

**NSSAR PRESIDENT GENERAL
ACCEPTANCE SPEECH OF
JUDGE EDWARD F. BUTLER, SR.
July 8, 2009**

President General Appleby
General Officers
Distinguished guests
Compatriots and ladies

Before I start my remarks I think it is fitting at this time to tell you I would not be here as your President General tonight without the hard work and sacrifices of my lovely wife, your First Lady, Robin. Please join me in giving her a warm round of applause.

Now, as a matter of personal privilege, I want to introduce some members of my family who honor me by their presence here tonight. Please rise when your name is called:

My SAR nephew **Steve Butler and his wife Laurie** from Oakland, TN
My SAR great nephew **Beau Butler** from Osceola, AR
My First Cousin **Dr. Ron Clemmons, and his wife Nancy**, from Birmingham
Their son **Scott Clemmons and his wife, Amy**, also from Birmingham.

Ron, will you and Scott please step up to the Podium. _____ (Birmingham chapter president please assist me.

(Swearing –in ceremony)

Do you, as a descendant of one of the Patriots and Heroes of the American Revolution, reaffirm your ancestor’s faith in the principles of Liberty and our Constitutional Republic?

Your response is “I do”.

Do you swear to uphold and follow the Constitution and By Laws of the National Society Sons of the American Revolution, the Alabama Society, and those of the Birmingham Society?

Your response is “I do”.

I congratulate each of you upon your decision to join SAR, and welcome you as a new member. Now, it is my pleasure to present you with your membership certificate.

Also, it is my honor to place the SAR rosette in your lapel. This rosette is one of the official recognition emblems of the SAR. Its blue and buff colors are emblematic of George Washington's uniform. Wear it proudly. You are entitled to purchase a SAR membership badge, which can be worn at all SAR and DAR events. Never wear the badge and the rosette at the same time.

Ladies and gentlemen, please help me welcome our two newest members to the SAR.

While they are getting back to their seats, I want to tell you that Robin and I had planned on bringing our four children, three grandchildren and her mother to participate in tonight's events. After the stock market fall in October, 2008, we decided that they would just have to watch these events on a DVD. Instead of paying for them to be here, we decided that it would be better if we paid off our pledge early. Mr. Treasurer General, here is our check for the balance of our pledge, which was not due for 18 months. I hope that many of you in the audience will also pay off your pledges early.

Now, I want to recognize and welcome some members of my San Antonio chapter. This chapter has won the President General's Award three out of the past four years. Please rise when your name is called:

Texas State Vice President & former Chapter President - **Stephen Rohrbough**
Former Texas State Vice President & former Chapter President - **Joe Ware and his wife Nita**. Joe and Nita have made both trips to Paris and several to Mexico.
Former Chapter President **Frank Rohrbough and his wife Diana**, a DAR Genie.
(Frank is also a former President of the Alexandria, VA SAR Chapter)
Texas State Historian & Chapter President Elect - **Peter Baron**
Chapter Chaplain and Genealogist **Rev. James Taylor and his wife Pat**.
A new transfer, Former President of the Empire State Society, Trustee of the Empire State Society, and former Color Guard Commander, **Col. Peter Goebel**.
And current Chapter President **David Bowles**.

David, please come to the podium.

(David makes presentation of gift to Ed and Robin)

Before I start my remarks, I want to recognize the Texas SAR delegation. Will all Texas members and their families please rise.

I thank you for your presence, and I thank you for your service.

It is indeed an honor to be standing before you tonight as your President General. Like many of you, for years I was just a SAR member, working on a committee and going to chapter and state meetings. It was 9 years ago that I attended my first national meeting in Louisville. I came to answer the call of PG Larry McClanahan, who asked me if I would assume the position of Ambassador to Mexico and Latin America. My task was to form the SAR Mexico Society. Robin and I made 8 trips to Mexico and spent 47 days in that country seeking members. The following February, we had 22 residents of Mexico and 112 dual members in the new Mexico Society.

