

***California Society, Sons of the American Revolution***

***2025 150<sup>th</sup> Spring Membership Meeting***

**Orange County Hilton at Costa Mesa**

3050 Bristol St., Costa Mesa, CA, United States

**Call to Order:** 9:04AM April 25, 2025, by President Donals Littlefield

**Invocation:** Chaplain Reverend Scott Elliot

**Presentation of the Colors:** Brandon Villardi

**Pledge of the Allegiance:** Executive Vice President John Ferris

**SAR Pledge:** Vice President North – Randy Dhindsa

**SAR Mission Statement:** Treasurer Kevin Bidenkamp

**Introduction of invited guests:**

President Littlefield asked President General Darrell Addington to take the podium.

- President General Addington (2025) and his wife Mary are pleased to be visiting CA but disappointed they did not experience an earthquake.
- President General John Dodd (2023 -2024) provided an update on the Henry Rifle Project.
  - The new Lexington Concord model is available. They're being shipped to Bass Pro as we speak, and it should appear on their website any day now
  - There are no more Tea Party rifles.
  - The Continental Congress models.
- President General Joe Dooley (2013- 2014) provided an update on the SAR Annual Academic Conference (250) is an annual academic conference that is sponsored by the SAR. This year's topic is "George Washington's dilemmas". The objective of this conference is to produce an edited volume, which is peer reviewed before publishing. The papers that will be presented at this conference will explore incidents in Washington's life when he had to decide on something important, and to explore his decision-making process. Joe also thanked several members of the California Society who made donations to help underwrite this conference including:
  - John Ferris: Executive Vice President CASSAR
  - Brandon Villardi: Color Guard Commander CASSAR
  - Dan McKelvey: Investment Trustee CASSAR
  - Brian Stephen: Vice President Western Division

**Introduction of Western District Vice President:**

President Littlefield asked Brian Stephens, Vice President Western Division, to come up and speak at the podium. Brian is also representing the Nevada State. Brian thanked everyone for attending with special mention of PG Addington and other national officers and compatriots from the Nevada Society. The Western District meeting will be held tomorrow afternoon. Minutes of the Western District meeting are reported separately.

**Introduction of other national and state officers:**

President Littlefield informed everyone that past State President Jim Kingler was unable to attend, as he is caring for his wife who just had hip surgery. He then asked Chancellor General Edmund McKinley, Chairman of the Museum Board and Education Center Dr. Kent Gregory, Trustee for the International Society Derek Brown, and Dan McKelvey, Vice Chairman of the Education Center and Museum Board to come up and speak in order.

- Chancellor General Edmund McKinley reminded everyone that he is running for Treasurer General. Chancellor McKinley reminded everyone to inform their respective chapter committee members to be careful about what you print in your newsletters, in your state letters. Be sure that you don't use something that is either trademarked or copyrighted. President Littlefield added that a release is required for all images of persons under 18.
- Chairman of the Museum Board and Education Center Dr. Kent Gregory expressed his pleasure in representing the Museum Board at this year's Spring Membership Meeting. Dr. Gregory expressed gratitude for the support and donations from members, recognized the impact of these contributions on the museum's growth, and encouraged additional sponsorships for the remaining mannequins. Dr. Gregory then provided an update on donations and acquisitions for the museum:

Artifact Acquisitions: Since 2019, the Museum Board has been responsible for acquiring and preserving artifacts from 1763 to 1801 for the SA Art Collection. Over \$450,000 worth of artifacts have been added to the collection during this period, largely due to generous member donations. Recent donations include:

- Brian Stevens donated a 1793 leather fire bucket from Portsmouth, New Hampshire.
- Treasurer Biedenkamp contributed a 12-pound British cannonball and a December 1781 Pennsylvania Journal newspaper featuring the Battle of Utah Springs.
- Phil and Paula Mitchell donated a three-draw spyglass made by George Adams of London, which is similar to George Washington's spyglass.
- Dr. John Richardson from Harbor chapter gave a 1777 three-tenths Pennsylvania note printed by John Dunlap (printer of the Declaration of Independence) (M42).
- Dr. Gregory and three past Massachusetts Society presidents acquired a 1775 Massachusetts muster roll listing two black soldiers who served from Bunker Hill to the end of the war.

- The Riverside chapter contributed an American naval cutlass in memory of Chuck Lansman.
- Jay Dickey from Nevada donated \$25,000 for documents by famous founding fathers, which has enabled the acquisition of several important documents, including:
  - A letter from General William Heath to General John Burgoyne after Saratoga's surrender.
  - A land transfer signed by George Rogers Clark and Robert Todd (Abraham Lincoln's maternal grandfather).
  - A deposition signed by Francis Hopkinson regarding the capture of the brigantine HMS Active.
  - A letter from William Phillips to Major General Horatio Gates about prisoner exchanges.

Museum Exhibit Sponsorship Program: The Museum Board is offering opportunities to sponsor uniforms for 15 life-sized mannequins planned for the museum, at \$5,000 each. 12 of the 15 mannequins have already been sponsored, including a Continental Marine uniform sponsored by Bill Nay and his family (Nay Latake Trust). Remaining sponsorships needed include: a black soldier in the First Rhode Island Regiment, a Philadelphia Light Horse Cavalry Trooper, and an artilleryman (Sergeant Hayes), with the National Ladies' Auxiliary considering sponsorship for Sergeant Hayes.

- International Society Trustee Derek Brown extended greetings from Jim Griffith, Vice President General of the International District, which covers all regions except Europe. Members interested in joining the International Society or seeking dual membership were encouraged to contact Trustee Brown for more information or questions.
  - Trustee Brown is also Chair of the Membership Committee, and he outlined a major effort to increase membership through recruitment, retention, and reinstatement. He emphasized that retention is often the most effective method, encouraging chapters to actively engage members and use available resources, such as the Safe Path program. Trustee Brown referenced President General William Gist's 1994 acceptance speech, highlighting the long-standing commitment to recruiting new members and re-engaging those who have left. He noted the establishment of a "retention and re-institutional task force" with the slogan "Adopt or Drop," focused on addressing membership challenges.
  - Trustee Brown reviewed the "three R's guide" on recruitment, reinstatement, and retention has been revised into three detailed, action-oriented documents. Chapters are encouraged to review and apply these guides, selecting strategies that suit their needs.

- Trustee Brown also provided printouts of members who have dropped out in the past five to ten years, organized by chapter. He encouraged chapter representatives to collect these lists and collaborate in efforts to contact and potentially reinstate former members. These resources will be available throughout the meeting.
- Vice Chairman of the Education Center and Museum Board, Dan McKelvey, greeted everyone and jumped right into progress at the Education Center and Museum.
  - Phase Zero (building infrastructure and systems) is complete and closeout. The project spent \$96,000 less than the authorized budget, freeing these funds for new requests to be made to the Executive Committee in early May and then to the trustees at Congress, subject to committee approval.
  - Preparation is underway for the upcoming presentation regarding further funding and project progress.
  - Phases 1 and 2 (mainly millwork, fixtures, exhibits) were previously authorized. Due to funding limits, some items were deferred. Phase 3B will address remaining millwork and select additional items, aiming for a full exhibit set up when the museum opens next year. Some interactive components are still in planning or deferred due to funding, though some interactives are already in progress. Solid Light is the vendor for fabrication and installation, actively working for the past five months. Recent updates include the arrival of exhibit components such as the St. John's steeple for fabrication.
  - Funding and Contributions: The California Society committed to a \$25,000 annual donation for four years for a total donation of \$100,000. This year marks the third installment, and next year will be the final payment. The Society's support has been critical to project progress.

President Littlefield then moved on to the introduction of past CASSAR presidents:

- Robert Ebert, 2006 to 2007
- John L. Dodd, Esquire, 2011-2012
- Jim L. Faulkinbury, 2014-15
- Dr. Kent Gregory, 2015-16
- Derrick Brown, 2018-2019
- Robert L. Taylor, 2019-2020
- Donald Littlefield, 2020-2021
- Brian Stevens, 2021-2022
- Jim Klingler 2022-2024 (not present).

## Roll Call Summary

Executive Vice President Ferris the performed the Roll Call.

### ▪ **CASSAR Officers:**

- President: Donald B. Littlefield - present
- Executive Vice President John Ferris - present
- Vice President North: Randy Dhindsa - present
- Vice President South: Brandon Villardi - present
- Vice President of Membership: Scott Whitman - present (away)
- Secretary: Christopher Cerillo - present
- Treasurer: Kevin Bidenkamp - present
- Chancellor: Michael Hirman - present
- Genealogist: David Morrow - present
- Registrar: Terry Briggs - present (voting on behalf of chapter)
- Historian: Scott Brooks – not present
- Chaplain: Scott Elliott - present
- Surgeon: Matthew Bowdish - present
- Investment Funds Trustee: Dr. Kent Gregory - present
- John L. Dodd - present
- Stephen Renouf - not present

### ▪ **CASSAR Chapter Roll Call by Vice President John Ferris: a quorum was reached.**

- Central Coast: Nathaniel Mass - not present
- Coachella Valley: represented by Dave Arthurs
- Delta: Andrew McClure - not present
- Eagle: Benny White - present
- General George Patton: Stephen Andrews - present
- Gold Country: David Gilliard - present
- Harbor: James Bunker - not present
- Kern: Chris Scott (represented)
- Monterey Bay: Jack Frank - not present
- Orange County: Lauren Stratten - present
- Redlands: Brian Christie - not present
- Redwood Empire: Daniel Van Valkenburg - present
- Riverside: Michael Mann – present
- Sacramento: Nic Gauthier (represented)
- San Diego: Jim McAdory
- San Francisco: Andy Martinez - not present
- Santa Barbara: Jeff Wang-Bender - not present

