



Mernie Sams Crane Elected to the Office of Chaplain General at 134th Continental Congress

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WASHINGTON, DC - More than 4,000 members of the Daughters of the American Revolution convened this week in the nation's capital for the 134th Continental Congress, the latest gathering of the longstanding service organization's annual meeting. The week-long convention consisted of business sessions, committee meetings, and social functions, and was topped off with formal evening ceremonies at which national DAR award recipients were honored. Mernie Sams Crane was elected to the National Office of Chaplain General for a three-year term. She is a member of the Mary Digges Lee Chapter in Laurel, Maryland.

A DAR member since 2001, Crane has served at every level of the Society. Most recently, she was National Chair of the DAR Museum Outreach Committee (2022–2025) and National Vice Chair for the Continental Congress Memorial Service (2022–2024). As Maryland State Regent (2021–2024), her administration supported the digitization of all Maryland DAR records dating back to 1903, published the “Maryland Revolutionary War Patriot Anthology” online, and raised over \$75,000 for the state-owned chapter house.

Crane is an Ordained Elder in the United Methodist Church and has served as lead pastor for several congregations. She is an adjunct professor at Wesley Theological Seminary and also leads seminars on church leadership. Before entering ministry, Crane spent 13 years in international business, including conflict resolution work during South Africa's transition from apartheid. She holds a Doctor of Ministry, Master of Divinity, and Master of Business Administration.

Active in her community, Crane leads local food pantry collections, chairs a D.C.-based arts committee, and participates in historic preservation and cemetery restoration efforts. She and her husband, Jeff, are the proud parents of three daughters, all members of the DAR.

Under the leadership of President General Ginnie Sebastian Storage, her administration plans to focus on honoring America's revolutionary heritage while building a stronger, more inclusive organization for the future. Storage's presidency will operate under the theme "Illuminate Our Legacy," reflecting the goals of her administration.

Storage's election comes at a significant time, as her administration will oversee the organization's participation in America's upcoming 250th anniversary celebration. She plans to commemorate this semiquincentennial milestone with programming that reflects on the foundational values of liberty and democracy while honoring those whose sacrifices secured the nation's independence.

Central to Storage's vision is creating a more welcoming and engaged community of members. Her administration will focus on recognizing the distinct qualities and perspectives that each member brings to the organization, fostering an environment where diverse experiences and backgrounds are valued strengths. This approach will emphasize a meaningful experience for both new and existing members while also pursuing opportunities to reconnect with former members. In addition, the new President General plans to encourage genealogical research to establish Patriot lineages that were previously difficult to confirm, opening membership to qualified individuals who had difficulty documenting their revolutionary ancestry.

Storage's administration will emphasize supporting local chapters in their community engagement efforts by supporting service projects and outreach initiatives that align with the NSDAR's three core mission areas: historic preservation, education, and patriotism. This focus reflects her belief that the organization's most significant impact occurs when chapters actively enrich their local communities through meaningful service.

Finally, the new administration plans to formally recognize the contributions of the NSDAR's headquarters team, acknowledging their commitment and dedication to the organization's daily operations. Storage has committed to ensuring careful stewardship of the organization's financial resources, maintaining the fiscal stability that enables NSDAR to fulfill its mission while promoting continued operational success.

The DAR Continental Congress is an annual gathering that has been held in Washington, D.C. since the organization's founding. National, state and chapter leaders as well as other members from across the country and around the world meet at the DAR National Headquarters to report on the year's work, honor outstanding award recipients, plan future initiatives and reconnect with friends.

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The National Society Daughters of the American Revolution was founded in 1890 to promote historic preservation, education and patriotism. Its members are descended from the Patriots who won American independence during the Revolutionary War. With more than 190,000 members in approximately 3,000 chapters worldwide, DAR is one of the world's largest and most active service organizations. To learn more about the work of today's DAR, visit www.DAR.org.