



Dear Chapter Presidents and Representatives,

Can you believe that October is drawing to a close and the holiday season is upon us? Election Day is this Tuesday. We encourage all of you to make sure to vote if you haven't already and encourage your members to do the same.

Freedoms Foundation at Valley Forge's National Board of Directors recently held its annual meeting virtually, as so many things are today. It was a very productive meeting. The board elected a new chairman. Jordan Clements from Salt Lake City, Utah is the new Chair and Diane Deshong, past president and current member of the Los Angeles County Chapter is Vice Chair. The board also welcomed new member, Jon Nehlsen, Associate Dean of Heinz College of Information Systems and Public Policy at Carnegie Mellon University.

This was the annual board meeting and a lot of important work and decisions were made. The one with the biggest impact currently on our Volunteer Chapters was the unanimous decision to keep Freedoms Foundation at Valley Forge closed to on campus programs until June 1, 2021. A statement announcing the closure and our future plans is attached. Please feel free to share with all the appropriate people including students, teachers, parents and supporters. This statement can also be found on our website.

Here is the good news. Staff is currently working on a virtual Spirit of America. This virtual program will run on the dates already promoted. This project is still in the very early planning stages. We will keep you updated as things progress and will share all our ideas as we put them into action. If you have any questions or ideas on how your chapter might use the online version of Spirit of America, please reach out to me.

The Chapter and Partner Relations Committee of the Board has been given the task of creating new universal bylaws for the Volunteer Chapters. You may soon hear from one of the committee members seeking your input. Committee members include – Sandy Cook (Sacramento Chapter), Sally Brinton (Utah Chapter), Diane Deshong (Los Angeles County Chapter), and Marvell Ruppel (AMVETS Auxiliary). These ladies are very excited to work with you and help meet the needs of your chapter along with helping us grow more chapters across the country.

Other items of note from the board meeting include the formal acceptance of the campus master plan. We hope to have everything completed in time for our country's 250<sup>th</sup> birthday celebration in 2026. Work on phase I, the connection to the public sewer, has begun. In conjunction with the master plan, the board voted to move forward with the capital campaign feasibility study. That study is about to begin and a company has been selected to lead the efforts.

In keeping with the good news theme, we are excited to announce a new initiative in 2021 – **Our Houses Uniting**. Freedoms Foundation at Valley Forge in collaboration with Dr. Rogers Smith, 2020 Recipient of our Distinguished Citizen Award, are developing a program that tackles the decline in civil discourse in our political culture. Designed by Professor Smith this offering looks to bring communities together along with leaders of various political leanings to discuss issues in an atmosphere of mutual respect and understanding. Look for more news on this exciting initiative in the months ahead.

As always, I like to end our updates with a link to a video related to our programming. If you have not yet had the opportunity to view our two video conversations with Dr. Larry Arnn of Hillsdale College and Dr. Rogers Smith of the University of Pennsylvania and our president, David Harmer, I highly recommend taking some time to watch all or part of the interviews. They really resonate during this time and give us hope for the future of our nation.

[Virtual Talk on the Constitution with Dr. Larry Arnn, President of Hillsdale College](#)

[Virtual Talk on the Constitution with Professor Rogers Smith, Ph.D., Christopher H. Browne Distinguished Professor of Political Science, University of Pennsylvania](#)

Thank you for all you do. The support of our volunteer chapters helps to sustain us and we can't thank you enough.

Be safe and stay healthy!

*Carolyn E. Santangelo*

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Freedoms Foundation at Valley Forge  
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