



BYLAWS
of
**THE ORDER OF THE
FOUNDERS OF NORTH AMERICA
1492-1692**

(REVISED JULY 2022)

Article I

NAME

The name of this organization shall be The Order of the Founders of North America. The Order shall be a 501(c) (3) non-profit organization incorporated in the state of Missouri.

Article II

MISSION

The mission of this Order is declared to be historical and educational, and it shall endeavor to perpetuate the memory of the leaders of the Old World who sponsored the discovery, exploration and settlement of the New World, and the explorers and settlers who came to North America during the critical period of 1492 to 1692, and laid the foundations for the development of the new continent of North America; to recognize and promote fellowship among their descendants; to inspire the descendants and the community at large with a more profound respect for the industry and sacrifices of our founding forebearers; to encourage historical research in relation to the discovery, exploration and settlement of North America; to acquire and preserve the records of the individual leaders, explorers and settlers, as well as documents, relics, and landmarks; to mark the sites of the founding of North America with memorials; and to celebrate the anniversaries of prominent events of the first two hundred years following the discovery of the New World in 1492; to encourage research and writing about the period 1492-1692 through scholarships and awards; to promote genealogical and historical seminars and educational travel to Europe to visit the homelands of our founders. The order shall be non-partisan, in conformity with regulations regarding 501(c) (3) organizations.

Article III

ELIGIBILITY FOR MEMBERSHIP

Section 1. Any man or woman, of 18 years of age or older, of good moral character is eligible for membership in this Order who lineally descends from the Founders of North America, including the Caribbean and offshore North Atlantic Islands during the period of 1492 to 1692. Members may descend from Spanish, English, French, Dutch, Scottish, Swedish, German, Danish, and Italian royalty, explorers, settlers, and seamen transporting and supplying these colonists.

Section 2. Any boy or girl, under the age of 18 years, is eligible for junior membership in this Order, provided they have a Founder ancestor meeting the qualifications in Section 1. If they are a junior member in good standing upon attaining their 18th birthday, they shall automatically become regular members.

Section 3 The Order will accept documented and proven lineages of certain societies. This list will be available on the website and in the updated "Lineage Documentation Guidelines" sent to each prospective member. The Order may accept documented and proven pedigrees accepted by other societies not found on the list on a case-by-case basis. The list will be expanded from time to time. For those applications that do not reach back before 1692, documentary evidence must be provided to connect to the applicant's Founder ancestor

Section 4. Applicants must submit the OFNA membership inquiry form to the Secretary General, who will distribute it to the Executive Committee. If there are no objections from the Executive Committee within five (5) days, the applicant shall be provided with an application form to complete, with acceptable documentary proof of lineal descent from a Founder ancestor. If there is an objection, the Executive Committee must approve the applicant by a 2/3 majority of the Executive Committee present and voting. Once the application has been approved by the Genealogista General, and registered by the Registrar General, the applicant shall become a member of the Order.

Section 5. The Order shall maintain a list of acceptable Founder ancestors, and shall add to the list every Founder ancestor subsequently proven. This list shall be published for the benefit of potential members.

Section 6. For people interested in supporting the mission of the Order, but lacking a qualifying Founder ancestor, they may be granted honorary “Companion of the Order” status by a 2/3 majority vote of the Executive Committee. They shall be entitled to attend meetings and serve on committees, but shall not be able to vote or hold elective office in the Order.

Section 7. The Charter members acknowledge that they collectively have approved one another and that they each agree that once the temporary General Officers elected at the July, 2012 meeting to organize, they will each submit a formal application with proper documentation to the duly elected Genealogista General.

Article IV OFFICERS

Section 1. The general officers of this Order shall be:

- *Grand Viscount/Viscountess General
- *Grand Viscount/Viscountess General Elect
- *Immediate Past Grand Viscount General
- *Deputy Viscount/Viscountess General for Eastern U.S.
- *Deputy Viscount/Viscountess General for Western U.S.
- *Deputy Viscount/Viscountess General for Europe
- *Abogado/Abagoda General
- * Secretary General
- *Exchequer General
- *Mareschal General
- * Genealogista General – Applications
- * Genealogista General – Supplementals
- *Registrar General
- *Emissary General
- *Vicar General
- Chirurgien General
- *Chronicler General
- Deputy Viscount/Viscountess General for Spanish Colonists
- Deputy Viscount/Viscountess General for English Colonists

