; these members are entitled to a veteran’s service medal; submit Vietnam Era Pin applications to NSSAR and PG National can issue certificates of Patriotism to those members of the community who served during the Vietnam War (eligible recipients do not need to be members); informed the membership that he recently had the honor of accompanying the remains of a fallen Marine to his home in Kansas; recently getting more communications at NSSAR regarding the transportation of recovered remains of military service members – the memorial services for these servicemembers may have Color Guard attendance/remembrance.
- **Wreaths Across America Committee** – Saturday, December 14<sup>th</sup> will be this year’s event; encouraged membership to sign up their Chapters as soon as

possible; participants can raise donations through their communities and get matching money back; can coordinate with the DAR, VFW, and the American Legion, as they are also participating organizations;

**Old Business - none****New Business**

- John Dodd made remarks about the First Ladies projects and shared that this project raises money for field trips in the under-privileged community school districts; encouraged members to consider donating to the First Ladies project; mentioned the Micro? Podcast as a great way to raise awareness of the SAR (check the NSSAR website, under the “News” section, noting his interview as one such way to learn more about the organization; Chapter members who are in veterans organizations and know any of those members who may be eligible for SAR membership to support veterans who may be eligible, ask for information/print out a pedigree chart and write their contact info to spark interest and support their application process;
- Don Littlefield commented on the challenges of finding times and locations to hold our regular semi-annual meetings; spoke enthusiastically about the venue of the upcoming BOM; underscored the challenges of keeping affordable venues with the schedules we have set; made a motion to approve October 24-26, 2024 as the new date for the BOM, seconded by Jim McAdory and approved unanimously
- David Gilliard spoke about the Tom and Betty Lawrence Teachers Contest; many state societies participate in this national contest (over 30 state societies this year) and make supplemental awards at the state level to those who have won at the state level; suggested to the CASSAR President that we have a CASSAR level award of \$1,000; he so moved to make this a yearly award, seconded by Brian Stephens; after a short discussion, this motion was approved by an overwhelming majority vote
- Bill Nay spoke to the Youth Programs and noted that many members in the Redwood Empire Chapter have come from the Sea Cadet and Eagle Scout High School Awards programs; made a motion to award the second (\$500) and third (\$250) place recipients in the five High School programs, for a total of \$3,750; after a long discussion, the motion was approved unanimously
- Stephen Renouf (ByLaws Committee) noted that the ByLaws will be updated in Section 9A regarding Life Members’ fees to align with a recent vote that enacted an increase; ByLaws Committee recommends that it be approved unanimously; motion carried unanimously

- Michael Hirman commented on the Youth Protection program for those who interact with youth; strongly encouraged every Chapter to explore insurance policies that would have full coverage in the unlikely event that a member breaks the law in the context of any event where youth are involved (i.e., “vicarious liability” of a Chapter if a member breaks the law – in such cases, a lawsuit often begins at \$1,000,000); recommended Chapters explore a program called “Safe Sport” for stronger background checks;
  - John Dodd spoke from the floor, stating that every Chapter should check Megan’s Law for each prospective member as part of the application review process;

### Nominating Committee

- Brian Stephens presented the following members as candidates to serve during the 2024 year:
  1. **President:** Don Littlefield
  2. **Executive Vice President & President-Elect:** John Ferris
  3. **Vice President – North:** Randy Dhindsa (2nd year)
  4. **Vice President – South:** Brandon Villardi
  5. **Vice President – Membership:** Scott Whitman (2nd year)
  6. **Secretary:** Chris Cerillo
  7. **Treasurer:** Kevin Bidenkap
  8. **Registrar:** Terry Briggs
  9. **Chancellor:** Michael Hirman
  10. **Genealogist:** David Morrow
  11. **Historian:** M. Scott Brooks
  12. **Chaplain:** Rev. Scott Elliott
  13. **Surgeon:** Dr. Matthew Bowdish
  14. **Investment Fund Trustee:** John Dodd
  15. **National Trustee:** James Klingler
  16. **Alternate National Trustee:** John Ferris
- Committee recommended that the motion be approved unanimously; motion so voted upon and approved unanimously.
- John Dodd remarked that anyone present who is planning on attending the Congress in Lancaster, PA this year should come see him and receive an information sheet
- Owen Stiles moved to adjourn the meeting; Jim Faulkinbury seconded. Motion was approved unanimously and Business Meeting Adjourned at 10:57 AM.

(**Note:** The Western District Meeting followed the adjournment of this Business Meeting Session and opened at 11:05 AM)

**--- 149<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting Adjourned: 11:52 AM ---**