

# NATIONAL SOJOURNERS, INC

## 2014-2015 ANNUAL REPORTS

95<sup>th</sup> ANNUAL CONVENTION  
31 MAY - 6 JUNE 2015  
OMAHA, NEBRASKA



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## **NATIONAL PRESIDENT, Merlen F. Howe**

Howe humbling was the awareness that as National President I was to serve all members, their families and National Sojourners, Incorporated. Each day begins with a prayer to do my utmost to fulfill the duties of the office.

A week after my installation Judy and I travelled to Montana for their Annual Grand Communication. We were generously hosted by Brother Lewie Fletcher and his wife Sue along with many others. Several Master Masons were not only interested in National Sojourners but were ready to join. Brother Fletcher began the process of establishing a Club and soon had nearly enough to petition for a charter for a chapter!

Attending the 45<sup>th</sup> Biennial Supreme Assembly, International Order of Rainbow for Girls, in Baltimore reminded me of solid ethical stands and wondrous youthful enthusiasm exemplified by many colors of original outfits. Dedicated supporters of Rainbow Girls certainly deserve praise.

Enroute home we visited our daughter and family in Pittsburgh and visited with Brother Ed Hanke of the Pittsburgh Club #38 who related all his efforts on behalf of NSI attempting to generate activity in rewarding JROTC students. Our visits to a variety of Lincoln historic sites including an outstanding museum in Lincoln, Illinois, made our visit to Lincoln #536 unique. Then we went south to Lindbergh #247 in Illinois for an opportunity to expand our knowledge of Charles Lindbergh. Later in August I was privileged to present the charter to High Country #553 in Boone, NC, and with advance work of Brother Denny Norris, we enjoyed conversation and a bountiful frontier style dinner with the Grand Master, the 92 year-old chaplain, and many other National Sojourners and ladies. The next day, Brother Ron Sortino and his family escorted Judy and me to a tour of the nearby Rainbow Camp, an underused and wonderfully equipped facility surrounded by rural, natural beauty. On our way home we joined Volunteer #414 where Brothers H. T. Ray and Larry Fouse made us most welcome at a Chinese buffet with the most excellent sushi.

September included visits to four Texas chapters, participation in a historic flag program and renewal of my Esoteric "A" certificate for the Grand Lodge of Texas. Judy and I attended the Grand Lodge of Iowa, where I had begun my Masonic journey, and updated my knowledge of my father's Masonic offices and tenures and revisited our favorite Amana restaurant. Towards the end of the month we attended the Conference/Encampment in Joelton, TN, where we learned about yellow dogs.

The Heroes' degree with our National Commander, Brother J. J. Brown, in Pacific Beach, WA, in October included a touching U. S. Flag retirement ceremony high on a crag above the Pacific where a retired apron of an unknown Mason was honored with the flags. At the annual Executive Committee meeting in San Antonio the second weekend, brains worked overtime before enjoying nearby restaurants. In Tucson five new members were initiated into the chapter meeting third weekend in large part due to the enthusiasm of the chapter president, Brother Joe Talvy. Wednesday we joined the Grand Master at the chapter meeting in Salt Lake City after enjoying the Mormon Tabernacle organist in concert. The following Sunday we attended the Sojourner meeting in Cheyenne and were hosted by Brother Jack and Lady Nancy Coffey, a gracious pair who also gave us a tour of Estes Park, CO. Monday we enjoyed fellowship with the Topeka #128.

In November we attended a meeting of Ft. Sill Chapter in Lawton, OK, arranged capably by PNP/PNC Ken Lowmiller. A lot of paperwork was done in November. I participated in the Annual Communication of the Grand Lodge of Texas early December before going to Hawaii for their Encampment and a Christmas banquet. Lady Kathy and National Commander J.J. Brown and PNC Roy and Carol Ota were superb hosts. Upon returning home we assisted in the wedding of our daughter, then celebrated Christmas and New Year's. January's highlight was the Mid-Winter

Meeting in San Diego where a team led by Brother Jim Benson and his lady Carol were assisted by others from the local area. All of them ensured a good meeting and great fellowship. On Friday evening just after the meal Lady Kathy tried to teach some of the National Line and Heroes of '76 Line how to hula! Because they were unteachable she beautifully demonstrated the classic dance for all.

Later in January we attended the Grand Lodge of Louisiana where the new Grand Master is also president of Louisiane #33. Last year I had been privileged to install him as chapter president. February held a 19 day trip towards Vancouver, B.C., Canada, for the Conference of Grand Masters. On the way we visited Pasadena Chapter where we were warmly hosted by Brother Joe and Katie Ryland and to Arrowhead Chapter at a beautiful clubhouse in San Bernardino, CA. At the Grand Masters' Conference an effective team presented a sparkling breakout session about National Sojourners services to youth and received praise from several who attended. We are indebted to Brother Harry Sanders who spearheaded the effort. The emphasis was on inviting a partnership with the Grand Jurisdictions to increase the number of youth attending Youth Leadership Conferences. During the Grand Masters Chapter meeting over a dozen new National Sojourners were added to our rolls and reflected the positive response to our purposes and presence.

After the Conference we were able to visit many National Sojourners and their ladies from multiple chapters in Washington in the Nile Shrine near Seattle where on Thursday Homer Wallins #40 was our host. We appreciated the efforts of the Area and Regional Representatives as well as the chapter Secretary, Brother Don Beck. That evening a meeting in Portland, OR, in a bomber museum was hosted by Portland #75 with members of the Salem chapter also attending. Entertainment included a nostalgic WWII song. On Saturday a gathering of National Sojourners and ladies from central California was arranged by Area Representative Steve Fowler in the Executive Airport restaurant in Sacramento. Some conversation centered on the possibility of their hosting a national meeting. On Sunday in Laughlin, NV, Brother Kermit Rosenthal was our host for the Camel Corps event which concluded on Monday evening with a banquet attended by some in desert garb. Having lived in the desert while stationed at 29 Palms we were still surprised by the authentic garb worn by some with our imitations being warmly accepted as "a nice try."

All National Sojourners, ladies, and HQ staff who were involved in selecting the site for our new national offices, inventorying, packing, loading, unloading, unpacking, *etal* deserve our heartfelt gratitude. This remarkable process was accomplished with a minimum of downtime. All those involved merit significant credit for their expended energies – all of our HQ staff, Col. Russell L. Henderson and Mrs. Judith A. Henderson, parents of Janine Kovack, Bros. Randy Geck, Ed Ford, Bill Turner, Harry Sanders, Paul Pennybacker, John Mayers, Louis Numkin, Frank Harris and more who supported the effort by making contributions to allay the costs. Well done!

March was mostly absorbed by preparations for the Annual National Convention and wrap-up of miscellaneous items. We did spend Holy Week with our daughter and family in Pittsburgh. With their unending winter this year, maybe we should have stayed in Texas. Nonetheless visiting family is always a precious moment to be treasured.

In April we attended our own Conference/Encampment in Austin, TX, where the junior Past Grand Master of Texas, Right Worshipful Brother Jerry Martin, was initiated into Heroes of '76 with the DGM, RW Wendell Miller, participating in the degree. Later in April we visited Lubbock #517 where we had a good time with the brothers and their ladies.

Activities for May include attending the Grand Lodge of Indiana. Later my honor will be to install the new officers of Omaha Chapter #19 on Wednesday prior to the ANC. Anything other developments I will report during our meeting.

Thanks to everyone who made this year's journey a pleasant one "on the road that leads through the valley to the west."

### **NATIONAL PRESIDENT-ELECT, James N. Higdon**

It has been a memorable and busy year for me as your NPE and I want to thank you for your continued confidence in me. I have enjoyed meeting and getting to know many new Sojourners on some of my trips, while also getting to know many of you that I already knew much better. Each year of service in the National Line continues to be a new and ongoing learning experience, trying to absorb the many changes that have occurred and are occurring, while also trying to take in and assimilate the many new responsibilities in fulfilling my new duties, not only as your NPE, but as I work through my panic in getting ready to serve you as your NP in a few short weeks. As always, I continue to build upon my past experiences in the Line, as well as on my prior and present service experiences in the many Masonic organizations of which I am a member and in which I continue to try to be active. I have also learned just how difficult it is to continue working full-time, more or less (my partners often post "for rent" signs on my office door), while also fitting in the time to properly serve you as NPE, while also serving as Treasurer of my Lodge, Chapter and Council, and still trying to make as many of the meetings of the other local appendant bodies of which I am a member. However, it is very apparent that the difficulty in splitting my time among the many things I have continued to try to fit in and do is only just beginning as I plan for 2015-2016 and my Masonic service that needs to be more fully devoted to you. Thus, I continue to covet your trust, confidence, tutelage and support, and, most of all, your prayers and patience.

In addition to maintaining an active Family Law practice with our firm, *Higdon, Hardy & Zuflacht, L.L.P.*, this past year, I participated in the following legal and Masonic meetings throughout this year:

July 19, 2014: As a Past Grand Commander and a Past Commander of two District 4 Commanderies, I attended and participated in The Grand Commandery Knights Templar of Texas District 4 School of Instruction and Conclave in San Antonio, Texas, hosted by the Eminent Grand Junior Warden, Clarence J. Laney.

August 4-7, 2014: I attended the Advanced Family Law Course in San Antonio, Texas, sponsored by the State Bar of Texas Family Law Section, during which the Texas Academy of Family Law Specialists held its annual dinner meeting (August 6) at which I was installed as a member of the Board of Directors to serve a 3-year term.

September 5-7, 2014: Tagging my attendance at the Southern California (SOCAL) Area Conference/Encampment, Camp Pendleton, CA, to a family reunion of our sons and their families in Los Angeles over Labor Day at our oldest son's home, Barbara and I enjoyed making new friends while enjoying the company of old friends that were in attendance at SOCAL. While there, our National Commander, Bro. J.J. Brown, and I participated in the Conference, such as it was, and also in the Encampment. After the NC almost pulled the Camp's Charter, order was finally regained by the Encampment Commander, following which I recited the Monitor Lecture and the Charge as we welcomed two new Heroes into our midst. The weather on the Camp Pendleton Beach, although warm, was lovely and so was the lively entertainment provided. Although attendance was reportedly low, a great time was had by all who did attend.

September 21-23, 2014: Barbara and I traveled to Greenville, S.C. to visit with our 2016 ANC Planning Team, then led by Bro. David Davenport, as well as to meet and fellowship with the members of John Sevier #548, who would be the nucleus of the three South Carolina Chapters hosting

the 2016 ANC, all individuals who would conduct the “grunt work” necessary to ensure a successful ANC. Upon our arrival at the airport, we were greeted by Bro. Rhodan Batson, 1st VP, and his lovely wife, Gerry, who whisked us away to our hotel to change and then off to dinner at Ruth’s Chris Steakhouse with R:W: Bro. William B. and Jeanne Rogers, DGM of the Grand Lodge of South Carolina, Bro. Gary and Margaret Watson, Chapter President, and Bro. Dan and Anita Rancourt, Camp Commander. During dinner, Barbara and I were not only honored with a very lovely meal and wonderful fellowship, but were presented with several very meaningful gifts we still treasure and enjoy. The following day we met with Ms. Megan Best of the Embassy Suites Hotel, Bro. David Davenport and the Planning Team, followed by a wonderful lunch in an area restaurant with a wonderful ambiance. Later, Bro. Guy Palmer gave us a grand tour of the downtown Greenville area and its beautiful environs, whose sites we won’t forget and neither will you when you see them while attending the 2016 ANC in Greenville. That evening, Bro. Rhodan and Gerry picked us up and took us to the monthly meeting of John Sevier Chapter, where we were greeted by many members, including Bro. Lewis Langley, LOH, and Secretary Jim Turner, as well as Area Representative Wayne Barnes and his wife, Floretta, who had driven from their home in Georgia to attend the meeting. I was privileged to participate in the initiation of a new member to the Chapter by giving the Medal Lecture.

October 10-11, 2014: I attended the National Sojourners ExComm Meeting in San Antonio, Texas, attending the meeting of the Trustees on the 10th along with the other National Line Officers, as well as the National Commander, followed by a dinner attended by all of the attendees and some of their wives at the Texas Land & Cattle Company. The following day, the National Line Officers held a very productive meeting.

October 19-21, 2014: I attended the Annual Communication of the Grand Royal Arch Chapter of Texas and Annual Assembly of the Grand Council of Royal and Select Masters of Texas in Waco where I completed my fifth and final year on the Grand Council Jurisprudence Committee of which I was serving my fourth consecutive year as its Chairman. Now, for the first time in many years, I do not have a Committee appointment to either body’s Jurisprudence Committee, or to any other committee for that matter.

December 3-6, 2014: I attended the Annual Communication of the Grand Lodge of Texas in Waco, continuing my service as a member (and *de facto* Secretary) of its Purposes and Policies Committee. On this occasion, your NPE and N1VP, together with PNPs Bob McConnell and Keye Perry, also participated by appearing in our Colonials when presenting the Colors at the Public Opening of The Grand Lodge of Texas, at which time our NP, Bro. Merlen F. Howe, was personally received and introduced as a visiting dignitary. I was privileged to address the “Grand West” and present a part of the P&P Committee’s Report.

December 13, 2014: I attended the Annual Ingathering of Nazareth Tabernacle No. XXXIV, Holy Royal Arch Knight Templar Priests, San Angelo, TX, as one of its past Very Eminent Preceptors.

January 1, 2015: PNP Bob McConnell, 1st VP Nelson Dunn and I, all of FSH Chapter #17, participated in the presentation the U.S. and Texas Flags in our Colonials at the investiture of newly elected District Judge of the 45th District Court of Bexar County, Texas, the Honorable Stephani Walsh. Following the posting of the colors, I presented the “Toast to the Flag,” which was well received by those in attendance.

January 13-17, 2015: I attended and participated in our Mid-Winter Meeting held in San Diego, CA, and, in particular, in addition to the tasks assigned in the opening and closing of the Meeting, presented to the Resolutions Committee the several Resolutions I have submitted to be acted

upon at the 2015 National Convention. Since Barbara was unable to attend with me due to an ear infection that prevented her from flying, she missed the hula dancing exhibition given by the National Line and National Heroes officers. Following the close of the meeting, I stayed another day and visited with my LA son and his family in San Diego—something Barbara was looking forward to and missed—and also got to have lunch with a University of Texas NROTC friend and Sigma Phi Epsilon fraternity pledge brother and his wife, both of whom had recently relocated from Austin back to San Diego, his adopted home from his Naval Aviation days as an F-8 pilot. I, thus, had an overall great time while in San Diego on this occasion.