- Silicon Valley: Terry Briggs – present
- Sons of Liberty: Mark Cross - present
- South Coast: Barry Michaels - present
- Thomas Jefferson: Dan Schurtz - present
- Yosemite: Scott Nichols – present (changing)

### **Approval of the minutes - Passed**

Randi Dhinsa – Motion

Daniel Van Valkenburg seconded the motion

\* Steve Belden will be taking minutes on behalf of Historian Scott Brooks

### **Officer Reports**

**President Littlefield** outlined a year of active involvement and collaboration within the organization and with partner groups. President Littlefield participated in several color guard events with the Motherlode Chapter, including:

- Veterans Memorial in Placerville
- Folsom Hometown Parade
- Carmichael 4th of July Parade
- Attended patriot grave marking ceremonies at three sites in San Diego honoring 18 Salgado soldiers.
- Marched in the Shasta City Veterans Day Parade, collaborating with the Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR)
- Attended Pearl Harbor Day commemoration aboard the USS Iowa; H. Delano Roosevelt was keynote speaker
- Returned to San Diego and Carlsbad for George Washington's birthday events
- Presented 35 grave marking medals personally; additional medals presented by Brandon Villardi at the Children of the American Revolution (CAR) Annual Meeting in Knott's Berry Farm
- Brought greetings to a major DAR District 2 America 250 meeting in Roseville, attended by approximately 400 DAR members, DAR President General Wright, and America 250 Chair Rosie Rios.
- Participated in a DAR plaque presentation at the old Bidwell Mansion (pending installation if the mansion is rebuilt)
- Attended California State Society DAR annual meeting in Burlingame
- Sent personal postcards to thank members for their contributions, with plans to continue the program
- Strengthened bonds and alignment between chapters and the DAR; praised Brandon's work with the CAR

- Closed General George Washington and Motherlode chapters, integrating members into Gold Country and Sacramento chapters
- Ongoing efforts to establish a new chapter in Redding (led by Kevin Knapp)
- Participated in numerous meetings with different chapters and uniformed color guard events. Northern California color guard highlights:
  - Eight (8) members at Wreaths Across America kickoff
  - Thirteen (13) at DAR District 2 meeting in Roseville
  - Eleven (11) at Lexington and Concord event at the state capital in Sacramento, in partnership with DAR and CAR

**Executive President John Ferris** reported an active and rewarding year, attending approximately 36-chapter meetings, 21 national meetings, and participating in 29 color guard events. He expressed gratitude for the support received from members, especially those who provided photos for the Compatriot publication, acknowledging that while the work was significant, the rewards of service and engagement were much greater. Vice President Ferris thanked everyone who welcomed him at chapter visits and those who served alongside him in color guard activities, highlighting the enjoyment and camaraderie experienced throughout the year. He concluded by expressing appreciation for the collective efforts that enabled his service and shared his enthusiasm for the year ahead.

**Vice President North, Randy Dhindsa** reflected on a successful year marked by active participation and engagement with various chapters and events. He attended several chapter meetings and played a significant role in color guard activities. Notably, Vice President Dhindsa contributed to a CAR museum presentation at the Legion of Valor Museum in Fresno and participated in a color guard event with the DAR, where a Revolutionary War Memorial was installed at the same museum. His involvement also included marching in the Veterans Day Parade in Fresno and attending the DAR State Leadership Meeting, underscoring his commitment to collaboration and honoring historical legacies.

**Secretary Chris Cerillo** distributed several supplemental certificates to individual chapters. Representatives from each chapter came up and retrieved their respective certificates. Secretary Cerillo reminded everyone to carefully check their certificates and ensure they have their introductory letter from National, their introductory letter from the State President, and a copy of their application with the state number. If you notice any errors, please return the certificate to me and I will correct it and send it back to you.

- Thomas Jefferson Chapter
- General Patton Chapter
- South Coast Chapter
- Gold County Chapter
- Silicon Valley Chapter

- Sons of Liberty Chapter
- Orange County Chapter
- Riverside Chapter
- Sacramento Chapter
- San Diego Chapter
- Delta Chapter
- Orange County Chapter
- Harbor Chapter
- Yosemite Chapter

**Secretary Christopher Cerillo:** Secretary Cerillo provided an overview of operations at the state level, emphasizing that for the second consecutive year, the state has experienced membership growth rather than losses. He encouraged continued efforts to maintain this positive trend. Secretary Cerillo reminded chapter secretaries and presidents to complete and submit their reconciliation reports, noting that these reports were distributed in April. He expressed concern about high officer turnover within chapters, stressing the importance of promptly communicating leadership changes so access to the necessary databases can be updated accordingly. Regarding financial processes, Cerillo clarified procedures for membership reinstatement. He asked members to send two separate checks—one for \$50 to National and one for \$20 to the state—along with the reinstatement form, explaining that failing to do so delays processing. He also explained that chapter-to-chapter transfers are handled internally and urged members to notify him of any changes. Communication was highlighted as a critical challenge, with Secretary Cerillo urging members to keep him informed of updates to minimize confusion and ensure smooth operations. He also underscored the importance of keeping officer lists current for the website and encouraged timely submission of chapter reports to meet established deadlines. Secretary Cerillo concluded by stressing the importance of delegate registration for Congress, noting that being on the delegate list ensures voting rights. He gave an example from the previous year, where a single vote determined the outcome of an important measure, illustrating that every vote counts. He asked members to email him by May 1st to confirm their participation.

President Littlefield added that doesn't mean you have to guarantee you will be there. If there's any chance that you'll be there, then send Secretary Cerillo a note. It's far easier to not have you there than to not have you be a delegate. Stephen Andrews also clarified his role in handling presidential and chapter updates, stating he receives information directly from members. He highlighted the ongoing challenge of maintaining accurate chapter rosters and emphasized the importance of starting the annual reconciliation process early. Stephen advised that keeping rosters updated monthly is more manageable than trying to fix them at year's end. He mentioned that the deadline for reconciliation was previously extended from November 15th to January, urging members to begin the process now. The chapter will continue using the Excel program for managing rosters, and



Stephens offered his assistance to anyone encountering difficulties. President Littlefield added that he will do his best to provide advance reminders about deadlines, particularly for the annual meeting, though last-minute submissions remain common.

**Vice President of the Southern California Brandon Villardi** expressed his honor in serving as Vice President. In his role, he attended 21 different chapter meetings, representing nine out of 13 chapters in the southern region so far this year. He highlighted his notable visit to the Central Coast chapter, which was at risk of closing following the passing of their President and Vice President at the end of the previous year. Fortunately, Nathan Maas stepped in as a leader, helping the chapter remain active, and Vice President Villardi noted ongoing conversations and optimism about the chapter's future growth.

In addition to his regular duties, Vice President Villardi also served as Color Guard Commander, participating in 44 color guard events. He attended both DAR and CAR state meetings and found his interactions with members and leaders throughout the year to be rewarding. He concluded that his full report is available in the meeting book.

**Vice President of Membership Scott Whitman** described his primary responsibility as managing membership inquiries submitted through the national SAR.org website. The process, which previously sent emails directly to him, has transitioned to a report on the Blue Database membership inquiry report under the state dashboard. Whitman now reviews this report almost daily to identify new postings, determines where each potential member lives, and connects them with the appropriate local chapter. He notifies both the chapter leadership and the applicant, inviting them to establish contact and work on the membership application process.

In 2024, there were 334 inquiries about potential membership, averaging nearly one per day. Whitman also assists with other inquiries, such as students interested in essay contests, by directing them to the relevant chapters. He reported that the Sons of Liberty Chapter received the most inquiries in 2024 (47), followed by Thomas Jefferson (29), San Diego (25), and Southwest (23). For 2025, two chapters are no longer present, so inquiries for the areas previously covered by the George Washington and Mother Lode Chapters are now referred to the Gold Country and Sacramento Chapters, respectively. Whitman confirmed his full report is also available in the meeting book.

**Treasurer Kevin Bidekamp:** presented a summary of the organization's financial status for the past fiscal year. Total receipts amounted to \$147,611, while expenses totaled \$144,710, resulting in a net surplus of \$2,901. Donations played a significant role in supporting finances, with \$12,205 received overall, including a notable \$10,000 contribution from Intel. Other donations came from the Ladies Auxiliary (\$2,000), Michael Elston (\$100), the South Coast chapter (\$100), and the Thomas Jefferson chapter (\$5). Treasurer Bidekamp reminded everyone that many corporations will match donations 1:1 and that is a great opportunity for the society to increase donations. The organization completed the second year of its four-year, \$100,000 commitment to the Education

Center and Museum in Louisville, with \$25,000 given so far. The Treasurer emphasized the importance of donations, matching gift programs, and membership growth as the primary sources of financial health. Investment growth and effective expense management also contribute to a stable financial outlook. The Treasurer concluded by offering to answer questions and noted that life member reimbursement checks were available for the chapters.

- Coachella Valley, Eagle, General George Patton, Gold Country, Harbor, Kern Chapter, Monterey Bay, Orange County, Redlands, Redwood Empire, Sacramento, San Diego, San Francisco, No Santa Barbara, Silicon Valley, Suns of Liberty, South Coast, Thomas Jefferson, and Yosemite.

**Chancellor Michael Herman:** it's in the book.

**Genealogist David Morrow:** Genealogist Morrow delivered a report summarizing his activities over the past year. He highlighted a presentation and webinar he conducted in February for chapter presidents, registrars, and genealogists, addressing frequently asked questions. The presentation materials were distributed to all attendees, covering most Oregon chapters. Genealogist Morrow plans to host another similar webinar in the fall, with the date to be determined once his children's school schedule is finalized, likely before Thanksgiving. He also noted his ongoing support for Terry Briggs and other chapter officers by answering questions and assisting with application reviews. Genealogist Morrow expressed his gratitude for the opportunity to help and thanked Mark for his support. His report is in the book.