Deputy Viscount/Viscountess General for French Colonists
Deputy Viscount/Viscountess General for German & Dutch Colonists
Deputy Viscount/Viscountess General for Scottish Colonists
Deputy Viscount/Viscountess General for Scandinavian Colonists
Deputy Viscount/Viscountess General for Italian Colonists
Marquis/Marquesa General of Publicity and Public Relations
Deputy Marquis/Marquesa General – Genealogy Society Liaison
*Adjutant General
Librarian General
Quartermaster General
Parliamentarian General
Sergeant-at-Arms
Capitan de la Guardia

Section 2. Each April in odd years, the Grand Viscount/Viscountess General shall propose a nominating committee of three members to the Executive Committee, who shall be voted on by the Executive Committee. The Nominating Committee shall choose one of their members to be the chairman. It shall be the duty of this committee to nominate a candidate for each office to be filled at the annual meeting in June/July in odd years. Additional nominations may be made from the floor, provided the consent of the nominee shall first have been obtained. At least fifteen (15) days prior to the annual meeting in odd years, the chairman of the nominating committee shall provide the Secretary General with a list of proposed nominations for each elective office. The Secretary General shall provide a copy of the list to each General Officer of the Order.

Section 3. If there is more than one candidate for any office, election to that office shall be by ballot and a majority shall elect. Election by ballot may be waived as to any office, if, after nominations for that office are declared closed, only one has been nominated for that office. The Executive Committee may institute a procedure to allow mail-in or e-mail voting on elections for office, in accordance with acceptable practices. This procedure will be sent to all members of the Order. All officers shall hold offices for a term of two years or until their successors are installed. Their term of office shall begin after their installation at the annual meeting in June/July in odd years. No member shall hold more than one office at any one time.

Section 4. Vacancies in office (other than that of Grand Viscount/Viscountess General) may be filled by the Grand Viscount/Viscountess General on an interim basis until the next meeting of the Executive Committee, at which time it will be filled by a majority vote of the Executive Committee.

Section 5. A General Officer may be removed from office for non-performance of duty or for misconduct. A two-thirds vote of the Executive Committee shall be required to remove an officer from office.

Section 6. The General Officers listed above with an asterisk (*) before their name shall be voting members of the Executive Committee.

Section 7. Temporary General Officers shall be elected at the July 2012 meeting in Phoenix, AZ, with understanding that they must stand for election at the 1st annual meeting in Washington, DC in April 2013. The Temporary General Officers shall be the official nominees, but any member may run from the floor for election for any office. In the event of a contested election at the April 2013 annual meeting and thereafter, each nominee may speak on his or her own behalf or have someone else make a nominating speech for him or him; and in addition, each candidate may have another member give a seconding speech.

Article V
DUTIES OF OFFICERS

Section 1. The **Grand Viscount/Viscountess General (GVG)** is the Chief Executive Officer and Chairman of the Executive Committee, and the Official Representative of the Order at all public functions. The GVG shall preside at all meetings of the Order and of the Executive Committee, and shall have a casting vote. The GVG shall enforce strict observance of the bylaws, and shall appoint all Committees not otherwise provided for, and shall be an *ex officio* member of all committees except the Nominating Committee and the Ethics Committee. The GVG shall have the discretion to establish non-voting positions during the GVG's two-year term provided approval of the Executive Committee is granted.

Section 2. The **Viscount/Viscountess General Elect (VGE)** shall, in the absence of the GVG, perform the duties pertaining to that office. The VGE shall assume the office of the GVG upon the expiration of the term, resignation or incapacity of the GVG. In the absence of the GVG and VGE, the GVG's duties shall be assumed by the other elected officers in order of precedence listed in sections 4 through 21. The VGE shall serve as the Chairman of the Annual Meeting, securing a venue, arranging for meeting space, entertainment, speakers, food and beverage and group rates at the hotel.

Section 3. The **Immediate Past Grand Viscount General (IPGVG)** shall become a lifetime member of the Executive Committee and assist in the long-range planning for the organization. Annually, the senior Past Grand Viscount General shall serve as Chairman of the Council of Grand Viscounts General, whose duties and powers shall be determined by future Executive Committees.

Section 4. The **Deputy Viscount/Viscountess General for Eastern U.S. (DVG East)** shall assist the GVG and the Adjutant General in publicizing meetings and events in which OFNA is participating; to secure publication of notices about OFNA in the newsletters and magazines of State and Regional lineage societies east of the Mississippi River, genealogical and historical societies; to attend state and regional meetings of other organizations to promote membership in OFNA; to insure that regional libraries have stocks of OFNA literature.

