

NATIONAL LADIES AUXILIARY OF THE SONS OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION

GUIDELINES for the HOSPITALITY ROOM

At every Congress, a meeting room is assigned to the Host Society to serve as a gathering place for the women in attendance. The setup and amenities of the room are negotiated by the Congress Planning Chair and the hotel with input from the Host Society. Only the Congress Planning Chair can modify the arrangements.

The following are suggestions for the planning and operation of the Hospitality Room based on lessons learned from past Congresses.

Setup. The room should have tables and chairs arranged for socializing as well as tables for display of fundraising items.

Staffing. The Host Society and its Auxiliary, if there is one, control the staffing of the room. Experience shows that having a single chairperson designated to hold the room key and interface with the Congress Planning Chair makes for smoother administration of the room. Volunteers are primarily from the Host Society but can be drawn from other states, especially those who recently hosted a Congress or who are scheduled to host a future Congress. This allows for a sharing of experience. At least one volunteer should be “on duty” whenever the room is open.

Hours. The Host Society controls the hours of the room. At a minimum, it should be open to the ladies whenever the men are in meetings and should be closed during the events that are included in registration (e.g., Memorial Service). Hours should be posted outside the room throughout Congress.

Security. The chairperson will ensure the room is locked during closed hours.

Refreshments. Beverages, such as morning coffee/tea or afternoon soft drinks, and snacks, such as cookies or candy, are usually provided in the room. The hotel contract will determine whether these are provided exclusively by the hotel or if the Host Society can bring in refreshments from the outside. Only the Congress Planning Chair can direct the hotel to provide additional refreshments; anyone other than him personally bears the cost for such requests.

Information. Information on the Congress location is often placed in the room. The availability of local maps, restaurant listings, and other “tourist” information is helpful for the ladies, even if it was included in the welcome bag. The ladies welcome bag is a great place to “advertise” the Hospitality Room with a flier listing the location, the hours, and things available in the room.

Activities. The room is usually stocked with puzzles, games, and playing cards for the ladies to use. Materials for service projects, such as Thank You cards for veterans, are also often included.

Fundraising. The room is traditionally used for fundraising by both the NLSAR and the State Auxiliaries. The NLSAR Second Vice President is the lead for the National Auxiliary fundraising activities and can assist the state auxiliary if needed. Each state has its own laws for fundraising; the ladies will need to coordinate with the Congress Planning Chair and the Host state to determine what fundraising activities are legal or what needs to be done to comply with state rules.

The most common fundraisers are Silent Auctions of donated gift baskets, Colonial Clothing, and other items. Silent Auction bid sheets should indicate the beneficiary of the funds raised. The Silent Auction normally closes 30-60 minutes after women return from the Ladies Luncheon.

Raffles are another common fundraiser. The NLSAR and the states raffle large items such as a patriotic quilt. These raffles are often not exclusive to the Congress, that is, sometimes the tickets are sold at Leadership Meetings or other events before or after the Congress. Tickets for these items should be the type that includes the name and contact info of the ticket holder. If the raffle is to be drawn at the Congress, it is generally done at one of the banquets; this is coordinated with Congress Planning Chair.

Opportunity Raffles, sometimes called Paper Bag or Cup raffles, are another common fundraiser. Participants place one half of the ticket in the container next to the item they wish to win and retain the other half of the ticket. At a designated time, a ticket is pulled from each container and the winning number is announced. While this type of raffle can be held at Congress, it is unwieldy with a large group, especially when tickets can be purchased over multiple days, and is not recommended.

This is not an all-inclusive list for planning and hosting a Hospitality Room at Congress but meant as a helpful starting point for Host Societies.