**Registrar Terry Briggs:** Registrar Briggs reported that over the past 12 months, he received 273 applications from California SAR chapters. Of these, 253 were forwarded for further review, and about 10 applications remain to be reviewed. Fifteen applications were returned to chapter registrars for being incomplete or not meeting SAR standards. During the year, 141 California applications are currently awaiting approval at SAR headquarters—comprising 49 new member and 92 Supplemental Patriot Ancestor applications. New member applications are taking about three months for review, while supplemental applications require about 15 months. There has been progress in reducing pending (appended) applications from 34 to 11 since he took office two years ago. In addition to processing applications, Registrar Briggs provides preliminary reviews and guidance to chapter registrars, especially new ones, to ensure applications meet the necessary standards.

**Historian Scott Brooks:** (not present) - it's in the book.

**Reverend Scott Elliot:** Chaplain Elliott invited all members to attend the memorial service scheduled for tomorrow at 2:00 PM, emphasizing its importance as an opportunity to honor and remember members who have passed away in the last year. He noted that the service allows attendees to share stories and learn about influential members from various local chapters. Chaplain Elliott also offered reminders to maintain professionalism during the meetings, encouraging the use of appropriate language and respectful conduct. He acknowledged that

conflicts or misunderstandings may occasionally arise and advised members to address any issues directly with the person involved as the first step, noting that most problems can be resolved through simple conversation. If further assistance is needed, he offered his support. Overall, he expressed optimism for a productive two days of meetings.

**Surgeon Dr. Matthew Bowdish MD:** Surgeon Bowdish emphasized the organization's tradition as a society of gentlemen and outlined the two minimum requirements for his role: holding a current California medical license and providing medical advice to both leadership and members, which he continues to fulfill. Beyond these duties, Dr. Bowdish engaged in member outreach by delivering medical history talks to various SAR and AR chapters, including presentations on George Washington's medical history and DNA/genealogy. He also introduced a new talk on the medical history of the early Jamestown colony and participated in the "Revolutionary War Rarities" podcast. Additionally, he supported the Medical Advisory Committee at the national level, contributing to the production of 15 medical challenge points representing figures from the 13 original colonies, as well as French and Spanish physicians who aided the American Revolution. Dr. Bowdish is assisting in developing a brochure of biographies to accompany the medical challenge point set, which will be available next year.

**Investment Fund Trustee Report:** Dr. Kent Gregory and John Dodd presented the Investment Fund Trustee Report, detailing the performance and management of five separate funds invested with Morgan Stanley Smith Barney: the Life Membership Fund, Education Fund, Permanent Fund, Congress Fund, and Unallocated Fund. The funds started the period on March 1, 2024, with a balance of \$519,233.88 and ended on February 28, 2025, with \$540,569.99. This reflected a net gain of \$21,337.11 after accounting for \$25,000 sent to the SAR Foundation.

Key fund details include:

- Life Membership Fund: Ended with \$199,351.27, achieving a 9.08% annual return and a 4.05% average growth since inception.
- Education Fund: Held \$127,138.90, with an 8.79% annual return and 5.15% average growth since inception.
- Permanent Fund: Provides society stability. It, along with other funds, is described in more detail in the full report.
- Congress Fund: Used for hosting Congress events, had \$36,976.44 and grew 9.92% during the year, with a 6.6% average growth since inception.
- Unallocated Fund: Contains surplus funds for use by the treasurer, ended with \$48,740.38 and an 8.5% annual growth, averaging 3.54% since inception.

The trustees consulted with Morgan Stanley's advisor in January to review account performance and discuss allocation changes, notably increasing core bond allocations while reducing short-term bond holdings. The Neuberger-Berman large-cap value fund is under close observation. The report also noted that contributions to the Permanent Fund, such as those from Consuelo-Sires pin

sales, help generate additional funds for various uses. As a non-profit, any surplus is rolled over to the allocated funds. The trustees reminded members to report debts and clarified that the Life Membership Fund should not distribute money to external entities.

**Flag Day:** President Littlefield interjected to remind everyone that Flag Day is coming up on June 14 and encouraged the use of door hangers to thank community members who display the American flag. These inexpensive door hangers, available for about \$200 per thousand, are distributed by the Sacramento chapter and can be customized with features like QR codes for easy website access. President Littlefield suggested contacting him for more information and highlighted that these door hangers can also be used for other patriotic holidays such as the Fourth of July and Memorial Day. He also recommended sharing them with DAR friends, who are typically enthusiastic about helping with this outreach.

President Littlefield distributed individual chapter awards for membership. The chapters received a \$250 check.

1. Harbor – 20 new members
2. Orange County - 12 new members
3. Sacramento - 10 new members
4. South Coast Chapter – 9 new members

#### **Chapter Reports:**

President Littlefield asked each chapter to come up and provide their reports:

- **Central Coast:** no report.
- **Coachella:** Dave Arthurs from Coachella Valley shared updates from Palm Springs, noting a busy year focused on growing membership and taking on new projects. The chapter holds eight meetings annually, but attendance can be affected by the extreme summer heat, leading to an increase in dual memberships so members can attend meetings elsewhere. Participation in spring and fall meetings, flag certificate distributions for holidays, and attendance at the NASAR Congress were highlights in 2024. The chapter has also sustained a seven-year streak in the Veterans Day Parade, handing out American flags to children, and has participated in Wreaths Across America for six years, now helping cover about 40% of veterans' graves at Desert Memorial Park. With \$10,000 in funds and a full slate of officers, Dave moved from registrar to vice president and is set to become chapter president. Membership grew by a net four last year and is projected to increase by 20% this year, with seven new applications and no attrition so far. This year, the chapter launched the Washington Memorial project to commemorate the country's 250th anniversary, budgeting \$9,000 for a monument at Desert Memorial Park. Members are encouraged to contribute \$250 each, and the project is already approved and underway. Additionally, a new initiative is underway to document Patriot biographies, with about 16% completed. As membership diversifies, including younger applicants, the chapter faces challenges with meeting times

and locations, and is seeking suggestions to better accommodate members who work during the day. Dave also noted his dual membership with a Michigan chapter, which meets in the evenings and enjoys better attendance and a wider age range. Efforts to recruit younger members and collaborate with DAR continue, with two potential DAR recruits identified but not yet onboard.

- **Delta:** Reverend Elliot, President of the Delta Chapter provided the update noting that the Chapter has become much more stable lately, with more people attending meetings and getting involved in projects. Andrew McClure's leadership has made a big difference, allowing others to focus on things like school engagement. For example, they worked with the local district superintendent to introduce end-of-year awards in 35 new schools, which was a big accomplishment. Presentations about Patrick Henry's famous "liberty or death" speech have also been a highlight, including a major event in Virginia with the governor and a presidential proclamation. A new C.A.R. chapter launched just south of Delta, and members partnered with them for the first time in the region. At the next chapter meeting, they plan to honor Frank Wright, a Marine veteran of World War II who turns 100 years old on July 5. Frank received two Purple Hearts, fought at Iwo Jima, wrote a book about his experience with PTSD, and has been an important community figure. The chapter is excited to celebrate his contributions. The rest is in the book.
- **Eagle Chapter:** Benny White, President of the Eagle Chapter reported on their activities as a small but active group, averaging 10–12 attendees at each of their 10 annual meetings. The chapter has recently collaborated with DAR, providing colored art for a bench dedication ceremony. They are closely involved with a newly formed local CAR society, attending meetings, making donations to support its start, and presenting seven awards to its members, who also participated with the chapter in the Fourth of July parade. The Eagle Chapter is committed to the flag certificate program, distributing 10–12 certificates each year, and maintains a supportive relationship with the local VFW hall in Nantucket, providing a \$250 annual donation in exchange for meeting space. Additional chapter activities include awarding veteran's certificates, membership awards, and service awards. Their Color Guard, although small with four members, remains engaged in local events. A recent initiative involved partnering with a small local cemetery to enroll it in the Wreaths Across America program, where the chapter is helping to launch activities. The Eagle Scout Contest remains a highlight, with three to four contestants annually; notably, one contestant placed third in the state this year.
- **General George S. Patton:** Stephen Andrews, President of the General George S. Patton Chapter has welcomed 15 new members and is actively engaging them by assigning roles based on their interests, ensuring immediate involvement. The chapter utilized national and state resources to support new member integration. They hosted a booth at the Ventura County Fair, reaching thousands and collecting contacts from schools and homeschool

groups. The chapter launched the 1776 Scholarship Program, where a \$1,776 donation funds monetary awards for youth contests for ten years, with donors having the opportunity to name scholarships. Award amounts for the youth contest are \$100, \$75, \$50, and \$25 for the top four places. In 2024, one donation was received with another pending. Additionally, the Robert Lee Taylor Youth Endowment Fund was established to support these youth initiatives, emphasizing the importance of fundraising for chapter activities.