Section 5. The **Deputy Viscount/Viscountess General for Western U.S. (DVG West)** shall assist the GVG and the Adjutant General in publicizing meetings and events in which OFNA is participating ; to secure publication of notices about OFNA in the newsletters and magazines of State and Regional lineage societies, genealogical and historical societies west of the Mississippi

River; to attend state and regional meetings of other organizations to promote membership in OFNA; to insure that regional libraries have stocks of OFNA literature.

Section 6. The Deputy Viscount/Viscountess General for Europe (DVG Eur) shall assist the GVG and the Adjutant General in publicizing meetings and events in which OFNA is participating; to secure publication of notices about OFNA in the newsletters and magazines of European lineage, genealogical and historical societies in Europe; to attend state and regional meetings of other organizations to promote membership in OFNA; to ensure that regional libraries have stocks of OFNA literature.

Section 7. The Abogado/Abogada General (AG) shall serve as the legal advisor to the Grand Viscount/Viscountess General and other members of the Executive Committee. The AG shall be a licensed practicing attorney. The AG's duties include selecting a state in which to become chartered; filing articles of incorporation; and assisting in the filing of a 501(c) (3) IRS exemption as a non-profit corporation.

Section 8. The Secretary General (SG) shall serve as the secretary of the order, and apply the seal to official documents and certificates, compile the minutes of the meetings of the Executive Committee and the membership, submit them to the Executive Committee and retain copies of each of the minutes, which will be immediately turned over to his successor. The SG serves as a member of the long-range planning committee. The SG shall keep fair and accurate records of all proceedings and orders; and shall give notice to the several officers of all votes, orders, resolves and proceedings of the Society affecting them or pertaining to their respective duties. The SG shall keep a roll of the members, and shall give due notices of the time and place of all meetings and attempt to attend the same. The SG shall conduct the general correspondence under the direction of the GVG and the Executive Committee. The SG shall prepare an annual report to be sent to the Executive Committee, showing the names and addresses of the active members; the names and addresses of those resigned, dropped, and deceased, and those for whom dues are waived for any reason. The SG shall have charge of the By-Laws and Minutes of the meetings of the Executive Committee and the membership, and shall certify all acts of the Order. The Secretary General may be a signatory on the bank account of the order.

Section 9. The Exchequer General (ExG) shall collect and keep the funds of the Order and deposit the same in a bank or savings institution designated by the Executive Committee, and shall be placed to the credit of THE ORDER OF THE FOUNDERS OF NORTH AMERICA. He shall draw on the funds for the payment of such obligations as may be approved by the Grand Viscount General or the Executive Committee. Expenditures over \$100, not otherwise authorized in the duties of the officer or allocated in the approved budget, shall require a majority vote of the Executive Committee. He shall keep a true account of his receipts and disbursements, and make a report thereof at every regular meeting of the Order, and submit an annual account at the annual meeting. He, together with the GVG and or SG, shall sign purchase orders for amounts approved in advance, and write checks to pay all approved bills of the order. Until a separate fund-raising arm is developed, the Exchequer General will also serve

as Chairman of fundraising. The ExG shall be responsible for preparing the 501(c) 3 filing for the organization in coordination with other appropriate officers.

Section 10. The **Mareschal General (MG)** shall serve as the membership chairperson. It is the job of the MG to propose a budget for advertising for new members and to develop a recruiting plan, including the design and preparation of a promotional flyer for the Order. The MG shall be the editor of the Order Newsletter. The MG shall be charged with the duty to design and seek approval of the Executive Committee of an acceptable Application Form and the instructions for the Application Form.

Section 11. (a) The **Genealogista General for Applications (GG-A)** shall establish and interpret the rules concerning the type and quality of proof necessary for membership. He/she shall review each application submitted and either approve or return to the applicant with appropriate suggestions. Checks accompanying the application should be forwarded to a designated officer, either the ExG or SG, within two weeks of receipt.

(b) The **Genealogista General for Supplementals (GG-S)** shall follow the rules concerning the type and quality of proof necessary for membership established by the GG-A. He/she shall review each supplemental application submitted and either approve or return to the applicant with appropriate suggestions. Checks accompanying the supplemental application should be forwarded to a designated officer, either the ExG or SG, within two weeks of receipt.

Section 12. The **Registrar General (RG)** shall assign a membership number to each member; prepare and mail notices of acceptance; together with an offer to sell membership medals and other merchandise, and a request for a charitable contribution; which order is returned to the Exchequer General. He maintains a copy of both the approved application and the documentary proof submitted by each member, and upon request provides "Record Copies".

Section 13. The **Emissary General (EmG)** shall supervise the Deputy Viscounts/Viscountesses General, each of whom should focus on seeking members descended from the areas they represent. In addition, the Emissary General, individually and with the assistance of approved Deputy Emissaries General shall promote the Order in Europe, Canada, Mexico, and the Caribbean.

