

Greetings from European Region,

As we come together for the 34th Annual Meeting of Members, I think back to the European Region pre 91 drawdown years when ER had 34 active chapters with over 1000 members and the annual German American fests where chapters volunteered to operate the beer taps and manned food booths to support their communities. Unfortunately, those times are gone. As US Army Europe transforms from over 65,000 soldiers to under 28,000 it is inevitable that our membership numbers will continue to decline. At one time, the largest region within our association it seems we will be relegated to the smallest as European transformation is completed in 2012. As the adage goes "change is constant", we are now in the planning stages for ER's transformation. The following is what we think the ER footprint will look like post 2012. USAREUR will have four enduring major communities where we plan to have active chapters. 1. Wiesbaden, the new home for USAREUR headquarters. 2. Grafenwoehr\Wilseck, the new home of the 2nd Cavalry Regiment (STRYKER). 3. Ansbach\Katterbach, the home of the 12th Combat Aviation Brigade. 4. Kaiserslautern, home of the 21st Expeditionary Support Command. End state will be four chapters (yet unnamed) with the home of the ER office still to be determined. The writing on the wall paints a bleak picture for the region that was at the forefront of the WOA a mere 15 years ago; or maybe it does not.

As we continue to downsize and lose members, we need to remember our members are being displaced to other CONUS areas with existing chapters. National's general membership will not suffer from ER's loss, what it will do is make other chapters stronger. We here in ER certainly have some challenges facing us but we are up to facing these challenges. The following are some great things ER chapters have accomplished over the past year.

Grafenwoehr\Wilseck (Oberpfalz Franken) has received a number of new warrants with the 2CR, along with existing area warrants they continue to grow, last month they raised over 800.00 at a weekend fundraiser, they are also planning on occupying a new "hut" in the near future.

Hanau Silver chapter although non-enduring, recently rejuvenated their chapter by sponsoring a membership drive and softball fundraiser, which raised over 400.00 for their upcoming Turkey for Troops program.

Ansbach\Katterbach is slowly rebuilding their membership, as they face the challenges of yet another upcoming deployment in the support of GWOT.

Wiesbaden has recently elected a new president; they are eagerly awaiting the arrival of the new UR headquarters and its accompanying warrants. They also sponsored a raffle on Heidelberg's boat ride and raised over 400.00.

Kaiserslautern (Rhineland Platz Silver) has had a significant increase in membership over the past 4 months and continues to grow even as the 21st TSC transforms to an ESC.

Heidelberg has had some turmoil this past year and membership has stagnated, the good news is a new president has been elected and some stellar warrants both active and retired have stepped up to ensure the chapter does not fail. Heidelberg sponsored their annual boat rides and Wounded Warrior program again this year enjoying great success and loads of appreciation from our wounded warrior's.

Mannheim (Rhine Neckar Silver) enjoyed a prosperous year with its annual fundraiser (no not the beer booth) and Christmas Bell Ringing campaign for needy families. Mannheim, sad to say, will not be an enduring community but the chapter has vowed to stay active until the last warrant departs.

Another highlight during this past year was our WOPD that ER sponsored during the AMM in June. We had over 130 warrants from throughout Germany attend briefings given by the 21TSC commander BG Scott West along with HRC and 1st PERSCOM representatives.

As our past ER president Jim Wilson stated in last years report, “The numbers of chapters we have, as well as the number of Warrant Officers, are demising, but our spirits and resolve remains high”. That sentiment has not changed in the past year and we are optimistically looking toward the future.

As the European theater continues its transformation our members although dwindling will continue to prove their dedication and resolve to our Corps and our association. We will continue to embrace the ideals of our association and represent our corps with pride and professionalism.

Thank you and God bless our military and our country.

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