

**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 First Cousin **Dr. Ron Clemmons and his wife Nancy**, from Birmingham
Their son **Scott Clemmons and his wife, Amy**, also from Birmingham, and
Their daughter Susie, and her husband, Lee Smith of Atlanta.

Ron, will you and Scott please step up to the Podium.

At this point PG Butler administered the membership oath to Dr. Clemmons and his son, Scott. Afterwards he presented them with framed membership certificates and their SAR lapel pins.

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 SAR trips to Paris and several to Mexico.
Former Chapter President **Frank Rohrbough and his wife Diane**, a DAR Genie.
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. *At this time members of the San Antonio chapter presented PG Butler with a Spanish Imperial flag, and two books about Spain's participation during the American Revolution. They presented Robin with a beautiful bouquet of flowers.*

TXSSAR President, Judge Tom Lawrence asked to be recognized. *Judge Lawrence had some kind remarks. He presented Robin with a certificate signed by Gov. Rick Perry, making her an official "Yellow Rose of Texas". John Knox presented her with a long stem yellow rose. He presented PG Butler with a Commission as an Admiral in the Texas Navy, signed by Gov. Perry. John Knox presented the PG with a boxed Texas State Flag, with a certificate that it had flown over the Texas State Capital Building.*

Then PG Butler appointed Col. Joe M. Ware, and Peter Baron of the San Antonio chapter, and John Knox of the Austin, TX chapter as Aides de Camp, and pinned their badges on the.

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. Although I have been a SAR member for 23 years, 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** 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 Karl Hoffman have all encouraged me 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. Roland, way to go!

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. His drive and determination have been inspiring. Thanks Bruce.

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.

Saving the best for the last, please join me in thanking our lovely First Ladies, for their participation.

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 tasseled 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. Later, he displayed it at Greensborough, NC, where he visited the Guilford Courthouse Battlefield with that flag.

This year we were fortunate to have five outstanding members offer themselves for office in the society. Although, only two could win, there were no losers.

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. I view as my most important item of business, the construction of our new library. SAR members are smart. We can walk and chew gum at the same time. So, we must move ahead on all our programs with gusto.

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.

On your table, there are some DVD's. This is a video message from me directed toward prospective members. Please take these back to your chapter and duplicate them, so that when you are sending a prospect an application and some literature, it will be accompanied for this DVD. Soon, we will have other DVDs suitable for showing at chapter meetings, and an overview of our society for use at Rotary, Lions, and other civic group meetings.

Our web site is being modernized so that we can register for meetings online, and so that applicants can apply for membership online. We now have automated telephone dialing so that we can keep in touch with our members by telephone. We are working on a plan to digitize all our records.

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 16 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

PG Larry McClanahan

Bob Bowen

Tom Jacks, who will also serve as Chairman of the Council of Vice Presidents General.

PG McClanahan will all serve as Ambassador General, and his Deputy Ambassador General will be Bill Allerton.

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

Rev. David Hockensmith will be our new Inspector General.

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.

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; and no US Constitution or Bill of Rights. Nothing! I was shocked.

When I was in school, prominently displayed in every classroom were copies of our Founding Documents and a portrait of George Washington. Now, the image of the Declaration of Independence has vanished and you are more likely to find a school portrait of George Washington posted on E-Bay than hanging on a classroom wall. Pulitzer-prize winning historian David McCullough has observed, “Sadly, American History has not only been put on the back burner – it’s been taken off the stove altogether”. In Volume 1 of our *SAR History*, I discovered that very early in the 20th

century, the SAF provided schools with prints of George Washington and the heroes of the Revolutionary War.

Bill Allerton will head up a new **Task Force to allow SAR to put Revolutionary War Prints in classrooms** all over this country. 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.

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*, ably assisted by his *Deputy Charge de Affairs*, **Lee Swart**. They 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. Many of the committees are now sub-committees, so be sure to check the Table of Contents, which is also posted.

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 who 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. **Treasurer 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 – 12, 2009.

Then, Robin and I will be leading a group through Spain May 10 - 24, 2010. We will be ably assisted by Steve Renouf, our new Ambassador to Spain.

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