Section 14. The **Vicar General (VG)** shall provide spiritual guidance to the members; send get-well cards to members and cards of condolence to their surviving family members. He shall prepare and deliver a memorial service at the annual meeting, and offer invocations and benedictions at Order meetings. He shall arrange the services at the burial of deceased members of the Order when the Order is requested to participate in the ceremony. He shall be an ordained minister. He shall serve as chairman of the Ethics Committee.

Section 15. The **Chirurgien General (CG)** shall provide sage medical advice to members and attend to those who become ill or have an accident at meetings of the Order.

Section 16. The **Chronicler General (ChG)** shall keep records of the historical and commemorative meetings, and shall supervise the preparation and printing of its historical publications and be responsible for the maintenance of the OFNA website.

Section 17. Each of the following seven **Deputy Viscounts/Viscountesses General** shall develop a program to seek out potential members by communicating with other heritage organizations; getting articles placed in their respective newsletters and magazines; attending meetings of other heritage societies where prospective members are likely to be members; assisting applicants from their area; and providing a bibliography of books and records available which might assist them.

Deputy Viscount/Viscountess General for Spanish Colonists
Deputy Viscount/Viscountess General for English Colonists
Deputy Viscount/Viscountess General for French Colonists
Deputy Viscount/Viscountess General for German and Dutch Colonists
Deputy Viscount/Viscountess General for Scottish Colonists
Deputy Viscount/Viscountess General for Scandinavian Colonists.
Deputy Viscount/Viscountess General for Italian Colonists

Section 18. The **Marquis/Marquesa General of Publicity and Public Relations** shall work with the Mareschal General and Emissary General in conceiving and developing membership materials to entice prospective members to join, such as preparing flyers to be inserted into the registration envelopes of other societies.

Section 19. *Section Deleted.*

Section 20. The **Deputy Marquis/Marquesa General – Genealogy Society Liaison** shall serve as a liaison with other genealogical and lineage societies. Works with Mareschal General, Emissary General, and the Marquis/Marquesa General of Publicity and Public Relations.

Section 21. *Section Deleted.*

Section 22. *Section Deleted.*

Section 23. The **Adjutant General (AdjG)** shall assist the GVG in preparing the agenda for all meetings, ensuring that all needed equipment is available at each meeting; preparing periodic e-mails for officers and sending notices of all meetings; and serving as an assistant to the GVG.

Section 24. The **Librarian General (LG)** shall be responsible for maintaining a master list of all publications that might be of assistance to applicants and researchers. At the time in the future when the Order has accumulated books, he shall be the custodian of those books.

Section 25. *Section Renumbered.*

Section 26. The **Quartermaster General (QG)** shall have the responsibility of ordering and maintaining the stock of membership medals, patches and other membership materials. An accounting of the inventory and sales will be due quarterly to the Executive Committee.

Section 27. The **Parliamentarian General (PG)** shall be act as an advisor to the Grand Viscount General and the Executive Committee in matters pertaining to parliamentary procedure. The Parliamentarian General shall be governed by the By-Laws and the current edition of *Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised*. The PG will have no vote or the privilege of making a motion. The PG will be an ex officio member of the By-Laws Committee.

Section 28. The **Sergeant-at-Arms (SAA)** shall serve as the officer of the door during closed door sessions during general assemblies of the membership and will assist with checking the credentials of attendees. The SAA will also be in charge of maintaining the Order flags and other Order meeting insignia including Order banners.

Section 29. The **Capitan de la Guardia (CpG)** shall serve in such duties assigned by the GVG.

Section 30. No person may serve as a General Officer in the Order if they have been convicted of a felony, or who has been found guilty of a breach of ethics by the Order's Ethics Committee.

Article VI

MEETINGS

Section 1. (a) The meeting in June/July shall be known as the annual meeting, and shall be for the purpose of electing officers (in odd years), installing officers, receiving reports of officers and committees, and for any other business that may arise. The meeting shall be held in conjunction with the annual congress of the National Society, SAR.

(b) The Annual Meeting may be held via the Internet, "virtual" or alternative means in the event of an emergency or similar eventuality, either nationally or in the area of the previously-scheduled Annual Meeting, upon a majority vote of the executive committee, that vote to be held as soon as practicable prior to the scheduled date of the Annual Meeting. The virtual Annual Meeting shall be held on the same date as the previously scheduled Annual Meeting, or as closely as practicable thereto. Notice of the meeting shall be provided to the membership as soon as practicable prior to the meeting.