- **Gold Country:** David Gillard, President of the Gold Country Chapter reported that they face challenges similar to other chapters, particularly the lack of a registrar or genealogist to process new membership interest and applications. The chapter is currently addressing deficiencies in past application processing, with help from volunteers like Jim Faulkinbury. Their main annual program, a poster contest, remains highly successful; this year, it engaged 24 fifth-grade classrooms across nine schools and resulted in 600 posters being judged by the chapter.
- **Harbor:** note that the Harbor chapter provided its update on Day 2. Chapter President James Bunker noted that the Harbor Chapter has demonstrated significant activity and success, particularly in membership recruitment and retention. Their officer structure benefits from strong continuity over recent years. Brandon Velarde has been especially effective in recruiting new members at every opportunity, including outreach to DAR and CAR representatives, which has contributed to nearly doubling the chapter's membership in two years. The chapter set a goal to reach 100 members by 2026 and is already at 94, aiming now for 125. Membership retention has been equally impressive, with only three or four members lost in the past year thanks to a strategic three-pronged approach: persistent email invitations via Cheddar, personalized follow-ups, and direct phone outreach. This strategy, combined with early and repeated efforts, has resulted in a high retention rate. The chapter prioritizes making meetings engaging and enjoyable by turning them into themed events with humor, historical anecdotes, and dynamic speakers, ensuring members leave each meeting with a positive experience. The Harbor Chapter also maintains strong community involvement, especially with veterans, and regularly collaborates with organizations like DAR and C.A.R. Their speaker roster is notable, and relationships with organizations such as the USS Iowa and Lane Victory enrich their events. Collaborations with the DAR and CAR are frequent and valued, bringing additional energy and effectiveness to the chapter's activities.
- **Kern:** Chris Scott, President of the Kern Chapter, said that the Chapter experienced an active year, with the Color Guard participating in various community patriotic and educational events. The chapter promoted Revolutionary War history, civic responsibilities, and SAR youth programs through public outreach and coordination. Key activities included co-hosting the board manager's meeting with the Yosemite Chapter, participating in Wreaths Across America at Bakersfield National Cemetery, and holding a joint SAR, DAR,

CAR holiday luncheon. The chapter awarded several Junior ROTC medals and participated in the CAR State Conference. They developed educational YouTube programs about the Revolutionary War, which are promoted to schools and available for use by educators and CAR programs. These resources help educate students on topics such as colonial life, money, the Marines, weapons, flags, and music from the Revolutionary War era. Financially, the chapter reported no open elected officer positions, maintained current regulatory filing status, and had a total cash balance of \$4,380. Since 2015, the chapter has focused on outreach to fifth-grade classrooms, adapting to COVID-19 restrictions by creating video modules at the Kern County Museum. These eight educational modules, each six to eight minutes long, are approved for use in California fifth-grade classrooms and are available on YouTube for teachers to access as needed.

- **Monterey:** not present
- **Orange County:** Lawrence Stratton, President of the Orange County Chapter said that the chapter held 10 monthly meetings, featuring seven guest speakers and an average attendance of 30 members per meeting. Each meeting included a "250" event and a minute presentation. Membership experienced significant growth, increasing from 144 to 158 members over the year, with 24 new members, seven new junior members, and two reinstatements. The chapter only saw 17 members drop, reflecting strong member retention efforts. Financially, the chapter is in good standing, with nearly \$33,000 in the bank. The chapter was highly active, participating in 18 Color Guard events and engaging in programs such as Flags and Wreaths Across America Junior ROTC. Additionally, the chapter proudly represented the Eagle Scout contest.
- **Redlands:** not present
- **Redwood Chapter:** Bill Van Valkenburg, Vice President of the Redwood Chapter provided an update on what they are doing at the Redwood Chapter. We talk to various organizations, and we will present them with a banner for the 250th Revolution celebration, so they can fly or put it on their stands or whatever. Also, being a very small group, and of course thanks to Bill Nay, going to the cemeteries for escorts, and talking at the Boy Scouts of America. The rest is in the book.
- **Riverside:** Michael Mann said that the Riverside Chapter is in a rebuilding phase following membership losses due to COVID-19. This year, they welcomed one new member—the most in several years—and have ten additional prospective members in progress. The chapter held ten in-person lunch meetings, typically on Wednesdays, with each meeting featuring an educational program focused on Revolutionary War battles. Efforts to promote the "250 medals" are ongoing, with the chapter currently holding 12 bronze and 10 silver medals. Collaboration with the local DAR (Daughters of the American Revolution) chapter is expanding, and the chapter recently donated funds for a museum cutlass in honor of

Charles Lampman, a former member and state president. Other activities included hosting an essay contest, sponsoring a teacher for the Valley Forge program, awarding six ROTC tickets, and presenting two Eagle Scout awards. The Riverside Veterans Parade was a highlight, with nine members firing muskets and three carrying flags, supported by the DAR and members from other chapters. The chapter also hosted an expo booth at the parade for community engagement. Membership stands at 68, and the chapter is financially stable. The chapter discussed the high cost of insurance for firing events (approximately \$800 for a single event), exploring broader insurance options with Comstock Insurance and considering coordination with the National Color Guard. The issue is scheduled for further discussion.

- **Sacramento:** Registrar Jim Faulkinbury reported that The Sacramento Chapter held nine meetings over the past year, including six dinner meetings with guests and family and three business meetings. Their activities included participation in the teacher recognition program, the JROTC program, and the Spirit of America Leadership Program, sponsoring students to the Valley Forge Institute. The chapter was actively involved in eight different events, notably the annual flag-laying at the historic Sacramento Cemetery for Memorial Day, covering around 8,000 veterans' graves from various wars, including the Civil War and World Wars, and honoring notable figures like Colonel William Stephen Hamilton and Albert Major Wynne. The Color Guard participated in eight events, primarily parades and DAR celebrations. Two major chapter initiatives were highlighted: a living history program for fifth-grade students, presenting colonial history in costume at about 15 schools annually since 1998; and the American 250 "book donation program." For the latter, the chapter set a fundraising goal of \$17,760, reaching \$17,197 by year's end, and delivered 1,665 books to classrooms, aiming for a ten-year impact. The chapter also gave ROTC awards to 17 high schools and three universities, gained 19 new members, and absorbed the defunct Motherload Chapter, ending the year with 192 members. The 1776 book project received additional support through a George Washington Endowment Fund grant, offering supplemental funding for other chapters adopting the program.
- **San Diego:** Chapter President Jim Mcadory reported one open officer position (2nd Vice President), with Registrar and Sergeant-at-Arms roles filled. Highlights included the George Washington birthday dinner attended by 60 people, which was featured in SD Discover Magazine. The chapter's JROTC program works with 60 schools, with 35–40 participating annually—a commitment described as a full-time effort. Their oration contest winner placed 1st at state and 6th nationally. Additional activities included marking patriot graves, especially recognizing Spanish patriots, with 200 in California still to honor. The chapter has \$21,000 on hand and regulatory filings are current. They are involved with fundraising for a monument commemorating the first Marine landing in Florida, with a goal to raise \$200,000. The chapter participated in



the July 4th color guard events at Balboa Park, honoring a 100-year-old D-Day veteran. A significant upcoming event involves supporting legislation that will ensure fallen service members lie in state for 25 hours with SAR providing a 24-hour honor guard, followed by burial at Miramar National Cemetery on May 22.

- **San Francisco:** The chapter was represented by Bob Ebert who noted the recent awards to ROTC, and that the essay contest winner will be recognized this weekend if she can attend.
- **Santa Barbara:** not present
- **Silicon Valley:** Terry Briggs The Silicon Valley chapter has an active membership of 100 as of last Friday. The chapter holds four meetings annually, which is limited partly due to organizational constraints and a small officer roster—currently, only three officers serve, with one individual also fulfilling the roles of both president and registrar, as well as state registrar. Their color guard has participated in several events, including the Four Chaplains Memorial, a Memorial Day information table at a local cemetery, an Independence Day ceremony, the San Jose Veterans Day Parade (for approximately 15 years), and Reads Across America. Many events have involved collaboration with the Pleasanton Youth Pipe and Drum Corps (Young American Patriots). The chapter has contributed a total of \$11,000 to the SAR Education Center and Museum over four years, including a recent donation. Due to limited member participation, youth contest activities are minimal, but the chapter continues to present medals (ROTC, Naval Sea Cadet, and Junior ROTC medals). The Eagle Scout Scholarship and Recognition program is described as very active, led by chairman Rob Morse. America 250 presentations are regularly made at chapter meetings, resulting in the awarding of seven bronze America 250 medals. The chapter's bank account currently stands at \$23,000, and there is a goal to increase member participation in chapter activities.
- **Sons of Liberty:** Mark Cross, president of the chapter reported on chapter activities and status. The chapter's general funds stand at \$14,789, with an investment fund of \$61,000 subject to conditional endowments. All regulatory filings are complete, and the chapter updated its bylaws this year. Meetings are held six times annually, including a joint annual meeting with the Society of Colonial Wars and other leading societies, whose memberships often overlap. The chapter's major annual event is the Masking of the Colors, held on General George Washington's birthday weekend, with participation from Color Guard members and the awarding of JROTC medals. This month, the chapter was recognized by the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors for the 250th anniversary of the Battles of Lexington and Concord. The event included representatives from DAR and CAR, and a video was shared widely on social media and the chapter's website, marking it as an America 250 event. The chapter has open officer positions (Color Guard, Historian, Genealogist, and ROTC contact) and seeks ideas for future programs to increase member participation. Mark

Cross expressed interest in developing a program to help inspire greater involvement among members.

