

Sons of the American Revolution



Illinois Society

Thomas D. Ashby, President

Report to the Great Lakes District
November 8, 2014

Organization

Our Society currently has fifteen Chapters. We are in the process of strengthening one chapter, reforming another and forming a new chapter on the Illinois side of the Quad Cities area. As of October 31st, the Illinois Society membership stands at 958, (with an additional 27 awaiting National Society approval).

We went to a new billing process for dues last year, which caused some confusion and resulted in a significant number of non-renewals. We have attempted to get ahead of the game this year by starting to collect dues earlier and thereby be able to contact members before they are dropped for non-payment. This has had mixed success and much work needs to be done to ensure a high renewal rate this year.

We have two chapters that have had, for a number of years, the same president, one of which is currently in the hospital after major surgery with no successor designated. This happens to be our largest chapter. We are hoping for a chance to allow the president to recover and work with us to implement a transition plan of regular succession.

Society projects and special events

The Illinois Society is in the process of placing patriot Cemetery Markers in Illinois, similar to the Wisconsin Society patriot cemetery marking program. The State Society contributes \$500 for each marker and the GWEF has given us \$3000 toward three markers placed earlier this year. The total cost for each marker is about \$2000 and local chapters request donations for the additional funds needed. The GWEF has indicated they would fund at a level of 25% in the future (\$500 per marker).

The State Society Color Guard and Chapter and Society members have participated in dedications of six Cemetery markers around the State this year.



The Color Guard again marched in the annual Chicago Memorial Day Parade and was featured on ABC television. This is the largest Memorial Day parade in America, so our participation helps promote awareness of the Sons of the American Revolution.



Normally the State Color Guard marches in the Illinois State Fair Twilight Parade in August, but this year we were rained out. We also participate in the ILSCAR Annual Meeting.

Many local Illinois chapters and their Color Guard members participated in memorial services, grave markings, police and fire awards presentations, ROTC medal presentations, Eagle Scout Recognition and Outstanding Citizenship Award Presentations.

At our annual State Congress in May, we hold a Youth and Community Awards Luncheon where the winners are invited along with their parents. During the Youth portion of the program, we recognize State Level Winners of an outstanding CAR member, the High School JROTC Outstanding Cadet, the Knight Essay, Rumbaugh Oration and Outstanding Eagle Scout Scholarship winners.



Then we have Community Awards, recognizing Police, Firemen and EMTs for Life Saving & Heroism and the Outstanding History Teacher.

This year we also presented a check for uniform replacement to a Compatriot Color Guard Member who lost his home and uniform in a tornado in Washington, Illinois, and contributed \$750 to Illinois Red Cross Tornado Relief.

NSSAR Activities



Illinois Society members have attended all NSSAR activities this past year: the Spring and Fall Leadership Conferences in Louisville and the Annual Congress held in Greenville, South Carolina, where tours of Kings Mountain and Cow Pens battlefields were held and re-enactors presented meaningful programs.

We are hoping for fellow GLD member participation in the future. Perhaps we could have a District Breakfast, as some Districts do during the Annual Congress.

Finances

Our budget for programs and projects for 2014 is \$24,105. The Illinois Society holds net assets of \$339,833, which includes earmarked endowment funds. Illinois Society endowment funds have earned \$2,468 through investments (37.5% in fixed income securities and 62.5% in equities).

Auxiliary

Our Ladies Auxiliary is very active, meeting quarterly at the BOM meetings. Through silent auctions at our May Annual Congress, it has been very effective in raising funds for the CAAH, donating \$500 annually for the past several years. The ladies are also now assisting us with funding the Cemetery Marker Program.

Respectfully submitted,

Thomas D. Ashby