

National President's 2017 Annual Report

By CW4 (Ret) Greg Gouty
National President, USAWOA



It was truly a pleasure to join our USAWOA board of directors (BOD), Members, spouses, and friends at the 45th Annual Meeting of Members (AMM) in Washington, DC. I sincerely thank the National Vice President, our Executive Director, and the Northeastern Region Director for hosting this year's Annual Meeting. I also want to thank our spouses who joined us and say thank you to the hotel and convention center staffs, and our friends from the Association of the United States Army, for working with us to make this a successful and memorable event.

Like I said in my address last year, "If you don't think our Association is busy working on behalf of its members and surrounding communities, then just listen to the reports that are going to be given here this week." We have been active from the Chapter level to the national level. As relayed in the Region Directors' Reports, Chapters have donated thousands of dollars – and volunteered thousands of hours – in support of their surrounding communities and other worthwhile organizations.

National officials reported on membership, the financial status of the association, and the important work we do on Capitol Hill, in partnership with more than 30 other organizations in The Military Coalition (TMC). Our 100th Anniversary Observance Committee also reported on all the hard work being done in preparation for celebrations of our Warrant Officer cohort's century of service next year.

Membership

Our membership has swelled by approximately 1,000 since last year. As our National Vice President reported, he has continued implementing his predecessor's (Past National Vice President, Gerry Wentworth's) three-point plan, to retain existing Members and recruit new ones. It is a simple plan:

1. Sign up non-Member attendees at Chapter Meetings
2. Ensure "about to expire" Members renew their memberships

3. Follow up on dropped Members, if they have fallen through the cracks

Success requires the involvement of Region Directors and Chapter leaders, in making contact with members who need to renew their membership. Many of these are new WO1s, who are provided an initial no-cost 18 month membership. We must welcome these new members, and each Chapter leader needs to reach out and make contact with them when they arrive at their first duty stations.

The Company Grade Warrant Officer Action Committee is comprised of six regional representatives and one national chairperson. Part of its charter is to canvass the company-grade (CG) Warrant Officer population, disseminating information and soliciting issues that affect the entire CG Warrant Officer community. The committee is charged with offering solutions to those issues identified to the USAWOA Board of Directors and the Executive Committee. Members of this committee are:

Chairman –

CW2 Richard Vandeway

Northeastern Region –

CW2 Keith H. Watson

Southeastern Region –

WO1 Toby Tennyson

Mid Southern Region –

CW2 Devane R. Love

Mid Northern Region –

WO1 Matthew Tormey

European Region –

CW2 James W. Aylor

Western Region –

CW2 Andrew J. VanCannon

Representation

We want our Members to be involved with what we do on Capitol Hill and with TMC. So we provided 13 legislative resolutions to be debated at this year's meeting. Having been approved, these will form the basis of next year's USAWOA mission with TMC, the Pentagon, Congress, and the White House:

- End Sequestration
- Properly Fund Our Nation's Armed Services
- Survival of the All-Volunteer Force
- Support the Army Staff Senior Warrant Officer and Army Senior Warrant Officer Council
- Fair Uniformed Service Member Pay Increases
- Oppose Reductions to Basic Allowance for Housing (BAH)
- Adequately Fund Retirements of the Future Force
- Provide Complete Concurrent Receipt of Military Retirement and VA Disability Compensation
- Oppose TRICARE Beneficiary Cost Increases
- Oppose TRICARE Pharmaceutical Cost Increases
- Adequate Funding and Appropriate Management Flexibility for the Department of Veterans Affairs
- Provide Equivalent Benefits to All Service Members Serving On Active Duty Orders
- Institution of Compulsory National Service Obligation

Last year we had three resolutions that were resolved:

Resolution 2017-012 – Unified Medical Recordkeeping System for All Uniformed Services and the Department of Veterans Affairs: VA Secretary Shulkin announced earlier this year that he would use his authority to short circuit the usual acquisition process, and adopt virtually the same system as the DoD is currently in the process of fielding. The forecast for placing this into production is approximately two years, but it looks like a done deal, so this resolution is removed from the 2018 document.