- **South Coast:** Chapter President Barry Michaels said that the chapter experienced notable growth this year, increasing membership by 11 or 15% with three new members in 2024. The Color Guard was active, supporting 28 patriotic events. The chapter awarded a variety of medals in the America 250 program: seven bronze, two silver, and two gold. Additional recognition included one Distinguished Service Medal, two Military Service Medals, one Lydia Dara Medal, and eight Certificates of Appreciation. The chapter also presented JROTC bronze medals to cadets at six high schools and two sea cadet units, as well as a ROTC silver medal at a local university. Three flag certificates were awarded, and the chapter sponsored an essay in the Tom and Betty Lawrence America History Teacher Award Contest. Members received several honors, including two silver and two bronze Baron One Steuben Color Guard Medals, one Silver Henry Achievement Medal, one Patriot Medal, and one Hannah White Arnett Medal from the PAR. The chapter itself received the Richard F. Loss Award for 2024 from the Statement Society. During the year, the chapter held eight membership dinner meetings with speakers and four board meetings. All elected officer positions were filled. The chapter maintained a healthy financial status, reporting \$14,880 on hand and completing all regulatory filings. Several members were acknowledged for their roles, including those responsible for color guard leadership, speaker organization, and event support. The chapter also served as the host for the meeting.
- **Thomas Jefferson:** Chapter President Dan Shurtz said that the chapter is celebrating its 100th anniversary on October 11, with a planned celebration in Walnut Creek. The chapter maintains a full slate of officers, with additional volunteers assisting in roles such as registration. For the America 250 program, the chapter discovered a 275-year-old oak tree in Walnut Creek and is collaborating with the city, DAR, and the former mayor to place a commemorative plaque at the site. The chapter recently began partnering with the Rowland Treatment Center in Vacaville, founded and funded by Herm Rowland, former owner of Jelly Belly. This partnership provides opportunities for school engagement, as the center attracts many student visits. The Rowland Center, located at the Nut Tree airport, features historic aircraft and is aiming to expand its Revolutionary War exhibits. The chapter sees this collaboration as beneficial for their educational outreach and school programs.
- **Yosemite:** Scott Nichols, President of the Chapter concluded the year with a record bank balance of \$5,393, up from their usual \$1,500. Membership stands at 56 active members, with three new members approved and eight more applications in progress. The chapter held 10 meetings, including a holiday open house, and actively collaborated with nine ROTC units in the Central Valley, notably Fresno State University's Army and Air Force groups. Major highlights include presenting the colors to approximately 8,000 people at the July 4 Fresno Grizzlies game, launching their first poster contest with 50 fifth graders (earning

fourth place), and providing color guard services for Central Valley Honor Flights and at the Woodlake cemetery. The chapter also conducted three school assemblies for fifth graders and plans further outreach in local school districts. New initiatives include a cemetery grave mapping project in Sanger, with the goal of supporting Wreaths Across America, and the adoption of Constant Contact for improved member communication and event registration. The chapter co-hosted its first fall Board of Managers meeting with Kern and continues to strengthen ties with the local DAR chapter. Looking ahead, they aim to send teachers to the Valley Forge program after narrowly missing out this year. Additionally, Yosemite Chapter members were recognized with a certificate of appreciation and commemorative coins by the Sacramento chapter for their participation in the December 9 Wreaths Across America event at the California State Capitol.

**Recognition for outstanding Chapter:** President Littlefield recognized those chapters who demonstrated excellence in membership, color guard, youth activities, and other criteria.

- Redwood Empire
- South Coast Chapter
- Eagle Chapter
- Yosemite
- Gold Country

### **Youth Programs**

Dan McKelvey, committee chair for Youth Activities, introduced updates from program leaders, starting with David Gilliard on the Poster Contest.

- **Poster Contest:** David Gilliard said that there are five posters available for judging, with voting closing around 10:30 AM and the winner to be announced at lunch the following day. This year's poster topic is Lexington and Concord, with next year's theme set as the Declaration of Independence, a timely opportunity for chapters not yet participating in the program. Prize money for the contest is substantial, especially for fifth graders, with awards mentioned around \$1,500 for first place and \$250 for second and third. Contest details can be found online.
- **Brochure Contest:** Dan Shurtz provided an update on the Brochure Contest, highlighting that the Patent Chapter was the standout participant, submitting multiple entries and winning the top three prizes. Recently, several new teachers have joined the program, and the Freedom Center will start assisting chapters by connecting them with schools for field trips, as the center offers free visits for children. Dan emphasized the ongoing challenge of engaging schools, especially following COVID-19 disruptions. He encouraged members to reach out to teachers, particularly those in middle schools, noting that direct contact is necessary since schools are less likely to initiate participation themselves. The winning

brochures are available for viewing at the event. The success of the program relies heavily on teacher involvement, as securing a committed teacher often leads to broader school participation, although retention can be difficult from year to year. In response to a question, Dan clarified that brochures are expected to be handwritten, according to guidance from the national chair.

- **Eagle Scout Program:** Bill Nay shared several updates, particularly shining a light on Robert McPhee from Orange County. Robert's ongoing achievements underscore the so-called "McPhee dynasty". He is this year's first-place winner, and notably, was a third-place winner two years prior. Despite being signed up for the celebratory lunch, he was unable to attend because he was invited to a prospect lunch at the Naval Academy, an impressive recognition of his accomplishments. Bill recounted Robert's path: after initially placing third two years ago and missing out last year due to timing and age requirements, Robert reapplied this year and earned first place. Bill also clarified a recent rule change: previously, if a contestant had won a lower-level prize (like third place's \$4,000), and then later won first place nationally (\$10,000), they would only receive the difference. Now, winners are eligible to receive the full amount with each victory, so Robert, if successful this year, could earn the complete \$10,000 on top of his previous \$4,000 winnings. The program continues to rely heavily on volunteers to review scholarship applications. Bill expressed gratitude to chapters such as Silicon Valley, Sons of Liberty, Redwood Empire, and Orange County for their help in reviewing applications, and noted that some committee members were honored with the Silver Roger Sherman Award for over five years of dedicated service. The reviewing process is open to anyone interested in scouting. Bill remarked on the rewarding nature of reading the applicants' essays and urged more people to get involved. This year, the team received five applications. At the national level, each state can send one application, but only 34 states participated last year. The shortage of volunteer reviewers at the national stage delayed the announcement of national winners this year. Bill promised to share the results with everyone once available and encouraged volunteering for both state and national reviewing roles. In a related note, Bill shared that at their recent national committee meeting (held on Zoom), it was pointed out that more information about Robert E. Burt—the namesake of the Eagle Scout award—should be made available online. Bill accepted the responsibility of compiling a comprehensive history of Burt, leveraging his personal friendship and knowledge of Burt's later years. Lastly, there were no applicants from California for the Robert E. Burt Award this year. Bill urged members to nominate scouters or local partners involved in supporting scouting and offered to assist with the application process for anyone unsure how to proceed.
- **Knight Essay Contest:** Patrick Cecil - not present. It's in the book.
- **Orations Contest:** Mark Torres - not present. It's in the book.
- **Patriot Chest Program:** Mark Torres - not present. It's in the book.

- **Sea Cadets:** Kevin Forrest said that the Sea Cadets program experienced a strong turnout this year, particularly in the southern region. Despite some recent changes in command structure at certain locations, communication has remained steady. The program is entering its award season and expects more updates soon. Several chapters have reached out with questions about the enhanced awards, and the necessary paperwork has been distributed to them. Overall, the program is actively progressing and preparing for continued engagement over the coming years.
- **ROTC:** Kevin Forrest said that the ROTC program update highlights that this year, only two contestants entered the enhanced JROTC award, making the selection process simpler. The winner was Julian Tank from Mira Mesa in San Diego, and the runner-up was Cadet Master Sergeant Leonardo Rizzo, submitted by the Sacramento chapter. The report notes the need for greater outreach to encourage more participation next year. While some schools have discontinued their ROTC programs due to funding or leadership changes, others have shown interest in sponsorship, and efforts are underway to match these schools with appropriate chapters. The coordinator plans to contact chapter presidents to confirm ROTC points of contact and invites any questions to ensure efficient communication and support.
- **Spirit of America - high school program:** Craig Anderson is not here. Larry said it's in the book.
- **Spirit of America - middle school program:** Bob Taylor is not here. It's In the book. It is in the book.

### **Committee Reports**

**America 250:** Executive Vice President John Ferris highlights the importance of engaging with the "revolutionary rarities" section, encouraging attendees to like and subscribe to boost its visibility and relevance. He discusses the American 250 Anniversary Recognition Program as a significant and successful initiative, noting that the society currently ranks second nationally. There are now 247 members in the pipeline for bronze recognition, 137 for silver, and 75 for gold, with expectations for further recipients. Ferris credits the leadership within local chapters for the program's ongoing achievements.

- Executive Vice President Ferris presents a special bronze award to Mark Cross from the Sons of Liberty chapter, marking a milestone as the first in his chapter. He also discusses the distribution of challenge coins, stating that nearly 4,000 have been purchased by individuals rather than the state. These coins serve as tokens of appreciation and encouragement, often leaving a meaningful impact on recipients and helping to promote the California Society. The America 250 Recognition Program utilizes these coins to spread awareness of events from 250 years ago. Vice President Ferris shares historical highlights from the period, such as Ethan Allen and Benedict Arnold's ride to Ticonderoga, the convening of the Second Continental Congress, the arrival of British reinforcements, the

creation of the Continental Army, Washington's appointment and acceptance of his commission, and the Battle of Bunker Hill. Ferris emphasizes the ongoing relevance and impact of these historical events, urging full engagement in the 250th anniversary activities.

- **250 certificates:** Executive Vice President Ferris presided over the presentation of America 250 certificates and medals, primarily awarding silver medals to male recipients from various chapters, with plans to present silver medals to women at lunch and gold medals at dinner for better ceremony management. Chapter presidents accepted awards on behalf of absent members. Recipients included individuals from the Delta, General George Patton, Harbor, Orange County, Redwood Empire, Riverside, Sacramento, San Diego, Silicon Valley, South Coast, and Thomas Jefferson chapters. 28 Silver Medals and 14 Gold Medals were awarded.