January 21-25, 2015: I attended the Grand Lodge of Colorado in Pueblo, CO, to which I am the Grand Representative from Texas to Colorado. I was also privileged to have been appointed by our Grand Master to attend as his Personal Representative. And, of course, I was also attending in my capacity as your National President-Elect. This, too, was intended to be a grandchildren trip, but Barbara was still barred from air travel by her ENT, so I got to bond with our Colorado grandchildren upon my arrival in Denver prior to going to Pueblo and then upon my return to Denver following the conclusion of the Grand Lodge Communication. I also had the good fortune to be called upon by the Grand Master, Michael McMillan, to bring greetings from the Grand Lodge of Texas and National Sojourners, which I did. Enroute to Pueblo, and then again on my return to Denver, I was fortunate enough to be able to visit with two different sets of long-time friends in Colorado Springs and have lunch with each. This was another wonderful trip and great time of visiting with my Masonic and family friends, as well as with the Denver branch of our family.

February 12, 2015: Barbara and I attended the annual Bridge of Light Banquet of Fort Sam Houston #17, San Antonio, TX. Our NP was unable to attend, having already departed Texas for COGMNA in Vancouver. Our own PNP/LOH Elliott Samuels was the Master of Ceremonies and MW Grand Master of Texas, Michael L. Wiggins, was the keynote speaker. A wonderful time was had by all.

February 14-18, 2015: We attended the Conference of Grand Masters of North America, which was held this year in Vancouver, B.C., Canada. Barbara was finally allowed to fly and we enjoyed a beautiful view flying up the West Coast of the U.S. and over the Vancouver area. Unfortunately, on Masonic trips like this, attendees don't get to see much outside of the Conference hotel, and such was the case again on this occasion. However, the accommodations and the Masonic camaraderie was outstanding, as was the Break-out Session conducted by PNPs Andrew McVeigh and Harry Sanders, and Ms. Marlene Dibrell, representing the International Order of the Rainbow for Girls, each of whom were ably assisted by PNP/PNC Bill Turner running the slides. The Fraternal Liaison Breakfast was a great success as well. This was MW Bro. Ed Cohen's first outing as the Chair and he did a superb job, as did all of your National Line Officers in their presentation of the program for the day. I was personally given positive responses, if not accolades, by several of the Grand Lodge attendees. The final event for your Line Officers was participating in the conduct of the Grand Masters #996 Meeting, which was well attended. The trip home for Barbara and me, however, was less than spectacular, our flight being delayed in LA for several hours such that we did not arrive back in San Antonio until after midnight.

March 12-14, 2015: I attended the Local Florida Area Conference/Encampment (LFACE) in Jacksonville, FL, with Bro. Ron Sortino, N2VP, the National Commander, Bro. J.J. Brown, and the National Chief of Staff, Bro. Ray Vanden Berghe. Bro. Ray Davis, NC FL Regional Representative and the LFACE coordinator/facilitator, along with the Florida Area Representative and National Officer of the Day, Bro. Boog Powell, both had their hands full in, virtually, at the last minute, having to completely reorder the scheduled activities to accommodate a schedule change of the Recruit, the

Grand Secretary of the Grand Lodge of Florida, R:W: Bro. Richard Lynn, due to his having to attend the funeral of a long-time friend in South Florida, while we were in Northeast Florida, some 5 hours away. Once all of the “players” had arrived on Friday the 12th, we, that is, PNC Pedro Arroyo and members from a number of different Florida area Chapters proceeded to confer the Heroes Degree upon Recruit Lynn, who ultimately successfully crossed the “D.” I participated by giving him the Monitor Lecture. The following morning, a very successful Conference was conducted where a number of different training topics were covered, which was then followed by a filling lunch. That evening, during the Bennington Banquet, Bro. Arroyo presented his wonderful rendition of *Old Glory*, the NC, Bro. Brown, brought a very fine talk, and then the Ladies, led by Den Mother Carmie Powell, conferred the Camp Followers Degree on two of the local ladies. It appeared that a wonderful time was had by all.

March 18-21, 2015: We travelled to Oklahoma City, OK to attend the Tinker Chapter #43 Bridge of Light Dinner held at the Tinker Officers Club. Brother A.C. Henager, President, conducted a fine meeting during which R:W: Bro. Robert Shipe brought a very informative and educational talk about Masons and their involvement in the formation of the public school system in the various states of the U.S. The following morning, the 2016 MWM Planning Team met with Barbara and me to discuss the status of that event. A significant problem faced by the Planning Team was the failure of the NASOCOCO Representative assigned to negotiate the hotel contract not having made any contact with the several hotels suggested by the Team. This was addressed with the NASOCOCO President the following day. However, as of the drafting of this report, April 29, 2015, the OKC Planning Team still has no hotel since none of the hotels suggested by the Team has been contacted by a NASOCOCO representative/negotiator.

April 11, 2015: I attended and participated in the South Central Area Conference/Encampment (SCACE) in Austin, Texas, along with the National President, Bro. Merlen Howe, and N1VP, Bro. Jim Baker, and the three area Trustees, Andrew McVeigh, Bob McConnell, and Keye Perry, all PNPs, as well as PNP Elliot Samuels, LOH. Also in attendance was R:E: Robert M. Loflin, R:E; Grand Commander, The Grand Commandery Knights Templar of Texas, and R:W: Bro. Wendell L. Miller, DGM of Texas (and his wife, Billie), both Past Presidents and Past Camp Commanders. The Conference was opened by the Area Representative, Bro. Tom Booth, assisted by the N1VP, who, as the Encampment Manager, also presented training to the attendees on the planning and conduct of an Area Conference/Encampment. After lunch, the Austin ANC candidate, the then M:W: Bro. Jerry L. Martin, who was unable to attend that conferral due to illness, was the candidate for the Heroes Degree, who successfully crossed the “D” and was made a Hero of ’76. The Camp Commander was the N1VP, while I, again, presented the Monitor Lecture. Although Bro. Carl Diamond, National Assistant Chief of Staff, was scheduled to attend, weather and airline cancellations prevented it. Following the Degree, a Bennington Banquet was held, during which I was privileged to lead the Pledge to the U.S. Flag and, owing to the absence of the National ACOS, also gave the “Toast to the Flag.” R:W: Bro. Martin presented remarks as the evening’s speaker, following which the ladies, led by Den Mother Becky Perry and ably assisted by Judy Howe, Barbara Higdon, Kay Baker, Ervalyn McVeigh and others, conferred the Camp Followers Degree on several ladies, including the Recruit’s wife, Betty Martin, and the wife of Tinker #43’s 1st VP (Bob Carr), Jane Carr. A grand time was had by all.

April 15, 2015: I attended a Called Meeting of Alamo Lodge #44, San Antonio, Texas, where I conducted the examination of E.A. Brother Brent A. Bauer in the second and third sections of Trial Questions and Answers, followed by my conferring the Fellowcraft Degree upon him.

April 18-20, 2015: I attended Annual Grand Conclave of The Grand Commandery Knights Templar of Texas, San Marcos, TX, as a Past Grand Commander and the Texas State Chairman of the Knights Templar Eye Foundation Annual Voluntary Campaign, where I reported on the status of Texas among the Grand Commanderies in contributions to the Annual Campaign, as well as the rankings of the several top Constituent Commanderies. I also participated with the M:E: Grand Master of the Grand Encampment of Knights Templar of the United States, David Dixon Goodwin, in the presentation of a Grand Masters Club award to R:E: Grand Commander Robert M. Loflin. Previously, at the luncheon of our ladies' organization, the Social Order of the Beauceant (SOOB), I presented a similar award to the Supreme Worthy 1st Vice President, Lynda M. Derby, wife of Tom Derby, Past President of Camp Joseph H. Pendleton #243 and Past Camp Commander of The 49ers Camp, who was in attendance representing the Supreme Assembly SOOB.

April 22-24, 2015: Barbara and I attended the Annual Grand Communication of the Grand Lodge of South Carolina in Charleston, S.C. at which, as the Personal Representative of M:W: Grand Master Michael L. Wiggins of the Grand Lodge of Texas and the NPE representing National Sojourners, Incorporated, I was invited to sit behind the Grand East as a dignitary and was called upon by M:W: Bro. David J. DeChant, Sr., M:W: Grand Master of The Grand Lodge of South Carolina, to bring greetings from the Grand Lodge of Texas, as well as from and on behalf of National Sojourners, which I did. I was in attendance to see the installation of M:W: Bro. William B. Rogers, a member of John Sevier #548 in Greenville, S.C., as The M:W: Grand Master of Masons in South Carolina. PNP Bill Turner was also present and presented M:W: Bro. DeChant a U.S. Flag that had been flown over several significant patriotic sites. During the Grand Lodge meeting, I also had the privilege of visiting with Bros. Lewis Langley (LOH), Jim Turner and Guy Palmer, all members of John Sevier #548. On the evening of April 23, Barbara and I had the opportunity of hosting at our hotel two friends from San Antonio who had relocated to Charleston in 2011. After attending the Installation on Friday, April 24th, of M:W: Bro. Rogers, Barbara and I went to see Fort Sumter. Later, we met up with other friends who live in Charleston, who took us to Fort Moultrie and then we had dinner together. The day was perfect for seeing these two very significant historic Civil War sites. The following day, after touring "old Charleston," driving through various historic neighborhoods and the campus of The Citadel, we, with our friends, toured the CSS H.L. Hunley, the first submarine to effect a war-time destruction of a ship - the Sloop of War, USS Houstanic, which was recovered in 2000 and is still being "restored." This was one of the historic highlights of our trip. It was truly a fascinating experience touring all three of these very historic venues. And, of course, we ate lots of great food, including shrimp and grits, twice, while in Charleston.

April 26-27, 2015: After our very enjoyable visit in Charleston, we departed for Greenville on Sunday, April 26, detouring thru North Augusta, S.C. (across the border from Augusta, GA, where the Masters Golf Tournament is played and was played about a week before, to visit one of Barbara's two cousins, whom we had not seen in about 30 years. On Monday, April 27, we met with our 2016 ANC Planning Team under the leadership of Bro. Jim Turner, Chapter Secretary of John Sevier #548. Following a very productive meeting with the Team, we attended the John Sevier Chapter meeting, where I was privileged to install their officers, including President Rhodan Batson and Camp Commander Jim Turner, as well as participate in the induction of two new members. We were also very pleasantly surprised and very honored by the attendance of M:W: Bro. Rogers and the very elegant First Lady of Masons in South Carolina, Mrs. Jeanne Rogers, as well as his Grand Marshal, Benny Hammond (who was also installed as a Chapter and Camp officer). M:W: Bro. Rogers, in his first Masonic visit following his Friday installation, thanked the Chapter members for their long support of him. All in attendance appeared to have a great evening of fellowship.

Throughout the year, I have had the privilege and opportunity to present the Toast to The Flag at several events, two of them noted above. I have also attended and participated as the By-Laws Committee Chair in the monthly business meetings of my home Chapter, FSH #17, as well as most of the bivouacs of Alamo Camp, at which I participated by giving the Monitor Lecture if a Degree was conferred. Also serving as the Treasurer of my Lodge, Chapter and Council, I attended as many of their Stated Meetings/Convocations/Assemblies as I could, but missed some due to either legal or National Sojourner conflicts, mostly the latter. I also regularly attended the Stated Conclaves of Brownwood Commandery #22, Boerne, TX, one of three Commanderies of which I am a member, as well as many other appendant bodies of which I am a member and past presiding officer.

Barbara and I look forward to attending the Annual National Convention in Omaha, NE, just “up the road in North Texas,” and once again enjoying renewing our friendships and acquaintances with so many of you. Although right now I am looking forward with some trepidation at being installed as National President and all that I have yet to get planned, organized and executed prior to June 6, I am looking forward to serving as your National President and launching out into the deep waters that Bro. Merlen will be stepping out of, accepting and taking on the management of the new challenges I will encounter in that position throughout the coming year. Finally, as I have said before and continue to say, I challenge each of you to take an active part in your Chapters and Camps, while also continuing your support of all of our National Order’s programs and endeavors in promoting our motto, **Proudly Serving the Cause of Patriotism**, throughout this Great Nation. That saying will be prominently displayed on my pin this year so that everyone who sees you wearing it will know that you, as a National Sojourner, and all National Sojourners, are **Proudly Serving the Cause of Patriotism!**

#### **NATIONAL FIRST VICE PRESIDENT, James A. Baker**

My election to N1VP at our Annual National Convention in Austin was again very special to me. I had the privilege of our Daughter Dre and son-in-law, Brother Dr. Ron Mottern, a new Honorary Member of Anson Jones #507, in attendance. Dre worked with our Transportation Crew and picked up a number of those attending the ANC at the airport. I was told by many that they deeply appreciated the way that she treated them upon their arrival. I was a proud father! I had the honor of Initiating Brother Ron into National Sojourners in May of 2014. He started out right working with our Registration Committee on the Desk. He will be a great addition into our Order. As with my first two elections into the National Line, I am grateful for your wish to continue my efforts in National Sojourners, Inc. Thank you. One thing I learned at the ANC is never serve as a National Officer and be the Secretary of the Host Chapter at the same time. It was arduous filling both positions simultaneously, but I survived with the help of many of my Brothers and Sisters from Anson Jones. I thank them all. At the end of the ANC, I swore that I would never again be the Host Secretary for a major event, while serving as a National Line Officer. However, last Fall, I brought up the possibility of Anson Jones hosting the South Central Area Conference and Encampment. So, April 10-11, 2015, I again served as the Host Chapter Secretary for the event. Some people never learn.

This year started out with a lot of planning by your National Line to attend as many events as possible. Intentions were high and our resolve to travel resulted in the smooth execution of our plan. I have been “on the road” more this year than the last two, while also remaining busy locally. I continued to serve as the Secretary of my home Chapter of Anson Jones and participated in a lot of our activities. I participated in two parades, three Historic Flags presentations, three Build the Flag

programs, two Build the Flag PowerPoint presentations, presented NSI and SR JROTC medals at two local high schools, and served in the Color Guard for The Grand Lodge of Texas, at its Annual Communication. I also visited several Chapters. I was honored to be asked to be the guest speaker at the Audie Murphy Chapter's Christmas Party in December. Another job I do for Anson Jones is our National Essay Contest. We have 18 local JROTC Units to which we give medals to annually. Since I started doing this, I have given each of the units the opportunity to submit entries to the contest. A local committee, this year made up of my wonderful Lady Kay, Lady Judy Howe, and my son-in-law, Brother Ron Mottern, graded the entries and selected 3 local winners to submit to the National Contest. If your Chapter is not taking part in this program, I urge you to start. Each year, we give our local winners a check and Certificate. This year, all of the winners came from one High School and I will present them their checks and Certificates at their annual Awards Night. Again, participating in our National Essay Contest is a great way to recognize your youth. I hope many Chapters will do this.

