

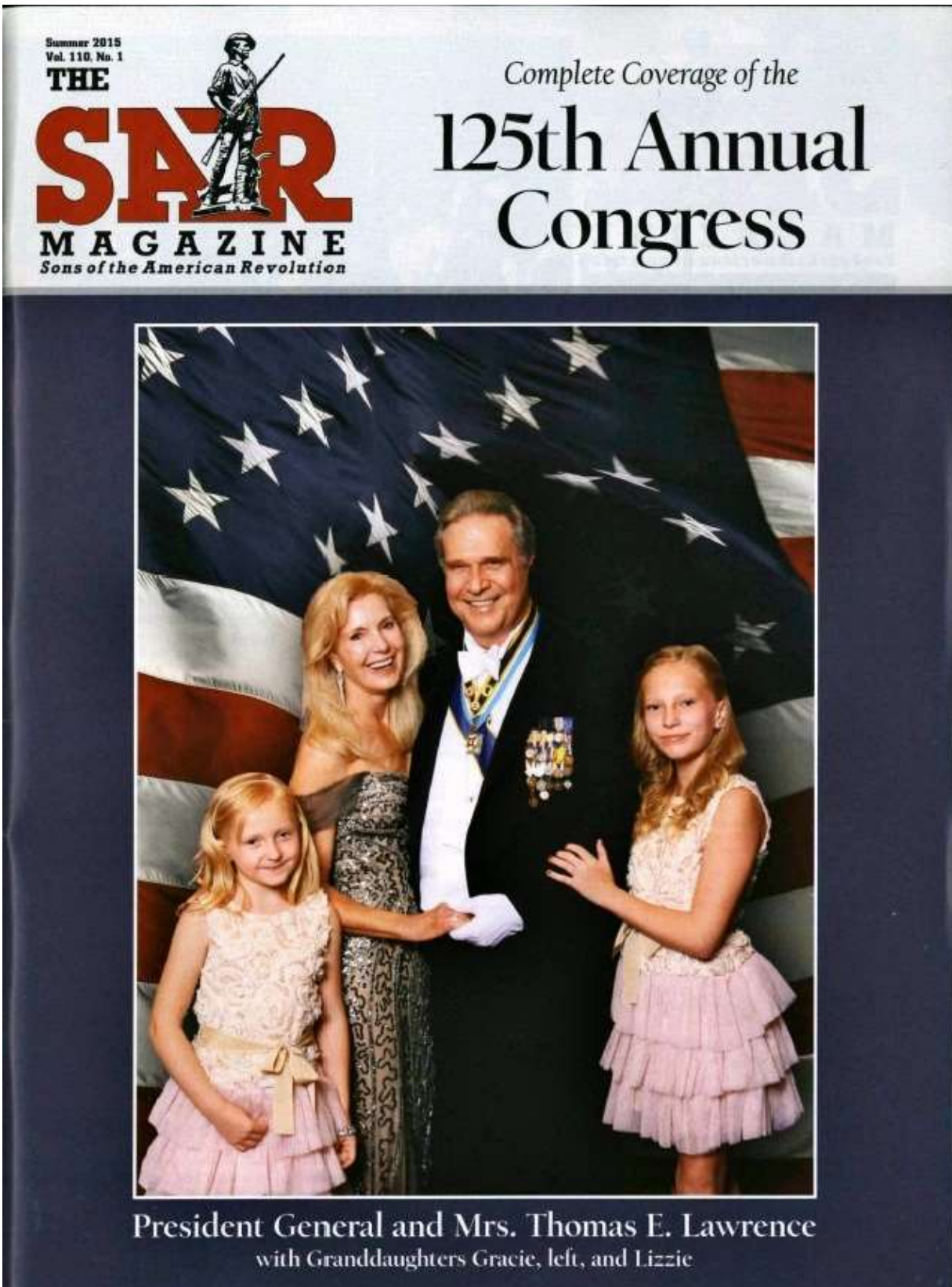


Judge Thomas E. Lawrence
National Society Sons of the American Revolution
President General 2015-2016

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The President General's Message

Finding Our Common Path

Thank you for your confidence by electing me President General. Let me introduce you to my family. Our daughter, Bridgett Harsgaard, is a consultant living in New York City with our grandchildren, Lizzie and Gracie. Gracie is 7 and plays baseball-not T-ball or softball. She is a catcher and shortstop and a good hitter with her own Louisville Slugger bat. Lizzie is 12 and a ballerina. She has danced with the American School of Ballet and the New York City Ballet at Lincoln Center. She is going to study with the Paris Opera Ballet.

