

## Tips for Small Chapters

*"History, although sometimes made up of the few acts of the great, is more often shaped by the many acts of the small." - Mark Twain*

- 1. Take care not to "burn out" people.** One method is to involve as many people as possible in small ways—e.g. ask a member to team up with another and plan one program, to welcome guests at one meeting, to submit one newsletter article, or to help with one mailing, etc. As members take on small tasks, they will discover what they enjoy doing and will likely find themselves interested in doing more.
- 2. Continually build new leadership.** Often this is an outcome of health tip #1. Mastering multiple tasks is a strong confidence builder, a precursor to assuming leadership. Mentoring is another success-proven method. Where practical, officers can select members to serve on a subcommittee, then work with them as advisors. Actual training sessions for future chapter leaders is another option. Hold a day-long Saturday planning session at an officer's house. Think far ahead in terms of programming, seeking input from attending members. You will be surprised at how eagerly they will rise to meet the challenge.
- 3. Invite a larger chapter or another smaller chapter to a joint meeting** This is a great way of injecting energy and fresh perspective into your chapter.
- 4. Seek diversity.** Charge the membership committee with seeking out prospective members of diverse age, experience, and cultural and racial backgrounds.
- 5. Keep communications ongoing.** Ask a member to serve as email secretary for the year. Organize a phone tree for special projects. Place reminder phone calls. Develop good media relations with local papers & radio. Issue press releases. Send timely invitations, flyers, newsletter to members, media, and prospective members. Publish the meeting schedule a year in advance in newsletter-write TBA (To Be Announced) for those programs still tentative.
- 6. Strive for consistent, quality programs.** Survey the interests of the membership. When planning programs, make sure they are relevant to the DAR objectives, seasonally timely, and appealing to prospective members.
- 7. Be positive!** Chapter leaders have an obligation to minimize criticism and maximize positive feedback. A small chapter needs and deserves frequent kudos for each of its' successes.