

FLORIDA SOCIETY, SAR, REPORT TO SOUTH ATLANTIC DISTRICT

29 June 2016

The Florida Society, (FLSSAR), continues to grow with addition of the 34th chapter, The Villages, and a society census of 2094 members including juniors. The Villages Chapter was chartered on 09 January 2016. The FLSSAR Registrar, Ray Lantz reports continued growth in new member applications. Florida continues to rank in second place with regards to the National Society census.

For the first time in FLSSAR history, three commemorative historical events have been conducted in one calendar year. The Florida Society conducted commemorative ceremonies at the 233rd anniversary of the "The Last Naval Battle of the American Revolution, the 239th anniversary of "The Battle of Thomas Creek", and the dedication of the "Minute Man Statue" in Pensacola Memorial Park in conjunction with the Pensacola DAR.

The Florida Society leadership initiated the concept of regional meetings in addition to regularly scheduled Board of Management Meetings. The concept involves conducting meetings in each of the seven regions and dealing with specific concerns and problems within those regions. The meetings have become very productive and scheduling for the upcoming year has progressed well.

The Florida Society has had a very successful year in garnering support for various SAR youth programs. We continue to have national representation in all categories and the George S. and Stella Knight Essay contest has exceeded all expectations and established goals. We had set a goal after last year's contest of having 100 contest entrants. We are delighted to announce that we exceeded that goal by having 103 entrants and the national contest winner. We are very proud of the hard performed by the Knight Essay Committee and especially, Chairman John Stewart.

The Florida Society set an aggressive goal of having each of the thirty-four chapters being involved in the SAR Public Service and Heroism Program by awarding at least medal per chapter. Although we did not meet that goal, we increased presentations this year when compared to last year.

At our recent FLSSAR Annual Meeting, the membership voted to bid on hosting a National Congress. An ad hoc committee was formed and a subsequent bid will be presented at the Fall Leadership Conference. Also, under the authority of our governing documents, we created a new position entitled, Executive Administrator. The position will assist in the increasing amount of administrative work within the Society. The Executive Administrator will also be instrumental in developing and implementing the first ever, Florida Strategic Plan. The Strategic Plan will be a "road map and compass" for the Society. It will endure the transition from one President and Leadership team to another and provide a stable direction for the Society.

The Society is moving to a new facility beginning with the Fall Board of Management Meeting. The new facility, The Embassy Suites, Lake Buena Vista South, Orlando, Florida, is a newer facility offering us better conference rooms and amenities. With the new move, we are changing the format of our Winter Board of Management Meeting from an evening banquet to a luncheon honoring the birth of our Patriarch, His Excellency, General George Washington. We will hold our annual Rumbaugh Oration contest in the morning and a Board of Management Meeting after lunch. The Ladies Auxiliary will hold their meeting in a separate meeting room at the same time.

The FLSSAR Ladies Auxiliary has set an achievable goal of increasing their membership by 100%. Each member has been challenged to recruit one additional member.

We were honored to host President General Judge Thomas Lawrence and First Lady Micky Jo at our Spring Board of Management/Annual Meeting. The Ladies Auxiliary hosted a First Lady's Tea Luncheon in honor of First Lady Micky Jo and made a significant contribution to the First Lady's veteran's cause. PG Lawrence addressed the FLSSAR Youth Awards Luncheon and spoke on the merits of supporting SAR Youth Programs and also installed the new FLSSAR Officers. PG Lawrence recognized Florida's recent recipient of the SAR Gold Citizenship Medal, Compatriot Alexander Dreyfoos Jr. The Florida Society presented PG Lawrence and First Lady Micky Jo a framed painting entitled, "The Winds of Change" by historical artist Mort Kunstler. The Painting depicts the historical scene of General Washington on horseback inspecting his troops on March 4, 1778 shortly after the arrival of Von Steuben and the beginning of a transformation of the army by Von Steuben. The gift was given by the Florida Society for all of the hard work that the PG and his Lady performed for the SAR.

As the Florida Society transitions to a new leadership team, we have set aggressive goals and will continue to build on the progress made by Past President Lawrence Fehrenbaker.

**Respectfully Submitted:
Raymond F. Wess
President, Florida Society 2016-2017**