Many friends and compatriots have worked hard to make this society one of the strongest lineage and patriotic organizations.

Organizations that want to make a difference, to be great, must have dreams and set lofty goals. There has been much discussion about the Solid Light proposal for the main-floor education center, our need to move forward aggressively with outreach education, to finish construction on our building, and the need for new software and a new website.

While raising money and renovating the Library and Headquarters building, we were all pretty much on the same page, but when we completed enough of the building to move in, it became clear there were differing opinions about what to do next. This is like when our Patriot ancestors were united to achieve independence but then became divided over the course to follow after we won the war. And like our founding fathers, we will come together, and here is how I think we can do it.

To make the best decision possible I will appoint an SAR Implementation Committee to look at our options and make recommendations at the Spring Leadership Meeting. The committee should have the final Solid Light plan by then; they already have the University of Louisville business plan, a better plan for outreach education and updated IT plans. The committee will be chaired by PG Nathan White and will include principal stakeholders, including the SAR Foundation; the IT Committee; representatives from Education, Budget and Strategic Planning committees; the museum board; and our new Governance and Organization Committee. They will review our existing plans and suggest options for consideration. We have to make decisions about what type of exhibit space we will have, how to proceed with completing construction, how to develop and make our outreach education programs national in scope, and how to complete our IT systems.

Another focus will be to bolster our SAR legacy. We all hope to leave a legacy to be remembered. We have legacies with our family, our jobs and our church, but another important legacy is our SAR legacy. How many lives will we touch? How many seeds of patriotism will we plant? It is through young people that we build our SAR legacy, and we do it with our youth programs. I am not minimizing the



President General Thomas E. Lawrence with his wife, Mickey Jo, and granddaughters Lizzie and Gracie.

importance of our color guard or public service awards or any other programs, but if we want to preserve the vision of our founding fathers, we must reach our youth. When we go to a school and put on a program or sponsor a poster or oration contest, or when Tom Green from Texas puts on a flag program, we touch students' lives and give them an opportunity to learn about Paul Revere's ride, the Battle of Yorktown or a brave young wife named Molly Pitcher. Going to the trouble to help them leaves a lasting impression that the American Revolution is important enough for you to take the time to come out and talk about it. It is hard work to set up these programs, but it is incredibly rewarding, and we know that by doing this we make this country stronger and ensure that our descendants will continue to enjoy the freedoms Thomas Jefferson and Thomas Paine wrote about so eloquently, and Patrick Henry and Samuel Adams spoke about so passionately.

Our youth programs are strong and led by dedicated compatriots, but not all states fully participate. Committee members have always talked informally, but I think we would benefit from a structured exchange. I will form a Council of Youth Programs that will include the chairmen of the eight youth programs-the poster contest, middle school brochure contest, C.A.R. award, Eagle Scout award, essay, oration, JROTC and the American History Teacher award. Dr. Rudy Byrd will chair the council, and its members will help one another's programs. I ask that they design a brochure featuring all eight programs that can be handed out in schools. This brochure can be put on our website so chapters and states can download it, add their contact information and print it themselves. As encouragement, any state society that submits at least four candidates for a youth program national contest will receive a streamer. For any state societies that submit an entry for all eight contests I will personally write a check for \$250 to that society's youth program budget. For states that submit candidates for all eight programs I will write another check for \$250 if any of their candidates win. Don't worry about the money; it is coining out of Mickey Jo's shoe budget.

Our chance for the SAR to be great is to inspire this great country to continue to follow the patriotic vision of our founding fathers.

I ask this council to post the winning essays and speeches on the website as well as information about current and past winners. The committee chairmen should record videos so chapters and states can access them on our website and see the benefits and learn how to set up a youth program.

I would like to mention three other ideas before I close education, the way our committees function, and our basic governance and organizational structure. One of the first things the new regime does when it takes over the government is to change what the kids are taught in school. They now learn that the old government was bad and the new leaders are heroes. Textbooks are rewritten, teachers re-educated, and new pictures put up in the schoolhouses. If you teach history in a certain way long enough, school children begin to believe it, so our fight is over how the history of the American Revolution is taught. Not only do we need to make sure it is adequately covered, but we need to see it is accurately portrayed. I am asking the Education Committee to add a subcommittee to map out a strategy to exert influence on how textbooks and web-based learning programs are written and selected. Tom Jackson from Texas is to chair this subcommittee. He is an elected school board member from one of the largest suburban school districts in the country, with more than 112,000 students. Anyone interested in this project should contact Education Committee Chairman Larry Stevens or Tom Jackson.

