

**VASSAR 2010 Good Citizen of the Year  
Fairfax Resolves Chapter Nomination**

**Date of Chapter Good Citizenship Award:** 11 December 2010

**Biographical sketch of the candidate:**

Lawrence E. "Larry" McKinley, 65, was born in Gallipolis, OH, but he'll tell you he's a born and bred West Virginian. Gallipolis "*Gah-la-poh-liss*" OH is just across the river from Point Pleasant WV, and was where the nearest hospital happened to be back in 1945. Larry received his Bachelor's degree in biology from West Virginia University in 1967, and his Masters degree the following year in Rehabilitation Counseling. Quite the Renaissance man, he worked in neither of those fields, instead retiring from the telephone company – take your pick: AT&T, C&P Telephone, Bell Atlantic and Verizon – after more than 30 years. During this time, he was also in the Army National Guard, flying helicopters as a Medical Evacuation (MedEvac) pilot in wartime and domestic flights for the West Virginia National Guard, and the 986<sup>th</sup> Medical Detachment of the Virginia Army National Guard. He later commanded the 986<sup>th</sup> Medical Company with detachments in both Richmond and Kansas City. He flew medical evacuations in Vietnam and Operation Desert Storm in Kuwait. Retiring from the National Guard after 24 years, Larry demonstrated his natural sense of service and found his sense of duty to his fellow man as a full-time volunteer!

Moving to Northern Virginia for work with C&P Telephone, he and his wife, Mary Frances, have lived in Great Falls since March of 1983. Larry and Mary Frances have been married for 36 years and have one daughter, Holly Lynne McKinley Schmidt (Mrs. Darrin M. Schmidt), of Herndon, VA.

Larry's accolades include many military honors, organization awards (including the prestigious National SAR Minuteman Medal, the Gold SAR/C.A.R. Medal of Appreciation, and numerous annual recognitions for 500+ hours of service to an organization), but more important to Larry is the simple appreciation of those he serves. As the Fairfax Resolves Citizen of the Year for 2010, Larry was awarded a framed Bronze Good Citizenship Medal and Certificate in front of his fellow Fairfax Resolves Compatriots, spouses and friends at the Chapter meeting and Christmas social on 11 Dec 2010 .

Lawrence E. McKinley is a 15 year SAR Compatriot and has performed extraordinarily outstanding service to the SAR in multiple capacities at the Chapter, State, Regional, and National organization levels, but this award is presented for his activities beyond SAR.

Significant full-page press coverage of the presentation was published in the *Great Falls Connection* in the December 15<sup>th</sup> issue. See [www.fairfaxresolvessar.org/ffx\\_chapter\\_press.html](http://www.fairfaxresolvessar.org/ffx_chapter_press.html) for information on this article.

**Narrative statement on how the nominee has demonstrated outstanding citizenship and met the criteria for the 2010 Virginia Society of the SAR Good Citizenship Award.**

Particularly relevant to the Citizen of the Year Award, is Larry's work with youth. He has been a dedicated chairman of the annual SAR Youth Essay Contest, Rumbaugh Oration Contest, SAR Outstanding Student Recognition program, SAR Eagle Scout Recognition program and extensive involvement with the Children of the American Revolution (C.A.R.). He has been instrumental in sponsoring a C.A.R. Society while also serving as the C.A.R. Registrar and VASSAR Liaison to the C.A.R.. He also has been responsible for the Fire and EMS Awards, Law Enforcement Awards, Teacher of the Year Awards, and of course Citizen of the Year Awards. He has been the Fairfax Resolves Chapter President, VASSAR President, and soon to be a Regional Vice President. SAR is only one of the organizations to which Larry devotes his time each year. Though Fairfax Resolves normally uses the Citizen of the Year award as a method for public outreach and publicity, Larry's sustained dedicated volunteer community service activities promote the SAR in the community so much more than a single SAR award recognition could accomplish. His outstanding good citizenship activities have for too long been unrecognized by the SAR, an organization that inherently accrues much credit for Larry's actions and his well known SAR membership.