(c) The regular meeting in April shall be for the purpose of receiving reports of officers and committees, and for any other business that may arise. The meeting shall be held in Washington, D.C. in conjunction with the meetings of the other Hereditary Societies.

Section 2. Special meetings of the general officers or the Executive Committee may be held on the Internet, telephone conference call, or via internet meeting/voting procedures or at a location as determined by a majority of the general officers voting. Notice of any meeting other than the annual meeting shall be delivered not less than 10 days before, with the exception of an internet meeting for a specific vote of the ExCom. This "meeting" will follow a procedure approved by a majority of the ExCom.

Section 3. Six members shall constitute a quorum.

Section 4. The meeting of the initial charter members of the Order shall have a meeting for the purpose of organizing the society in July 2012 in Phoenix, AZ in conjunction with the National Congress of the Sons of the American Revolution. The Order has been invited to participate annually with the Texas Heritage Society, the 2012 meeting of which is scheduled to meet in Houston, TX, in October 2012.

Article VII

FEES AND DUES

Section 1. (a) An application fee shall be that required by the Order of the Founders of North America. This fee together with the lifetime dues must be submitted with an applicant's Membership Application. The application fee is non-refundable. All lifetime dues collected are refundable by the Exchequer General when the applicant is judged not to have proven his or her lineage.

(b) A supplemental application fee shall be that required by the Order of the Founders of North America. This fee must be submitted with an applicant's supplemental application. The supplemental application fee is used for the processing of the supplemental application, and is non-refundable.

Section 2. No annual membership dues for regular and junior members shall be that required by the Order of the Founders of North America at the National level. Dues or fees maybe established at the state and chapter levels, if and when such a structure is adopted by the Order. "Companions of the Order" shall be required by the Order of the Founders of North America to pay the same application and dues and any other member of the order.

Section 3. The lifetime dues may be increased by a two-thirds majority of the approved members present at the annual meeting of the order. The increase in dues shall take effect in the following year.

Section 4. The fiscal year for the Order is from April 1 through March 31.

Article VIII

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Section 1. The Executive Committee shall be composed of the Grand Viscount General, the Grand Viscount General Elect, the Deputy Viscount General – East, the Deputy Viscount General – West, the Deputy Viscount General – Europe, the Abogado General, the Secretary Secretary General, the Exchequer General, Mareschal General, Genealogista General-Applications, Genealogista General-Supplementals, Registrar General, Emissary General, Vicar General, the Chronicler General, Adjutant General, and all living past Grand Viscounts General.

Section 2. The Executive Committee shall have general supervision of the affairs of the Order between its meetings. It is subject to the commands of the Order, and none of its acts shall conflict with action taken by the Order.

Section 3. Meetings of the Executive Committee shall be at the call of the Grand Viscount General, or upon ten (10) days following written request of four members of the Executive Committee. An exception is the calling of a vote of the ExCom, according to the established procedures which may occur soon that the ten days.

Section 4. At least two (2) regular meetings of the Executive Committee shall be held annually.

Section 5. Six voting board members shall constitute a quorum. Every act or decision done or made by a majority of the Executive Committee members present at a meeting duly held at which a quorum is present is an act of the Executive Committee. Each Executive Committee member shall have only one vote notwithstanding he may hold two positions each of which qualifies him for Board membership.

Section 6. Every member of the Executive Committee is required to execute an Acknowledgement of Receipt of the Conflict of Interest Policy of the OFNA, upon taking office and annually thereafter. Failure to complete this document will be grounds for removal from office.

Article IX COMMITTEES

Section 1. Such committees, or chairmen of committees, shall be appointed by the Grand Viscount General as he desires, or as the Executive Committee authorizes.

Section 2. The **Ethics Committee** shall consist of the Vicar General (who shall serve as chairman), the Abogado General, and a third General Officer to be appointed by the Grand Viscount General. All disputes between members shall be referred to the Ethics Committee for adjudication. Members may be expelled from the Order by a majority vote of the Ethics Committee upon presentation of evidence of conduct unbecoming.

Section 3. Any member expelled by the Ethics Committee, may within 30 days file a written appeal stating his reason for the appeal, and his expulsion shall be reconsidered by the Executive Committee at its next regular meeting. The ruling of the Executive Committee is final.

Section 4. A **By-Laws Committee** of at least three members in good standing shall be appointed by the GVG. This committee will elect its chairman. The committee will receive the proposed amendments to the by-laws from the members and committees and also correct any inconsistencies in the By-Laws by proposing changes. All proposed amendments will meet the criteria and deadlines established in the Bylaws. The committee will submit the proposed By-Laws amendments to the SG who will distribute to the Executive Committee for their consideration. The Executive Committee may not make changes to the proposals but may make a vote for or against each amendment. This will be recorded by the SG. The SG will send a copy of the By-Laws amendments to all approved members thirty days prior to the Annual Meeting or Regular Meeting in which they will be considered.