Since that time I have served as a General Officer for 7 years. During this time several men have had a pronounced impact on me.

I want to thank President General **Stuart McCarty** for being a role model for me. He is a true gentleman.

Through President General **George Brandau**, I have learned humility. It was my distinct honor to roast him last year at the Fall Leadership meeting. PG **Clovis Brakebill** showed all of us how to record SAR history, with his book, *Revolutionary War Patriots buried in Texas*.

President General **Larry McClanahan** (my 3rd cousin, 9 times removed), got me involved on the national level. He has served as my mentor, and to him I owe much. Thank you Betty, for letting us spend time together.

Presidents General McClanahan, Brandau, with Rice Aston, Howard Horne, and another distant cousin, **Carl Hoffman** have all encouraged me all along the way and have provided valuable help at each step.

President General **Hank McCarl** taught me how to keep a stiff upper lip through adversity. Hank told me “Don’t sweat the small stuff, Ed; and its all small stuff”.

President General **Roland Downing** has shown me how to focus on fundraising, and we all owe him a debt of thanks for getting us the \$1,000,000 Drinkard Estate gift.

President General **Nathan White** has shown me how to squeeze a nickel so hard the buffalo squeals.

President General **Bruce Wilcox** has been a wonderful teacher on how hard work and dedication can lead to success. He has been the hardest working PG I’ve seen.

Finally, and certainly not least, it has been a pleasure to follow President General **David Appleby** through the offices of Chancellor General, Treasurer General, Secretary General

and now as PG. He has been very easy to work with. He took the time to warn me of impending problems, and helped me at each step. David, thank you for your friendship.

So, I follow a long line of great men who have led this organization over many years.

I also want to thank **Tom Green**, past Texas State President, who followed Robin and me down the isle with his personal gold tassled Texas state flag. This flag has been all over the country, from the Alamo and San Jacinto to the National Congress in Dallas, and at Yorktown. He took it to Barre, Vermont, where we honored **Ira Hobart Evans**, the founder of the Texas Society – and a Medal of Honor winner. He also carried it to the top of the mountain at King's Mountain during the annual memorial ceremony. He also took it to Greensborough, NC, where he visited the Guilford Courthouse Battlefield.

Tonight, I wish to share with you a few of my goals for the next year. In a nutshell, we should:

MODERNIZE
PUBLIZE, and
SOCIALIZE

The SAR needs to step boldly into the 3rd Millennium.

We need to start making DVDs to communicate with our chapters and members all over this nation. We are putting together a professional team to handle this now.

Our web site should be modernized so that we can register for meetings online, and so that applicants can apply for membership online.

Increased interaction with other lineage societies can only enhance our membership.

There are many ways we can publicize our society, and I intend to explore them all. When Robin and I come to visit you, we are asking that you get me scheduled to appear on your local morning TV show or radio talk show. We are also going to ask you to submit a news release about our visit to your local newspapers. Hopefully, we can present some awards to deserving folks in your area that will warrant some media coverage. To assist in this effort, I will appoint a **SAR Publicist**, and ask the By-Laws Committee to draft a proposed by-law amendment to create the office of **VPG of Publicity and Public Relations**. **Frank Hodalski has agreed to tackle this job.**

I'm told that many members won't join the Color Guard because they can't afford to buy the uniform. This is understandable as many of our members are retired and live on a fixed income. So, I am asking that a new **SAR HONOR GUARD** be formed and work with the Color Guard.

These would be members, who will wear a navy blue blazer with the SAR Blazer patch, gray slacks, light blue dress shirt for day time activities and white shirt for evening attire,

with a SAR tie. For a very modest investment, we can put a substantial number of our members in uniform to appear at SAR functions.

I think it is time for SAR to create a new flyer to attract new members. This new publicity piece should add two new elements:

- a) The fact that 17 of our recent US presidents have been members of SAR, and
- b) Pointing out all the discounts and membership benefits that **Judge Tom Lawrence** has gotten for us. Thank you, Tom.