Next, it clearly impossible to get all of our committee work done on a Friday at Leadership Meetings. Every new PG tries to improve efficiency by dissolving some committees and creating new ones, but I think we need to change the corporate culture. To help the committees, I am appointing Mike Elston of Virginia as a committee coordinator. He will work with the committee chairmen to set and meet goals, submit budgets, assist them in holding meetings with teleconferences and gotomeeting.com and introduce them to working with Sharefile for document access. He will make sure committee concerns needing immediate attention are brought to the Excom and PG. To allow our members to attend all the necessary committee meetings and allow sufficient time for the trustee meetings, we will start on Thursday with a social activity on Thursday night.

Lastly, I want to look at our governance and organizational structure. As you know, we have a Congressional Charter, which is prestigious but limiting. We have the SAR Foundation, which is chartered in Kentucky, and we have the right to use the CAAH name, so we have laws and rules we must follow. Questions have come up about our corporate structures in regard to liability, accepting donations from charitable entities, whether we have the exclusive right to use all of the potential operating names we need, and whether our system of governance still makes sense. I am appointing three of our best lawyers-John Dodd, Davis Wright and PG David Appleby-to seek answers and report to us by the Spring Leadership Meeting with suggestions or proposed changes.

I often find myself reading the obituaries. I love to see where people were born and what they did. I look for their military service. I notice their work history, sometimes being impressed if they were a doctor, a partner in a big law firm or the president of a corporation. I increasingly search for what they did to help their community. When you read an obituary, you see the year a person was born, a dash, and then the year that person died. The dash represents the individual's life. My wife, Mickey Jo, told me about a poem titled "Dash Between the Years," from which I quote:

*"For it matters not how much we own... the cars... the house... the cash
What matters is how we live and love and how we spend our dash"*

How do you want to spend the rest of your dash? The fact that you are an SAR member indicates you love this country, you care about its future, and you respect the ideals of our founding fathers and mothers. If we want this country to continue to look like Washington and Adams and Jefferson envisioned it, then we must ensure that our young people understand their vision and love our country as we do. The best way for us to do this is through our youth programs. You will agree that instilling in our young people the philosophy of the Declaration of Independence and a love of the freedoms in our Constitution is worth some of your dash.