In October, the National Line and our Trustees met in San Antonio, Texas for our EXCOM. It was a fruitful meeting at which your Line discussed a number of issues and made plans for the remaining part of the year. Of course, our MWM in San Diego was among the topics, along with our attendance of the COGMINA in Vancouver, B.C. As with any major meeting, there is a lot of planning to make each a success. Our National President presided over our meeting and directed each of us to complete a number of tasks. My oversight committees this year have been the Americanism, Incentives and Awards, Publications Review Board and CLMA. Brother Paul Pennybacker is doing a great job as the Chair of the Americanism Committee. Due to a scheduling issue, our National President Elect, Brother Jim Higdon and I have swapped our time to attend Freedoms Foundation Valley Forge. My Lady Kay and I will attend this coming July, and he and Lady Barbara will go next year. I am looking forward to going to the event and to take the Historic Tour of Philadelphia. The reins of leadership for our I&A Committee were turned over by Brother Carl Diamond to Brother Denny Norris. Brother Denny is working diligently to ensure that he does not miss a step in preparing for the presentation of our National Awards in Omaha. Brother Armand Cote unfortunately reported that not a single document was submitted to the Publications Review Board this year, including no submission of any newsletters or bulletins. I do not know what caused this, but I hope that Chapter Secretaries and those responsible for those publications will re-double their efforts for the next submission process. Of course, a lot of discussion at our EXCOM was given to the selling of the property where CLMA and NSI have called home for long time. Plans for moving our Headquarters was discussed, and, as you know, it is now located in Springfield, VA. The Brothers who assisted in the preparation for and execution of the move did a superb job. I look forward to visiting our new venue, as soon as possible. CLMA as an organization has not "gone away". They will be relocating as well. Information about where they are located and their future plans will be made known, as soon as they are available.

In November, I flew to Fayetteville, NC and participated in the Mid-Atlantic Area Conference & Encampment. It was a good Conference led by Area Rep Wayne Barnes, an impressive Heroes Degree conducted by the Heroes of '76 from the Cornelius Harnett Camp and an enjoyable Bennington Banquet. I was joined by our N2VP, Brother Ron Sortino, which made the event even better.

In January, my Lady Kay and I flew to San Diego in order to attend our Mid-Winter Meeting. It was nice to be in San Diego again. I went to Boot Camp there in 1962 and much has changed. The town square was being completely renovated and I could not even see it, behind the construction fences. The meeting was held in a most beautiful setting, the Town & Country Resort that has been there since the 50's. We arrived three days early and took one of the trolley tours and enjoyed it a lot.

During the MWM, I sat in on all my oversight committees, as well as others. As a lot of our work is done at this National Meeting, held halfway through the year, there were several issues discussed at each meeting. The interest in doing the best job possible from the Chairs and members attending was palpable. I am encouraged that those in the leadership of our National Committees are dedicated to doing a great job and I look forward to hearing about their accomplishments this year in Omaha.

In February, Kay and I flew to Vancouver, B.C., for the Conference of Grand Masters in North America (COGMINA). This was the third such event I had attended and I think it was the best of the three. Your National Line presented our "Service to the Craft" PowerPoint Program to attendees at our Fraternal Liaison Breakfast. Brother RW Ed Cohen acted in his new capacity as the Fraternal Liaison Committee Chair, assuming the role from Brother Gene Sizemore, upon his retirement from the post last June. Our presentation was well received and sparked interest in our endeavors. In a breakout session, PNPs Harry Sanders and Andrew McVeigh III, were joined by Supreme Nature and Supreme Liaison to Mexico Lady Marlene Debrill, Supreme Assembly International Order of the Rainbow for Girls, and provided a slide presentation about our service to Youth. The session was well attended and received. Capping off our involvement in COGMINA, your National Line assisted in the Initiation of 25 new members of the Grand Masters #996. This was the largest number that I have witnessed being initiated in the Chapter.

As I previously mentioned, I attended the SCACE in April, in Austin, serving as the Host Chapter Secretary. I had been working on the event planning, off and on, for about 6 months, and for the last month before the meeting, a lot. The Conference was led by our new Area Rep Brother Tom Boone, Houston #513. The training included a presentation I made on "How to Host an Area Conference & Encampment". I have been working on this presentation for a while and I intend to polish it up and post it on our Website for use by Chapters in all our Areas. In it, I presented the nuts and bolts of what a Chapter must do to hold an event like this, with hopes of sparking some interest by other Chapters in the South Central Area to host a future one. Really, the only difference between hosting a C&E an ANC is that NASOCOCO handles the negotiations with the hotel, and the registration is handled by their Treasurer. I know that they are essentially the same, after serving as Host Chapter Secretary for both the ANC in June 2014 and the SCACE in April 2015. Wow, back to back. During the Encampment, I had the honor of serving as the Camp Commander for the Heroes of '76 Degree at which we made our Junior Past Grand Master of Texas Brother RW Jerry L. Martin a Hero of '76. At the Bennington Banquet, he was our Guest Speaker. We coupled the Banquet with a Bridge of Light function and welcomed our Deputy Grand Master RW Wendell Miller, along with two District Deputy Grand Masters from local Districts, and one Worshipful Master and his 10 year old daughter.

As I must get this report to our Headquarters, soon, I will have to submit it before attending the GLACE, which I will do in May, in Flint, Michigan. This event will conclude the National Meetings, and Area Conferences and Encampments I attended this year. Each was unique in that they were held in different areas, but all were the same in the presentations during the proceedings, and the excellent hospitality of our Brothers and Sisters from the local Chapters who made each event special in their own ways.

In conclusion, I have been honored to serve in my current capacity this year and I look forward to moving up to National President Elect in Omaha, if I am so elected. I remain encouraged that our organization is one of the few going in the right direction, at this time in our Nation. I also remain committed to doing the best job I can to support all of your efforts over the next year and beyond. We have the best programs available and only need to stand tall and execute our plan to

promote Americanism and Patriotism in America to succeed in our honorable task. I thank you in advance for all that you will accomplish over the next year. God bless America!

### **NATIONAL SECOND VICE PRESIDENT, Ronald D.R. Sortino**

Another year of education is coming to a close and I have enjoyed every minute of it. Without saying “travel” has been the primary activity for me this year: In July of 2014, I traveled to Freedom Foundation Valley Forge (FFVF), Pennsylvania for our “Spirit of America” program – again a very successful year led by Brother Paul Pennybacker our Americanism Committee Chairman. Good things are on the horizon for this program; In August, the National President, National President Elect, National 1<sup>st</sup> Vice President, the Regional and Area Representatives of the Mid-Atlantic Region and myself traveled to Boone, North Carolina to Charter a new Sojourner Chapter called “High Country #553.” Located in the mountains of North Carolina, we finally have a Chapter in the “hinterland” of the State; In September, I represented National Sojourners at the North Carolina Grand Lodge Annual Communication and was a member of the Color Guard posting the Flag at the opening ceremonies as well as presenting our “Toast to the Flag” to approximately 1300 Carolina Masons; October was the National lines Executive Committee (EXCOMM) meeting in San Antonio, Texas. These meetings are always most informative and instructional; The Mid-Atlantic Area Conference/Encampment heralded the visit of our National Commander (Brother J.J. Brown) to North Carolina in November. Chapter #97, Fayetteville was the coordinating Chapter and did an outstanding job. A well organized and planned event.

The action slowed down in December, but picked up again in January 2015: Our Mid-Winter Meeting (MTM) was held in San Diego, California that month. February found me travelling to Vancouver, British Columbia for the Conference of Grand Masters in North America (COGMINA). What an experience! The National line (past/present) presented two “power-point” presentations to the attending Grand Masters and “money” was made by National Sojourners on that day – The Grand Master’s Chapter initiated approximately fourteen new Sojourners on the last day of the conference. It was very productive for all concerned. In March, I travelled to Hampton Rhodes, Virginia to represent the National President at Hampton Rhodes’ Chapter #6 meeting. They had had a long dry spell initiating new members and were going to initiate two the night of our arrival. It was one of the most enjoyable times we (my family) have had visiting Sojourner chapters. A growing Chapter to watch! Again, March found me travelling to Florida for their Florida Area Conference/encampment. The intent was to welcome our National Commander, Brother J.J. Brown to Florida and initiate the Grand Secretary of the Grand Lodge of Florida into National Sojourners. All went well and everyone had a most enjoyable time. Although travel outside my State slowed down considerably in April, travel throughout the State every week, representing our Fraternity, did not. As I continue my Sojourner exploits, I am steadfastly convinced that every day is truly a holiday and every meal a banquet!

When you have professionals tending the store, life is worth enjoying. I am referring to the two committees I have oversight authority – Membership and Fraternal Liaison Committee for COGMINA. Brother Bob Roth and MWB Ed Cohen are the committee chairs respectively and their dedication, experience, sincerity, honesty and inexhaustible energy ensures satisfactory results will follow.

Brother Roth has initiated an effort by which our Sojourner Chapters can identify Masons who are veterans in each Blue Lodge in each State: A letter to each Grand Lodge Secretary has been sent requesting certain military information be included on every application for degrees submitted and that those already in the system be updated to include such information. This cannot be done by letter

alone. Sojourners in each State should communicate with their Grand Lodges and brief them on the importance of such data being available to them as well as to National Sojourners. Brother Roth has identified the basic problems of membership, but needs the full support of our Chapters to ensure that each Grand Lodge and Blue Lodge understands who we are and what we do for the community and freemasons in general.

My deepest respect goes to MW Brother Ed Cohen. His title may give the impression of being “easy,” but let me tell you no one works harder and is more exposed to problems than the Chairman of the Fraternal Liaison Committee for COGMINA. Perhaps the most important position from the perspective of presenting a professional image of National Sojourners to the World: Coordination between the Conference Committees, negotiations to support the agenda of National Sojourners, Inc. and these committees, administrative arrangements and support for the National Line while in attendance and resolving complaints to everyone’s satisfaction is just a small glimpse of his responsibilities. And yet he makes it seem as though it was just in a days work. I can say unequivocally that without him our portion of the conference would be a disasterous. It is a pleasure and honor to not only know these two Brothers but to be associated with them.

### **NATIONAL THIRD VICE PRESIDENT, Edward W. Nolte**

In my first Annual Report for the National Line, I would like to thank my Brother National Sojourners, who unanimously elected me to the position of National Third Vice President. I am humbled by your confidence in me, and I pledge to do my best to further the interests of National Sojourners, and with your help, to ensure it has a bright future.

My tours as National Commander of Heroes of ’76, Chairman of the Committee of 33, Chairman of the Chapter Revitalization and Chartering Committee, Deputy Chairman of the Bridge of Light Committee, and being a member of the Americanism, Education and Training, Incentives and Awards, and Heroes Manual Committees have helped familiarize me with many aspects of what the Order is and does.

The 2014-2015 National Sojourner year began with the Annual National Convention (ANC) in Austin, Texas, on 16-21 June 2014, where I was elected to the National Line. Key travel directly relating to National Sojourners business during the year included the following:

- National Line and Trustees Executive Committee meeting in San Antonio, Texas, on **9-12 October 2014**
- Mid-Winter Meeting in San Diego, California on **13-17 January 2015**
- Conference of Grand Masters in Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada, on **14-17 February 2015**
- Annual National Convention in Omaha, Nebraska on **1-6 June 2015**.

In addition, I represented National Sojourners, Incorporated, at the following meetings:

- Royal Order of Scotland in Minneapolis, Minnesota, in **August 2014**
- General Grand Chapter and General Grand Council International Triennial for Royal Arch Masons and Royal and Select Masters in Buffalo, New York, in **September 2014**
- Grand Commandery of Knights Templar of Iowa in **September 2014**
- North Central York Rite Department Conference in Sioux Falls, South Dakota, in **October 2014**
- Grand Lodge A.F. & A.M. of Nebraska in **February 2015**

Also, I represented National Sojourners at meetings of the following organizations:

- Albert Pike Lodge

- Allied Masonic Degrees
- Holy Royal Arch Knight Templar Priests
- Knights of the York Cross of Honor
- Master of Renaissance Lodge #334
- Red Cross of Constantine
- Omaha Valley Scottish Rite
- Tangier Shrine
- York Rite Chapter, Council, and Commandery
- York Rite College

Among the highlights of the year were delivering the Toast to the Flag to nearly 7,000 people at the Shrine Circus in Omaha, Nebraska, giving Historic Flag presentations to various groups, and delivering a Toast to the Flag and presenting JROTC medals at Northeast High School in Lincoln, Nebraska. In addition, each of these groups contributed an Advertisement in our Annual National Convention Souvenir Program Book.

Between these specific events and presentations, most of my activity centered on working with the National Line Officers on various issues of national importance to the Order. Duties during the year included a collection of items and issues as they arose to include the following:

- Facilitated transition of Committee of 33 and Chapter Revitalization and Chartering Committee Chairmanships to Brother Carl Diamond and Brother Randy Geck, respectively in **June through August of 2014**
- Facilitated a conference call in **September 2014** with the Education and Training Committee and the Bridge of Light Committee to ensure progress prior to the mid-Winter Meeting and Annual National Convention
- Presented and obtained approval from the National Line in **October 2014** on several Committee of 33 recommendations made over the last three year at the Executive Committee meeting in San Antonio, Texas
- Developed a Guide for conducting Area Conferences and Encampments and an Area and Regional Representatives Guide that summarized their duties in **November 2014**
- Provided direct input to the National Line on Robert's Rules of Order being a National Regulation-directed requirement for National Sojourners relative to conducting straw polls on membership requirements in **November 2014**
- Helped to edit National Regulations and ensure accuracy and appropriate content in **December 2014**
- Provided inputs to help improve the Mid-Winter Agenda for **January 2015**
- Advised against a proposed National Regulation wording changes that would have excluded Prince Hall Masons of Nebraska from being National Sojourners, thus saving at least three of our current active members in **January 2015**
- Provided input for our new National Sojourners banners and our Youth Leadership presentation and delivered a portion of the briefing at the Conference of Grand Masters in **February 2015**
- Addressed topic of National Sojourners, Inc., requirement for U.S. citizens only among our membership to offset some more liberal interpretations facilitating foreign nationals to join our Chapters in **March 2015**
- Personally invited 24 living Past Grand Masters, all members of Omaha Chapter #19, to attend the Annual National Convention in **March 2015**

- Wrote an article for THE SOJOURNER on one of the Five Points of Fellowship—Cheek to Cheek or Mouth to Ear in **March 2015**
- Provided recommendations on the cover design for the 2015 ANC Souvenir Program Book in **March and April 2015**
- Developed, coordinated, and managed 22 Program Ads for the Souvenir Program Book from Albert Pike Lodge, Allied Masonic Degrees, City of Omaha, Florence Chapter of Royal Arch Masons, Grand Lodge of Nebraska, the Grand Master of Nebraska, Grand York Rite of Nebraska, Holy Royal Arch Knight Templar Priests, Knights of the York Cross of Honor, Mannheim Steamroller, Mount Calvary Commandery of Knights Templar, National Line (Part of N3VP responsibilities), Omaha Council of Royal and Select Masters, Papillion Lodge, Plattsmouth Lodge, Personal Ad, Red Cross of Constantine, Scottish Rite, Sovereign Grand Inspector General of Scottish Rite, Tangier Shrine, and York Rite College in **March and April 2015**. In every case, the Nebraska Brethren demonstrated Masonic Unity and their total support for National Sojourners.
- Ensured proper recognition, congratulations, and thanks for our National President Merlen Howe and his Lady Judy by procuring and arranging gifts in honor of their hard work for National Sojourners (Part of N3VP responsibilities) in **April 2015**
- Worked with the Rocky Mountain Area Representative on issues with Pike's Peak Chapter to transition from a Chapter to a Club, vice going In-Memoriam, in **19 April 2015**
- Installed as President of the Convention of Anointed High Priests in the Holy Order of High Priesthood Degree in Nebraska on **23 April 2015**
- Installed as President of the Thrice Illustrious Master Degree on **23 April 2015**
- Installed as Grand Commander of Knights Templar of Nebraska on **25 April 2015**
- Performed as Master of Ceremonies for the Bennington Banquet on **3 June 2015**
- Performed as Installing Officer for the National Heroes of '76 at the Bennington Banquet on **3 June 2015**
- Developed script, assigned parts, organized setup, directed ceremony, and performed as Worshipful Master at the first Colonial Ladies at the Table performed at the National level to demonstrate the capability to all Chapter members present to facilitate Chapter activities and improve membership on **4 June 2015**
- Presented a historic flag presentation at the Colonial Ladies at the Table Ceremony on **4 June 2015**
- Conducted training for Chapter Officers on their duties and responsibilities with emphasis on leadership, membership, programs, activities, and outreach on **4 April 2015**
- Performed N3VP duties for the National Line, Past National Presidents, and ladies at the Ankle Breaker Ceremony prior to the President's Banquet on **5 June 2015**

It is a pleasure working with the professional grade of officers and leaders in the National Line. I have thoroughly enjoyed my year and look forward to the Annual National Convention in Omaha, Nebraska, and the challenges of the 2015-2016 National Sojourner year. I look forward to supporting and serving with National President James Higdon.