Article X

RULES GOVERNING THE CONDUCT OF ALL MEMBERS OF THE SOCIETY

Section 1. All members of the Order are expected to act as ladies and gentlemen. Any member of the Order with a complaint about the operation of the Order, about the operation or activities of a committee, or a group of members, or about an individual member shall also refrain from derogatory remarks, sarcasm or innuendo made orally or in writing about the Order, an officer or past officer, committee chairman or member or about a group of members. Failure to comply can result in harsh penalties reflected below.

(a) The offensive language may not be distributed in a publication, web site, e-mail list of the Order, an official publication, web site, e-mail list of another organization or through e-mails distributed to two or more individuals.

(b) A “**gross violation of ethics**” within the meaning of this by-law shall include but not be limited to the following:

1. Theft of the property of the Order,
2. Embezzlement of the funds of the Order
3. Assault by a member of the Order upon another member or guest of a member of the society at an event sponsored by the Order.
4. Intentionally misrepresenting the facts, distorting the truth, or using half-truths and/or innuendo that would in all likelihood cause direct or indirect damage to the reputation of another member, whether in writing or orally.
5. Being found guilty by the Ethics Committee for a second violation any other provision in above.
6. Conviction of a felony by any state or federal court.
7. Conviction of any misdemeanor involving moral turpitude.
8. Since serving in a leadership position in the Order requires a member to be able to manage income and expenses, pay expenses timely, and balance a checkbook and to follow a budget, any member who has declared personal or business bankruptcy may not be qualified to serve. Any member who serves in a position that requires the management of funds of the Order must immediately advise the executive committee immediately upon the filing of a personal or business bankruptcy. For those who plan to seek office in the future, the bankruptcy must be fully disclosed on each piece of literature of that candidate including solicitation letters.
9. The Executive committee may immediately remove the bankrupt member from his office and make an interim appointment to fill the vacancy. The individual appointed to fill the appointment shall serve until the next meeting of the Executive Committee, when the vacancy may be filled.

(c) Procedures upon the filing of a complaint for violation of the above rules:

1. In the event an ethics violation is charged by one member against another, that charge or complaint shall be referred by the Grand Viscount General to the Abogado General for determination that the charge or complaint meets the definition of an ethics violation. Any such complaint deemed to meet the definition of an ethics

violation shall be referred to the Ethics Committee for a hearing and determination of facts.

2. The Ethics Committee shall have the responsibility and authority to investigate alleged violation of the above rules by members of this Order. The investigation may be instituted by a written complaint or by information brought to the attention of the Chairman or a member of the committee. The committee shall hold hearings and take testimony as provided in Robert's Rules of Order newly revised.
3. The Ethics Committee shall supervise compliance with the guidelines for all candidates for national offices enumerated herein, and shall likewise supervise the conduct of all members of the Order. The committee shall monitor the conduct of members at Committee meetings, meetings of the Order, and at events sponsored in whole or in part by the Order; shall monitor articles written by members in publications of other organizations, and through private e-mail; and at any other time when so requested by the Grand Viscount General. In these instances, the committee shall proceed with the powers and authority and take such action as is provided hereinabove.

(d) Penalties for violation of Article X.

1. At the conclusion of the hearing, the committee may take such action as it deems necessary, including but not limited to private or public admonishment by the committee; or it may recommend disciplinary action to the Grand Viscount General and the Executive Committee. In the event of a recommendation for disciplinary action by the Grand Viscount General and the Executive Committee, the Executive Committee shall review the findings of the Ethics Committee and take appropriate action or no action as the case requires. The Grand Viscount General, in his sole discretion, shall have the power to cause findings to be made public. Examples of suitable disciplinary action include, but are not limited to:
 - a) cancellation of an appointment to a Committee and/or Committee Chairmanship,
 - b) withdrawal of the right to run for the position and title of a General Officer at the next annual meeting of the Order,
 - c) removal as a general officer,
 - d) public censure,
 - e) requiring a public apology to all members of the Order, or to the Executive Committee,
 - f) private letter of reprimand that will remain in the member's file.
2. A copy of any disciplinary action taken will be maintained as a permanent record in the Ethics committee permanent files. All of these penalties shall be available notwithstanding any provision of these Bylaws.
3. Penalties for "Gross Violation" of Article X.

