



Chapter Presidents Zoom Call

June 14, 2023 | 2 pm ET

Chapters Represented – Greater Cincinnati, Pensacola, San Diego, and South Central Montana

Special Guests – David Harmer, CEO; Jason Raia, COO; and John Meko, Executive Director of The Union League Legacy Foundation

Welcome

Carolyn wished everyone a happy Flag Day and thanked those who were able to attend. Carolyn introduced everyone on the call and made special note of the guests joining the meeting.

Freedoms Foundation at Valley Forge Updates from Headquarters

Merger Update

The first item on the agenda was opening the floor to attendees with any questions or comments regarding the merger announcement a month ago. We had David Harmer and John Meko on the call to answer any questions or discuss any concerns. San Diego Chapter commented that the membership has very positive feelings about the merger and Greater Cincinnati replied that its membership is anxious to see what happens.

John and David both gave remarks reassuring chapters that little will change in their day-to-day operations, but that investments will be made to the campus and programs will expand. John reminded those on the call that \$2 million will be invested in the property in the first year for upgrades and beautification. The timeline remains to have all three boards approve the merger agreement by June 30th and all legal obligations met by the fall to complete the merger.

Campus Updates

Carolyn reported that the windows in MacArthur have all been installed and the outside exterior has a fresh coat of paint and repaired, or new sills as needed. The building looks really good and almost brand new. She also reported that the new lamp posts are up and working. Jason Raia, COO, confirmed he has seen the campus at night and the new lights really light up the campus, especially the areas with the most foot traffic. It was also reported that the new public sewer system is working great, and the old plant is being dismantled. Two other additional projects on campus were a new gazebo in the Pennsylvania acre of the Medal of Honor Grove and a repaired front fence with new paint and new posts where needed.

Education Updates

Spirit of America Update

Carolyn thanked everyone who gave us feedback on dates. Your input was of great help in finalizing the Chapter dates for 2024. The four dates for 2024 are as follows...

- March 7-10
- April 4-7
- April 11-14
- April 18-21.

We are now accepting reservations for 2024. After this call an email will go out to you and the key people in your chapters who handle the student recruitment efforts with detailed information on the 2024 schedule.

The price for tuition in 2024 will be increasing. Our caterers are increasing their prices for the first time in over a decade. They just can't keep current prices with food costs skyrocketing and transportation costs continue to climb. In addition, to be able to hire qualified and experienced program staff we need to offer competitive wages. In analyzing all these factors, we came up with the price of \$525 per participant. Carolyn opened the floor to hear from attendees and get their input before we make this increase official. With no objections or concerns, the price for Spirit of America for 2024 will be \$525 per participant.

Flyers are being created now and will be distributed to the chapters later this summer including an electronic version.

The essay topic for 2024 is currently in committee. We have a subcommittee of the 75th Anniversary Committee that is focused on the essay contest for 2024. We are finalizing the topics now and will have the topic ready for the chapters by July 1st and a broader official announcement of the essay contest on September 1st.

Graduate Program Update

Thank you to all the chapters who are supporting teachers in their attendance to a program this year. The first teacher program starts on June 18th with Frederick Douglas: Legacy and Impact Seminar. We are honored to have a descendant of Frederick Douglas presenting.

Awards Update

Carolyn shared the timeline for the National Awards process. Applications are still being accepted until Monday, June 19th. The judges will be reviewing the submissions during the summer and chapters will be notified of their recipients the week of August 28th. Letters to recipients will go out the week of Labor Day. We will be ordering medals and supplies in late August so ceremonies can be conducted beginning in mid-October.

75th Anniversary Planning

Plans for the 75th Anniversary continue to progress. The main committee has suspended meetings for the summer, but the subcommittees continue to meet and plan.

Gala Committee

Jason spoke about the Gala Committee's efforts. We are having two galas. One on the east coast and one on the west. We are looking to have the first in Philadelphia at the Union League on Constitution Day, September 17th. We will join the Union League on their Constitution Day celebrations. The committee has been invited to the celebration this year to see how the program runs. The second gala will be more traditional with formal dining and an auction. The date we are looking at is October 17th at the Jonathan Club. The Committee is meeting there on June 26th to formalize the date and logistics. Having the two galas will allow us to invite lots of chapter members and partners. The committee is looking for volunteers to join the planning for the galas, especially chapters west of the Mississippi for the LA Gala.

7500 Acts of Civic Responsibility

This is something that each chapter can be a part of with their members, students and even award recipients. The guidelines for the acts are currently being written. The acts will be based on our five pillars of responsible citizenship – Participation, Respect,

Accountability, Productivity, and Generosity. We will have examples under each pillar. We will launch this activity on January 1, 2024, and people will be able to submit a form online through our website to record their act. Rewards will be given to those who complete acts in twelve consecutive months or who complete an act that falls under each of the five pillars. Look for these published guidelines in the next few months.

Video

We are currently in the beginning stages of video production for our 75th Anniversary video. We are working on the script, selecting our videographer, and laying out video shoots. We need your help. Please look through your records for old photos. We need photos from the chapters. The older honestly the better. When you find them, please send them to Carolyn or scan and digitize them if you are able. The originals will be returned to you, but we really need some photos from chapters to make this video special.

Chapter Committee

Carolyn will be sending out invitations to chapter leaders for a meeting in July to discuss chapter participation in the 75th Anniversary celebrations from 7500 Acts to special award ceremonies to video assistance. All chapter presidents will be invited along with others in the chapters who have expressed interest in helping. During this meeting we will present the instructions on requesting a 75th Anniversary resolution/citation from your state legislature.

Other News and Notes

FFVF Podcast - Jason spoke about our new venture into the world of podcasts. We will be launching our podcast entitled "George Washington Slept Here." The name comes from all the locations around the east coast with the sign out front saying our founding father slept there. The theme of the podcast is that George Washington brought us together. He was a force of unification and now more than ever we need that sentiment. The podcast will feature hour long interviews with scholars, friends of FFVF, and others. Guests will talk about their work and then focus on the state of America today and how we can help bring back unity and preserve the principles of Freedom. We have recorded four with another six lined up for season 1. We hope this will bring a new audience to Freedoms Foundation, but we will be leaning on chapters in the beginning to help us with initial numbers. We will send you instructions on how to listen to the podcast and download it when it's ready to debut.

E-News and Webpages – Carolyn will be doing a summer edition of the newsletter so please submit anything that has happened in your chapter since May so that it can be included. And as always send in updates for your webpages with upcoming events to photos to recaps.

Chapter Input – Open Floor

Lynn from Pensacola asked those on the call if they have recommendations for online or email invitations to chapter events. The Pensacola Chapter is looking to get away from paper invitations. San Diego noted that they do both based on member preference. Eventbrite and Evite were offered as options.

There were no further questions or comments for discussion, so the meeting was brought to a close and Carolyn thanked all who attended.

The Next Meeting will be on Wednesday, September 13th at 2PM ET.