### **NATIONAL SECRETARY/TREASURER, William R. Sanner**

I have been in this position for a little over a year now. I will say it has been a challenging and educational period but there is still much to learn. The curve ball this year was the relocation from Collingwood to Cluny Court. Many thanks to the volunteers from the National Officers to the Chapter

members that pitched in and made it happen. Brother Harry Sanders gave us a great foundation with the Relocation Plan he had developed and he was around to provide guidance and suggestions all along the way that were invaluable. The additional challenge of housing the museum pieces from Collingwood within our new facility is being coordinated under the Spirit of America Education Foundation moving the items from one 501c3 organization to another. The availability of these items enhances our ability to promote the historical theme of Americanism and Patriotism.

Fiscally, we are ten months through our budget year and our Budget to Income comparison shows expenses thus far as \$176,419.08 and income thus far as \$203,407.65. Our major segment of income is the MIP dividend which we received in April.

We are making every effort to make THE SOJOURNER as attractive and informational as possible. As a result of our recent move in order to be able to pay our rent we are publishing every other issue of THE SOJOURNER on the Web only. Those who have opted to receive it by email will continue to receive it that way. In addition to Chapter and Camp News we encourage our members to submit articles they have written that will be of interest to our members that relate to National Sojourners but can include other activities of interest to the Craft as a whole. An example being where a Sojourner is involved in a Grand Lodge or Appendant Body Office or activity that would be informational to the brotherhood.

Again this year, the trend of declining submissions by chapters of articles for publication in the SOJOURNER continued. The same chapters submit the same type of article issue after issue. From the Chapter meeting minutes and Chapter newsletters I know there are activities that could be shared that aren't.

Membership is an area of great interest to me as I generate a weekly status report tracking the changes in our member's status. Total number of MIPs has increased to 19,248. Our dues paying members have decreased due to a combination of conversions to MIPs, deaths and 119 NPD drops leaving us at 1,071 prior to this meeting. Our living members have dropped some 650 since 2010 and as of May 12 we had 7676 living members but according to the Annual Reports only 64 of them are under the age of 40. Given all that, over the past 5 years, considering all categories of membership we have grown in total members by just over 600. Brothers, we need to do some recruiting if we are to maintain the momentum we want to project in our efforts to promote Americanism and Patriotism and to educate our youth on those ideals.

This year we were able to Charter High Country #553. Ben Franklin #15 merged with Valley Forge #444. The National President has approved the formation of a new Club in Montana sponsored by Cheyenne Chapter #5, which is working to become a Chapter. Unfortunately, Dupont #78, Monterey Bay #136, Albert Youndt #511, and Ouachita #528 have become In-Memoriam Chapters.

All chapters are encouraged to appoint an Assistant Secretary to avoid confusion if something were to happen to your secretary. Remember we at National will always be happy to work with you to overcome any problems that arise.

ROTC units continue to increase; however, many chapters who receive a request from the school or forwarded from National do not let the school know that they will sponsor the award resulting in more emails from worried schools.

This year 310 members laid down their working tools. This included Brother Charles E. McNoldy, Past National President, Brother Donald L. Shaw, Legion of Honor recipient and Past National President, and Brother Richard D. Sutton, Past Commander.

At times the National Headquarters runs in spite of me, thanks to the professional and knowledgeable staff we are blessed to have in place. I could not do my job without them. It is my firm belief that the occupant of the National Secretary/Treasurers position is successful in great measure

due to the gargantuan efforts of two Camp Followers, Mrs. Janine Kovack and Ms. Heather McGraw. Their historical knowledge, understanding of the operations of National Sojourners, Inc. and untiring commitment provide for the successful continuity of high quality service to the members of our organization. During the move they both committed many hours and weekends to effort to ensure the move was successful.

### **NATIONAL HISTORIAN, S. Woodruff Bentley, Sr.**

Greetings Fellow Sojourners. Thank you for allowing me the privilege of serving as your National Historian for 2011 to 2015. I look forward to serving you for two more years. I have already learned a great deal and look forward to learning more and sharing more information about our great organization with you.

I see my role in three areas: First is to summarize and report the annual activities of our order so that our members can better understand the challenges that the leaders of our order face and how they are managing our affairs and building our future. Second is to research our past and bring to you interesting information that will help you better understand our past and the many programs and activities that have gone on of which you may not be aware. Third is to give you an in depth analysis of current issues that affect our organization, trying to put it in context with our history and values. In all of this, my goal is to give you a deeper and more comprehensive understanding of our order. While I have achieved some success, I must admit that I am finding this a difficult challenge.

There are two ways that I provide you with this information. One is through articles in our Sojourner Magazine and the other is through our Sojourner Web Site. With the assistance of our great webmasters, there is now a "Historian's Corner" on the Web Site. In this space, I am placing articles based on my research, including all of those that appear in the magazine.

The most important is the "Summary of Sojourner History." The original parts of this were written by others, but what I am doing is adding paragraphs on interesting historical items as I do research and find them. This column will continue to grow as I add more items in the future. Of particular importance is that it will add items on more recent years since the publication of "The First Fifty Years of National Sojourners."

The first two issues of the 2014 Sojourner Magazine contained an essay on our membership criteria issue which has been a matter brought before at least three conventions. I hope that the explanation of the thoughts on all sides of the issue was helpful. I did receive some positive comments from members which I appreciated. I am working on other issues including our new 501c (3) Foundation and a report on the loss of our Collingwood Library and Museum on Americanism.

There is also an index of all known publications relating to National Sojourners. Most were limited print editions and are difficult to find. If any Sojourner has copies of these that they would like to contribute to our Sojourner library for other current and future Sojourners to read, they are invited to send them to me. I will then make them available to members on loan for them to read.

I have been unsuccessful in one area that I hoped to have success. Sadly, I have had no responses to my request for member's assistance. This was to create in the National Historian's Corner on our web site, a place for local chapter and Heroes camp histories. I am aware that some of you already have these, but I would encourage all chapters and camps to have a member prepare a history and send it to me electronically. While our National Headquarters has a file on each chapter, it will not contain the significant detailed information about the chapter and camps history and activities. I would also like to include information about the chapter and camp names. This is

especially true for those named for individuals. It would be fascinating to have available for all a brief biography of those individuals so honored or the explanation of place or other names.

I am always available to talk to anyone about our history and will research an issue of interest to a member. Anyone who wishes to contact me for further information or to provide assistance can contact me on email at [ciddad@aol.com](mailto:ciddad@aol.com) or by telephone at 703-281-7489. My mailing address is 9901 Carrhill Court, Vienna, VA 22181.

### **NATIONAL PHOTOGRAPHER, William D. Means**

The Mid-Winter conference in San Diego provided the photographer and fiancé the opportunity to enjoy AMTRAK travel from Washington to Chicago to Los Angeles to San Diego. Three and a half days each way with a Superliner Bedroom with private bath. From Washington to Chicago, the Capitol Limited had one overnight. From Chicago to Los Angeles, the Southwest Chief had two overnights. Meals were superb and were included in the cost of the accommodation. On the return trip from San Diego to Los Angeles, we were held for nearly three hours just outside San Clemente as someone had been hit by the train and was deceased. There had been three other suspected suicides at that site during the prior 30 days. It apparently takes a while on Sunday for a coroner to arrive. Through creative work by AMTRAK customer service, we made our connection to the Southwest Chief despite the delay at San Clemente. The rail ticket (coach) is discounted for seniors, but the accommodations are not. It was a great adventure and avoided winter driving cross country.

At the Mid-Winter meeting, there was a lot of committee work and team building accomplished in a casual, relaxed environment. Despite being among the walking wounded or chair-bound wounded, Brother Capt James F Benson, USMC Ret'd and Lady Carol and their merry band of hard workers deserve credit for jobs well done; thank you. Over the three days of the days of business and social activities, there were 322 images added to the photographer's web site. The photographer's cap, a Spotted Tranquility crew cap, that mysteriously disappeared in Austin at the 94<sup>th</sup> National Convention did not re-appear; hope springs eternal.

The Federal Area Conference and Encampment at Fort Collingwood was cancelled due to the impending foreclosure by the bank of the Collingwood property. It has been reported and published locally that Collingwood has since been sold by the foreclosing bank.

Taken during the 94<sup>th</sup> National Convention in Austin, Texas in 2014, 646 images were added to the photographer's web site. Usually, the photographer has been able to capture images of most meeting and of each couple at the Bennington or President banquets. In Austin, the photographer's flash died unexpectedly. A new one was obtained from Amazon with expedited delivery; apologies to those whose photo ops were missed.

On December 29, 2013, two feet of water was discovered in the basement of the photographer's dwelling in Alexandria. The loss was significant including the furnace, water heater, washer, drier, nine computers, four printers, and other property stored on the floor or on low shelves in the basement. Early remediation efforts precluded the photographer from attending the mid-winter meeting in Orlando despite pre-registration. There was both water damage and mold damage (throughout the dwelling) resulting in approximately 120 cubic yards (4 roll on dumpsters) of debris being hauled to the land fill. The last usable effects desired by the photographer were removed from the property and re-development commenced officially in April 2015.

During the past two years, the internet service provider that hosts photographer's site moved to consolidate their servers formerly located in multiple countries to their new headquarters in

Estonia. There were frequent and seemingly random disruptions in the availability of images as the servers were transitioned; the mysterious disappearance of images continues to cause concern. Sojourner Brethren, families, and friends are not making much use of the photographer's web site.

Within the Federal Area, the photographer attended meetings of Fredericksburg #545, Quantico #44, as well as Washington #3.

The photographer expects to arrive in Omaha on May 31 by car with the usual cameras, computers, clothes, etc. This year, there will also be two industrial halogen flood lights to put light on the subjects (love that pun) for a group picture of the assembled conferees.

The photographer has taken pictures of National Sojourner events since 2002. He has defrayed all costs associated with the photographer's web site as well as additional travel and lodging costs associated with transporting cameras and equipment to National Conventions, Mid-Winter Meetings, and other Sojourner events since 2006. From 2002 to 2005, the National Secretary / Treasurer paid all costs for multiple rolls of photographic film, development, printing, distribution of prints, and batteries.

Over the period from 2006 to the present, the photographer has taken 6047 images at National Conventions and 3469 images at Mid-Winter meetings for a total of 9516 National Sojourners national meeting images.

Number of images captured by National Sojourners event

Calendar Year	National Convention	Mid-Winter Meeting	Federal Area Conference	Other Photo Opportunities	Image Count
2015	*	322	Cancelled		
2014	749	**	108		
2013	646	144			
2012	649	***			
2011	869	344	92	NP Visits	76
2010	797	494		NP visits #3	41
2009	****	488			
2008	606	364	99	OD # 364	22
2007	976	384			
2006	755	729		Nat Cdr&364	58
2002-2005	Film	Film			

NOTES:

- \* Scheduled – 31 May through 6 June 2015
- \*\* Not able to attend – 2013 Flooded basement at home in Alexandria VA.
- \*\*\* Not able to attend
- \*\*\*\* Disability leading to Hip Replacement

**NATIONAL COMMANDER, John J. Brown**

I have looked forward to this Sojourner year for some time and before I knew it, it was over.

Thank you to all for your kindness and courtesies extended to me as your National Commander. Another thank you goes to all those who assisted in the support of the SEM Fund and the Spirit of America Fund.

My theme was Service to God, Country and Corps. I based my Sojourner Magazine messages on those points and hope that the readers enjoyed the articles.

On June 20, 2014, I had the privilege to greet and escort Major General Robles to the National President's Banquet.

After returning to Hawai'i, I attended the Red Cross of Constantine Saint John's Banquet on June 27th, which honored the Masters of the Masonic Lodges on O'ahu. I was honored to lead the Pledge of Allegiance and present the Sojourner's Toast to the Flag.

On July 4<sup>th</sup>, I marched in the Kailua parade with three other Heroes, in formal Colonial uniform, as the Color Guard for the Masonic bodies in Hawai'i. While halted, I presented the Toast to the Flag for the surrounding spectators.

On July 9<sup>th</sup>, I was the guest speaker for the joint meeting of the Hawai'i Sojourners chapters and attended the Samuel Adams Camp Bivouac on July 30<sup>th</sup>.

On August 2<sup>nd</sup>, Kathy and I attended the 69<sup>th</sup> anniversary commemorating the end of WWII on the USS Missouri at Pearl Harbor.

I attended the memorial service for our Regional Representative, Most Worshipful Brother Bruce Bonnell on the 3<sup>rd</sup> of August.

Pearl Harbor Lodge received the Grand Master of Hawai'i for his official visit on August 11<sup>th</sup>. I was in attendance and presented the Sojourner's Toast to the Flag. On August 13<sup>th</sup>, I attended the joint meeting of the Hawai'i chapters for the Bridge of Light. The Grand Master of Hawai'i was our guest speaker.

I went to Camp Pendleton, California on September 5<sup>th</sup> and participated in the SOCAL Conference and Encampment and returned to Hawai'i on September 7th.

On September 10<sup>th</sup>, I attended the joint meeting of the Hawai'i Sojourner chapters.

I participated in the Grand Lodge of Hawaii Constitutional Observance Day on September 13<sup>th</sup> at the Bowfin Museum on the Pearl Harbor Naval Base. I was a member of a color guard with three other Heroes and presented the Sojourner's Toast to the Flag.

