

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: NSSAR Fall Leadership, September 26-27, 2014, Louisville, KY

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. William E. Mitchell, VA
4. COL Robert D. Pollock, DC, Co-Chairman
5. CPT R. Duane Tackitt, USN (Ret.), MD
6. Rev. Dr. James C. Taylor, TX

OAS PROGRAM DIRECTOR:

Rick Kincaid
NSSAR Headquarters
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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:

We currently have 11 OAS programs operating across the country. Since the previous Congress report (dated June 10, 2013) we have opened seven new facilities (highlighted in bold below.)

The current OAS facilities in operation 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 (NMCS, 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**
- 10. Fort Drum Warrior Transition Battalion – Fort Drum, NY**
- 11. Syracuse VAMC – Syracuse, NY**

Local SAR chapter representatives are in various stages of developing the OAS program at the following facilities:

1. Camp Lejeune, NC
2. Fort Bragg, NC
3. Darnall Army Medical Center – Fort Hood, TX
4. Indianapolis VAMC
5. West Los Angeles VAMC
6. Memphis VAMC – Memphis, TN
7. Southern OR VA facilities
8. Seattle, WA VAMC
9. Stokes VAMC, Cleveland, OH
10. Jamestown, NY VAMC
11. Batavia, NY VAMC / Canadagua, NY VAMC
12. Fort Knox, KY Ireland Army Hospital
13. Fort Campbell, KY Blanchfield Army Hospital
14. McGuire VA Medical Center, Richmond, VA (Poly-Trauma Center)
15. Fort Bliss Warrior Transition Battalion – El Paso, TX

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:

1. Madigan Army Medical Center, Joint Base Lewis-McChord (Tacoma, WA)
2. Minneapolis, MN VA Medical Center (Poly-Trauma Center)
3. Palo Alto, CA VA Medical Center (Poly-Trauma Center)
4. Jacksonville, FL Naval Hospital
5. Portsmouth, VA Naval Medical Center

Key Updates:

- Rick Kincaid has been the OAS Program Director since April 22, 2013. He has attended the Congresses and the Fall and Spring Leadership Conferences to promote awareness of the OAS program with committee meetings, information tables and private discussions.
- A revised OAS information toolkit has been developed and is being distributed.

- A new OAS website has been developed and is being revised 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. Rick Kincaid attended the 2013 FGS Conference in Fort Wayne, IN, and 2014 Conference in San Antonio, TX, to promote awareness of the OAS program among the genealogical and library communities.
- 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.
- We have received the third installment of our three-year \$180,000 OAS program grant from Ancestry.com. Plans are currently underway to prepare a detailed 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 the 2014 Fall and 2015 Spring Leadership Conferences and 2015 Congress in Louisville.
- 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.