

SAR – Congress report 2023 – Orlando FL July

The 2023 Congress, the annual business meeting for the National Society SAR, was held in mid-July 2023 in Orlando Florida. Similar to other annual business meetings, the delegates from each state gathered to hear reports, set plans and budgets (including electing officers) for following the year. Highlights of the Congress included: unopposed election of previously-announced nominated officers (normally there are a few wildcard competitions), an annually required setting of the annual dues (with the adult dues set at \$50 a year), and a motion to make Louisville building office space modifications (required because the source of funds was the sale of the former building in Louisville). Those unopposed elections included President General John Dodd of California (former VPG Western District and former California President), Vice President General Rob Moore (former Hawaii President) – Western District, and Trustee Elwin Spray (former VPG Western District and former Hawaii President) – Hawaii Trustee.

The Hawaii Society received special recognition – special national SAR certificates – for two member registration-related efforts by all of our members and officers, and also for the reporting efforts of our Registrar Chris Smithson – and additionally a certificate for having members participating in national Friends of Library fundraising efforts. The Richard H Thompson Award (smallest number of members dropped for non-payment of dues), the Texas Award (highest percent increase in members among small – less than 100 – states) and the Franklin Flyer Award – certificate and a flag streamer -- (for Friends of the Library for increasing Friends memberships percentages based on comparison to total state membership).

As a note for our August 2023 Hawaii State meeting, we should acknowledge and express appreciation for the past services of national President General Bruce Pickett, Secretary General John Dodd, Vice President General Derek Brown (of California – dual with Hawaii), and for Hawaii Trustee Rob Moore and Hawaii Alternate-Trustee Elwin Spray.

The Orlando Congress also included a memorial church service for departed members, an awards ceremony for individuals and for state societies, the finals for orations and presentations for youth awards, as well as several committee meetings. There was a closing banquet for the year-end officers and an installation banquet for new officers, as well as gathering for spouses and several tours. Color guards were active with the events, including the memorial service, the meetings and ceremonies. Additionally, a modification to the bylaws was discussed to permit off-shore societies (including Taiwan) to function

as state societies within the larger auspices of the International District.

The upcoming national Congress for 2024 will be in Lancaster Pennsylvania in July 2024. All Compatriots are welcome to participate – please pencil in your mainland travel plans to include the event – and make hotel plans in mid-fall 2023. All Congress details are on the SAR website: www.sar.org.

Trustees meet generally three times a year: once at Congress and once each in September and March. The two trustee leadership meetings include most committee meetings and all Compatriots are generally welcome to Louisville Kentucky events.

----- Elwin Spray