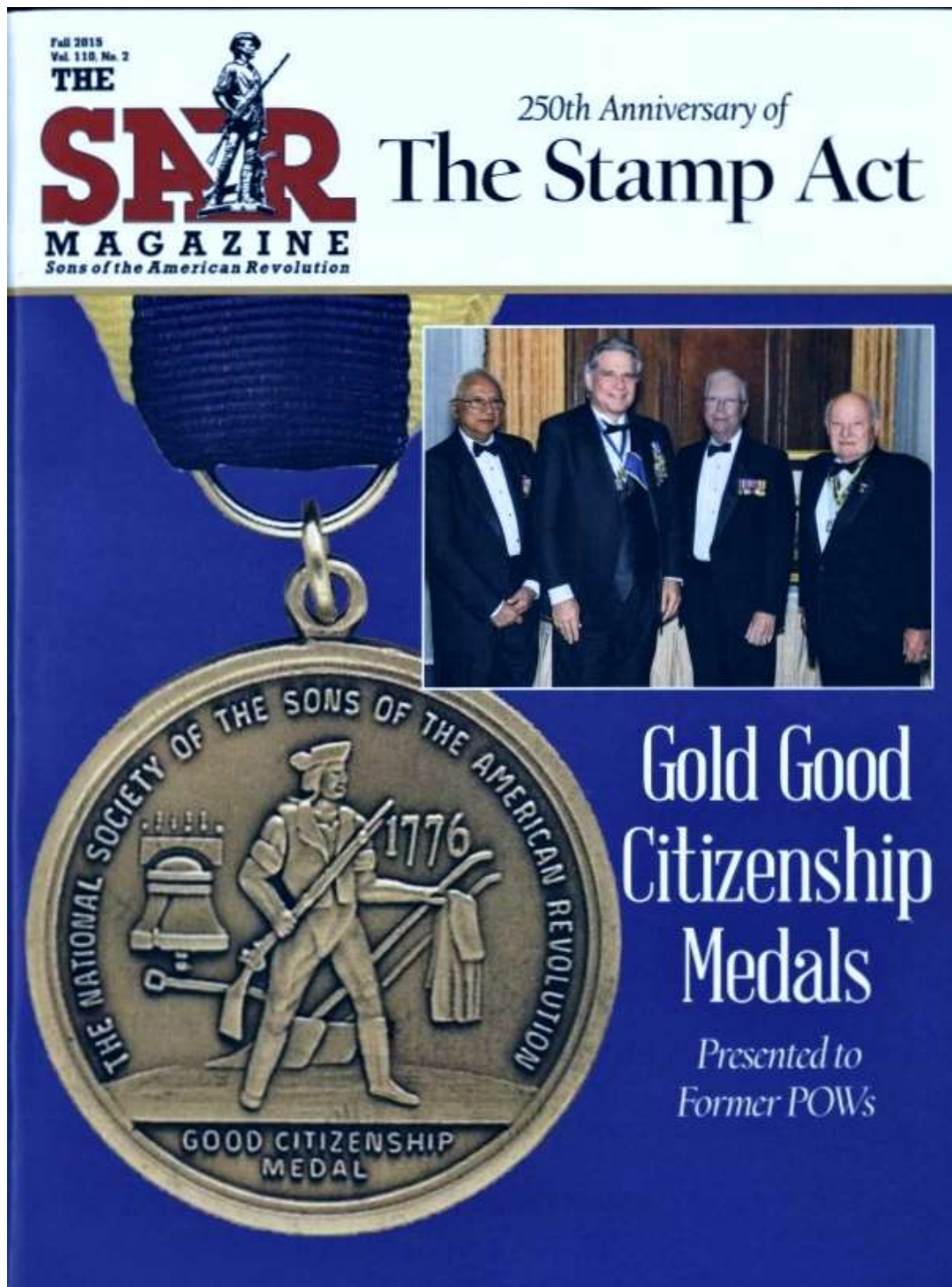
I close with a final thought about what makes an organization great. It is not how many members you have, although people join organizations that do worthwhile things. It is not how much money you have, although people tend to vote with their pocketbook and give when they think their money will be used for beneficial purposes. Organizations are great when they help people or influence positive and fundamental change. Our chance for the SAR to be great is to inspire this great country to continue to follow the patriotic vision of our founding fathers. Those of us who have contributed money and valuable time to preserve the principles of the American Revolution recognize our country's future is dependent on those principles remaining the cornerstone of our government and national vision. We must dream the same dream that George Washington, John Adams and our Patriot ancestors dreamed, and work to make their sacrifices count and ensure that today's youth understand those dreams. It is a

humbling honor to be elected President General, and Mickey Jo and I look forward to this year and hope to see many of you in your home states soon. God bless you.

Thomas E. Lawrence

President General Thomas E. Lawrence

SAR Magazine 110-NO-2_Fall-2015, cover



ON THE COVER

Commander Everett Alvarez, Jr. USN (Ret.), President General Thomas Lawrence, Rear Admiral Robert Shumaker, USN (Ret.), and Dr.] Phillip (Jack) London at the DCSSAR Gold Good Citizenship Medal ceremonies on Sept. 11, 2015 in Washington, D.C.

The President General's Message

Finding Out Where We Are Going

This article will discuss the current status and future plans for our West Main Street headquarters property. The dates and dollars mentioned are approximate.

HOW DID WE GET HERE?

We started out with a headquarters in Washington, D.C., but sold it and moved to Louisville, Kentucky, where we bought the property on Fourth Street.

Then we realized that our Fourth Street property was not sufficient for our needs, particularly our library, so we bought a lot across from our HQ on Fifth Street. We tore down several structures on the property, had plans drawn up for a new library and even raised money for the new building.



President General Thomas E. Lawrence, seated left, was joined by nine other Presidents General during the Fall Leadership Meeting in Louisville. Seated, from left, William C. Gist (1995-96), Lindsey C. Brock (2014-15); standing, from left, Stephen A. Leishman (2012-13), Nathan E. White Jr. (2006-07), David N. Appleby (2008-09), Joseph W. Dooley (2013-14), Edward F. Butler Sr. (2009-10), J. David Sympton (2010-11) and Bruce A. Wilcox (2007-08).

Then in 2008 we decided we wanted to buy a vacant building on West Main Street and renovate it for a new headquarters, library and a museum. It was felt that the traffic in that area of Louisville would bring a lot of foot activity to our library and museum, thus giving us the opportunity to spread the word about the SAR and the American Revolution. The Fourth and Fifth Street properties were both put up for sale and two adjacent properties on West Main Street were purchased.

