

Mr. President, Board of Directors and Members: It is a pleasure to address you here today.

I am extremely excited and proud to announce that due to the hard work of your USAWOA, you will be getting the warrant officer targeted pay raise that we have been working so hard for, for over 12 years. The pay raise will range from 1% to as much as 8.3%. The effective date of this raise will be 1 April 2007 and that is on top of the 2.2 COLA increase programmed for 1 January 2006. I want to say that and then say that it is not right yet; but we will continue the good fight to correct it.

Since the last time that we met, we have unintentionally become much more of a self-managed, self-directed association under the watchful eye of our President, Mr Roy Valiant. After many years and a series of unbelievably talented officers acting as our executive directors (ED) we have found ourselves without someone to take the day to day controls of our affairs. Mr. Valiant has in advertently stepped into the role of not only overseeing our organization as the president but also running the inter workings of our Association due to the absence of an ED on our staff.

Because of the vacant ED position, your BODs have had the duties of splitting up into smaller part-time positions the ED duties in an attempt to attract the same level talent and still serve our end state objective of representing - you our Army's Warrant Officer Corps and to ensure the day to day requirements and obligations that we have to you our members. The division of labor (categories) ended up being NEWSLINER Editor, Legislative Advisor, Office Manager, the Bookkeeper and Member Services Manager. Our ED has always been our chief writer, editor, our office manager, our liaison to Capitol Hill, the Pentagon, the Hoffman building, congressional subcommittees and other locations in and around our nation's capitol. In short the ED has been the face of our association.

Therefore, we hired Mr Herb Rundgren as our full-time office and member services manager and Ms Terri Casteel as our Bookkeeper that work in our Home Office. Our editor for the (now) monthly NEWSLINER is Serge Obolensky. At that same time, we have increased our services to our members by adding another edition (from 11 to 12) to the annual publication requirement (this was now possible as before the ED was totally consumed with AMM in the fall and had limited time to devote to that month's edition). Ray Bell has agreed to continue on a temporary basis to perform for us as the Legislative Advisor. Mr. Dave Welsh has received numerous awards for his efforts as our webmaster. Since his involvement with our web site, it has moved a light speed. His work has truly rivaled the NEWLINER as a best source of information to the USA Warrant Officer and our association.

Our writers for the NEWLINER have been (for the most part) your board of directors. This has really been a blessing as we have had the true pleasure of getting a great deal of fascinating articles from all over the country. In addition, we have observed significant strides made by the two major spin off organizational structure in both the heritage foundation headed by Dave Welsh, which has presently working on a second edition of the History of the Warrant Officers published by Turner Publishing Company. In addition, the scholarship foundation headed by Bob Scott has been no less remarkable by providing much needed scholarship money to the many well deserving dependants in our association. The center piece of their funding have been from both the contribution made by you in our raffle tickets and from the now very well

established contribution made by the Combined Federal Campaigns or CFC. I encourage you all to join me and support this extremely worthy cause.

The good news and solution to this situation is we have actively interviewed large volume of people for this position and have selected one to start sometime between the ending of this meeting and on or about 1 November 2006. We are only waiting on his acceptances of the offer to announce his name; I look forward to working very intently with him over the next months and years to better represent you, our Corps and to add his contributions up at next years AMM. It is my desire that he become the new “face” of our association.

Our relationship with The Military Coalition (TMC) continues to grow better, stronger and closer as we work toward our common good together. With the expert hand of Mr. Bell our legislative LNO to ensure our mutual goals are farther developed and reinforced. In that organization, we have an equal vote with 36 very powerful military associations that now number over 6 million voters. Most of you know that where we can, we try to develop organizational alliances with issues for our members that are common concerns across the DOD and HQDA spectrum. For example on the topic of retirement benefits are worked through the TMC as it has potential to benefit all members of the military retirement community (current and future) and not just the Warrant Officer Corps which then frees up our staff with the time to allow us to focus on only Warrant Officer unique issues for you.

Another example in our desire to assist you (our members) is an idea that was brought up at our last meeting in Tucson. It is an effort that we have initiated which, at present described as the Simultaneous Membership or Dual Membership Program. Executive leaders of several other military associations’ such as AUSA, AAAA, and MOAA have received this very favorably. This would allow members to affiliate with several military organizations at a reduced cost. We see this as a win-win opportunity for you our members and for the other associations that you are or might like to affiliate with as member of. This topic is still open and I will report to you as significant events occur. As you can imagine this gets very complicated when we study the different kinds of memberships, multiyear memberships and life membership programs. Collectively we have so far only been able to agree on an association one-on-one agreements.

The print “The Quite Professional” is sold-out and those lucky investors can just about name their price if they wanted to sell their copy. Don Stivers has graced us with a second print that is selling at about the same rate as the original. The “Let Go!” print will need to be followed by a third in the series as soon as investment savvy buyers finish grabbing up this print. They will most likely be gone by the time we meet again in the Military District of Washington area in 2008. We have begun initial discussions on our next print in the USAWOA series. The thoughts at this point are something that would show the bond between the Warrant Officer and Non-Commissioned Officer (NCO) Corps. If anyone of our members wants to be able to say that they had a hand in its designed, please think about how it might be laid out and presented to Mr. Strivers.