During September, I presented the Sojourner Toast to the Flag to the Windward York Rite Bodies on the 12<sup>th</sup>, at the Aloha Shriners Legion of Honor Annual Steak Fry on the 21<sup>st</sup> and at a York Rite Past Master's Degree on the 25<sup>th</sup>.

On the 1<sup>st</sup> of October, I flew to Seattle for the Pacific Northwest Conference and Encampment at Pacific Beach Resort. From Seattle, I went to EXCOM in San Antonio on October 7<sup>th</sup> and returned to Hawaii on the 12<sup>th</sup>.

On October 29<sup>th</sup>, I attended the Kalakaua Camp Bivouac. The new Hero was the Grand Marshall of the Grand Lodge of Hawaii, a retired Navy Chief Petty Officer.

From 5-9 November, I attended the Mid-Atlantic Conference and Encampment in Fayetteville, NC with my favorite Den Mother and Camp Follower, my wife, Kathy. The Camp Followers added eight new members to their ranks.

On the 12<sup>th</sup> of November, I attended the joint meeting of the Hawaii Sojourner chapters. I participated in a Lodge of Military Tribute on November 17<sup>th</sup> sponsored by Pearl Harbor Masonic Lodge at the Makiki Masonic Temple.

The National President, Merlen Howe and his wife, Judy, visited Hawaii in December. On the 8<sup>th</sup> of December, Brother Roy Ota, Past National Commander, with his wife, Carol, hosted a dinner for Brother Merlen, Judy, Kathy and me. Mahalo Nui Loa Roy and Carol.

On the 9<sup>th</sup> of December, I attended the Hawaii Encampment with our National President, Brother Merlen Howe. Our new Hero was an active duty Marine Master Gunnery Sergeant. On December 10<sup>th</sup>, Kathy and I attended a Bennington Banquet with Brother Merlen and Judy at the Hale

Koa Hotel. Kathy served as Den Mother and the Camp Followers delighted us with an excellent degree.

On January 9<sup>th</sup>, in Colonial uniform, I attended the Windward York Rite 2015 Installation of Officers and lead the Pledge of Allegiance and gave the Toast to the Flag.

From 13-16 January, Kathy and I attended the Mid-Year Meeting in San Diego, CA. It was my pleasure to give a \$3000 check to the SEM FUND and \$500 to the Spirit of America Fund. The SEM FUND check was matched by an anonymous Hero.

I attended the Red Cross of Constantine Installation of Officers on January 24<sup>th</sup> and lead the Pledge of Allegiance and gave the Sojourner's Toast of the Flag.

On February 11<sup>th</sup>, I attended the joint meeting of the Hawaii Sojourner chapters. The program featured Travis Bowman, who performed "The Hercules of the Revolution" at the Annual Convention in Burlington, VT.

From 21-24 February, I attended the Camel Corps in Laughlin, NV.

On the 26<sup>th</sup> of February, I attended the Annual Communication of the Grand York Rite of Hawaii and presented the Toast to the Flag at the opening ceremony.

On the 11<sup>th</sup> of March, I attended the joint meeting of the Hawaii Sojourner chapters.

From 12-16 March, I attended the Florida Area Conference and Encampment in Jacksonville. The Grand Secretary of the Grand Lodge of Florida is our new Hero.

In April, I attended the joint meeting of the Hawaii Chapters on the 8<sup>th</sup> where the Grand Master of Freemasons in Hawaii spoke. On the 11<sup>th</sup>, I presented the Sojourner's Toast to the Flag at the meeting of the O'ahu Royal Arch Masons. I attended a bivouac for Liholiho Kai Moi Camp on the 29<sup>th</sup>.

On the 13<sup>th</sup> of May, I attended the joint meeting of the Hawaii Chapters. On the 14<sup>th</sup>, I presented awards at Kalaheo High School JROTC banquet at Marine Corps Base Hawaii.

On May 31<sup>st</sup>, Kathy and I left Hawaii for the Annual Convention in Omaha, NE.

On the 3<sup>rd</sup> of June, I presided over the National Encampment.

Thank you for the honor to serve as your National Commander.

### **NATIONAL TRUSTEES, Harry E. Sanders, Jr., Chairman**

Your National Trustees have completed another busy year meeting eight times and directing four work parties at Collingwood. In addition to the four formal meetings held during the past Sojourner Year (94<sup>th</sup> ANC, Post-94<sup>th</sup> ANC, National ExCom, and MWM), four phone conferences were held to specifically address the relocation of our National Headquarters. In addition, the Chairman made multiple trips throughout the year to conduct business at the National Office and manage work parties related to both the continuing inventory of artifacts and relocation preparations. The Chairman also represented the National Trustees at the Conference of Grand Masters in North America (COGMINA) as a part of the National Sojourners contingent.

At the Post 94<sup>th</sup> ANC meeting we welcomed Bro Keye E. Perry, Sr. (PNP) to our ranks. Later in the year, Bro William G. L. Turner (PNP/PNC) was also welcomed after being appointed by the National President to fulfill the remaining term of MW Bro Joseph A. Baker (PNP) who had resigned. The following Trustees were elected to provide leadership for 2014-2015: National Trustee Chairman – Bro Harry E. Sanders, Jr. (PNP); NASOCOCO Board of Directors Chairman – Bro Andrew J. McVeigh III (PNP); and Spirit of America Education Foundation (SAEF) Board of Directors Chairman – Bro E. Thomas Kuhn. Annual reports for NASOCOCO and the SAEF are provided separately and are not a part of this submission.

Salient accomplishments over the past year include:

**1. NATIONAL OFFICE RELOCATION:** By now you are aware that our National Headquarters was relocated from Collingwood to a commercial facility less than 15 miles away in Springfield, VA on April 1<sup>st</sup> and the dream of a permanent National Home for our Order remains just that! The silver lining in the entire process is that Annual National Convention delegates had the foresight nearly 38 years ago not to accept liability for the Collingwood property until such time as it was free and clear of all mortgages and perpetual operation and maintenance was endowed. As a consequence, National Sojourners has remained simply a tenant on the property and incurring NO liability for the failure of the Collingwood Library & Foundation on Americanism (CLMA) to meet its financial obligations. The National Trustees have monitored the financial progress of CLMA since the property was acquired and became increasingly concerned about its status as a tenant in early 2011 when it became apparent that CLMA was struggling with the income side of its balance sheet. In a prudent reaction to this growing threat, the National President chartered an ad hoc team in 2012 to develop a Short Term Plan for relocation of the national office to an interim location in the Washington Metropolitan Area if required. Following development of the Short Term Plan, the 2013-2014 National Trustees evolved the following strategy: (1) maintain the office at Collingwood as long as possible; (2) prepare for a possible move by insuring that all Heroes of '76 museum artifacts were properly accounted for and inventoried; and (3) monitor the CLMA situation closely. The National Trustees balanced the desire to remain at Collingwood as long as possible with taking action to relocate recognizing that sufficient lead would be needed to find a suitable alternate facility that would best meet our minimum requirements and pocketbook. Based on CLMA's status as reported at the recent 2015 MWM and the fact that they were out of cash, the National Trustees instructed the National Secretary-Treasurer to explore potential locations and obtain quotes. Following, extensive work and a series of four conference call meetings, the National Sojourners selected and approved a 5-year lease for the Cluny Court location in Springfield, VA. As it turns out our timing was spot on, as CLMA subsequently announced that it expects the sale of the property to be complete on about May 7<sup>th</sup>. Transition and relocation to the new facility was completed during the week of 30 March without incident and with minimum impact on member and chapter service as a direct result of the professionalism, dedication and hard work of our National Headquarters staff—Bro William Sanner (NST), Janine Kovack, and Heather McGraw. It is important to note that the relocation has doubled our monthly rent from \$1,087 to \$2,135 for the first year. The only discretionary expenditure in our annual budget which we can adjust to offset this increase is the cost for printing 6 issues of *The Sojourner* magazine. Accordingly, the National Trustees plan to publish the (2014-2015) May-June issue, and every other issue in the follow-on Sojourner years through 2019-2020 as on-line website only issues (see item 2 below).

**2. DISTRIBUTION OF THE SOJOURNER MAGAZINE:** In order to accommodate the increase in rent as a result of the relocation of our National Headquarters and balance our annual operating budget, it will be necessary to publish some issues of *The Sojourner* magazine exclusively as on-line website issues. Accordingly, the tentative publication plan through the 2019-2020 Sojourner year is as follows:

YEAR	ON-LINE WEBSITE ONLY ISSUES	PRINT & MAIL ISSUES
2014-2015	1	5
2015-2016	3	3
2016-2017	3	3
2017-2018	3	3
2018-2019	3	3

2019-2020	3	3
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3. **NATIONAL SOJOURNER ARTIFACTS:** During three separate inventory sessions over an 8-month period, a team of Sojourner volunteers under the direct supervision of the National Trustees inventoried, photographed, barcoded, and cataloged 188 museum artifacts including 136 items in the Heroes Room at Collinwood and 52 items/collections representing the complete contents of the Collingwood Library & Museum on Americanism which were conveyed to the National Sojourners on 18 March 2015. These artifacts have been moved to our new Cluny Court Headquarters location where space has been allocated for their display. Although a final decision regarding management of all our museum holdings will be made at the upcoming ANC, it is assumed that the Spirit of America Education Foundation will assume that responsibility.

4. **WEBSITE:** Action was taken to support a major upgrade of the website by providing supplemental funds in the amount of \$1,000 for the effort which is now on contract and being managed by the IT Committee. This “next generation” upgrade of the website will feature enhanced security; provide new back-up, archive and configuration control features; permit posting of all Microsoft file formats; and support easier posting of changes and updating by the webmaster team.

5. **CONVENTION DISPLAYS:** New professional lightweight portable convention display pop-up banners were funded, designed, and procured. The two new pop-up banners were unveiled at the past MWM in San Diego, CA and used for the first time as part of our booth display at the Conference of Grand Masters in North America.

6. **FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT:** A key focus of the National Trustees is to insure the financial well-being of the Order. In that regard, the Trustees are pleased to report that National Sojourners, Inc. is solvent and year-to-date expenditures remain generally in line with the budget approved at our 2014 ANC in Austin, TX. Additionally, our investments continue to perform well. Moving forward, however, we face new financial challenges resulting from our recent National Headquarters relocation to a commercial office building. That said, it is important to note that every Sojourner can play a key role in maintaining our continued financial viability by:

(1) First, **paying annual dues in a timely fashion** if you are not a MIP!

(2) Second, “catching the membership spirit” and understanding that every Sojourner is an ex officio member of their chapter’s membership committee with a responsibility to **find and make new members!**

(3) Third, supporting the Souvenir Ad Book by **buying and selling an ad!** Note that Souvenir Ad Book sales are a key component of our annual income for operations!

(4) Fourth, **participating in national meetings and bringing a first timer or 2.** This ensures that we do not incur convention contract penalties that erode our Souvenir Ad Book profits.

(5) Fifth and finally, by making a **tax deductible donation to the Thompson Fund** (make your check payable to National Sojourners, Inc., write “Thompson Fund HQ Move” on the memo line, and mail your check to our National Headquarters). Your gifts will be used to offset the cost of our recent National Headquarters relocation and every gift will be acknowledged by return letter.

7. **FAMB BUDGET:** A small increase in the budget for **F**raternal Liaison, **A**mericanism, **M**embership, and **B**ridge of Light (FAMB) activities in support of the annual Fraternal Liaison Breakfast held at the Conference of Grand Masters in North America in Vancouver, BC, was approved to cover essential audio-video support.

8. **HEADQUARTERS PERSONNEL POLICIES:** At the MWM, the National Trustees approved and published a new statement of National Headquarters Personnel Policies thereby

concluding several months of review work. The review was initiated by request of the National Secretary-Treasurer when he discovered upon assumption of his new office that portions of the previous polices issued in 1959 were outdated.

It is my particular privilege as Chairman to commend and thank those who have served and labored over the past Sojourner year as your National Trustees for their faithful, dedicated, and selfless service.

### **AMERICANISM COMMITTEE, Paul W. Pennybacker, Chairman**

The National Americanism Committee is pleased to report another productive year --- some of the more salient accomplishments are summarized below:

#### **National Convention**

The National Convention meeting of the Americanism Committee held in Austin, TX was well attended and most productive.

-Opening Prayer by 3<sup>rd</sup> VP Brother Ron Sortino

-All present saluted flag of our country

-The 2013-2014 Committee chairman, Brother Boog Powell, gave brief on the seven points of interest:

1. Web site to be completed still work in progress
2. VF trifold is on the web page in color.
3. Essay is out and on web page. All Submissions due not later than 15JAN2015 with coversheet. Last year 96 submitted but only 58 were passed on due to problems with other submissions. Chapters should review all submissions prior to forwarding on to National. Check with COL Dave Burke for exact criteria the essays are judged by.
4. Americanism reports due to committee chairman (Paul Pennybacker) NLT 31JULY15 note the reports are for year past not current year.
5. ROTC medal Brother Bill Hayes: had out medals personally, preferable in uniform. Request to do "toast to the flag". Need to send medals from HQ (when request sent from school directly to HQ) to Regional Rep vice straight to the school or a chapter. Get requests for medals submitted timely. Chapters initiate a "Daddy or Uncle" program who buys the medals for the presentations. A card etc. should accompany the medal so student knows who provided the medal. If chapter is short of funding to purchase the ROTC medals there are two sources for help (1) HQ which uses MIP funds from closed chapters and (2) Americanism committee funds. Request National Secretary put article in Sojourner magazine about how struggling chapters can get help with ROTC.
6. Brother Ron Stites reported that website will have Americanism Education programs there are twelve (12) programs – twelve (12) names received some response some good and some bad. We need more program designers so far three (3) brethren have signed up. Some suggestions are programs on color guard / when duty done / etc. Goal is to get programs out on web for chapters to use. Brother Henry Kuhn BOL committee chairman turned in two programs and will put in more.
7. Brother Harry Sanders presented a brief on our new "Spirit of America" 501c3 IRS tax exemption status as a charity and how we will obtain donations from individuals and corporations such as Walmart. Also these are available for purchase "Freedom Shares" at \$50.00 each for FFVF. There will be a "certification" form/paper that we can give to the donators good for SAEF, YLC and ROTC medals. You can designate where donations go, this

items it kept by the chapters vice HQ. All donation forms should be kept by donator and chapter for minimum of 5 years.

Meeting closed by the chairman Boog Powell.

### **Annual Americanism Breakfast**

The Americanism breakfast was well attended and our guest speaker was “Benjamin Franklin”. Brother ENS Irv Dietscher presented “Benjamin Franklin” with a briefcase flag”. The winners of the Americanism committee awards were announced and they are: Anthony Natali Plaque: FT. Sam Houston # 17 and the Horton-Tourtillott Award: Brother SSGT Robert L. Mason.

