

**REMARKS OF JUDGE EDWARD F. BUTLER, SR.
PRESIDENT GENERAL – 2009-2010
NATIONAL SOCIETY SONS OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION**

**To the 91st Annual National Convention of the American Legion
Kentucky International Convention Center
Louisville, KY - August 26, 2009**

Good Morning Fellow Legionnaires:

My name is Ed Butler, and I am the 106th President General of the National Society Sons of the American Revolution. We are known as the “SAR”. Our SAR Headquarters is here in Louisville. Many Legionnaires also belong to the SAR. So, let me welcome you to Louisville.

The Sons of the American Revolution is the leading male lineage society that perpetuates the ideals, principles and liberties established by the founding fathers during the American Revolution. We have about 28,000 dues paying members.

As a patriotic, historical, and educational organization, we seek

- 1. to maintain and expand the knowledge and meaning of patriotism;**
- 2. to promote respect for our national symbols; and**
- 3. to preserve the value of our American citizenship.**

Through these efforts we hope all Americans come to have a better understanding of their rights and duties as expressed in the US Constitution and the Bill of Rights.

By joining the SAR we honor the memory of our Patriot Ancestors who fought and died during the American Revolutionary War (1775 – 1783). To become a member, we must provide documentary evidence of both

- 1. The Patriotic Service of our Patriot Ancestor, and**
- 2. Our lineal descent from that ancestor – e.g. that we are his direct lineal kin!**

Over the years gathering this documentary evidence has become more and more difficult. Many military records, as well as birth, marriage and death certificates were destroyed during the Civil War, and through 225 years of fires, earthquakes, tornadoes, hurricanes, mudslides, and floods.

I am here today to ask you – no, to beg you – to write your story. Every man and woman in this auditorium signed a blank check to the U.S. Government, when we enlisted or accepted our commission. We agreed to follow orders and to give our lives if necessary. Ladies and gentlemen, you are all heroes. Your story needs to be told.

My older brother, an 82 year old retired U.S. Army Colonel, served in World War II as a Navy Second Class Hospital Corpsman assigned to the Fleet Marine Landing Forces of the First Marine Division in the South Pacific. He was authorized to wear the US Marine uniform as a Sgt.

He made several opposed invasions and was wounded on the island of Peleiu. He refuses to talk about his military service, as it was very traumatic to him. All the family knows about his service is the information about his bravery contained in the Citation accompanying the award of his Navy and Marine Corps Medal. Unfortunately, his story will never be known. I suspect that many of you have not told the story of your military experiences.

Your children, grandchildren and your descendants who come along after your death will want to know about you. Only you can give the details of your military service. They will also want to know about your hobbies, your employment history, and what you consider as your major accomplishments in life.

I encourage you to start immediately to record your biographical information. Start with your family information. Put down the names of your parents and grandparents, with the maiden names of your grandmothers. List what you know about them, and what events stick in your mind. Where did they live? Were they farmers? If so, what crops did they grow and how big was their farm? If they lived in the city, tell what they did.

Tell us about your brothers and sisters, aunts and uncles, and your cousins.

Give details about the schools you attended and any certifications or licenses you have obtained. If you played sports or were in the band in high school, give some details. Talk about your hobbies, and where you have traveled.

Tell a little about your job history. What skills do you possess? Your descendants will want to know about your favorite kind of music and the college and professional baseball, basketball and football teams that you support. Do you scuba? Play tennis or golf? Like to fish or camp? If you are a hunter, certainly you have some interesting stories to tell. Travel around in a motor home? Tell your family how you have fun.

For your military service, give your enlistment or commission date, discharge date, your military training, duty assignments and locations, duties, and combat, if any. Reflect all promotions as well as your military awards and medals.

Describe how you met and married your wife, and provide information about your children. What have been your favorite family vacations? If you are proud of your children and grandchildren, this will be a perfect opportunity to let them know.

Did you ever run for or hold public office? Have you served as an officer in your church, fraternity or labor union?

Collect and make copies of

- 1. Your Discharge Certificate**
- 2. All Military Diplomas and Certificates**
- 3. All Certificates accompanying Medals and Awards**
- 4. High School and College Diplomas**
- 5. Any license or specialty Certificate**
- 6. Your Marriage License and that of your parents or grandparents.**
- 7. Birth Certificate for you, your parents, wife, children and grandchildren.**
- 8. Death Certificates of family members**
- 9. Family information in your Family Bible**
- 10. Family photographs.**

Once you have gathered all this information, I encourage you to type it up on a computer and make digital copies. If you are not a skilled typist, or don't have any computer skills, there are college students who will type your story up for you for a nominal fee. They can scan into your written story copies of your family photographs. Check the bulletin board of your local college; ask at any Kinko's office or your grocery store message board.

Once you have your story on the computer, please print out copies for every member of your family. Print a copy for infants and ask their parents to give it to them when they are grown. You should also send a copy to your home town library, attention family history section. Send another copy to the Family History Library, 35 North West Temple, Salt Lake City, UT, 84150.

By following these instructions you can assure that your life story will be there for future family members. If any of you would like a copy of these remarks, I have left a copy with your National Adjutant.

Thanks for allowing me time to speak to you. As we used to say in the Navy "I wish you Fair Winds and Following Seas".

**God Bless You
God Bless the American Legion
And God Bless the United States.**

(Applause)

And now it is my distinct pleasure to present the SAR's Distinguished Patriot Award to your Commander, David K. Rehbein.

David, the SAR appreciates all that you do to instill patriotism in the hearts of Americans. We honor your service. We are proud to be Partners in Patriotism with the American Legion.