As I read the chapter minutes I can clearly see that some of the chapters are struggling with get a crowd to show up for there meetings. I would like to offer these thoughts to assist you. You need to offer your members a reason to come. Your members need to feel like you are giving

them more value by coming to your meeting than the cost of there dues plus what ever else that they would be doing by not coming to your meeting. Therefore, I say this, to suggest to you that as an elected top official of your chapter it is your duty to conducting your business portion of your meeting and then reward your members with a professional developing and networking social opportunity. To find out what that is many times it is as simple as asking them what they would like to be exposed to. Retirement services, promotion requirements, military and civilian education requirements, resume building, job networking, career management, etc. As the week progresses I would like to invite you track me down and we can discuss what would best suit the needs of your chapter and your members.

To the soldiers that have been protecting us all in the global war on terrorism in the middle east. I have attended too many Purple Heart award ceremonies over the past few years. However, let me ask each of you to testify to the critiques of this war on terror. Making this war take place on foreign soil is far better than allowing it to creep onto United States soil for our families' children to have to first hand witness in person. For that, I want to personally thank each one of you for your part in that success.

Ladies and Gentlemen! I am very concern for our Corps. My duties in Army force management and as a force developer we are transition into the Modular Army we are growing more warrant officer spaces in that migration and we have not demonstrated that we can recruit and retain to this level. Those that are in our great Corps are an aging group, so much so; that the majority of us are retirement eligible now. Our Corps as a whole needs to grow to remain viable. If we cannot fill the ever-increasing structure that we have lobbied and earned being the true professional that we are, the rest of the Army will be forced to find other methods of finding people to complete this very important work. The best recruiters are our selves. Please take a moment out of your busy schedules to talk to the outstanding young soldiers and NCO that we need to work along side of us and ultimately back-fill us.

Membership numbers over the past year have grown a little over eight and a half percent. However, we still need each one of you to help us in our efforts of a common good. We need more members! Our over all population is nearly 25,000 Army warrant officers on active status and countless more retirees. In my ten-year tenure as a participant in the EXCOM, I have watched our numbers climb steadily. The one and only true solution is by being a professional and keeping all warrant officers as members of our fine association. We have a very large void in some areas that we do the greatest good. This I refer to as a misrepresented population. Aviation for example, is 48 % of our numbers however is only 15% of our association. Another example of this is - by force structure design our largest needs are for CW2s however, our association membership is made up of only 14% W2s. We have attempted several programs that have proven quite successful; like the no-cost membership for W1s that has nearly doubled their numbers in the past 12 months. That combined with that groups rate of renewal is over half (50%) is proving to be admired by other many associations. It is my recommendation to the BOD that we continue this program through the unforeseeable future. I plead with you to help me with innovative ideas (or even wild brainstorm) to support these issues.

This is an election year and it as expected we will show a rotation of some of your BODs. I would like to thank each member of your board of directors for their devotion to our Corps by

stepping up to the “plate” and serving the Association over the past several years. These jobs come without pay and demand significant challenges and I want to encourage you all in turn to one day fill these duties. Please join me in thanking”:

- Director Mid-North Region- CW5 Howard Lundin
- Director Mid-South Region- CW4 Candis "Candy" Martin
- Director Northeast Region- CW4 Pete Hill
- Director Southeast Region- CW4 Robert "Bob" Lee
- Director Western Region- CW4 Harry Wilson
- Assistant Vice President for National Guard Affairs- CW5 Rhea Pruett
- Assistant Vice President for Reserve Affairs- CW4 Janie Diamond
- Assistant Vice President for Veterans Affairs- CW4 Percy Butler
- CW5 Anthony Rotti, (newly elected) President, European Region

The rest of the list are the Chapter Presidents where the “rubber truly meets the road” and the lion share of our work takes place. In addition, our subcommittee members and chairs, where the individually focused work is accomplished for BOD. This list is too extensive to name everyone but I want to make mention of their effort and wise council to the EXCOM and BOD.

I would be very remiss if I did not thank CW4 Robert E. Lee, Director and Dick Sauer Deputy Director of the Southeast Region and CW5 “Mac” Mcinnis, President of the Florida Sunshine Chapter and all the gang in the Southeast Region for hosting us here in the Tampa/Saint Petersburg area.

Finally, I trust that you will have a productive and enjoyable week here as we endeavor to conduct the work of our Corps!

Our next Annual Meeting of the Members is scheduled for San Antonio, Texas and I hope that “all yawls” have made plans to attend the Alamo/river walk city. Personally, I look forward to this meeting, as it will bring me back to some of the best memories of my first military assignment in the Army.

Thank you.

Your humble servant....Respectfully submitted,

For the Corps!

CW5 Gary Nisker
Vice President
USAWOA