<b>Delta Chapter</b> Andrew McClure – Silver Medal	<b>Riverside Chapter</b> Hal Cardwell – Silver Medal Henry Lucas – Silver Medal Mike Mann – Gold Medal
<b>Gen. George S. Patton Jr. Chapter</b> Jerry Hayes Jr. – Silver Medal Tom Shaw – Silver Medal Robert Taylor – Silver Medal Jim Armstrong – Gold Medal	<b>Sacramento Chapter</b> Sandra Anderson – Silver Medal Karen Faulkinbury – Silver Medal Mary Ann Littlefield – Silver Medal
<b>Harbor Chapter</b> Keneth Winiecki – Silver Medal Patricia Winiecki – Silver Medal Alexa Villardi – Gold Medal	<b>San Diego Chapter</b> Bryan Bagnas – Silver Medal
<b>Kern Chapter</b> Brian Claxton – Silver Medal Kerry Adams – Gold Medal Larry Carroll – Gold Medal Mike Davis – Gold Medal Rick Meredith – Gold Medal Sophia Kaufman, CAR – Gold Medal Kristen Kaufman, DAR – Gold Medal	<b>Silicon Valley Chapter</b> Terry Briggs – Silver Medal Terry Briggs – Gold Medal
<b>Orange County Chapter</b> Pamela Beach – Silver Medal Dan Casey – Silver Medal Dyke Dooley – Silver Medal Jim Klingler – Gold Medal	<b>South Coast Chapter</b> Shane Gates (Jr.) – Silver Medal Jerry Hereford – Silver Medal Robbie Jones – Silver Medal Barry Michaels – Silver Medal Scott Neall – Silver Medal Kathryn Paye – Silver Medal Bunny Smith – Silver Medal Kate Forrest (CAR member) – Gold Medal
<b>Redwood Empire Chapter</b> Mike Nay – Silver Medal Karen Nay – Silver Medal Daniel Van Valkenburg – Silver Medal Karen Nay – Gold Medal	<b>Thomas Jefferson Chapter</b> Dan Schurtz – Silver Medal Stephen Renouf – Gold Medal

Executive Vice President Ferris emphasized the logistical challenges of distributing so many awards, acknowledged the hard work of participants, and highlighted the importance of active participation as a demonstration of leadership within the California Society. He

concluded by thanking everyone for their efforts and encouraging continued involvement in the program.

- **Americanism Program:** Duncan Campbell provided an overview of the Americanism program, detailing its requirements, the importance of accurate reporting, and how chapters can compete for national recognition. The Americanism award is a year-long program tracked in a growing document, which must be started early and submitted at the end of the year. The latest guidelines and forms are available on [sar.org](http://sar.org) under the Americanism Committee, with frequent updates. Small chapters with fewer than 40 members often excel in this program. To qualify for competition, chapters must complete at least seven of the eight Americanism categories and four of the five streamer categories. However, all chapters are encouraged to submit their reports even if they do not meet these thresholds, as state-level recognition and points depend on these submissions. Failing to turn in the report can negatively impact the state's overall standing and reporting. The program emphasizes participation from all chapters, regardless of size, and the importance of consistent documentation throughout the year.
  - Media Publicity: Update your chapter's website or Facebook page at least once every six months. If you don't have a website, updating a Facebook page also qualifies.
  - Speakers Bureau: Publicize your Speaker's Bureau on any website (including another chapter's) and send a speaker out to receive credit.
  - DAR/CAR Support: Support the Daughters or Children of the American Revolution, for example, by making a donation (e.g., \$20 donation equals 20 points).
  - Youth Programs: Participate in or support youth programs. Most chapters already meet this requirement.
  - Public Service Program: March in a parade to fulfill this criterion.
  - Historic Sites: Place a wreath at a historic site or cemetery on national observed days (e.g., Memorial Day). Taking a photo is recommended but not mandatory.
  - Grave Marking: Place flags on graves during events like Memorial Day. Earn 1 point for each flag placed (up to 200 points).
  - Color Guard: Have a member march in a parade in uniform to earn points for this category.
  - Medals: Give out medals to non-members (category 9a) or to chapter members (category 9b) to fulfill this requirement.
  - National Society Donations: If anyone in your chapter donates to the National Society, report the total amount (not individual names). This information is provided to chapters at the start of each year.
  - Reconciliation Report: Complete a reconciliation report by listing all relevant items. This fulfills another required tab.

- Meetings: Attend chapters or society meetings and report attendance on your Americanism form.
- **Audit Committee and Budget and Planning:** Executive Vice President Ferris said it is all in the book, and everything is in order. John thanked the team members of the Audit and the budget and Planning Committee for their hard work, adding that they passed. The audit and everything looks in good order and accuracy.
- **Bylaws Committee:** Michael Herman, Chris Cerullo, and Stephen Renouf (not present). Michael deferred the update to the next meeting day.
- **California Compatriot:** Executive Vice President Ferris expressed enthusiasm for his role as the California Compatriot editor, emphasizing the enjoyment and fulfillment it brings. He highlighted the value of receiving articles and photos from various compatriots, which help showcase their pride in chapter events and individual achievements. Ferris encouraged members to continue engaging in the publication and welcomed suggestions for improvement. He announced that Vice President Dhinsa, the current Executive Vice President, will soon become the new editor. Overall, Executive Vice President Ferris thanked everyone for their contributions and ongoing support for the California Compatriot.
- **CAR (Children of the American Revolution):** Brandon Villardi acknowledged Sue Fitzpatrick, the past state president and current senior state president of the Children of the American Revolution (C.A.R.), and sent her greetings. He mentioned that the new state senior president and president would be introduced at tomorrow's meeting. Villardi relayed Fitzpatrick's request to present awards to CAR members in recognition of their outstanding support throughout the year. While most awards would be distributed later, he presented a special flag streamer—California Society Children of the American Revolution Supporter 2425—to Don Dryden, the California Society President, expressing appreciation for their collaborative efforts.
- **Chapter Activities and Recognition:** Brandon Villardi expressed his appreciation by recognizing and thanking several chapters for their support. The chapters acknowledged were South Coast, Yosemite, Sons of Liberty, Silicon Valley, Eagle, San Diego, Harbor, Riverside, Kern, Sacramento, and Delta. He congratulated these chapters and conveyed his gratitude for their contributions.
- **Chief of Protocol:** Brandon Villardi said there is nothing to report.
- **California Color Guard:** Commander Brandon Villardi opened by thanking Adjutants Kevin Forrest and Scott Nichols for their support over the past year. Commander Villardi highlighted a notable surge in Color Guard participation, stating he personally attended 45 events this year, with 30 additional engagements already scheduled. As the 250th anniversary of America approaches, the demand for Color Guard members and events is



rising sharply. Brandon encouraged chapters without dedicated Color Guards to identify members who have uniforms or participate in reenactments, and suggested they connect these individuals with the Color Guard leadership. He noted that many Color Guards in California are made up of mixed units from different chapters, as illustrated by the recent DAR state meeting in Burlingame, which drew participants from Fresno, Harbor, Los Angeles, Sacramento, and Bakersfield. Villardi stressed the need for chapters to share information about interested members, as there is a willingness among guardsmen to travel and support events across the state—even to neighboring states, such as Utah. Efforts are underway to compile a roster of individual guardsmen and chapter captains so events can be better distributed, allowing members to decide which activities they wish to join. Villardi also addressed the issue of uniforms, urging chapters to loan or sell unused uniforms to facilitate new membership, and shared that he has redistributed uniforms at low cost to make participation more accessible. Brandon then announced the medals and recognition for its outstanding 2024 participation. For 2024, 18 Color Guard medals were awarded:

- 5 National Silver Medals
- 5 State Silver Medals
- 4 State Bronze Medals
- 3 Junior Color Guard Medals
- 1 Molly Pitcher Award

Commander Villardi emphasized the importance of chapters submitting activity reports so that participants and chapters can be recognized, including through an Outstanding Chapter Award. Assistance in filling out reports is available from Commander Villardi and the adjutants; members are encouraged to reach out for support if needed.

**Color Guard Adjutant North:** Scott Nicols, Color Guard Adjutant North, reported having 28 Color Guard members across six chapters in Northern California, with 19 members able to march unrestricted (such as in two-mile parades) and four additional members in process of joining, currently working on uniforms or getting started. Of the group, 12 members have firing muskets, while the rest carry non-firing muskets. He has compiled an up-to-date roster including contact information and certifications such as NRA and youth protection training, which was a significant accomplishment for the year. Nicols emphasized ongoing recruitment and uniform needs, asking for information about unused uniforms to support new members. The boundary for Northern California Color Guard is defined as Fresno North. He encouraged participation and collaboration with Southern chapters and invited members to join Northern events. Looking ahead, Nicols expects increasing activity, especially with the upcoming 250th anniversary in 2026. He highlighted the Race Across America kickoff at the state capitol on December 8, aiming to grow participation from eight members last year to 15–18 this year, and encouraged all to mark the date and join.

- **Color Guard Adjutant South:** Kevin Forrest said it's in the book.
- **The Compliance Committee:** Michael Hirman emphasized the importance of meeting compliance requirements, acknowledging that while the process can be boring and complicated, it remains essential. Harmon noted that most members have been good about compliance over the past year. Many forms are not due until May 15th, so some members are still working on them, while others are already fully compliant or close to being so. He encouraged members to reach out to him with questions and recommended seeking guidance from previous officers for help with forms. Harmon also reminded members to submit necessary forms, including conflict of interest documents, during the meeting for convenience.
- **DAR liaison Brian Stevens** provided an update highlighting several key points. In 2024, the California Society SAR (CASAR) received 25 DAR finder forms and ranked 10th nationally, with thanks given to registrar Terry Briggs for tracking submissions. An award was recently presented to Kathy Reeves of the Point Vicente Chapter for five referrals. A significant new development is the launch of a national DAR finder form medal program, recently approved at the fall leadership meeting. Three medals will be available: the Abigail Adams Medal (for two finder forms), the Deborah Sampson Medal (for five), and the Lucy Knox Medal (for eight). While California may require five forms for the DAR Medal of Appreciation, nationally, only two are needed for the Adams Medal. The medals are being minted and will be available soon. The DAR finder form, which is a referral form, remains unchanged and is accessible on state and national websites. The process involves submitting a form when a DAR member refers to a potential applicant, and this referral is tracked through the application process. Terry Briggs maintains a spreadsheet tracking these referrals, though it may not always match the national records. The new medal program is not retroactive.
- **5 Public Service Medal:** Brian Stevens explained that there are five public service medals: Heroism, Lifesaving, Fire, Law Enforcement, and Emergency Medical Services (EMS), awarded at both chapter and state levels. Chapters are encouraged to host their own awards programs, with the Mother Lode Chapter highlighted for its successful annual community awards banquet. This event is well-received locally, honors multiple recipients, produces a photo brochure, and gains local media coverage. For guidance on chapter-level awards programs, Steven Belden was recommended as a contact.
- **Ethics Committee:** Chris Cerillo - nothing to report.
- **Flag Committee:** Chairman Randy Dhindsa. It's in the book.
- **Handbook Committee:** Derek Brown discussed the SAR handbook, highlighting its role as a comprehensive resource for understanding SAR operations at both chapter and state levels. The handbook is intended for all California State Society members, not just officers and committee chairs, and is especially useful for mentoring newer members. It is updated

approximately annually, incorporating new information from national leadership and congress meetings. The most recent update added content on membership, recruiting, retention, reinstatement, and detailed the newly implemented SAR University, which offers around 20 training modules. Future updates will include information on the George Washington Endowment Fund. Members are encouraged to suggest any additions to enhance the handbook for the benefit of the entire society.