### **Youth Conferences**

On July 17<sup>th</sup>, 2014, 57 students and 12 chaperones arrived at Freedoms Foundation ~ Valley Forge for the 2014 National Sojourners, Inc. Spirit of America Youth Conference. Among the adults attending was Brother Lt Col Ron Sortino our 2<sup>nd</sup> National Vice President and his Lady Barbara; Past National President and Legion of Honor recipient Brother COL Frank Harris and his Lady Terri; Brother LTC William Haynes our FFVF-YLC Subcommittee chairman and myself.

Friday morning started with a conversation with “Mr. Thomas Jefferson and Mr. John Adams”. This was followed by an outstanding “Freedom Summit” student program facilitated by Dr. Bruce Murphy and Dr. Christian Jurlando concerning the U.S. Constitution particularly the first and fourth amendments.

On Saturday, the students presented an outstanding Ceremony of raising the original thirteen Flags and later that morning National Sojourners Ben Franklin Chapter No. 16 conducted an impressive “Building of the Flag” program. In the afternoon we were privileged to hear “The General Address His Troops” the General, of course, being George Washington. Prior to our evening banquet, four of our JROTC and SCOUTS students, in uniform, retired the American flag in a very moving ceremony, presenting it to Brother Lt Col Sortino who in turn presented it to Brother COL Harris. After our Saturday evening banquet, Mr. Dan LeClerc was the guest speaker and his topic was “Leading Significant Lives”. This was followed by Vespers and a Ceremonial “Signing” of the Declaration of Independence with “James Wilson of Pennsylvania”.

On Sunday, after a tour of Philadelphia the students and chaperones departed for home.

The facility, the staff and the programs they presented were beyond expectations. This is one of if not the best Youth Leadership programs for our young adults to attend. We need to continue working hard in the effort to reach our goal of 100 students attending.

I encourage every chapter to help in obtaining this goal by encouraging their local Lodges to sponsor a student. Additionally, now that we officially have our 501c3 tax exempt status, the chapters can start efforts to obtain donations from local business.

I have several copies of the latest FFVF-YLC promotion DVD and will be happy to send a copy to any Area/Regional representative or chapter who wants to use them in their effort to raise money for sponsorships.

We are working with FFVF staff to develop a National Sojourners Spirit of America promotional package that can also be presented to prospective donors and sponsors.

At the conclusion of the conference, 57 young Americans departed for home with renewed excitement and knowledge about what it means to be an American! Typical student feedback included:

- *I would like to thank you for letting me experience this amazing camp that has taught me so much in so little time. I only wish that it could have been longer so I could have learned even more in the time I had here.*

- *I truly do appreciate the opportunity to come to this life changing camp. The atmosphere was something that contributed to the overall enjoyment of this camp, which should be kept for the year to come. Thank you for all you have done for me.*
- *Thank you for this amazing experience that has left me with many new friends and tons of knowledge that I learned through this. This has given me new insight into things that I can do to help my community and school.*
- *I really appreciate this wonderful opportunity to come to the Freedom Foundation of Valley Forge. This was an outstanding experience that I will never forget. I have learned so much and I thank you for that.*
- *Thank you so much for the opportunity to participate at the Freedom Summit. I learned so much that I wish to bring back to support my community, home and school. Thank you again for your sponsorship.*
- *Thank you so much for allowing me the opportunity to participate in this program. I learned so much from the leadership sessions and I cannot wait to apply these skills at my unit back at home. The staff was wonderful, the speakers were excellent and it is amazing to see them so much in character.*

Your National Americanism Committee extends its heartfelt thanks to all who made this year's conference a resounding success including:

- a. All National Sojourner Chapters who supported this year's conference.
- b. All National Sojourners and sponsors who generous donations provided the funds to both pay the tuition and transportation costs associated with conference.
- c. The Freedoms Foundation staff (Jessica, Brian, Dan, Christine) under the direction of Ms. Carolyn Santangelo Director of Educational Programs, whose outstanding effort delivered the best program ever!
- d. The chaperones (Brothers Don Cumbo, Nikki Miller, Jeffery Owens, Audi Strickland, Johnny Suries, Mel Tinklenberg and Mrs. Jan Tinklenberg) that were acknowledged by the staff at Freedoms Foundation as the best they have ever worked with!

#### **Mid Winter Meeting**

Greetings Brethren, the MWM in San Diego enjoyed warm and sunny weather.

Our Thursday afternoon Americanism Committee was well attended with fourteen members, eleven visitors of whom three were the 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>; and 3<sup>rd</sup> National Vice Presidents.

-Youth Leadership Conference Freedom Foundation Valley Forge: our goal is still to reach one hundred students in attendance. This year dates are 16-19 July 2015. Although most of our students come from east of the Mississippi, it was noted that we have at least two in attendance who are from the West of the Mississippi. If a Chapter has been working hard and can't quite come up with the funds for both the tuition and travel for a student, there are scholarships available for the tuition.

-Youth Leadership Conference Military Order of World Wars: a new section of the Chapter Annual Americanism Report has been added for a chapter to identify if they have sponsored a student to attend one of the YLC-MOWW camps and where.

-ROTC/JROTC: Much discussion but the bottom line learned is that the Chapter representative for the ROTC/JROTC programs must be proactive with the various units. Ask them if they want the medal presentations made in military or colonial uniform, it was noted that some of the units like the presentations to be made in colonial uniform. Ask them if you can do the "Toast to the Flag". If they don't know what that is demonstrate it to them. It was noted that the new Chapter Annual Americanism report will have a place to put number of ROTC/JROTC awards issued, number

in person and number mailed along with if done in uniform and if “Toast to the Flag” was presented. Again, for struggling small chapters that have had requests for many medals, the Americanism Committee chairman has some limited resources available to assist.

-Spirit of America 501c3 Foundation: a quick review noted that tax deductible donations may be made in support of YLC-FFVF; YLC-MOWW; ROTC/JROTC Medals. The donation checks MUST be made out to “Spirit of America Education Foundation” noting in the memo area what the donation is geared for. It is recommended that the individual chapters also keep records of such donations. It was reemphasized that to keep the IRS happy and not lose our 501c3, NSI must receive and maintain tracking data of all donations.

-Education and Patriotism Programs: work in progress, looking for more volunteers to develop and submit Patriotic and/or Educational program material.

-Essay Contest: You can expect the results from the 2015 Essay Contest and the 2016 Question (Authorized Cover Sheet) by mid-February.

On Friday morning, we had a “Patriotic Program” and the guest speaker was Ms. Joedy Adams who is the granddaughter of the author of “The American Creed” William Tyler Page. She told the story of her grandfather and how he came to author the American Creed. At the end of her talk, she played a recording of her grandfather reciting “The American Creed” as it should be recited and it brought a chill down the spine of all in attendance. She was then asked to relate some of her memories of being a twelve year old in Hawaii on 7 December 1941. She ended this by saying that the “%\*##%” flew low.

She was presented with a patriotic gift, a Presidential certificate and received a standing ovation. The recording of William Tyler Page reciting the American Creed may be available for you to listen to on NSI web page in the not too distant future.

**Chapter Reports**

Chapter reports for the 2013 – 2014 Sojourner year reflect a productive year with great Americanism work being performed and equally great results. Chapters reported the presentation of over 2,339 ROTC awards; the presentation of 90 Patriot of '76 certificates; and the conduct of numerous Americanism programs. Programs included presentations such as Building the Flag, Historic Flags, and Folding the Flag; providing Color Guards and parade units; and participating in a wide range of local patriotic events.

**Essay Contest**

Our national essay contest received a record 81 qualified entries! With thanks to Bro. Col. David Burke, we again awarded savings bonds of \$2000, \$1000 and \$500 to the 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> place winners as indicated in the table below who wrote an essay addressing the following question:

*What question was asked three times in the first stanza of the Star Spangled Banner?*

<b>PLACE</b>	<b>WINNER</b>	<b>CHAPTER SPONSOR</b>
1 <sup>st</sup> - \$2000 Bond	Kathryn M. Davit	Fort Lewis #89
2 <sup>nd</sup> - \$1000 Bond	Susan E. Chatfield	Quantico #44
3 <sup>rd</sup> - \$500 Bond	Dylan C. Goike	John S. Bersey #316

**Masonic Youth Initiative**

A very important part of our Americanism program is the Youth Leadership Conferences either held at Freedom Foundation Valley Forge or one of the Military Order of World Wars locations. Our goal continues to have at least 100 students attend the Freedom Foundation Valley Forge Youth Leadership Conference held the third weekend in July each year. We are especially pleased when the students attending are from our Masonic Youth organizations such as DeMolay; International Order of Job Daughters and Rainbow girls. Our National Officers address our youth

orientated goals each year at the Conference of Grand Masters.

### **Future Goals & Plans**

Looking ahead, your committee has outlined a number of future goals and initiatives. Some of the more significant items are listed below:

- Spirit of America Youth Conference
  - Increase chapter support for the Youth Conference programs
  - Send at least 100 students to Freedoms Foundation
- ROTC
  - Increase chapter participation in the ROTC Awards program
- Enhance Americanism Committee communication with chapters through improved use of the National Sojourners website resource
- Youth Education Funding:
  - Promote use of our new 501c3 tax exempt status for donations
- Recognition:
  - Develop a recognition program for donors to the Americanism Youth Education Fund

And now we again have the pleasure of beginning anew as we focus on the year ahead! Join with your Americanism Committee and me in making our 2015 – 2016 year an even greater success by:

- Being active --- get involved in your chapter's Americanism activities
- Promoting Americanism at every opportunity
- Proudly displaying the flag of our country
- Supporting our troops
- Talking to a young person about what it means to be an American

### **A Final Thought**

By: General George Washington

“A primary object should be the education of our youth in the science of government. In a republic, what species of knowledge can be equally important? And what duty more pressing than communicating it to those who are to be the future guardians of the liberties of the country?”

### **COMMITTEE OF 33, Carl Diamond, Chairman**

The 2014-15 Sojourner Year has been a slow year for Committee of 33 work. Tasker 2014-3 concerning Area and regional rep is still being looked at. One self-directed task was completed. For the self-directed task the Committee gathered information for the procurement of Colonial Uniforms. The results of the task are posted to the National Sojourners, Incorporated Members Only website.

The Committee is under new leadership and is working to find its way. As always, communication and timely response is key to getting work done. To improve communication, the Committee is investigating better ways to do this by conference calls and online surveys.

Areas the committee will be discussing in the future are:

1. Zone, Area and Regional Representative Program
2. Membership of National Sojourners
3. Composition of the Committee of 33
4. MSM and National Convention
5. Committee 33 Handbook revisions

6. National Regulation 8.1.2 Committee of 33 update

The Committee of 33 would like to thank Br. Ed Nolte for his leadership and guidance over the past several years and wish him success in the National Line.

In the future, anyone who would be interested in becoming a member of the Committee of 33, remember it is an elected position. Active participation is required, computer use mandatory and an interest in the purposes of National Sojourners, Incorporated.

**INCENTIVES AND AWARDS COMMITTEE, Carl J. Diamond**

**INCENTIVES AND AWARDS** Committee strives to maintain a credible and equitable system to express National Sojourners, Inc., appreciation for service to our Order.

The Committee considers your recommendations and evaluates them. Then they are forwarded on to the National President for his recognition of:

- ◆ A specific act or acts with a Presidential Citation
- ◆ Noteworthy performance with an Exceptional Meritorious Achievement Certificate
- ◆ Significant contributions to the National order by any individual or group whether or not directly associated with National Sojourners, Inc., with a Certificate of Appreciation.
- ◆ The Committee appreciates your use of the National Award Recommendation form. We trust it facilitated your submissions. This form and the Awards and Citation pamphlet are on the Web site, Members only, and Reference Library. This year the submission date was extended to a later date due to National Sojourners moving to their new location. This was done to accumulate all the awards that were submitted. There was some confusion, but with many phone calls to National and speaking to Janine, everything finally worked out and **every award submitted** is being processed.

The committee read and viewed 194 awards, of this 94 were for Certificate of Appreciation, 27 for Exceptional Meritorious Achievement, 63 for Presidential Citation.

The Area Reps, Regional Reps. need to do a better job of reviewing the write ups; some were great but the majority of them were less than desirable. Don't just sign something and pass it on. What good are you doing? You as Area, Regional Reps. are demoralizing the awards. There is no reason why the 94 Certificates of Appreciation couldn't have been given at the Chapter level. If we are going to recognize an individual (person) for work they do at the chapter level then keep it at chapter level. When you send them to National a whole year has gone by before you say thank you to them; they may have forgotten what they did or moved away from your chapter thinking no one really cares.

Due to the nature and workings of this Committee, a full report will be given at Omaha Convention. Please join us at the Awards Luncheon on Friday.

**PUBLICATIONS REVIEW BOARD, Armand Cote, Chairman**

It is a sad time when this committee did not receive a single entry for consideration of the Chapter Bulletin / Newsletter for the year 2014. The deadline is December 31<sup>st</sup>. Review National Regulation 9.1.2.

Let's hope that the year 2015, we'll see some results.

Also we agree with Resolution 2015-4 in clarifying the number and type of the awards.

## **MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE, Robert W. Roth, Chairman**

This past year found your committee seeking to have our National Line Officers reach out directly to the Grand Masters, nationwide, on the matter of working with them to locate and identify all Masonic veterans in their Jurisdictions. All this was done in hope of outreach and support to them by NSI. The draft letter which the National Membership Committee approved as to form, knowing that coordination and support would have to be provided to our National Line Officers, was taken under consideration by the National Command line, and remains there at this time. We hope the initiative, which has been staffed as a concept and submitted for the two previous years to the Grand Secretaries of the Jurisdictions in the US, may be acted upon this coming year, and be seen by Grand Lodges as a relevant effort by NSI to support Grand Masters in their Jurisdictions on the important matter of Masonic veteran's affairs.

This has been another interesting year for membership. Brother Sanner has continued his excellent support regarding statistical analysis of our membership. One key message for us from his work this year is that we have managed to grow our ranks with living members over the last ten years by about 600. We currently have 7676 living members, and as we reported last year, most are over 75 years of age. Our total living members numbers are about to drop noticeably, if not severely in the next five to ten years. As a result, NSI may well not be able to staff our National command structure, much less execute programs in almost all of our Chapters. It won't be for lack of raw numbers of living members, but too many will simply be unable, because of infirmity, to do the work. Finding sixty or so new living, qualified members per year from a nation of more than 320 million, having some 19.6 million veterans is just too small a result. And it's not all our collective fault. With a restricted membership, and no really effective way of finding out where Masonic veterans might be, we are left to seek the aid of local Worshipful Masters, whose incentive to push their lodge members into another appendent body is limited at best. Unless a Grand Lodge makes locating Masonic veterans a priority, it's close to a pipe-dream to expect that telling our members to reach out to Blue Lodges will ramp up our numbers significantly. But that's about all we can do right now, so let's get with it and keep working to find new members.

Five Chapters turned in their Charters this year, but we did see High Country 553 form up as a new chapter and get going, and a new, as yet unnamed, Wyoming Chapter is about to set up shop. So we can still find Masonic veterans and some Honorable members who want to be active in new Chapters and that is very good news.