Resolution 2017-013 – Uniformed Services Former Spouses Protection Act Reform: This was solved with an amendment to the National Defense Authorization Act of 2017, last December,

Continued on page 25

National President's Annual Report 2017 - Continued from page 3

which amended the Uniformed Services Former Spouses Protection Act (USFSPA). USAWOA sent one of the first letters in support of Congressman Russell's initial submission of this, in April 2016.

Resolution 2017-014 – Recognize All Retired Guardsmen and Reservists as Veterans: Originally raised more than a decade ago at an AMM, by Fort Dix Doughboy Chapter Member CW2 (Ret) Ben F. Gottfried (and subsequently raised as a TMC issue by USAWOA), this was also achieved at the end of last year, so it was removed from the 2018 resolutions document.

"Eagles Rising" Painting

On 4 April 2015, the USAWOA entered into a contract with renowned Military Artist Todd A. Krasovetz for the creation of the Warrant Officer 100th year anniversary (2018) painting. The unveiling is scheduled for July of next year.

An enlarged photo of the nearly complete painting was displayed on an easel at the 45th Annual Banquet and Ball, and post cards were distributed with the original approved concept drawing on the front, and the following description on the back:

"Eagles Rising"

A Painting by Todd Krasovetz

We are pleased to announce USAWOA's third Warrant Officer Painting, scheduled for unveiling on the Warrant Officer cohort's 100th birthday in 2018.

Ambitious in scope, it seeks to encompass 100 years of our history – from our humble beginnings as mine planters in World War I, and through every conflict since, as eagles rising to become the technical experts we are at today's leadership table.

We hope all who view this painting will see a part of themselves, or that it evokes a fond memory of someone they have counted on and perhaps loved in the past...

A Warrant Officer... A Quiet Professional...

Huge thanks go to National Vice President CW5 Joachim Consiglio, who took the lead on making this project a reality. Look for an article by him at the beginning of the year, describing how you can become a

proud owner of an "Eagles Rising" numbered print. It is a magnificent piece of art, and the proceeds will provide critically needed revenue to support your association.

Final Thoughts

I would like to take a moment to thank all Members who religiously support our USAWOA Annual Fundraiser. The association has not raised membership dues in more than two decades, but as you can imagine our cost of doing business has more than tripled over the same time period.

Consequently, revenues generated by this program, and projects like the painting described above are vital to keeping us afloat. This year we were pleased to distribute \$10,500 in prize money to our lucky winners. It is one of my greatest pleasures as National President to notify the winners. I think the best part is that in doing so, I am bringing joy to at least a few of our dedicated loyal Members. Folks, thanks for continuing to support you association.

I also thank all of our folks who support the USAWOA Scholarship Foundation (USAWOASF). This year, the USAWOASF was able to fund 17 scholarships. For all the details, please read USAWOASF President CW5 Gary Nisker's annual report on page 23. In it he describes the foun-

dation's activities over the past year, and provides well-deserved thanks to all who supported its efforts.

Thank you to those Warrant Officers who have gotten new members to join our Association. Our National Vice President, CW5 Joe Consiglio, works hard every month with membership. Thanks Joe for all the hard work you do! But this isn't a one man/woman show. We need your continued help. Membership is everyone's responsibility. I challenge each Region Director and every Member of the association to push for membership this coming year. If **all of us** put forth the effort, the association will grow!

I would be remiss in not offering my heartfelt personal thanks to our loyal, dedicated employees at the national headquarters, superbly led by Executive Director CW4 (Ret) Jack Du Teil. Without the incredible job done by Mr. Herb Rundgren and Mrs. Theresa Casteel, we simply could not continue our mission. Folks, we can't afford to pay you even half of what you deserve, but please know how important you are to us all.

Finally, thanks to my beautiful wife Deb, the love of my life – you have always supported me. Thanks for sharing my dreams, and helping make so many of them come true...

God bless each and every one of you! 🇺🇸

Credit for prior military training



**COLUMBIA
SOUTHERN
UNIVERSITY**

Always Forward ➤

ColumbiaSouthern.edu/Military | 877.347.6050

Gainful employment information available at ColumbiaSouthern.edu/Disclosure.