An architect and a contractor were retained and plans were approved. The SAR Genealogical Library was completed first and the grand opening was held in 2010. Fundraising continued for the headquarters and it was sufficiently completed to allow staff to move in 2013. Both the Fourth and Fifth Street properties were sold.

At the 2014 Congress in Greenville, South Carolina, the delegates voted unanimously to spend \$549,000 to hire Solid Light Inc., from Louisville to design our museum.

WHERE ARE WE NOW?

We have a beautiful genealogical library and we have completed construction on roughly a third of the headquarters building. This includes most of the offices on the second floor, the conference room and bathrooms. Still to be completed are upgrades to the electrical system, the basement education center, the balance of the second-floor offices, catering kitchen, meeting area, a second elevator and the roof garden.

The estimated cost to complete the electrical upgrades, the balance of the second floor and the roof garden is about \$1.3 million. We do not have an estimate for the basement education center because we do not know what will be included yet. We still owe a little more than \$1.2 million on a loan we had to take out to finish the construction of the part of the building we have already occupied.

Solid Light has been working on the design plan and the Trustees reviewed their work at the Fall Trustees Meeting. They are currently working on the final design, which will be presented to the Trustees for approval at the Spring Trustees Meeting.

WHERE DO WE GO NEXT?

To build out the balance of the second floor and pay off the loan will cost about \$2.5 million. We do not know how much the basement will cost, but if we want to put in a studio to produce our own videos, plus have classroom and theater areas, it could get expensive.

We also do not know how much it will cost to build out the museum (think interactive exhibit instead of static displays). Once we approve the Solid Light design they will be able to give us accurate figures to complete construction. The construction costs are dependent on the design. More technology is more expensive, but that is what draws visitors. If the Solid Light design plan is approved in substantially the form it is proposed then we should be able to get fairly accurate construction costs from Solid Light at the Spring Trustees Meeting.

Approving the Solid Light design plan does not mean we will build the museum, as the Trustees have not approved funding construction for the museum. The Trustees have two choices: They may approve the design plan and then approve funding construction of the museum, although we will still have to raise the money; alternatively, the Trustees could approve the design plan but delay the decision about building the museum.

Delaying construction raises another issue. In both 2013 and 2014 the SAR Foundation raised almost \$900,000 each year but so far in 2015 we have raised less than \$300,000. That is because there has been some discussion about whether we want to build the museum, so the Foundation felt it could not raise money from donors for a museum that might not be built. That has hurt our fundraising and we need to raise funds for the completion of the headquarters building (including the education center) as well as potentially for a museum.

We need to finish the headquarters build-out, including the basement education center. Although we don't have to have a museum, it was part of the reason we decided to move to West Main Street to take advantage of the location. If we did not want to have a museum we should have stayed on Fourth Street and built the library across the street or we should have bought property in a less expensive part of Louisville. If we do not build a museum, then what will we put on the main floor of our headquarters that will justify our investment in that location, and do we just waste the \$549,000 spent for the museum design plan?