We have much work to do if we are to find those Master Masons who should be members in National Sojourners, make them understand that we are relevant to them and get them to join and be active participants. Let this report help to continue to inform the ongoing debate about National Sojourner's membership composition, its future missions, its ability to be useful to the Freemasonry generally, and more especially to those who are our nation's Veterans and are Master Masons.

## **BRIDGE OF LIGHT COMMITTEE, Henry Kuhn, Chairman**

The findings of the in-depth review of the 99 Chapter Bridge of Light (BOL) Annual Reports received by National Headquarters for the period 1 July 2013-30 June 2014 revealed the following information deemed noteworthy;

- a. The number of Chapter BOL Annual Reports received were 4 fewer than the prior year.
- b. Of the 99 reports received, 33 Chapters reported increased BOL activity over the previous year. A slight improvement.

c. Reports received from 44 Chapters (slightly less than 50%) were noted to be appropriately documented (as specified in Attachment 8, BOL Handbook, dated 22 May 2009) and thus credited with all points claimed. Again, an improvement over the previous year in which only 39 Chapter reports were appropriately documented.

d. In contrast, BOL Reports received from 26 Chapters lacked minimal required documentation with the result that points could not be credited to them and thus losing out on eligibility for the Odie Howell Chapter BOL Award. Members of the BOL Committee have contacted these various Chapters, pointed out this lack of compliance and recommended action to take to improve their reports so that they comply as set forth in the BOL Handbook.

e. 9 Chapters were judged to have qualified for a minimum of 18 points for the 2 year period 1 July 2012-30 June 2014 and thus eligible to be awarded the Odie Howell Chapter BOL Award. This recommendation was forwarded to National Headquarters February 4, 2015. Awards to be presented at the 2015 Annual Convention.

f. Overall, there has been some increase in Chapter BOL activity as well as an improvement in the Chapter BOL Annual Reports prepared and submitted by the Chapters. However, action by the BOL Committee to encourage further overall improvements, as well as an increase in Chapter participation in the BOL Program(s), is to continue unabatedly. This is to include, but not limited to, the following:

1. Every member of the BOL Committee to continue to maintain periodic contact(s) with their assigned Area Reps to assure that they (the Area Rep) maintain contact with their respective Regional Reps and they, in turn, with their assigned Chapters to assist and also assure compliance with current BOL Handbook (dated May 22, 2009). Also to assure that each Chapter has a copy of the current Handbook and, if appropriate, instruct them to obtain a copy on line or from National Headquarters.
2. Chapters which have not already done so, to be encouraged (by their Area/Regional Rep) to appoint a Chapter BOL Chairman and that the appointee is knowledgeable of the various BOL activities.
3. Based on the review of BOL Annual Chapter Reports received from the various Chapters, those Chapters that submitted reports lacking required documentation (as called for in the current BOL Handbook) were identified. This information will be brought to the attention of the President of the concerned Chapters either by a member of the BOL Committee or the assigned Area/Regional Rep, with guidance to improve their BOL Annual Chapter Report.
  1. Forms for planning and organizing the various BOL presentations have been created and furnished to the BOL Committee members to be made available to the Chapters. These forms, when the called for entries are filled out, will set forth all the required information for the preparation and submission of the Chapter BOL Annual Report. Preparation of the Chapter BOL Annual Report should thus be easier and also eliminate problems resulting from furnishing insufficient/incomplete information which often results in loss of points needed to qualify for the Odie Howell Chapter BOL Award.
  2. Members of the BOL Committee will continue to emphasize to their assigned Area Reps that the Committee is there to offer assistance to their respective assigned Chapters in resolving questions and/or problems in presenting BOL programs, increasing participation in BOL programs and in the preparation and submission of the Chapter BOL Annual Report.

g. Last, but not least, the BOL Committee plans action to promote the “Toast to the Flag” presentation by Chapter members when attending Masonic affairs, i.e. lodge meetings, etc. Chapters will be encouraged to have certain members (at least one) memorize the “Toast to the Flag” and with the (prior) approval of Master of the Lodge present it at the opening of the Lodge’s session. Chapters which do not have the available membership nor the capability to conduct the more complex presentations, e.g. Building of the Flag, Service Flags of the U.S., History of the Flag, Color Guards, etc., should find this appealing in that it enables them to become more active in BOL activities in spite of their limitations. The “Toast to the Flag” when properly done, is well received by audiences and places National Sojourners in a very favorable light.

#### **FRATERNAL LIAISON COMMITTEE, Edmund Cohen, Chairman**

The National Sojourners had a significant presence at the 2015 Conference of Grand Masters held in Vancouver, British Columbia. The Monday morning breakfast attracted a capacity crowd of invited Grand Masters and Deputy Grand Masters and heads of Appendant Bodies. National President Merlen Howe, President Elect Jim Higdon, First Vice President Jim Baker, and Second Vice President Ron Sortino each gave presentations that crisply highlighted the role and functions of National Sojourners and explained its various educational and patriotic programs which assist Freemasonry in general and the various Grand Lodges in particular. Comments at the end of the breakfast were uniformly positive with many stating that the briefings were comprehensive, interesting, and informative and program finished promptly on time.

The breakfast guests also were advised about the breakout session later that day on the National Sojourner’s Spirit of America Youth Partnership Initiative which is designed to help grow the next generation of patriotic, civic minded citizens. This session led by Harry Sanders, accompanied by a number of other presenters, was well attended by Conference participants who asked many questions. A number at the meeting indicated an immediate intention to join with us in this important effort while others promised to review the materials and bring this program back to their respective organizations.

#### **NATIONAL RESALE ACTIVITIES BOARD, John C. Mayers, Chairman**

This year has been a busy one and sales are going well. Due to the move we have postponed the restocking of some items so that we did not have to turn around and move them. So some items, particularly some popular sized hats, may be on backorder but we will be catching up soon. The cost of orders can be greatly increased by rush order shipping charges. If we receive rush orders wanting next day or 2nd day delivery we are calling the chapters to see if they want to bear the significant costs. We recommend that the chapters plan ahead and allow for normal delivery. We are actively seeking recommendations for items we may want to add to the inventory that people want so please send us your suggestions. We have considered belt buckles, shirts, and thumb drives with the Sojourner emblem. What are your ideas?

#### **CHAPTER REVITALIZATION & CHARTERING COMMITTEE, Randolph Geck**

The Chapter Revitalization & Chartering Committee (CR&CC) was established to work with the appointed Area and Regional Representatives to evaluate Chapter status, develop methods of assisting struggling Chapters, and to provide guidance and support to all Chapters in the National

Sojourner organization. The Committee has continued the practice of providing Chapter Status Reports by our Regional and Area Representatives to evaluate and report on the health of the Chapters in the order. The Committee Chairman established an informal position of Zone Representative to assist in the production of the Chapter Status Reports. To-date the Committee has received 89 Chapter Reports, with 9 Chapters belonging to the National HQ and thus not reporting, leaving 61 Chapters not evaluated. This year's Master Report shows that we have 8 Weak/Failing Chapters, 24 Fair/Solid, 36 Strong/Good and 16 who were Very Strong/Excellent. This relative percentage has remained consistent over the last 4-5 years showing the evaluation system to be valid. Now the focus should be on helping the struggling Chapters get on strong ground. This Committee will turn its attention on the following at the 2015 Annual Convention: 1) Disband the position of Zone Representatives, as this experiment has not proven effective in managing the reporting process; 2) Solicit positive input from struggling Chapters as to why they may be in that position and Strong/Excellent Chapters as to how they have managed to attain their strength; and 3) illicit input form Chapters who have managed to shift from a weak position to a strong position and why. The main emphasis now will be on lessons learned and best practice sharing, so all Chapters may profit from other's effort.

### **INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY COMMITTEE, David Alderfer, Chairman**

The IT Committee met at the 2014 Annual National Convention in Austin, TX and the 2015 Mid-Winter Meeting in San Diego, CA. Committee members present at one or both were Brothers Dave Alderfer, Wendell Dutt, Jim Benson, Paul McCullough, Bill Means, and Harry Sanders, PNP. Also attending were Brothers James Baker, 3NVP; Bill Sanner, NS/T and Patti Turner, Facebook page Administrator.

We have over 1500 members registered for the Sojourners Only portion of the website.

The webmaster and assistant webmasters continue maintaining the website, keeping it current and adding additional content. The NASOCOCO approved posting the Corporate Operations Manual on the website.

Several National Committees have increased using their web pages; e.g. National Line, Heroes Manual, Americanism, NASOCOCO, Trustees, Committee of 33, Area/Regional Representatives.

The Americanism Committee continues to expand their Sojourner Only web pages to provide a multitude of resources to chapters and members.

The National Sojourner Facebook page continues to provide a source of information to the social media public as well as a forum for Brother Sojourners. The current administrator Patti Turner continues to monitor the page. As part of the ongoing web site enhancements a link from the NSI home page to the Facebook page will be forthcoming. We are also looking at Twitter and other social media as possible future projects.

The IT Committee continues to provide NSI.org 'help' desk at both ANCs and MWMs.

The transition to a new hosting and support contractor for the web site, WebStrategies, will provide an upgrade of the web site Content Management System (CMS) as well as a more security. The fund raising efforts since the ANC in San Antonio have successfully provided the funds necessary to begin the process. Thanks to all who have contributed!

There were minor cyber-attacks on our website Home page in March but did not damage the content. The existing CMS was upgraded to prevent the attacks.

The national HQ moved to its new location with minimal IT issues.

**NATIONAL SOJOURNERS, INC.**

**10 MONTH FINANCIAL REPORT 1 JUL 14 – 30 APRIL 15**

**TRUST FUND:**

NET WORTH (1 July 14)	\$ 3,651,333.93
INCOME:	\$ 49,798.73
INTEREST & DIVIDENDS (April 1 – March 30 MIP Year)	\$ 197,194.40
EXPENSE (MIP Dividend Paid)	\$ 197,194.45
ACCOUNTS PAYABLE	\$ 13,682.20
CASH ASSETS	\$ 94,909.35
INVESTMENTS	\$ 3,553,541.40
NET WORTH (30 APRIL 15)	\$ 3,648,450.75
FUND INCREASE/DECREASE:	\$ -2,883.18

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**LAVON P. LINN FUND:**

NET WORTH (1 July 14)	\$ 113,410.66
INCOME	\$ 0.00
INTEREST	\$ 4,020.99
EXPENSES	\$ 3,957.28
CASH ASSETS	\$ 26,373.53
INVESTMENTS	\$ 86,252.47
NET WORTH (30 APRIL 15)	\$ 112,626.00
FUND INCREASE/DECREASE	\$ -784.66

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**FAMB FUND:**

NET WORTH (1 July 14)	\$ 68,223.53
INCOME	\$ 5,884.69
INTEREST & DIVIDENDS	\$ 1,916.23
EXPENSES	\$ 0.00
CASH ASSETS	\$ 18,083.75
ACCOUNTS PAYABLE	\$ 12,642.57
INVESTMENTS	\$ 52,755.00
NET WORTH (30 APRIL 15)	\$ 70,838.75
FUND INCREASE	\$ 2,615.22

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**SOJOURNERS ENDOWMENT MEMORIAL FUND**

NET WORTH (1 July 14)	\$ 991,790.27
INCOME	\$ 11,728.90
INTEREST & DIVIDENDS	\$ 37,017.01*
ACCOUNT PAYABLE	\$ 0.00
EXPENSES	\$ 44,146.27
CASH ASSETS	\$ 65,714.21
INVESTMENTS	\$ 945,952.91
NET WORTH (30 APRIL 15)	\$ 1,011,667.12
FUND INCREASE	\$ 19,876.85

\* + Int & Div will be transferred to Accounts Payable on 1 July 15

**HOUGHTON MEMORIAL FUND**

NET WORTH (1 July 14)	\$	1,393.84
INTEREST & DIVIDENDS	\$	4.25
EXPENSES	\$	0.00
CASH ASSETS	\$	298.09
INVESTMENTS	\$	1,100.00
NET WORTH (30 APRIL 15)	\$	1,398.09
FUND INCREASE	\$	4.25

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**JONATHAN M. WAINWRIGHT FUND**

NET WORTH (1 July 14)	\$	1,451.62
INTEREST & DIVIDENDS	\$	4.24
EXPENSES	\$	0.00
CASH ASSETS	\$	372.46
INVESTMENTS	\$	1,084.40
NET WORTH (30 APRIL 15)	\$	1,455.86
FUND INCREASE	\$	4.24

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**HISTORY FUND**

NET WORTH (1 July 14)	\$	1,586.03
INTEREST & DIVIDENDS	\$	2.67
CASH ASSETS	\$	404.66
INVESTMENTS	\$	1,184.04
EXPENSES	\$	0.00
NET WORTH (30 APRIL 15)	\$	1,588.70
FUND INCREASE	\$	2.67

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**DALLAS L. KNOLL FUND**

NET WORTH (1 July 14)	\$	1,301.70
INTERESTS & DIVIDENDS	\$	5.13
EXPENSES	\$	0.00
CASH ASSETS	\$	306.83
INVESTMENTS	\$	1,000.00
NET WORTH (30 APRIL 15)	\$	1,306.83
FUND INCREASE	\$	5.13

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**ROBERT W. THOMPSON FUND**

NET WORTH (1 July 14)	\$	70,099.54
INTEREST & DIVIDENDS	\$	1,967.84
EXPENSES	\$	12,642.57
CASH ASSETS	\$	7,970.82
INVESTMENTS	\$	47,902.60
NET WORTH (30 APRIL 15)	\$	55,873.42
FUND INCREASE/DECREASE	\$	-13,636.42

**GENERAL FUND**

NET WORTH (1 July 14)	\$ 280,499.04
ASSETS:	
PETTY CASH	\$ 50.00
CHECKING	\$ 219,697.93
FURNITURE & FIXTURES after depreciation	\$ 2,164.00
POSTAGE INVENTORY	\$ 230.00
SALES INVENTORY	\$ 87,918.96
ACCOUNTS RECEIVABLE	\$ 0.00
ACCOUNTS PAYABLE	\$ 0.00
NET GAIN	\$ 29,511.85
NET WORTH (30 APRIL 15)	\$ 310,010.89

**INCOME:**

PER CAPITA TAX	\$ 23,386.00
SALES PROFIT	\$ 20,150.43
INTEREST	\$ 61.68
MIP DIVIDEND	\$ 98,597.20
MISCELLANEOUS*	\$ 52,107.34
PROCESSING FEE	\$ 9,105.00
TOTAL INCOME	\$ 203,407.65

