



## **GRAND PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE**

**April / May 2021**

**As my short-term winds down, I am so grateful for all the wonderful people I was able to meet and exciting places I visited over the past 10 years as a Grand Officer of the Native Sons of the Golden West.**

**I just completed a double dedication in Humboldt County and concluded a 1,600-mile trip over a five-day period. The lengthy trip may have been the highlight of my entire 10 years as a Grand Officer as I attended Humboldt State University in the 1980s and haven't been back until now. It was truly a look back into my past with many things changed but just as many remaining the same.**

**I think the beauty of the Northern Counties and the Giant Redwoods is just spectacular. But even more stunning is the unique geography, climate and environment of this wonderful State of California. From the Giant Redwoods of Humboldt County; to the awesome coastline with the rocky beaches of Northern California and the warm beaches of Southern California; to the tallest and longest mountain range in the United States—the Sierra Nevada; to the hot, dry but stunning desert areas of southern and eastern California; our fantastic state offers much to see, enjoy and do.**

**We are indeed the Golden State, and with our own very special history going back to the largest number of Native Americans in the United States; to the Spanish, English and Russian explorers; to the Mexican ranchos and settlements; and home to one of the most significant events in our Nation's history, the California Gold Rush; all of these are the reasons which has made California a very special place indeed.**

**The Native Sons of the Golden West is the oldest historical-based organization in the State, giving us a unique place in our own state's special history. After traveling, throughout the state, I am amazed each trip I take as it seems I see something new each time.**

**For example, on my latest trip I actually saw a rope and hand-pulled 1913 Otis elevator at one of our dedication buildings and a group of llamas lounging in a green pasture. I was hoping to get a glimpse of Big Foot but even though I didn't see him, I just know that he was out there watching me.**

**It's been a challenging year but I'm so grateful for my time this year and the past 10 years of being a Grand Officer. It is an experience which I will always remember and being a member of the Native Sons of the Golden West is just like our golden State of California, a time to be proud of, a Golden year as the Grand President of the Native Sons of the Golden West.**

**In Friendship, Loyalty and Charity,  
Joe Castillo Grand President**