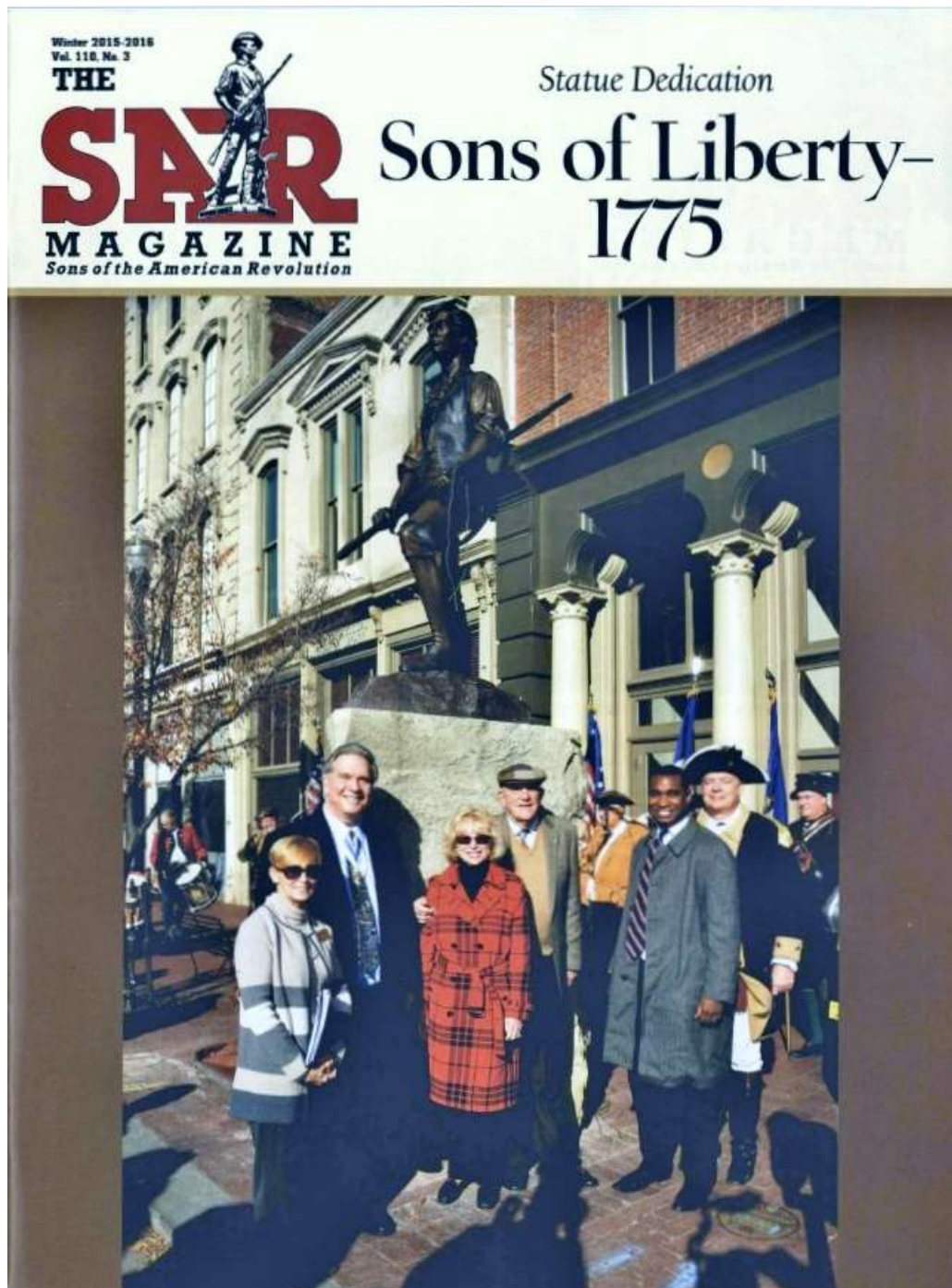
Dr. Larry Leslie, left, and Kentucky Society President Chuck Scott presented President General Thomas E. Lawrence with a commission as a Kentucky Colonel during the Fall Leadership Meeting. PG Lawrence was one of several so recognized.

We have some important decisions to make in the spring. I hope all of you who are able will make plans to attend the Spring Leadership Meeting to participate in our future.

Thomas E. Lawrence

President General Tom Lawrence

SAR Magazine 110-NO-3_Winter-2015, cover



ON THE COVER

Attending the "Sons of Liberty-1775" dedication were, from left, a representative from Sen. Mitch McConnell's office; President General Tom Lawrence; President General (2010- 2011) David Sympson and his wife, Evelyn; Chase Sanders of Rep. John Yarmuth's office; and SAR Foundation President Sam Powell

The President General's Message

Come Prepared to Speak Your Mind

This article will again focus on the upcoming decision we will make concerning the education center, which we sometimes refer to as the museum. To summarize how we got to this point we go back to the initial decision to buy property on West Main Street in Louisville. We believed that we needed a presence on what is now called "Museum Row" that would provide us with foot traffic for both our genealogical library and for a museum that would attract visitors.



We built out and opened the genealogical library and part of the second floor of the headquarters but it has become apparent that we lack enough artifacts to have a true museum. The focus then shifted to having an educational center that would tell the story of the American Revolution and the vision of our founding fathers and mothers. This is in keeping with our support for the Center for Advancing America's Heritage (CAAH) and for our desire for outreach education that will reach throughout the country, not just in Louisville.

At the 2014 Congress in Greenville, S.C., the delegates voted to spend \$549,000 to retain Solid Light, a Louisville company, to design a plan for the education center to be built on the main floor of the headquarters. The plan will be presented at the Spring Leadership Meeting and a proposal will be made for its acceptance. It is also possible that a proposal will be made to move forward with the project and to direct the SAR Foundation to raise funds for construction. Before we take those votes there are some questions that need to be answered.

