

# **PRESIDENT GENERAL'S VETERANS DAY MESSAGE**

**Nov. 10, 2009**

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As a Revolutionary War lineage society, one of our main purposes is to honor our patriot ancestors – our nation's first veterans. By tradition, we have honored veterans of all wars since. Now, with military conflicts in both Iraq and Afghanistan, and tensions in Iran and North Korea, it is important that we honor our active duty military who are in harm's way, as they are already veterans.

Let me offer my personal thanks to all of you who have served our country. As President General, I also offer the thanks of our entire 28,000 members. Without the service and sacrifice of our veterans, we would not enjoy the many freedoms that we share.

For years, as I walked through airports, malls and other public places, I have stopped when I see military in uniform. I shake their hands and thank them for their service and sacrifice. I encourage every member of our society to adopt that practice.

Shortly after being inducted as President General, I started a test program, which I termed the "SAR Wounded Warrior Program". Twelve of us participating in the Pacific International Conference in Honolulu in September, met with a dozen soldiers, sailors and airmen at Tripler Army Hospital, who suffered from severe traumatic stress disorder. We told them how much the SAR appreciated their service and sacrifice. As we presented them with SAR Outstanding Citizenship Award pins, we took their photo. Their photo, a copy of their SAR Certificate and a news release was shipped to their home town newspaper, and the certificate was mailed to them. This event started with blank stares and ended with smiling faces and celebration.

Other similar programs were conducted by the First Lady and me at VA Hospitals in Johnson City, TN and Louisville, KY, and at the Ft. Knox, KY Army Hospital. Based upon my recommendation, the NSSAR Executive Committee voted at the Fall Leadership meeting to officially adopt the Wounded Warrior program. The first such ceremony was conducted without me or the First Lady at the Intrepid Center at Ft. Sam Houston by members of the San Antonio SAR chapter.

A few days ago the NMSSAR society put together a very impressive ceremony at Veterans Park, adjacent to Kirtland Air Force Base in Albuquerque. I presented SAR challenge coins to the honorees. The local chapter printed a formal program, used the Civil Air Patrol color guard, and had a young lady from a local high school with a beautiful voice sing the national anthem. This ceremony was conducted with pledges to the flag and the SAR; opening and closing prayers, and the SAR Recessional.

Based upon the recommendation of the Awards Committee, we are now presenting these Wounded Warriors with a SAR challenge coin and a special Wounded Warrior Certificate of Appreciation designed by Joe Harris, Executive Director. We are considering a special SAR Wounded Warrior challenge coin. Since these challenge coins

and certificates must be paid for by the chapter, state or district society sponsoring the event, discussions are underway to offer them at a discount. Hopefully, full details will be available soon.

As we prepare for the upcoming holiday season, if you live near a military base, please consider inviting a few young soldiers, sailors, marines, or airmen to share your holiday meal. Perhaps you might consider picking up their check at a local restaurant.

Tomorrow, many of us will be honoring our veterans. Some will march in Veterans Day Parades, while others will participate in somber ceremonies at cemeteries. My chapter is sponsoring a Military Ball to honor veterans, active duty military, reserves and National Guardsmen. The local DAR has been invited and many plan to attend. Please keep our veterans in your thoughts and prayers.