4. Any member of the society found guilty of a “**gross ethics violation,**” as defined above, shall, in addition to any other punishment deemed fitting by the Order’s Ethics Committee and/or the Grand Viscount General, be automatically:
 - (a) be barred for a period of five (5) years from serving on any committee, task force, or other deliberative body of the Order.
 - (b) be barred for a period of five (5) years from serving as a General Officer. If upon conviction of a “**gross ethics violation**” by the Ethics Committee, the member is at that time serving as a General Officer, he shall be immediately removed from that office automatically, by virtue of these by-laws; and a notice of a vacancy should be published.
5. Any member found guilty of a “**gross ethics violation**” defined above shall have a right to have the Executive Committee review the findings and punishment allocated. That member may not continue to serve as a General Officer while waiting on the results of a hearing by the Executive Committee.
6. Any member found guilty under paragraphs defining a “**gross ethics violation**” above shall be labeled “**persona non grata,**” and as a “**persona non grata**” shall also for a period of five (5) years:
 - (a) be refused registration at any meeting or other sponsored trip or event, and
 - (b) be denied the privilege of entering the room where any meeting is scheduled to take place.
 - (c) not be recognized to speak at any meeting of the Order.
7. For acts deemed “heinous” and for repeated acts of “Gross ethics violation” the Executive Committee may expel the member from the Order. Following expulsion, the former member remains a “**persona non grata.**”
8. After a five (5) year period following expulsion, such “**persona non grata**” may file with the Executive Committee an Application for Reinstatement, together with a fee to be set by the Executive Committee, and in no case less than \$250.00. The Application should be made under oath, and signed by a Notary Public. It should contain the reasons the member feels entitled to apply for reinstatement for eligibility to resume normal participation, and should recite in detail what efforts the member has taken in the five (5) years to improve himself ethically, citing specific information that would convince the Executive Committee to allow him to be reinstated. The Application must be accompanied by two letters of recommendation from individuals who are currently General Officers or who have been General Officers from the date of conviction until the date of application. If it chooses, the Executive Committee may ask the Ethics Committee to conduct a

hearing, call witnesses, admit evidence and make a recommendation to the Executive Committee.

Article XI

SYMBOLS OF THE ORDER

Section 1. The membership medal of the Order shall consist of a red Maltese cross surmounting a blue 4-bar cross with 8-points, with a medallion in the middle with a galleon at sea surrounded by the words "ORDER OF THE FOUNDERS OF NORTH AMERICA * 1492-1692." There is a pin consisting of a compass centered on a spyglass that is affixed to the ribbon drape or neck ribbon. The ribbon drape and neck ribbon shall be gold in color. There shall be a large membership medal, and a miniature membership medal for formal wear. Only members in good standing may wear the membership medal.

Section 2. The Grand Viscount General may wear a 3" wide sash (gold in color), a padded neck chain with the society medal, and a 3" starburst to be worn on formal attire. After his term has expired, he may wear the past Grand Viscount General emblem on the padded neck chain.

Section 3. All other General Officers may wear a 2" wide sash, and a neck ribbon with the society medal.

Article XII

AWARDS

Section 1. The Grand Viscount General shall be authorized to present the following awards (this does not preclude the executive committee from recommending awards deemed appropriate):

(a) The **Legion of Merit Medal** is Gold in color, and shall be the highest award of the Order. It may be awarded to members and non-members who have distinguished themselves in fulfilling the mission of the Order. One medal may be presented each year by the Grand Viscount General serving for that year. Past Grand Viscounts General may retroactively award the medal if they did not present a medal for their year(s).

(b) The **Distinguished Service Medal** is Silver in color, and may be awarded to members after a minimum of three years of exemplary service to the Order.

(c) The **Meritorious Service Medal** is Bronze in color, and may be awarded to members and non-members for notable services on behalf of the mission of the Order.

(d) The **Commendation Certificate** may be awarded to members and non-members for service to the Order.

Section 2. A **Certificate of Appreciation** may be presented by General Officers to people assisting them in their duties, or furthering the mission of the Order.

Article XIII

PARLIAMENTARY AUTHORITY

The rules contained in Robert's Rules of Order Revised shall govern the Order in all cases in which they are applicable, and in which they are not inconsistent with the By-Laws of the Order.

Article XIV
AMENDMENT

Section 1. These By-Laws may be amended at the annual meeting or a regular meeting (not including electronic meetings) by a two-thirds vote of all members in good standing. Proposed amendments must be signed by two members and submitted in writing to the By-Laws committee 30 days prior to the vote on the amendment. The By-Laws Committee will consider and consolidate the By-Laws and produce a listing of the proposed by laws. This listing must be submitted in writing to the SG, and distributed to the approved membership of the Order at least 30 days prior to the meeting. The consideration of By-Laws amendments allows motions to amend proposed By-Laws amendments but does not permit introduction of new By-Laws or amendments. Approved amendments shall become effective upon the adjournment of the meeting at which they are adopted, unless otherwise specified in the amendment.