My team is already hitting the road running. My appointments to the **Executive Committee** are:

PG David Appleby
Bill Marrs, my travel coordinator
Larry McClanahan
Bob Bowen
Tom Jacks

I am appointing Judge Tom Lawrence as VPG of the International District.

_____ has agreed to head up a new Genealogy and History Seminar Committee. He will promote seminars all over the country, which will bring us wonderful publicity.

Larry McClanahan and Harry Fife will head up a new **Honors committee**, to send birthday and anniversary cards to our Presidents Generals and First Ladies; cards of condolence; and to pay appropriate respect to the widows of SAR members. We need to pay more attention to the ladies who have been with us throughout our SAR lives.

Bill Allerton will head up a new **Task Force to allow SAR to put Revolutionary War Prints in classrooms** all over this country. In the early 20th Century, our SAR leaders provided pictures of George Washington to schools. When Robin and I went to vote in the 2008 primaries, our party had a caucus in an American history class room. There were no pictures of George Washington Crossing the Delaware; no picture of the Signing of the Declaration of Independence. No US Constitution or Bill of Rights. Nothing! I was shocked.

When I was attending school, for all 12 years, each classroom had two or three prints of paintings about the founding of our country and our Revolutionary War Leaders. Now our educators don't even call it history anymore – it's now called Social Science. The founding of our country and the principals upon which it was founded play second fiddle to the Social Revolution. Instead of honoring George Washington, John Adams and Thomas Jefferson, they extol the virtues of Martin Luther King, Malcolm X, and Caesar Chavez.

Hopefully, we can restore this worthwhile project. We must do all within our power to expose our children to their heritage. What better way than to start in the classroom.

Larry McClanahan will also head up all our Ambassadors as the new **Ambassador General**, which I am also asking the By-laws committee to prepare for a vote.

Who better to head up a new **Museum Acquisitions Committee**, than **Larry McKinley** who serves as a docent for the Smithsonian?

Rod Hildreath will be serving as my *Charge de Affairs* and will head up a group of *Aides de Camp*, to assist me and the First Lady at national meetings and as we travel. Again, the By-laws Committee will be asked to waive some of their **magic woofle dust** over this new program.

As you leave tonight, you will find a series of posters in the lobby with the names of all Committee Chairmen and Members. If you got left off a committee that you had expressed an interest in being on, just contact me.

Within the next few days, each newly elected general officer and committee chairman will receive a letter from me, setting forth my goals for the coming year, and asking for their extra effort to achieve those goals.

We must finish the renovation of our new facility. To do that, I ask each of you to dig into your pockets once again.

Without being distracted from our goal of enhancing our present programs and completing the construction of the CAAH, it is my opinion that the SAR – down to the chapter level – needs to become **more social**, and must include our wives in our activities. The number of new members that we recruit each year continues to go up, but we can't seem to keep most of them beyond the first year.

This year I am asking each state and chapter to institute **one new social event**, to which prospective members and their wives will be asked to attend. Such social events might include:

- Picnic or swimming party.
- Military Ball or cocktail party
- Christmas or other holiday party
- Pot luck supper
- An afternoon or evening at a sporting event.

If we have fun together we are more likely to work well together, and with greater knowledge about our programs we must improve.

- President General Rice Aston took us to Paris in 2003
- President General Roland Downing joined us on a MXSSAR Cruise
- President General Bruce Wilcox led us through Scotland and England, and

President General David Appleby, led us back to Paris last September.

This year, there will be two exotic SAR trips. **Inspector General Larry Magerkurth** has organized a wonderful meeting in Honolulu, followed by a one week cruise through the romantic Hawaiian Islands. This will be Sep. 3 – 13, 2009.

Then, Robin and I will be leading a group through Spain May 10 - 24, 2010.

I encourage each of you to join Robin and me on these two trips.

So, remember, the theme for this coming year is:

Modernize
Publicize, and
Socialize.

In conclusion, **LETS HAVE SOME FUN IN SAR THIS YEAR.**

**God Bless You
God Bless America, and
God Bless the SAR**

Thank you