

THE NATIONAL SOCIETY, SONS OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION
COMMITTEE REPORT

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Committee Name: **OPERATION ANCESTOR SEARCH (OAS)**

Co-Chairman: Carl B. Bedell, DC
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Meeting Dates & Location: 124th NSSAR Annual Congress, July 18-24, 2014, Greenville, SC

Committee Communications (by Mail, Email and Conference Call), Dates: Various

MEMBERS:

1. Carl B. Bedell, DC, Co-Chairman
2. LTC Gregory O. Bodge, VA
3. Peter Arrott Dixon, VA
4. CPT R. Duane Tackitt, USN (Ret.), DC
5. Rev. Dr. James C. Taylor, TX

EXPENSES: (\$60,000 annual operating grant from Ancestry.com)

REPORT & RECOMMENDATIONS:

The last meeting of the Operation Ancestor Search (OAS) Committee was convened at the Spring Leadership Conference (Brown Hotel, Louisville, KY) on February 28-March 1, 2014.

Current Status Report:

The current OAS facilities are:

1. Walter Reed National Military Medical Center – Bethesda, MD
2. Brooke Army Medical Center, Fort Sam Houston – San Antonio, TX
3. Fort Belvoir, VA
4. Armed Forces Retirement Home – Washington, DC
5. Armed Forces Retirement Home – Gulfport, MS
6. Naval Medical Center San Diego (NMCSD, Balboa Naval Hospital) – San Diego, CA
7. Naval Hospital Camp Pendleton – Camp Pendleton Marine Base, CA
8. James A. Haley VA Poly-Trauma Center – Tampa, FL
9. Bay Pines VAMC – Bay Pines, FL

Local SAR chapter representatives are in the planning stages for developing the OAS program at the following facilities:

10. Fort Drum, NY
11. Fort Hood, TX
12. West Los Angeles VAMC
13. Jacksonville Naval Hospital
14. Southern OR VA facilities
15. Seattle, WA VAMC
16. Stokes VAMC, Cleveland, OH
17. Batavia, NY VAMC
18. Canadagua, NY VAMC
19. Fort Knox, KY Ireland Army Hospital
20. Fort Campbell, KY Blanchfield Army Hospital
21. Cincinnati VAMC

Following are the largest remaining military facilities and VA Poly-Trauma Centers in the country that we are targeting to open during the coming year:

22. Madigan Army Medical Center, Fort Lewis (Tacoma, WA)
23. Minneapolis, MN VA Medical Center (Poly-Trauma Center)
24. McGuire VA Medical Center, Richmond, VA (Poly-Trauma Center)
25. Palo Alto, CA VA Medical Center (Poly-Trauma Center)

- Rick Kincaid joined the NSSAR headquarters staff as the new OAS Program Director on April 22, 2013. He attended last summer's Congress in Kansas City and the Fall and Spring Leadership Conferences in Louisville to promote awareness of the OAS program with information tables and private discussions.
- A revised OAS information toolkit has been developed and is being distributed.
- The OAS website is in the process of being revamped and expanded.
- The Federation of Genealogical Societies (FGS) has endorsed the OAS program and encouraged its state and local member societies and libraries across the country to assist our volunteers at the OAS training sessions and through remote assistance with queries by telephone, email and social media.
- FamilySearch.org also has agreed to a collaborative partnership whereby its LDS Family History Centers and individual consultants across the country will assist our volunteers at the hands-on OAS training sessions based on their centers' geographic proximity to our respective facilities.
- The Daughters of the American Revolution (NSDAR) will assist our volunteers on an individual chapter basis if the local chapter chooses to do so. The NSDAR left the door

open for possible collaboration on a national level when the OAS program expands to that level.

- The third installment of our three-year \$180,000 OAS program grant from Ancestry.com is due this year following Congress. Plans already are underway to prepare a detailed summary report of the OAS program in anticipation of a renewal of the grant for another three-year period.

Recent success stories will serve as catalysts for other societies and chapters across the country to demonstrate the same leadership, initiative and commitment as those above and develop similar programs to benefit our wounded warriors. A number of smaller facilities hopefully will “piggy-back” on the opening of the larger ones when some of these chapters see what their larger counterparts have done. These could easily raise the overall total number of facilities to more than 20 by the end of the year.

Objectives:

- Increase awareness of the OAS Program by marketing it to SAR state societies and local chapters, and especially to their officers, genealogists, registrars, veterans’ committee chairmen, and state and local newsletter editors and webmasters in order to help identify prospective SAR volunteer leaders to develop and administer the OAS program in new military and VA medical centers.
- Disseminate information about the OAS Program to as many members as possible during 2014 Congress and Fall Leadership Conference.
- Continue cultivating collaborative partnership agreements with mutually compatible organizations and relationships other genealogy resource donors who can provide tools other resources to the program.
- Establish relationships with key personnel within the military, Department of Veterans Affairs, Fisher House and others responsible for operating the facilities and organizations that support wounded and injured soldiers and veterans.