

Hello Compatriots,

Last weekend was our Empire State Society Board of Managers meeting, at which time I provided an update to our Board and Guests on a project that has been underway for the last several months.

I'm pleased to be able to share with you that beginning with the Annual Dues Renewal for 2020; the Empire State Society has made online dues payments available to you for the first time. This is enabled via our own online ESS system, and is brought to you as a combination of in-house volunteer development efforts by the ESS Online Database Committee and with the cooperation of your Chapter Officers.

Some Background

Online payment capability is powered via PayPal. You are not required to have or open a PayPal account in order to make a payment, as you can also use a credit card. However, we do utilize PayPal as our payment processor, and as such, there are fees associated with the usage. Because of that, we are required to share an Online Processing Fee with our membership in order to ensure that the Chapters still receive the same amount of money, whether is it paid by traditional paper check or via the online payment system. This system will highlight the fee structure upfront, so there is no confusion about what the member gets charged versus what the Chapter receives. (Bear in mind, you will see the fees are not high, and you do save with convenience of the online payment and the lack of needing a postage stamp to mail a check).

NOTE: if you do not wish to pay online, that is perfectly fine, and you can still follow the instructions on the dues renewal letter about writing a check and mailing it to your Treasurer.

How the Online Payment Works

The process is entirely web based, and you can find links directly from the Empire State Society homepage: <https://www.ess-sar.org>

The only information required in order to submit payment is your National Member#, your State Member#, and your 5 digit zip code. Since all of these are printed on the Dues Letters you will be receiving soon, it is information that is very easy to locate. If you are a member of multiple chapters (Dual Chapter memberships), you can pay those online as well; with the caveat that the Primary Chapter must be paid first. The Online Payment page will show you a listing of available memberships to pay, and ensure you pay the primary one first.

Important Notes

1. Most Important ==> If you believe there is a problem with the dues amounts shown on the website, please reach out to me BEFORE making payment.
2. The online dues system is not tracking information about change of address, email, phone numbers, etc.
If any of those apply, please notify your Chapter officers that there are changes to me made.
3. This program was an opt-in program. Because your are receiving this email, your Chapter has agreed to opt-in to this program. This has required additional work by your Chapter officers

and I just wanted to acknowledge and thank them here for their help and cooperation, as this would not be an option without them.

4. Because this was an opt-in program this year, the online payment opportunity is not printed on the dues letters that were distributed at last week's ESS Board of Managers meeting. This email serves as notification of the availability for the Saratoga Battle Chapter, and if you lose this email, you can go to the state website and see the option on the left side to pay dues online.
5. This system also allows you to make Optional Donations to the Society (just like the paper letter has space for them). Please consider making an optional donation. The amounts and destinations (your Chapter, the State Society, or the National Society) are determined by you and are very much appreciated and help enable activities within the Society.
6. Finally, for any problems / concerns / feedback / suggestions, feel free to let me know directly, or use the link at the bottom of the Pay Dues web page. This is the first year we're doing this, we want it to be successful for our members and the Society as a whole.

What to do Now

The paper dues letters are currently being distributed to your Chapter Treasurer so that they can be mailed out to you. (same process as has always occurred)

When you are ready to make your payment, you can do so by:

- Visiting our state website, you can go to the following page: <https://www.ess-sar.org/paydues>
- Or visit the website home page and click on the link on the left side for "Online Dues Payments"

That will take you to a page that will provide a bit more background on this program. Additionally, that page has a link to more detailed documentation on how to pay the dues via the online system, with screenshots of each step within the process. Please take the time to review this document, it is a very quick read (it's all screenshots). Finally, at the bottom of that page is a link that takes you directly to the payment system, where you can make your payment.

In closing, I hope you find this new capability of making online payments to your Chapter a useful addition, and potentially make it simpler for you to submit your dues renewals. Again, if you have any questions/concerns, please feel free to reach out to me, or click the Feedback links on the bottom of the webpages.

Sincerely,

Erick Krueger
ESS Online Database Committee (co-chair)
ESS Board of Managers