

Communication

...from the President General

We are in desperate need of additional offices at our Headquarters Building. The next major task we should undertake is the build-out of the second floor, at least the west side bricked area. The completion of that area will allow for expansion of Genealogy and other related growth positions that will be needed as the Society grows in the next nine years to the goal of 64,000 by 2026.

While I'm talking numbers, as of 10.31.17, we are at **36,259** members! This is an increase from the 7.21.17 number I quoted of 34,667. Within the increase of 1,592, there were 961 registered applications in September and October. This means these 961 are the beneficiaries of the approved motion at Congress granting 2018 dues in the application for those two months. As we already had this grant for November and December, all registered applications before the end of the year also qualify as having paid 2018 dues, so keep the applications flowing.

By the way, Executive Director Don Shaw reports our approval time is 4 weeks for new applications and 25 weeks, and falling, for supplements—down from 27 weeks a month ago. After a few vacations and illnesses, genealogy is fully staffed, and additional people will be dedicated to supplements. Without the additional expense of hiring and training, we have added 32-36 hours by increasing the current staff hours with full time from part time staffing. We are very well positioned to manage growth through increased applications. We have added three full-time staff and 1 part-time or 112-120 additional hours per week since October 2016 when the backlog really started to materialize.

I know I have said this before, but the secret to our growth is **retention**, keeping those who join us **engaged** so they want to remain and help us accomplish the reason for our being—perpetuating the memory of our founding. If we are too busy telling others about ourselves to listen to, and find out about each other, we will continue to lose new members almost as fast as we gain them. **Retention is no secret.** It only requires you to welcome new family members and to find out why they joined so we can assist them in accomplishing their goals by **listening to what they need.**

We have two months to put on the press to get those renewals. **You can do this.** Contact by email only will seldom result in full renewal. **Phone calls** to invite Compatriots to meetings and events are now, and have always been effective tools. Invest the time and the results

will follow. Have you called a Compatriot in the last month to see how they are doing? To invite them to join you for coffee? To let them know about a Flag recognition event near their house? To personally invite them to the next meeting? Well, you get the gist, personal contact works, but if all you do in the call is to ask for their renewal, what would YOU say? Engage, Engage, Engage. You might even find a new life-long friend. During November, try to contact all your chapter members that you do not see regularly and just ask them what's up. As Mark Twain once said, "Always do right. This will gratify some and amaze the rest."

Happy November to all!

Larry