- **Information Technology:** Greg Hill is not present and it's in the book.
- **Insurance Committee:** Michael Hirman, Joe Dooley and others contributed to the conversation. The committee (Michael Herman, Kevin Biedenkamp, and Don Littlefield) opened by acknowledging the lengthy process other societies have faced in securing appropriate insurance policies, noting some took several years. Despite this, the urgency is clear as there's a growing interest in events involving black powder, which amplifies the need for comprehensive coverage. The Blockton chapter's current policy has a problematic events exclusion clause, raising a key question: if events aren't insured, what value does the policy truly provide? Committee members debated the ambiguity in the events exclusion clause. The language seems convoluted: while participation in events sponsored by other organizations appears covered, events sponsored by their own group may not be. This uncertainty prompted concerns that insurance carriers could interpret the policy to exclude essential activities. The committee also questioned what precisely constitutes an "event," since vague definitions could jeopardize coverage. Committee members reached out to insurance agents for clarification. The agent in San Diego was not helpful, leading to suggestions of consulting alternate agents or reviewing policies from other chapters. There may be differences in how marketing policies are structured among chapters, possibly resulting in varying levels of coverage. Discussion revealed that some chapters, like Riverside, independently obtained their policies rather than copying approaches from others. Several are now insured through Lloyd's of London, illustrating both a move away from previous insurers and a trend toward specialized carriers willing to consider black powder activities. When completing insurance applications, chapters were asked to provide not just the number of participants in hazardous activities (like firing), but the total number of members in their group or chapter. This affects premiums significantly. For example, one chapter's annual cost was nearly \$800, including \$600 for insurance and \$135 for a required association membership. Another chapter reported fees up to \$1,700 per year, nearly \$1,000 more, which sparked questions about how membership is defined. There is no consistent definition of "active member"; some interpret it as those actively firing black powder, while others use total chapter membership. For California's policy, the committee worked with an agent named Brand to ensure more accurate numbers were used, aiming to keep costs appropriate for their actual risk profile. The committee is committed to seeking feedback and clarity from agents and other chapters. There's an ongoing effort to compare

policies and clarify ambiguous clauses, especially regarding event sponsorship and member definitions. Updates and any new information from agents (like Comstock) will be shared as they become available.

- **Medal and Awards:** Greg Owens reporting for the Medals and Awards Committee, highlighted that the California Society orders a significant number of medals annually. Owens stepped into the role unexpectedly last year and has since managed the process, with support from contributors like John Ferris (responsible for 250 medals) and President Littlefield, who sign numerous certificates, sometimes resulting in writer's cramp. The SAR takes pride in its robust medal program. Responding to a query from Kent, Owens confirmed that he maintains a stock of medals that can be accessed on short notice, with the inventory remaining in the same box as when he first received it.
- **Media and Public Relations:** David Gilliard reported for the National Media and Public Relations committee, noting that two statewide press releases have been issued recently. One release announced an award for actor James Woods, and his neighbor Joe Patterson. Another publicized the introduction of a state assembly resolution by Assemblyman Joe Patterson, which designated April 19, 2025, as Lexington and Concord Day in California. Gilliard drafted the resolution, which passed unanimously in the California Assembly, officially recognizing the day statewide.
- **Membership Committee:** Scott Whitman - it's in the book.
- **Nominations Committee:** Craig Anderson is not present. It's in the book.
- **Public Services and Heroism Committee:** Brian Stephens - it's in the book.
- **Patriot Research Project:** Randy Dhindsa reported on the Patriot Research Project (PRS), emphasizing its ongoing efforts to maintain and update records. The PRS currently has about 770 state records and 130 new application records that need updating. Dhinsa announced the launch of "Operation Cleanup" next week, aiming to have all records updated by this time in 2026. Volunteers will play a key role in achieving this goal, with increased participation expected soon. The objective is to ensure that, going forward, only new applications need to be added, with each chapter having dedicated personnel for timely data entry. During the discussion, it was recommended that the newest applications, approximately 140 from 2024 and 2025, be prioritized for entry before addressing older records, some dating back to 1965. Dhindsa acknowledged this suggestion and reiterated the ongoing effort to ensure newly approved applications, and their lineage details are promptly entered and kept up to date for future reference.
- **Spanish Patriot Research Project:** position vacant. No update.
- **Tom and Betty Lawrence Teacher Program:** David Gilliard said we did not get any applications this year. The deadline is January 15<sup>th</sup>.

- **Valley Forge Teacher Program:** Larry Brasher reported on the Valley Forge Teachers Project, noting that only four chapters—Riverside, Delta, Sacramento, and Gold Country—nominated teachers for the program this year. The State Association annually sponsors two teachers for week-long graduate programs, mostly focused on the American Revolution, though other topics like the Constitutional Covenant and the Declaration of Independence are sometimes included. This year, the committee selected one teacher from the North and one from the South: Philip Taylor from Norco High School (Riverside chapter) and Isaac Farhadian from John A. Pittman High School (Delta chapter). Brasher highlighted the impact of sponsoring high school teachers, who can reach more students, but noted that awards have also gone to elementary and middle school history teachers in the past. A teacher database has been established, primarily weighted toward Northern California, and Brasher encouraged all chapters to contribute information on history teachers to improve promotion of the program. Next year, Founding Forward will announce graduate programs in December, and the committee plans to notify chapters by January 1st, encouraging them to solicit teacher applications. Applications will be accepted directly from teachers or through chapters, with nominations due March 15th. Brasher admitted the need to improve communication and ensure reserved spaces in popular programs, expressing regret for missing out on the American Revolution North program this year. Finally, he invited volunteers from both northern and southern chapters to join the committee and help with outreach and coordination.
  
- **Vets Program and Wreaths Across America:** Phil Mitchell addressed the group about Veterans Programs and Wreaths Across America. He reminded chapters to register for Wreaths Across America, noting that a portion of funds contributed is refunded to chapters, which can choose to reinvest or donate it back. Wreaths Across America events are scheduled statewide for December 13th and 18th. He emphasized the importance of registering all chapter veterans for War Service or Military Service Medals, specifying that the War Service Medal includes bars for various conflicts such as World War II, Korea, Vietnam, and Afghanistan. Mitchell also encouraged chapters to coordinate with local Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts for Memorial Day flag placements in cemeteries. He highlighted the ongoing need to recognize Vietnam veterans who have not yet received their Department of Defense pins, suggesting outreach at senior centers and community locations to identify and honor them. He concluded by inviting members to reach out if they need pins and shared personal anecdotes about finding and recognizing veterans in everyday places. The meeting was then adjourned for the day, with logistics announced for the evening dinner and transportation arrangements. He reminded everyone that the next Wreaths Across America is at the state capital Dec 8<sup>th</sup>.

President Littlefield called for a recess at 3:55.

***California Society, Sons of the American Revolution***

***2025 150<sup>th</sup> Spring Membership Meeting***

**Orange County Hilton at Costa Mesa**

3050 Bristol St., Costa Mesa, CA, United States

**Call Day 2 to Order:** 9:03AM April 26, 2025, by Don Littlefield

**Invocation:** Chaplain Reverend Scott Elliot

**Pledge of Allegiance:** Vice President of South Brandon Villardi

**SAR Pledge:** Treasurer Kevin Biedenkamp

**SAR Mission Statement:** Secretary Christopher Cerillo

**CASSAR Officer Roll Call by Vice President John Ferris:**

- President: Donald B. Littlefield - present
- Executive Vice President John Ferris - present
- Vice President North: Randy Dhindsa - present
- Vice President South: Brandon Villardi - present
- Vice President of Membership: Scott Whitman - present
- Secretary: Christopher Cerillo - present
- Treasurer: Kevin Biedenkamp - present
- Chancellor: Michael Herman - present
- Genealogist: David Morrow - present
- Registrar: Terry Briggs – not present (late)
- Historian: Scott Brooks - not present
- Chaplain: Scott Elliott - present
- Surgeon: Matthew Bowdish - present
- Investment Funds Trustee: Dr. Kent Gregory - present
- John L. Dodd - not present (late)
- Stephen Renouf - not present

**CASSAR Chapter Roll Call by Vice President John Ferris:** a quorum was reached.

- Central Coast: Nathaniel Mass - not present
- Coachella Valley: Chris Cerrillo - present
- Delta: Andrew McClure - not present
- Eagle: Benny White - present
- General George Patton: Stephen Andrews - present
- Gold Country: David Gilliard - present
- Harbor: James Bunker - present

- Kern: Chris Scott - present
- Monterey Bay: Jack Frank - not present
- Orange County: Lauren Stratten - present
- Redlands: Brian Christie - not present
- Redwood Empire: Daniel Van Valkenburg - present
- Riverside: Michael Mann – present
- Sacramento: Nic Gauthier (represented)
- San Diego: Jim McAdory - present
- San Francisco: Andy Martinez - not present
- Santa Barbara: Jeff Wang-Bender - not present
- Silicon Valley: Terry Briggs - present
- Sons of Liberty: Mark Cross - present
- South Coast: Barry Michaels - present
- Thomas Jefferson: Dan Schurtz - present
- Yosemite: Scott Nichols – present

President Littlefield took the opportunity to provide an additional update on the Flag Program and 1776 Book Project. President Littlefield reminded everyone that if they are interested in the flag program to send him an email to send information about the program. President Littlefield also noted that he has a supply of brochures about the 1776 book project that members can take with them to share with any chapter members who may be interested in supporting the program. CASSAR will be available to assist any individual member who requests guidance.

