

USAWOA NATIONAL PRESIDENT'S REPORT TO THE 37TH ANNUAL MEETING

Board of Directors, Members, Spouses and Guests: It is a pleasure to address you today.

Since the last time that we met, we have continued to be a self-managed and self-directed association under the watchful eye of your volunteer Board of Directors (BOD). 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. I have not only been overseeing our organization as the president but also running the inner workings of our Association due to the absence of an Executive Director on our staff. The solution to this situation is we are actively seeking applications for the position of Executive Director (ED). It is my desire that we find the new "face" of our association. If anyone in this room might be remotely interested in this position we would love to chat with you about what is involved.

Over the year I have gone to the Warrant Officer Career College on numerous occasions to present the most deserving WO1s with the Class Honor Graduate and Class Leadership Awards in person. Much of these trips have been documented in past editions of our NEWLINER.

Last fall about this time, I was requested by CCWO Tommy O'Sullivan, NGB and CCWO Jimmy Thompson, USAR to represent them at the Senior Warrant Officer Advisory Council (SWOAC) as a voting member. While there I was successful in cementing a formal relationship between SWOAC and USAWOA by a majority vote. Their Chairman (CW5 Mike Anderson) will address you in the Wednesday at our Professional Development Seminar about what this group of Army senior leaders does for our Corps.

I have attended two functions with the United States Coast Guard Chief Warrant Officers Association (USCGWOA) to better develop a firm relationship with them. I have found them to be very receptive and looking forward to exploiting areas where we might share a common good.

We have started sending copies of the NEWSLINER to the Chef Warrant Officer of Branch (CWOB)/Regimental Chief Warrant Officer (RCWOs) in the interest of getting more awareness of our work and to attract more members (Note that this is being addressed to the office and not the individual). In a letter I wrote each of them, I stated that; it is hoped that they place each copy in there waiting areas so that visitors might have an opportunity to browse through it. In addition we have continued offering free memberships to our WO1s with the hopes that they will see the benefits and continue their memberships.

I have spent countless exhausting hours rewriting our association's operating manuals to bring our association into the current electronic age. To better describe how we really, really function day to day as an organization. This allowed us to cut down on the size of our manuals and regulations in hopes that more members will read them to better utilize the internet by posting links to forms and other cross reference materials to better assist the reader on how we perform our duties in home office. Most of you know that we do

most of our interfaced communications via email vs. US Mail. These rewritten manuals were all approved by your BOD at our mid-year meeting this past April. They can be easily found and used on our web site.

As a member of the Warrant Officer Senior Advisory Council (WOSAC) I have given an opportunity to testify to them that we are dedicated to support them as a unified front for the collective betterment of our corps. They too, will be here to address you at our WOPD seminar tomorrow. This is to assure our collective agreement to be united toward a better representation to DoD and HQDA leadership.

We have used multiple means of communication with our Corps to stay in touch with their needs and desires to recommend improvements for the United States Army our Corps and our association. The Warrant Officer Net has been very supportive in allowing us to canvas the warrant officer population through another venue of communication to better serve them their needs and support the war fight throughout our ranks. More on this from their organizer, CW5 Bob Huffman on Wednesday at our WOPD Seminar.

Over the past year your USAWOA leadership have been invited and participated in speaking opportunities at Ordnance week, Quartermaster week, Army Aviation Association of America (AAAA), Association of the United States Army (AUSA), National Association of Uniformed Services (NAUS) and at the Warrant Officers Birthday celebration in Iraq as well as WOPD Seminars at Fort Hood, Fort Bragg and Fort Campbell. We have worked very hard with staying engaged with the warrant officer population so that we are on the cutting edge of what our warrant officers need as well as their families. Yes, here too in Salt Lake City, I hope to gain some insight and vision from you on how to better help guide our corps to a better future for the younger warrants that will follow us.

Our writers for the NEWLINER have been (for the most part) your volunteer Board of Directors and our Assistant Vice Presidents. 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 Warrant Officer Heritage Foundation headed by Dave Welsh, which has presently working on securing a place in the Army Museum at Fort Belvoir for us. In addition, the USAWOA 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 the Scholarship funding has been from the contribution made by you and your contributions made through the Combined Federal Campaigns (CFC). I encourage you all to join me and support both of these extremely worthy causes.

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. Don Hess our legislative LNO to ensure our mutual goals are farther developed and reinforced. In that organization, we have an equal vote with 34 very powerful military

associations that now number over 5.5 million voters. I have attended numerous events, through their open doors on the “the Hill” telling about our issues and concerns.

Another example in our desire to assist you (our members) is an idea that was brought up at our 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, NAUS, NGAUS and MOAA have received this very favorably. This allows 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. So far we have attracted several hundred new members for those organizations/associations.

The WOA print “The Quite Professional” is sold-out and those lucky investors can just about name their price if they wanted to sell their copy (sold for \$150 and now around \$3,000). Don Stivers has graced us with a second print that is selling at about the same rate as the first. 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 at Redstone Arsenal in 2010. 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 Army Warrant Officer Corps and their roots in the 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 we’ll presented to Mr. Strivers.

As I read the chapter minutes I can clearly see that some of the chapters are struggling with how to 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 whatever else that they would be doing by not coming to your meeting. Therefore, to suggest to you that as an elected top official of your chapter it is your duty to conduct 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 to track me down and we can discuss what would best suit the needs of your chapter and your members.

Ladies and Gentlemen! I am very concerned for our Corps. 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 acquiring people to complete this very important work and fill in on our ranks. The best recruiters are, ourselves. 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 and I will let our VP Mr Pete Hill address that in greater detail; however, we still need each one of you to help us in our efforts of a common good. We need more members! Our overall population is just over 25,500 Army warrant officers on active and reserve status and countless more retirees. In my twelve-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 an under represented population. Aviation for example, is 48 % of our Corp's 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. I plead with you to help me with innovative ideas (or even wild brainstorm) to support these issues.

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 and Arlington National Cemetery 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. For that, I want to personally thank each one of you for your part in that success.

I would like to thank each member of your volunteer board of directors and Assistant Vice Presidents 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 them:

- Director Mid-North Region- CW5R Phil Tackett
- Director Mid-South Region- CW4 James Davis
- Director Northeast Region- CW4R Greg Gouty
- Director Southeast Region- CW3R Gene Perrino
- Director Western Region- CW5R Russ Brewer
- Director European Region- CW5 Anthony Rotti
- Assistant Vice President for National Guard Affairs- CW5 Rhea Pruett
- Assistant Vice President for Reserve Affairs- CW4 Virginia Oscovitch
- Assistant Vice President for Veterans Affairs- CW4R Percy Butler
- Chairmen of the Past Presidents Council- CW5R Frank Meeks and his hard working group
- Presidents Emeritus Don Hess and Bob Scott

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 committee members and chairs, where the individually focused work is accomplished. This list is too extensive to name everyone but I what to make mention of their effort and wise council to the EXCOM, BOD and AVPs.

This coming year is an election year and I would like to challenge you all into thinking about running for a USAWOA office at some level or another. We need you!

I would be very remiss if I did not thank CW5 Russ Brewer, Director Western Region and CW3 Donna Hardcastle, President of the Greater Salt Lake Chapter and all the gang in the region for hosting us here in this beautiful 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 Redstone Arsenal, AL in Huntsville and I hope that “all yawls” have made plans to attend.

Thank you.
Your humble servant....Respectfully submitted,
For the Corps!

CW5 Gary Nisker
National President
USAWOA