

THE NATIONAL SOCIETY, SONS OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION

COMMITTEE REPORT

Filing Date: February 10, 2014

Committee Name: **Operation Ancestor Search (OAS)**

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Meeting Dates & Location: Spring Leadership Conference, February 28-March 1, 2014, Louisville, KY

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

MEMBERS:

1. Carl B. Bedell, DC, Co-Chairman
2. COL Robert D. Pollock USAF (Ret.), DC, Co-Chairman
3. LTC Gregory O. Bodge, VA
4. M. Simon Klotzbach, KS
5. CPT R. Duane Tackitt, USN (Ret.), DC
6. 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 March 1-2, 2013. Co-Chairman Brock D. Bierman chaired the meeting. Co-Chairman Carl B. Bedell attended via Skype.

Current Status Report:

- 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 Leadership Conference in Louisville to promote awareness of the OAS program with information tables and private discussions.
- The 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 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

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

6. Portland, OR/Vancouver, WA VAMC
7. Southern OR VA facilities
8. Seattle, WA VAMC
9. Stokes VAMC, Cleveland, OH
10. Batavia, NY VAMC
11. Canadagua, NY VAMC
12. Fort Knox, KY Ireland Army Hospital
13. Fort Campbell, KY Blanchfield Army Hospital
14. West Palm Beach, FL VAMC

Following are the six largest remaining facilities and poly-trauma centers in the country that we are targeting to open during this year:

15. Balboa Naval Hospital, San Diego, CA
16. Madigan Army Medical Center, Fort Lewis (Tacoma, WA)
17. Minneapolis, MN VA Medical Center (Poly-Trauma Center)
18. McGuire VA Medical Center, Richmond, VA (Poly-Trauma Center)
19. Haley VA Medical Center, Tampa, FL
20. Palo Alto, CA VA Medical Center

There are a number of other smaller facilities that hopefully will “piggy-back” on the opening of some of the larger ones when some of these local 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, veterans' committee chairmen, and state and local newsletter editors and webmasters in order to identify prospective SAR volunteer leadership teams 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.