### **Remaining Old Business:**

**CASSAR Meeting Cost and Format Task Force:** Over the past year and a half, the task force has been researching how other state societies manage the cost and structure of their Board of Managers (BOM) meetings. By gathering insights from various states, the task force has identified a range of approaches to meeting duration, formality, and costs. Below is a summary of how several state societies conduct their BOM or annual meetings:

- Indiana: Holds a less formal, single-day meeting with boxed sandwiches for lunch at a cost of \$25 per attendee.
- Massachusetts: BOM meets monthly for about two hours each session.
- Michigan: Members arrive on Friday, meet all day on Saturday, and finish around 4:00 PM. Dinner on Saturday is optional.
- Ohio: Holds a one-day, informal meeting.
- Texas: Organizes a three-day, two-night event—beginning with a half-day on Friday, a full day on Saturday, and a short program on Sunday morning.

- o Florida: Members arrive on Thursday (no dinner provided), hold a Friday banquet (\$70 per attendee) for awards, and officer installation takes place on Saturday.
- o Kentucky: Conducts a one-day meeting with youth awards in the morning and state awards in the afternoon.
- o North Carolina: Hosts two BOM meetings per year (each lasting two to four hours) and one annual meeting per year.

The group explored strategies to make their programming more appealing and justify the cost of attending events. Examples included organizing offsite excursions, such as a recent visit to a driving museum in San Pedro, which added fun and value beyond the core agenda. Such activities can be woven into the main event to make the overall experience more memorable and enticing, especially for those who might be undecided about participating. The discussion encouraged chapters to think creatively about what they could add to their programming, elements that spark conversations and incentivize members to attend.

A key point of discussion was the value of sponsoring the conference costs (excluding travel) for a selected chapter member. This approach helps attract new members, exposes them to the organization, and often leads to greater involvement. Having more than just the president or vice president attend events means that positive experiences are shared more widely within the chapter. The sponsored individuals often become advocates, encouraging others to participate in the future, which has proven effective in growing officer pools and generating fresh energy and perspectives.

To address the challenge of attracting younger, working members who may have weekday conflicts, it was proposed that future meetings be held on Saturdays and Sundays. This shift could accommodate those unable to take time off work and may help boost attendance. The feasibility of this change depends on several logistical factors, including hotel rates and availability, which need to be researched and considered. The group was open to exploring this idea further, recognizing the potential benefits and possible challenges. Additionally, participants discussed the option of incorporating a virtual (Zoom) component for meetings. This would allow those who cannot attend in person to participate remotely, potentially increasing overall numbers and broadening engagement. However, the issue of cost was raised—many hotels outsource their audiovisual services, often to a single contractor, which can drive up prices substantially. For example, in one instance, the quoted cost for audiovisual support was \$8,000, highlighting the need to negotiate or seek alternatives where possible. The group acknowledged that adding virtual capabilities would require both technical expertise and budget planning.

The committee will assess interest, ensure a balanced representation from northern and southern chapters, and develop a proposal to present at the next Board of Managers meeting for further feedback and planning. For ongoing communication, an email address was provided (genealogy@dhinsa family.com) for submitting photos and for those wishing to join the committee. A big thank you was given to volunteers, like Kevin Knapp, David Morrow, who have stepped forward to help.



Vice President John Ferris took an opportunity to remind everyone the importance of adhering to submission deadlines, typically the 25th of each month for "The Compatriot" publication was also reaffirmed, with a reminder that content often arrives at the last minute, delaying releases. Members were urged to submit materials promptly to ensure timely and high-quality publication.

**Reconciliation and Reinstatement Requests:** Chris Cirillo took this opportunity to remind everyone about the importance of timing when submitting reconciliation and reinstatement requests, noting that two periods each year—during Congress and reconciliation—create processing delays. Submissions sent in December are not processed until April, and those sent in June are not processed until August. During these times, National prioritizes reconciliation and Congress activities, so members should expect delays in receiving certificates or updates.

**Officers Elections for 2025-2026.** The nominating committee presented a slate of officers for the 2025-2026 term, which was reviewed and discussed at the Board of Managers meeting. The proposed slate included John Farris as President, Randy Dhindsa as Executive Vice President and President-elect, Brandon Villardi as Vice President South (second year of a two-year term), Danny Schurtz as Vice President North (first year of a two-year term), Scott Whitman as Vice President Membership, Chris Cirillo as Secretary, Kevin Bidenkap as Treasurer, Terry Briggs as Registrar, Michael Hirman as Chancellor, David Morrow as Genealogist, Steve Belden as Historian, Scott Elliott as Chaplain, and Matthew Bowdish as Surgeon. Kent Gregory was nominated for Investment Fund Trustee (2025-2028), with Dan McKelvey as National Trustee and John Ferris as Alternate National Trustee. Kent Gregory then requested to amend the nominations and to be removed from the Investment Fund Trustee position and to add Kevin Bidenkamp as the nominee instead. Kevin expressed his preference not to be nominated for Treasurer but agreed to continue serving until a replacement was found. The board voted on the amendments and subsequently adopted the final slate of officers by unanimous vote, with no opposition.

### **New Business:**

**By-Law Amendments:** Chancellor Michael Hirman led the discussion on the four proposed bylaws changes, although it was determined that these could not be formally considered at this session due to insufficient advance notice (less than the required 30 days). These proposals will be republished and considered at a future Board of Managers meeting. Four Bylaws Proposals:

1. Closure of a Chapter: Establishes requirements and procedures for dissolving a chapter, particularly if a chapter fails to send a representative to state meetings over a specified period (initially worded as three meetings, which could be clarified to three years).
2. Officers Change: Proposes replacing the Vice President of Membership with the Color Guard Commander in the officer slate.
3. Executive Committee Modification: Suggests modifying the executive committee composition to replace the VP of Membership with the Color Guard Commander.

4. Duties of the Color Guard Commander: Seeks to define or adjust the responsibilities of the Color Guard Commander, possibly elevating the role to a voting officer.

There was significant debate about whether the lack of attendance at meetings should be grounds for dissolving a chapter, with some members emphasizing that compliance with required paperwork (such as IRS filings and state reporting) is more important than meeting attendance. Concerns were raised about smaller and more rural chapters, where geographic distance makes attendance at state meetings challenging, and whether dissolving these chapters would leave members without representation or a local group. Some members advocated offering more support ("carrot") rather than penalties ("stick") to encourage chapter participation and compliance. There was discussion over whether the Color Guard Commander should be a voting officer, with some in favor due to the role's visibility and contributions, and others preferring to keep the position appointed without a vote.

- Recent Chapter Closures: General George Washington Chapter: This chapter was run by one individual filling four positions. Due to lack of broader participation, the chapter was closed.
- Mother Lode Chapter: Despite efforts from leadership, the chapter could not find members willing to fill necessary positions. After a formal vote, the chapter decided to dissolve.

The discussion concluded with recognition that proposals would be revised and further debated at a future meeting, and that ongoing engagement and support for chapters, especially those at risk, remains a priority.

**Events:** President General Daryl Addington addressed the assembly, sharing details about future events organized by the National Society. He invited members to attend the next Congress in Connecticut, noting its unique location on an Indian reservation and highlighting the special rules and logistics, such as restrictions on weapons and transportation options. The Mohican community has been welcoming, and the venue offers beautiful scenery. Addington reflected on the organization's presence at recent commemorative events, emphasizing the importance of maintaining high visibility at parades and other public gatherings, especially in the lead-up to the 250th anniversary celebrations. He suggested budgeting for sponsorships to ensure continued exposure and encouraged chapters and states to organize their own 250th events.

The 150th Fall Board of Managers meeting was announced, with date details to be confirmed via official communications. Members were encouraged to check the "Compatriot" publication for updates and reservation information. President General John Dodd spoke about merchandise available for signature events, including t-shirts, pins, patches, and challenge coins, and encouraged members to distribute them within their chapters. He also highlighted upcoming signature events, such as the anniversary of the Battle of Saratoga, and recommended members attend and participate in these national celebrations.

Attendees were reminded that society medals are available for a \$35 donation, and members who have not received their life member pins were invited to collect them. Additional commemorative pins for supporting the permanent fund were mentioned as available.

**Meeting Adjournment:**

- President Littlefield asked if there was a motion to adjourn the meeting.
- President General Joe Dooley made the motion to adjourn.
- Daniel Van Valkenburg seconded the motion.
- The motion to adjourn was approved, and the meeting was adjourned.
- Reverend Scott Elliott led the closing prayer, thanking God for the discussions and asking for guidance in the society's work and mission.
- President Littlefield asked the group was asked to remain standing for the SAR recessional
- The CASSR meeting concluded with thanks to attendees and an official adjournment, followed by the Western District meeting.

The meeting adjourned 11:13am.