**EXPENSES:**

THE SOJOURNER	\$ 22,550.13
SALARY – NST	\$ 39,402.89
SALARY – OFC MNGR	\$ 34,490.31
SALARY – ADMIN ASST.	\$ 31,896.34
POSTAGE	\$ 2,953.27
PRINTING	\$ 2,181.56
RENT	\$ 11,552.17
UTILITIES	\$ 240.22
FICA	\$ 6,558.95
MEDICARE TAX	\$ 1,533.93
UNEMPLOYMENT TAX	\$ 330.00
EXPENSES – NATIONAL PRESIDENT	\$ 2,000.00
EXPENSES – NATIONAL SECRETARY	\$ 2,801.97
EXPENSES – NATIONAL COMMANDER	\$ 1,000.00
INSURANCE (adjusted for refund received 5/14)	\$ 2,934.00
OFFICE SUPPLIES	\$ 969.53
TELEPHONE/FAX	\$ 1,344.16
WEB SITE ACCESS	\$ 1,040.07
WEB SITE DEVELOPMENT	\$ 500.00
IRA PLAN CONTRIBUTIONS	\$ 3,104.58
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$ 176,419.08

\*- MISCELLANEOUS includes SEM FUND dividends& interest, ½ Linn Fund Income, transfer & initiation fees, and Harris Book

**MEMBERSHIP STATUS**

		<u>2011</u>	<u>2012</u>	<u>2013</u>	<u>2014</u>	<u>2015</u>
MIP'S	INDIVIDUAL	6660	6699	6643	6582	6607
	DUAL	2972	2964	2950	2860	2889
	DECEASED	7539	7912	8292	8809	8861
	IN MEMORIAM	857	880	887	890	891
TOTAL	MIPS	18,045	18,477	18,772	19,141	19,248
HONORARY MEMBERS		409	444	474	417	363
ACTIVE	MEMBERS	1168	1052	858	793	706
TOTAL	MEMBERSHIPS	19,695	20,003	20,081	20,351	20,317
LIVING	MEMBERS	8317	8220	7952	7792	7676

\*2015 is as of 12 May

**2014-2015 MEMBERSHIP STATISTICS**

CHAPTER	TOTAL MEMBERS YEAR ENDING					MIP	MIP GAIN	LIVING MMBRS
	<u>2011</u>	<u>2012</u>	<u>2013</u>	<u>2014</u>	<u>2015</u>			
CHICAGO	107	107	105	107	106	102	0	21
DETROIT #1	95	93	93	93	96	93	0	41
WASHINGTON #3	169	169	167	169	169	168	0	50
FORT MEADE #4	75	75	74	74	74	70	0	25
CHEYENNE #5	67	65	70	68	84	64	5	56
HAMPTON RDS #6	96	96	95	95	102	96	7	49
BALTIMORE #7	133	122	129	130	131	118	3	46
FT. BENNING #8	110	109	109	104	103	97	0	47
HAWAIIAN #9	94	85	95	95	94	86	0	49
COLUMBUS #10	122	134	127	131	129	123	0	36
HONOLULU#11	150	149	153	159	162	159	3	67
NEW ENGLAND #12	40	48	45	46	46	40	0	18
KNICKERBOCKER #13	76	76	78	77	75	69	2	29
NARRAGANSETT BAY#14	62	65	75	77	80	56	6	44
BEN FRANKLIN #16	145	147	146	149	194	190	47	75
FT. SAM HOUSTON #17	394	395	405	416	421	404	6	179
GOLDEN GATE #18	469	470	468	466	465	465	0	60
OMAHA #19	232	236	241	248	256	246	19	149
PANAMA CANAL #21(M)	12	12	12	12	12	12	0	2
ST. LOUIS #22	132	134	133	134	137	125	4	66
CLEVELAND #23	126	127	128	128	133	123	4	48
WICHITA #24	59	64	64	63	63	59	0	19
MINNESOTA #25	182	187	183	184	185	180	2	93
LOS ANGELES #26	76	79	78	80	79	78	0	37
MILWAUKEE #27	555	556	558	560	564	564	7	273
CHARLESTON #28	204	208	209	210	215	215	5	107
LOUISIANE #33	91	90	90	88	87	82	0	51
DENVER #37	153	154	147	156	157	146	1	69
PITTSBURGH #38	14	14	14	13	14	12	0	10
BUFFALO #39	17	15	15	15	15	14	0	3
VADM H. WALLIN #40	107	113	111	109	110	106	2	38
N. NEW JERSEY #42	69	71	72	79	82	78	4	41
TINKER #43	279	283	279	293	300	296	7	118
QUANTICO #44	126	132	128	128	128	124	0	63
SAN DIEGO #45	220	219	214	215	239	220	13	99
LINCOLN #52(CLUB)	2	2	2	2	1	1	0	1
HARTFORD #56	70	69	68	73	75	53	1	37
NEW LONDON #58	124	124	124	125	126	116	1	64
FT. MCPHERSON #60	91	95	90	90	97	95	7	42
KANSAS CITY #63	98	98	84	85	82	67	0	55
INDIANAPOLIS #66	191	193	192	193	194	185	1	107
HOT SPRINGS #70(M)	36	36	35	35	34	34	0	4
FT. LEE-RICHMOND #72	132	130	140	134	136	127	0	59
EL PASO #74	99	99	98	98	98	96	0	13
PORTLAND #75	69	57	56	60	60	54	2	26
HARRISBURG #76	382	382	381	389	401	332	12	265
DUPONT #78	42	39	38	37	37	36	0	14
SINCLAIR INLET #80	61	62	61	65	65	49	0	32

LONG ISLAND #86	49	50	47	49	47	31	1	41
DES MOINES #88	42	46	46	45	47	36	0	30
FT. LEWIS #89	130	130	130	131	130	125	0	34
PORTLAND(ME) #92	70	67	61	60	61	51	1	45
NO. CAROLINA #97	146	147	147	147	151	151	4	83
PARIS #98	25	24	22	22	22	22	0	20
TULSA #101	70	72	74	76	76	70	2	52
SPOKANE #102	40	38	36	38	38	31	0	25
OAKLAND #108(M)	79	79	79	78	78	78	0	6
AKRON #111	8	8	7	7	7	7	0	1
AUDIE L. MURPHY #112	130	137	138	142	145	145	3	80
SALT LAKE #114	93	93	83	84	82	62	0	56
ANNAPOLIS #121	44	44	44	44	44	44	0	9
TOPEKA #128	91	93	90	91	90	82	2	39
FORT SILL #129	231	231	231	232	235	231	4	100
CARLISLE #130	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
SACRAMENTO #133	127	127	129	130	127	122	0	57
KENTUCKY #134	515	515	533	544	542	520	0	188
MONTEREY BAY #136	49	49	49	49	49	49	0	7
HARRY S TRUMAN #152	76	74	69	70	71	67	1	41
FT. LEAVENWORTH #154	87	89	91	91	88	68	0	45
FT. MONMOUTH #155	98	98	98	97	96	96	0	15
CLARENCE COHEN #162	56	61	61	63	65	61	1	30
ARKANSAS #166	50	59	56	59	60	42	2	40
MISSISSIPPI GULF #171	85	90	92	94	98	97	4	57
FT. CAMPBELL #177	52	56	58	59	60	56	0	28
FT. JACKSON #184	199	205	205	204	208	208	4	66
FT. HOOD #208	65	55	54	55	58	50	1	30
ABERDEEN #221	91	91	91	92	91	91	0	12
CAMP FANNIN #228	31	33	30	29	34	29	1	19
CAMP PENDLETON #243	184	189	189	191	194	191	4	39
C. LINDBERGH #247	71	74	73	71	70	63	0	33
SANTA ANA/EL TORO #250	240	241	241	247	256	254	7	67
TAMPA #252	81	84	91	93	94	86	0	37
OKINAWA #264	27	26	26	26	26	26	0	6
PASADENA #265	153	164	165	181	190	190	9	64
STOCKTON #266	66	63	64	68	69	50	1	34
TOKYO #267	17	15	15	14	14	14	0	4
FRESNO #269	73	73	73	73	73	73	0	8
BARSTOW #271(M)	17	17	17	17	17	16	0	2
SO. ARIZONA #273	55	59	62	66	74	72	7	30
BARKSDALE #275	25	27	24	27	25	22	3	19
HAMILTON #277	101	102	99	99	99	99	0	11
WHITE SANDS #282	66	67	67	68	69	68	0	22
GUAM #287	14	14	14	14	14	14	0	6
LAKE MICHIGAN #289	70	71	69	70	67	58	0	39
LANCASTER #292	28	38	33	32	30	27	0	12
PIKES PEAK #293	99	98	96	96	92	86	0	32
WALTER REED #303	281	286	286	290	293	293	3	43
HEIDELBERG #304	10	10	10	10	10	9	0	5
PHOENIX #306	431	437	435	435	437	432	2	35

BERLIN #307 (M)	33	33	33	33	32	32	0	15
LANGLEY-MONROE #310	159	163	162	164	165	164	1	68
TRANSPORTATION #311	25	25	25	25	25	25	0	5
ST. PETERSBURG #314	33	32	32	32	32	32	0	3
JOHN S. BERSEY #316	40	39	38	38	37	31	0	18
SO. INDIANA #328	105	105	105	106	108	108	2	30
CAMP LEJUENE #329	141	127	129	135	140	128	5	86
FARGO-MOOREHEAD	71	66	62	59	60	45	3	43
J.C.CALHOUN #343(M)	29	29	29	29	29	29	0	7
WEST POINT #344(M)	33	33	33	33	32	29	0	15
PORTSMOUTH #352	70	66	64	63	63	58	0	19
REDSTONE #353	73	76	76	77	81	81	4	26
FORT DETRICK #354	13	12	12	12	12	11	0	3
ALASKA #355	122	120	120	120	120	120	0	59
MIAMI #357	52	53	50	51	52	45	1	23
OLD DOMINION #364	363	365	363	366	364	364	1	174
MONTGOMERY #365	39	40	40	40	41	38	1	18
CAPE CANAVERAL #366	135	131	130	131	132	124	0	43
POLARIS #369	39	41	41	42	42	42	1	32
SEMINOLE #373	344	344	346	354	353	344	2	74
BRAZOS VALLEY #378	98	97	100	100	102	92	2	50
BLUE HEN #382(M)	12	12	12	12	12	12	0	1
ANDREW JACKSON #385	144	143	136	137	142	119	4	82
PORTSMOUTH (NH) #386	111	113	111	118	118	111	2	66
J.J.HARRIS #397	69	75	70	65	70	70	5	34
INDIAN #405(M)	33	33	32	33	32	31	0	9
OGE LTHORPE #406(M)	15	15	14	13	13	12	0	3
SAIGON #409	267	268	268	272	273	270	2	16
GEN MORRILL W. MARSTON # 413	136	135	132	133	134	128	0	40
VOLUNTEER #414(M)	101	107	107	107	110	100	3	57
ARROWHEAD #421	100	93	89	93	95	90	3	18
CAPE HENRY #424	100	101	101	102	102	100	0	40
N.E. FLORIDA #435	147	146	147	146	150	141	6	72
KAMEHAMEHA #439	116	121	123	121	121	112	0	67
ARLINGTON HALL #440	96	93	91	91	90	83	0	26
BETHESDA #445	115	115	115	115	113	113	0	21
ANDREWS #446	39	38	38	37	37	37	0	13
KIT CARSON #447	172	173	170	171	167	161	4	50
WRIGHT BROTHERS #449	68	68	68	71	77	76	5	1
FIVE FLAGS OF PENSACOLA #460	74	73	72	73	75	70	2	27
GEN WM W. WORTH #463	123	131	126	126	125	118	0	51
GEO. R. SCOTT #482	114	112	107	154	151	141	1	48
GEN R. F. TRAVIS #490	85	87	87	87	86	85	3	35
VENTURA COUNTY #494	139	138	136	136	136	136	0	36
DANANG #498	164	165	165	170	171	171	1	9
HUNTER #502	75	72	71	70	68	65	2	40
M.W.BYERS #503	67	67	67	69	73	62	1	29
PIEDMONT #504	72	75	73	72	73	70	0	37
CLEARWATER #505	68	67	67	67	67	66	0	10
ANSON JONES #507	127	146	145	160	168	159	10	71
LYCOMING #509	41	38	36	35	34	24	0	29

P.M. RASMUSSEN #510	33	33	39	36	36	34	0	24
A.J. YOUNDT #511	71	69	69	71	69	69	0	21
DANIEL BOONE #512	66	63	62	63	69	54	0	33
HOUSTON #513	100	104	94	95	94	89	0	47
KNOXVILLE #514	66	66	65	66	69	61	1	37
LUBBOCK #517	42	42	42	42	42	42	0	15
MAUMEE VALLEY #518	13	15	14	14	13	13	0	3
LOS ALAMITOS #519	152	155	155	153	151	145	0	40
YOSEMITE #520	38	37	37	36	35	31	0	10
EAST VALLEY #521	60	57	57	57	57	54	1	18
PATUXENT #522	34	34	33	31	28	28	1	13
P/O/W #523	108	108	108	108	108	108	0	2
GEN. H. H. ARNOLD #524	71	71	68	66	59	59	0	7
WATAUGA #525	35	36	35	35	35	35	1	11
WARNER ROBINS #526	55	58	58	58	60	60	2	37
GREEN MOUNTAIN #527	87	93	89	85	84	44	2	60
OUACHITA #528	16	21	22	22	16	12	0	6
WILLAMETTE VALLEY #529	99	102	102	102	104	99	2	44
BEAUREGARD-ANDERSON #530	47	52	52	55	64	57	10	47
BALDWIN COUNTY #531	33	33	32	33	33	32	0	9
PENMAR #532	50	47	37	26	26	26	0	11
SARASOTA #533	110	115	114	116	119	112	1	41
PACIFIC NW #534	82	86	84	85	83	72	0	42
EXPEDITIONARY #535	169	184	186	193	194	194	1	19
W.C. GATEWOOD #536	62	66	60	62	64	60	1	36
NO. CENTRAL FL.#537	45	41	43	43	44	38	3	27
ROGUE VALLEY #538	43	45	40	37	35	32	0	13
OLYMPIC #539	71	69	70	70	69	69	0	29
CHATTANOOGA #540	64	67	67	68	73	73	5	36
INDIANA MASONIC HOME #541	102	96	97	97	97	82	1	61
MUSTANG #542	101	105	105	111	114	114	3	1
SHENANDOAH VALLEY #543	62	62	62	63	63	62	1	31
FREDERICKSBURG #545	54	58	58	58	58	58	0	22
WM HOOPER #546	44	43	43	42	42	35	0	18
JESSE B. THOMAS #547	36	38	39	38	38	36	0	22
JOHN SEVIER #548	58	43	62	65	73	73	8	20
JAMES MONROE #549	41	25	38	39	40	37	0	29
ANDREW HICKMAN #550	4	22	40	43	45	34	2	26
NORTHWEST ARKANSAS #551			14	14	14	5	0	12
MG EMORY UPTON CLUB #552				4	9	1	1	8
HIGH COUNTRY #553				18	36	3	1	17
MINUTEMAN 995	54	60	61	62	62	62	1	7
GRAND MASTERS #996	89	94	99	116	128	128	12	35
PAST MASTERS #997	190	195	195	206	213	213	7	0
SHRINER'S CLUB	14	14	15	15	15	15	0	0
NATIONAL HDQS	369	382	385	396	396	386	2	82