

“Observations from the 30 Yard Line”

I sometimes hear from fellow Compatriots that what happens at National has little impact on our State and Chapter Societies. I used to agree. But if that was ever true, as Bob Dylan so aptly crooned, “The times they are a-changin’”¹. Indeed, not only does National affect us; we affect National.

There is little doubt that the 2021 Congress changed us in a big way. Once an SAR backwater, the Northwest became a dominant player on the National scene. Our Congress is now history, but the experience set an extraordinarily high bar for future host societies. As they struggle to surmount it, they will improve future Congress experiences for all who attend. Congresses will evolve in part because we excelled.

But National affects us in so many other ways. Consider the SAR Library. We think of it as a Louisville institution that few of our members will ever enjoy; its benefits limited to those who live near or make the trek to Kentucky. But due to the efforts of countless enduring souls, the Library has scanned more than 10,000 volumes that are available to you here and now as searchable resources. And that list is growing.

Consider, also, the SAR Museum and Education Center that have been under development for years. NSSAR understands that we cannot hope to impact American thought in any significant way unless and until we become a national resource, available to everyone at the touch of a keystroke. As Big Data revolutionizes the dissemination of information and knowledge, the days of stagnant museum displays are waning. For that reason, the Museum and Education Center project is being designed, not only as a brick and mortar showplace, but as an electronic interactive experience that animates the study of the American Revolution, our patriot ancestors and our founding documents. Upon completion, you may enjoy it from the comfort of your favorite internet connection. A recent \$1,000,000 donation, with the hope of more to come, is accelerating the projected completion date. And for those concerned that the costs associated with developing the SAR Museum and Education Center will be reflected in dues increases to members, be assured that NSSAR is committed to the proposition of developing the project based on directed donations and new gifts.

The election of President General Davis Wright in July also changed the way we view the future. Past PGs had pet projects that could be completed within their one-year term. PG Wright chose, instead, to focus on the Mission and Purposes of SAR, which by their very nature cannot be accomplished in a single term. His vision of adopting a meaningful rolling five-year strategic plan – anchored on the Mission and Purposes of our Society - will transform SAR at every level. By setting realistic, achievable, stretch goals, with implementation plans, timelines and targets for how they are achieved, and modifying the strategic plan as facts, circumstances, money, growth, and new resources allow, State Societies and Chapters will become real-life actors in accomplishing the job laid out for us by Congress at 36 U.S. Code Chapter 1533. In retrospect,

¹ From “The Times They Are A-Changin’”, written by Bob Dylan. Copyright © 1963, 1964 by Warner Bros. Inc.; renewed 1991, 1992 by Special Rider Music.

the SAR annual budget only makes sense in the context of our Mission and its implementing strategic plan.

How else are we experiencing our relationship with National?

PG Wright streamlined the committee structure by creating organizational groupings of related committees. Certain previously free-standing committees became sub-committees of other so-called “supercommittees” for reporting and oversight purposes. For example, the Patriotic Outreach and Operation Ancestor Search committees became sub-committees under the overall supervision of the Veterans Committee Chair. Similarly, the Officer Training Committee, the Compatriot Training Committee and the Patriot Chest Committee each became sub-committees under the auspices of the Education Committee. The super-committees have enhanced clout, enabling them to become more competitive in seeking funds that advance the Mission by achieving their respective committee objectives.

How will that affect you? In the next twelve months, you will begin to see output from national committees that: (a) are consistent with and coordinated with the strategic plan; (b) advance the Mission of SAR; and (c) make our work at State and Chapter levels relevant to the overall Mission and Purposes of SAR. For example, the Officer Training Committee will develop a series of training videos accessible to you locally when you log into the SAR website. Associated print materials will be available to you to be downloaded at your convenience. You will have the ability to learn first-hand how the structure and operation of SAR comport with federal, state and local laws and regulations. You will see, in a dynamic way, how the Mission and Purposes of SAR affect your fiduciary duties as officers and trustees of the organization. Rather than being dissociated from National, you will find that you are the gears that make the machinery of SAR work.

But I barely scratched the surface. The relationship between National and our respective State Societies and Chapters is becoming increasingly dynamic. Committees, such as the Council of State Presidents, are beginning to appreciate their role in the bi-directional flow of information.

This is an exciting time in our history. As we enter the 250th anniversary celebration of what our forefathers created for us, we have the ability not only to look to our past, but forward to our future.

The times they are a-changing...

Stay healthy. We need you.

Gregory D. Lucas
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Sons of the American Revolution