❖ Question No. 1: If we vote to accept the Solid Light plan can anything be changed if we want to add or delete from the plan or add new technology? Yes, we can make changes after we accept the plan. The plan we will vote to accept is general and does not have specific photos, language in the exhibits or specific recordings for audio exhibits. If we vote to go forward with the education center, the next step is to ask Solid Light to actually design the center. This will include the visuals, the text and the technology. This is where we need to make decisions as to exactly what we want to cover. After the design, then we would have it constructed.

❖ Question No. 2: How much will it cost to build it? We don't know yet. As of the date this is written, Solid Light has not come back with the final plan, which will include the total costs to build it. Once Solid Light gives us the final plan, the Museum Board will approve it and it will then go to the Executive Committee for its approval. The finished plan will be put in the Trustee folder in Sharefile before the Leadership Meeting so the Trustees can review it prior to the vote. The Trustees will have the final decision as to whether or not we move forward. Technology is a big factor in the ultimate cost. If we want to have new technology such as holograms and virtual reality then it will cost more, but also will make the center more popular because that is what people want to see.

❖ Question No. 3: How much will it cost to operate the education center and will it be profitable? We don't know yet but the University of Louisville did a study for us last year and produced a business plan that is on the member folder in Sharefile. This will be addressed at the Leadership Meeting, but the study indicated that the project was commercially viable. It will also depend on several factors such as hours of operation, availability of volunteers, and maintenance expenses. It is difficult to predict how many visitors will be willing to pay to tour our center but we have a good idea of how many people attend other museums in the area and what they charge for admission. From this we can make some predictions, but the popularity of our center will depend on how attractive our exhibits are and how innovative the use of technology is in our center. Again, it is the holograms, virtual reality and other technology that really draw visitors.

❖ Question No. 4: Is this center only for those who live in Louisville or will it help us educate those in other states? This is a good question because of our emphasis on outreach education. Solid Light believes it is possible that we can make parts of our exhibits accessible via the Internet to people outside Louisville. It may not be an identical experience but it would allow us to export what we have on our main floor to classrooms across America. This aspect will be covered during the presentation at the Spring Leadership Meeting.

❖ Question No. 5: We have other financial needs, so is the construction of this education center the best use of our money? This is a valid concern as we have a \$1.2 million construction loan; we need about \$1.3 million to build out the balance of the second floor; we will need to build out the basement; and we must construct a store on the main floor in conjunction with the education center. We will need to raise money for all of these needs, so what is our priority? The Trustees will have to decide our priorities but I believe we can begin raising money for the education center at the same time we raise money for these other needs. The SAR Foundation Board can give us its opinion on whether this can be done.

❖ Question No.6: If we don't build an education center, what will we put on the main floor? We could use it for small exhibits, including some of our artifacts that would lend themselves to display here. It is possible we could attract some traveling exhibits that would fit in with our mission. It is also possible we could put in permanent flooring, buy more tables and chairs and try and rent it out for events. Although we will have a smaller space for event rental on our roof garden, utilizing the main floor entirely for a rental space was not envisioned. Is event rental really the highest and best use for this space? If we are not going to take advantage of the prime West Main Street location to have some type of education center or museum, then perhaps we should not have bought on Museum Row. What is the vision of the SAR and is it best met with an education center, a rental hall or a small exhibit space?

I hope that the meeting will provide answers to all of these questions as well as any others you may have about the education center project. We will have many people available for presentations or to answer questions such as Solid Light, the Museum Board, the Solid Light project manager, financial resources members and those who can speak on the business plan. The important thing is that we have a full discussion and come together in a consensus and move forward with a single vision. Please make plans to attend this meeting.

Fraternally,

Thomas E. Lawrence

President General Thomas E. Lawrence

SAR Magazine 110-NO-4_Spring-2016, p. 3, 5

The President General's Message

Thanks for a Wonderful and Fulfilling Year

Writing my last President General's Message for the magazine is bittersweet as it signals the end of my term. I will miss so many aspects of this job as Mickey Jo and I have had a wonderful and fulfilling year. Some of the highlights were being able to place a wreath on the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier at Arlington National Cemetery, watching the Yorktown Day parade led by the Old Guard, firing a cannon in Tucson, Arizona, at the Presidio, and giving the speech at a Naturalization Ceremony at SAR Headquarters. But easily the most rewarding aspect was having the opportunity to meet so many dedicated SAR members all over the country. We are fortunate to have members who work hard in their communities, and who do not seek recognition but are content to try and improve their towns by reminding them of the vision of our founders.