During the extensive work that Larry does within the community, he carries the SAR principles with him and obviously promotes the organization by his actions and example.

The Fairfax Resolves Citizen of the Year Award is made annually to a particularly deserving citizen who has demonstrated outstanding service to the community and Lawrence E. McKinley has certainly done this for years. He has routinely volunteered at least 40 hours weekly, providing surge support for several special events and conventions throughout the year, and tedious hours of preparation and personal study which results in approximately 3500 hours of volunteer work annually. To equate that to a full time employed position.... *Larry nearly works the equivalent of one and three quarters full time jobs.*

The quantity of his service hours is only matched by his contagious enthusiasm for the organizations he serves.

### **Selfless service to country, community and individuals characterizes Larry McKinley**

The following organizations and activities currently benefit from his direct volunteer work:

- Smithsonian Institution National Air and Space Museum
- Smithsonian Institution Air & Space Magazine
- Docent Council, National Air and Space Museum
- Reading For the Blind and Dyslexic (RFBD)
- Andrew Chapel United Methodist Church
- Boy Scout Troop 1128
- Bishop O'Connell Catholic High School
- McLean Youth Orchestra
- Girl Scouts of America
- Children of the American Revolution
- Daughters of the American Revolution
- Sons of the American Revolution

His leadership and service vita speaks volumes about his character and his leadership by example philosophy: *“Anything worth doing deserves being done well.”* In addition to the above volunteer support, the following provide details on the responsibilities he has assumed, often because no others step up:

- Docent Council of the Smithsonian Air and Space Museum
- Air and Space Museum Distance Learning for Children Around the World
- Fairfax Resolves Chapter, Sons of the American Revolution, (Past President, current Registrar, current Chaplain, current Membership Committee member, Board of Managers Member, Nominating Committee Chairman, Veterans Committee Chairman, Youth Orations & Essay Contest Committee Chairman, Color Guard Commander, and others on an often as needed basis.
- Andrew Chapel United Methodist Church English Handbell Choir (1992-Present)
- Andrew Chapel United Methodist Church Chancel Choir (1985-Present)
- Performing musical/theatrical roles in Church Potluck performances
- Distributing food to the needy as part of an ongoing Church program
- Special Handbell performances at Christmastime, or when the Hand bell choir played for church services at a senior center.
- Delivering phone books to help the church youth with an annual fundraiser.
- Participating in church work days and helping with general church maintenance
- Participating in Church Mission activities, including being the live auctioneer for special items at the annual Mission Auction
- Reading for the Blind and Dyslexic (RFBD) Reader of textbooks and novels for the blind and dyslexic, specifically biology and medical texts as well as books for children and youth.
- Air and Space Magazine audio magazine reader for worldwide distribution.
- Event Coordinator for the Great Falls C.A.R. / SAR Flag Retirement Ceremony
- Communications Merit Badge Counselor, Boy Scout Troop 1128
- Orations and Communications volunteer presenter, Bishop O’Connell High School
- Senior Society President, Children of the American Revolution
- Senior State Chairman, Virginia C.A.R./DAR/SAR/SR. Relations
- Senior National Chairman, C.A.R
- Senior National Officer, C.A.R. 2008-2012 (Registrar, 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President)
- Past President and Trustee, Virginia Society of the Sons of the American Revolution
- National Society of the SAR Orations Chairman
- Fairfax Resolves Chapter Color Guard Commander and member of the VASSAR Color Guard
- National Society of the SAR Youth Contests Chairman
- National Vice President General of the Middle Atlantic States, 2010-2011