Section 2. All approved members in good standing of the Order shall cast votes for or against amendments, and a quorum shall be seven General Officers and ten total members including General Officers.

Article XV
OFNA PATRONS

The Grand Viscount/Viscountess General may appoint one or more Patrons to be recognized for support of the Order and accomplishments in their respective field. This appointment must be approved by a two-thirds vote of the Executive Committee. Patrons will receive a complementary and honorary membership in the Order, including a certificate, membership medal, and General Officers neck ribbon and sash. A list of Patrons will be maintained on the Order's webpage.

Article XVI
STATE/DISTRICT/FOREIGN SOCIETIES

Section 1. The Executive Committee shall have the power to grant a charter to a State Society, District Society, or Foreign Society with an association of ten (10) members residing within a State, District, or Foreign Country, or to reorganize a State Society, District Society, or Foreign Society. A District could be formed in a contiguous group of states that do not have state societies.

Section 2. State Societies, District Societies, and Foreign Societies so admitted, organized, or reorganized shall continue to exist until such time as the State Society, District Society, or Foreign Society charters are revoked, altered, or amended by the Executive Committee.

The foregoing is a true and accurate restatement of the Bylaws of the Order of the Founders of North America. These Bylaws were duly approved by vote of the organizing membership on July 8, 2012, amended at the annual meeting of 15 April 2013, amended at the annual meeting of April 8, 2015, amended at the regular meeting of September 30, 2017, amended at the annual meeting of July 7, 2019, amended at the annual meeting of July 11, 2021, amended at the regular meeting of September 25, 2021, and amended at the annual meeting of July 13, 2022.

Respectfully Submitted
Secretary General Douglas T. Collins

History of Bylaws Amendments

1. **April 15, 2013** - Article III, Section 2, revised language; Article IV, Section 1-2, revised language; Article IV, Section 3, revised language; Article V, Section 7-11, revised language; Article V, Section 19, 21, and 22 were deleted; Article V, Section 16, revised language; Article VII, Section 1-3, revised language; Article VIII, Section 2, 3 6, revised language; Article IX, Section 4 added; Article XI, Section 3, revised language; Article XIV, Section 1-2, revised language; Article XV added.
2. **April 8, 2015** – (1) Allow Supplemental Applications/Create Genealogista General-Supplementals (Modify Article IV, Section 1; Article V, Section 11; Article VII, Section 1; and Article VIII, Section 1).
(2) Change Annual Meeting to June/July (Modify Article IV, Section 2 & 3; Article VI, Section 1).
(3) Expenditures over \$100 require ExCom vote (Modify Article V, Section 9).
(4) Define the Insignia of the Order (Modify Article XI, Section 1 &2).
(5) Grant Charters to State/District Societies (Create Article XVI, Section 1 & 2).
(6) Permit Bylaw Amendments to be passed at any regular meeting (Modify Article IX, Section 4; and Article XIV, Section 1).
3. **September 30, 2017** – (1) Modify Article V, Section 1 to authorize GVG to establish non-voting positions during his term with Executive Committee approval. (2) Modify Article XIV, Section 1 to change the number of days required for Bylaws amendments to be submitted to the Bylaws Committee from 90 to 30 days prior to the vote on the amendment.
4. **July 7, 2019** – (1) Modify Article XII, Section 1 to define awards as three medals (gold, silver, and bronze), and one certificate.
5. **July 11, 2021** – (1) Replaced language in Article III, Section 4, to reform process for approving new members by only requiring a vote if there is an objection to a new member from a member of the Executive Committee; (2) Added a new subsection (b) to Article VI, Section 1 (and reclassified the old subsection (b) to (c), to allow annual meetings to be held by virtual means in the event of an emergency; and (3) correct Article V, Section 9, to remove an outdated reference to April being the month of the annual meeting.
6. **September 25, 2021** – (1) Removed the requirement in Article XII, Section 1, for the GVG to have the approval of the Executive Committee to present awards; and (2) Clarified Article IX, Section 4, to make it consistent with Article XIV, which permitted bylaws changes at regular meetings.
7. **July 13, 2022** – (1) Amended Article III, Section 3, to remove the names of societies' applications which can be used as proof in applying to the Order, so the bylaws do not need to be amended every time a new society is added to the list.