

## President General's Message - Denise Doring VanBuren

May 2021

Dear Daughters,

At the time of this publication, the District of Columbia remains in Phase 2 of its reopening, meaning that indoor gatherings are still limited to 10 people and staffing remains at 25%. Because there are no assurances that these restrictions will be suitably eased by late June, we must again move our annual conference to a virtual format. I am deeply sorry—I was so looking forward to welcoming you back to Headquarters, especially to see our restored DAR Constitution Hall.

While it is sad to share this decision, I am determined that we will not allow the pandemic to stop us from recognizing the outstanding work of our members and the achievements of our award winners over the past year, and I am proud that we will conduct the business of the Continental Congress using technology. As important as our annual Continental Congress is to our National Society, it traditionally involves just 2% of our membership, i.e., 4,000 women out of nearly 190,000 members. It is so important to realize that the mission of DAR thrives 52 weeks a year in communities large and small in all 50 states and more than a dozen foreign countries, well beyond the week of Congress. Wherever you find a DAR chapter, you find passionate, patriotic women who find purpose in our wide-ranging committees that offer something for everyone, many of whom will never attend our annual conference.

I have asked each of you to welcome at least one new member to that mission this year.

The [2020ONE Challenge](#) offers the potential to welcome tens of thousands of women who share our love of country and who want to fulfill the joyful obligation we owe to our Patriot ancestors on behalf of future generations. Please: Invite that friend or work associate to research her family tree and join your chapter. Hold an in-person or virtual genealogy workshop through your local library. Use traditional and social media to invite others to join. Ask your family members to consider the many benefits of membership—sometimes, they are waiting only to be invited.

I have found a rich sense of purpose as a citizen in service to our Society that I could find nowhere else, despite a wonderful family life, a rewarding professional career and active community involvement. Through DAR, I have honored veterans, thanked active-duty military personnel, preserved history, supported education and welcomed new citizens. I have exposed young people to the joy of American history, and I have participated in worthwhile projects to protect our precious natural resources. I have also met the most outstanding women in America—women who share my commitment to honoring our Patriot ancestors through service to others.

I know that you, too, have found these things in Today's DAR. That is why I ask you to help us grow—and not to simply expand the roster of a lineage society. I ask because what we do matters—and because I believe that our cause has never been more important to America's future. We live in a time when far too few people appreciate the values on which our nation was established—help us to spread an appreciation for our many blessings by welcoming at least one new member to DAR. Can you do it? I have every confidence that you can. (And by the way: why stop at just one?)

Rise and Shine for America,  
Denise Doring VanBuren