### **Illustrative details of extraordinary “Good Citizenship” characterizing Larry McKinley**

A National Air and Space Museum Docent letter of recommendation for Larry McKinley to be the VASSAR 2010 Citizen of the Year ([Enc. 1](#)) illustrates some of his volunteer activities at the museum. “As a member of the Museum Docent Corps of well over 300 volunteers, he has donated thousands of hours (individually more than any other docent) during the past 6 years, to support The National Air and space Museum’s mission---.” As a Docent for the Air and Space Museum, Larry had to attend an initial 12

weeks of classes, involving many hours of outside research and preparation each week. He serves weekly at the Downtown Museum and at the Udvar-Hazy Center near Dulles Airport. Larry provides tours at the request of friends and family, as well as being the go-to Docent for Diplomatic tours, or tours fulfilling a child's "Make A Wish" request. He particularly enjoys working with school children, and inspiring their pilot or astronaut dreams. Larry dons his blue mock flight suit ("the Smurf suit") as part of a team that is committed to providing Distance Learning lessons for children around the world. Knowing a WWII veteran at his church, he volunteered to drive him downtown for a special one-on-one tour of the Air and Space Museum!

He prepares monthly topical tours such as "Women in Flight" for Girl Scout troops or "Black Aviators" for a school visiting from inner-city DC. He picks memorable facts (like Harriet Quimby's purple jumpsuit) and stories to share during these tours, and has even taken his "show on the road" when he recently presented a virtual tour about Naval Aviation to a Naval Academy Class reunion.

A statement by Laurel Marget, the Evening Program manager of the Recording for the Blind and Dyslexic of Metropolitan Washington, DC, ([Enc. 2](#)) characterizes the quality of Larry's service, "He is one of the select volunteers with the talent to make youth books come alive for our listeners. Listening to Larry's voice, the student's experience changes from one of frustration to one of enjoyment and inspiration for further learning and reading. Nothing could be more important!"

The hallmarks of his involvement are dedication, commitment and enthusiasm. He is consistently working for the good of the organization and the people he supports and there are many of both. Larry makes many tremendous commitments to volunteer his time and energies, and he meets each of his promises to the absolute best of his considerable abilities.

For example, Larry's preparation for Reading for the Blind and Dyslexic and the Air and Space Magazine involves pre-reading the article to avoid stumbling on difficult words and long sentences, validating pronunciations (and phonetically spelling them where necessary) and preparing Narrator's notes like the one below:

*Narrator's Note: On pages 20 and 21 there is one large photograph...which covers three quarters of both pages. It is as if a plane were flying approximately 30,000 feet off the ground of Titan, the largest moon of Saturn, the planet). The view is of mountainous terrain with a thick orange-colored haze with valleys possibly filled with carbon-based liquid like methane or ethane as measured by the Cassini Orbiter. The images are actual pictures sent back to earth by the Huygens probe and lander. There is a small circle picture insert....showing what the airplane will likely look like. A narrow cigar-shaped fuselage and delta-shaped wings with a rear pusher engine. The Caption reads: From images sent by the Huygens probe in 2005, scientists created this view of Titan from 30,000 feet – about the altitude at which an airplane would cruise. END NOTE.*

Not only is Larry committed to the education of youth, he is particularly committed to mentoring them and teaching them valuable life skills. His earnest interest in fostering enthusiasm and passion for causes in youth is something at which Larry is fantastically dedicated and the youth can see and feel his genuine commitment to them. This is evident in his work as a Boy Scout Merit Badge counselor for the

Communications Merit Badge, his decades of support for the Girl Scouts (through activities as well as cookies!), his mentorship and Senior Leadership at all levels of the C.A.R., and as the Youth Activities Chairman for the Sons of the American Revolution.