President General Thomas Laberny took a different approach to the Spring Leadership Meeting's evening banquets. Friday night, compatriots were encouraged to "come Caribbean" and Saturday night, the Monarchs, a PPSB rock 'n' roll band had everyone dancing (and singing).

I have often said that the important work of the SAR is done in our chapters and I have seen that firsthand. We also have many state societies that are working hard to support their chapters, and it is apparent that the most important job of the national organization is to support our state societies and chapters by providing them with the tools they need to be successful.

As most PGs do, I started out my term with certain goals I hoped would capture the interest of our members. Some of those goals have seen great progress, while some have been harder to implement. Additionally, other important matters came up during the year that demanded attention. The two goals that have seen success are improving the committee structure and enhancing our youth programs.

It has been clear for some time that we are not getting the full productivity out of our committees that we need. Some reasons are insufficient time to meet, lack of accountability and lack of clear committee goals. With the assistance of Compatriot Mike Elston from Virginia, each committee has set goals and reported on their progress in achieving those goals. We have given committees the opportunity to meet on the Thursday afternoon before the Leadership Meeting begins so we did not have as much overlap on the Friday meetings and so they could meet longer if they wanted to. Ineffective committees were disbanded and new, essential committees were organized.

I am very pleased with the formation of one committee in particular, the Council of Youth Awards. It is chaired by Dr. Rudy Byrd from Arizona and consists of the chairmen of each of our youth programs. They have made good progress this year in several areas. They have produced a brochure on all of our youth programs that can be downloaded and printed by our state societies and chapters and then distributed to schools. They have also posted videos from all of our youth program chairmen to explain the importance of each program and to assist chapters and states in starting their own programs. This cooperation among all of our youth programs will strengthen our overall approach to working with our schools and young patriots.

Although the museum project was not one of my stated goals for the year, it quickly became apparent it would need a lot of attention. Bill Stone from Alabama was the project manager and he did a fantastic job with the help of the Museum Board. At the Spring Leadership Meeting all of the information we had was presented to the Trustees and they decided to move forward with the project. When the money is raised to build it, about \$7.5 million in actual construction costs, we will determine the exact design of the museum and then start construction. This will give us a strong presence on West Main Street in Louisville and will form the bedrock of our outreach education effort.

One of our most important accomplishments was not even listed as a goal but it was recognized early as a problem area. That problem was communications and it was affecting not only the Trustees, but all members. Other than *The SAR Magazine*, we did not have a method to communicate with the members about the important business of the SAR. The problem with the Trustees is that they did not have much, if any, information about most of the matters on which they would be called upon to vote at Trustee meetings. Trustees now receive agendas and materials to be discussed well in advance of the Trustee meetings. Good governance dictates that the Trustees have all of the information they need to make decisions and that they study that information and be prepared to vote. Trustees now expect information and have become more involved in managing the SAR, which will improve our decision making.

Another problem area was in distributing written materials to members where we found it was difficult to email large documents because of spam filters and ever changing email addresses. It turned out there were two solutions to this problem. One was to use a computer program called Sharefile, which allowed us to put documents in a folder for access just by SAR members. We put meeting minutes, meeting agendas, and documents to be discussed at meetings in special folders. We also allowed committees to have their own folders and even some state societies decided they wanted their own folders. Any SAR member can sign up for Sharefile and have access to more information than they have ever seen before.

The other solution was to institute a regular practice of sending out PG Communications to the Trustees, state society presidents and officers and chapter presidents. I then asked that they forward my email to others in their chapters so we could get wide distribution. My communications dealt with routine business of the society as well as important matters such as the museum. Sometimes I included committee reports or reports from general officers or project managers. In my travels the effort to communicate with the members has been mentioned more than anything else. It is critical we not forget that unless we make the effort to let our members know what is going on, we cannot expect them to enthusiastically support the projects and goals of the society. Most of our members attend only chapter meetings, if at all, so they get little information about what is going on nationally and probably not much more about what is going on in their state or chapter. Eventually, I hope we are able to have a method to communicate with all of our members through our website but for now we just have to continue to find opportunities to let all of our members know about our society.

Mickey Jo and I have had a fantastic year and we are grateful for the opportunity to be able to serve and to help build the SAR. Thank you.

Thomas E. Lawrence

President General Thomas E. Lawrence