A very noteworthy letter of recommendation for Larry McKinley to be the VASSAR 2010 Citizen of the Year is from Children of the American Revolution adult leaders, Hans E. Jackson, Sr., Past Vice President General and current 1<sup>st</sup> Vice President of the National Society of the C.A.R. and Trish Jackson, Sr. National Convention Chair and Past Sr. C.A.R. National Officer is worthy of particular consideration. The letter (Enc. 3) cites Larry McKinley's "commitment to promote the ideals of patriotism, historic education, and his underlying support of the members of the C.A.R. and all young persons in their endeavors to be positive members of society." The letter goes on to cite Larry having "volunteered large amounts of hours to perform the work behind the scenes that makes the C.A.R. a vibrant and relevant organization." Specifically cited is his travelling around the country for the C.A.R., "to promote the national programs and work with the members of the organization to spread the message of being a positive member of the community." His efforts in this area are cited as being motivated by his "passion for celebrating the rights and responsibilities of being a citizen of our country and local communities; and assisting young people in their efforts to give back to society ---." In a letter of recommendation for SAR Citizen of the Year for Larry McKinley, Robert Leggett, Scoutmaster for Boy Scout Troop 1128, cited Larry's mentorship of the Communications Merit Badge as having helped many boys achieve the rank of Eagle Scout as well as other awards and scholarships that can accrue to those having achieved Eagle Scout status.

According to the current Fairfax Resolves SAR Chapter President, John E. Sweeney, who has observed Larry McKinley for years, Larry performs wonderfully as a coach and master of ceremonies for the SAR Rumbaugh Youth Oration Contest, Larry does all he can to ensure all of the contestants achieve to the best of their ability. His efforts have always yielded extremely competitive performances and in 2009 his extraordinary mentorship clearly was instrumental in the Fairfax Resolves SAR Chapter Rumbaugh Oration Contest entry, Kristi Bowers, speaking on the topic of "It's Only Common Sense," winning both the Virginia Society and National Society competitions. Kristi's extraordinary talents and the mentoring by Larry McKinley, a first-rate coach in a field, resulted in this extraordinary achievement for an outstanding young woman, the Virginia Society of the SAR and the Fairfax Resolves Chapter. Kristi Bowers has been positively impacted for the rest of her life by this experience of success.

Larry McKinley's outreach extends to the broader community and persons of all ages. Mr. Robert Leggett's letter of recommendation (Enc. 4), as the Andrew Chapel United Methodist Church's Director of Music and Former Vienna Choral Society Director, describes Larry as a stalwart in the Society's bass section and also an important member of the Chapel's choir for about 25 years and also an English Handbell Choir member for over eighteen years! The performances at religious services and other special audiences, such as local senior centers, reach out with their talents to the entire community. Bob Leggett also cites Larry's behind the scenes contributions as a member of various church committees to include confirmation mentorship, building maintenance, and the church's increasingly important feeding of the hungry and elderly transportation support.

Beyond organizational activities, Larry McKinley is an active citizen on a very personal level. He looked forward to Jury Duty when he was called for the first time this past year. He also ensures that neighbors' driveways are cleared of snow, drives elderly members to church services and elsewhere as requested, and sees that others with special needs are accommodated when getting to functions. He does this for organizations he is associated with (SAR, church) or anything else – even if it's across the state! With his son-in-law, he braved an oncoming "Snowpocalypse" to re-hang a DAR Marker that had been repaired at the Occoquan Workhouse.

These and all of the other good citizenship actions by Larry McKinley, encompassing veterans support, charitable giving, philanthropy, and community outreach across the United States and epitomize an extraordinarily broad scope and depth of impact achieved at great personal sacrifice of his time, treasure and talents. He is huge asset for the local community, the nation, and indeed internationally, with his reading for the blind. His highly successfully good citizen activities with broad based impacts are achieved through exceptional and consistent dependability, creativity, initiative, responsibility and leadership. These outstanding qualities are profoundly appreciated by all who know of Larry's good citizenship volunteerism, as the enclosed letters of recommendation clearly convey.

JOHN E. SWEENEY  
President, Fairfax Resolves  
SAR Chapter, VASSAR

#### 4 Enclosed Letters of Recommendation

1. Col. S. Mark Jones, National Air and Space Museum Docent Corps
2. Laurel Marget, Recording for the Blind & Dyslexic of Metropolitan Washington
3. Hans E. Jackson and Trish Jackson, National Society of the Children of the American Revolution
4. Robert Leggett, Boy Scout Troop 1128 Leader & Director, Andrew Chapel Methodist Church Music and Vienna Choral Society