

2017 Convention Report to the Membership

The 2017 AVVA National Convention was held August 8 – 12th at the Marriott and Sheraton in New Orleans, Louisiana. The following report is a composite of happenings submitted by the Convention Committee members. This report is a narrative designed for those members not in attendance and as a review for those members present. All Board members played an active role in the success of the convention. Planning meetings began six weeks before through our online conference calling. All Board members were invited to participate in the planning; those not limited by work schedules or health issues took the opportunity to be of service. Our largest pre-convention task was creating, developing, printing, and shipping the spiral convention notebooks with all of the information the delegates needed for the business session and elections; also included were the year-to-date financial report and AVVA's Legislative Priorities. The National Secretary, Joanna Henshaw, did a phenomenal job in gathering the information and working with the printer.



Registration:

Official delegate registration opened on Tuesday, August 8th; however, the task of stuffing convention bags began early Monday morning. Each bag was given an AVVA Convention Notebook, AVVA Agent Orange Challenge Coin, ballpoint pen with writing pad, fan, LA Hot Sauce, Tabasco sauce, seasonings, credit card protectors, several brochures, and peanut-butter crackers. A total of 220 bags were made ready for Tuesday.



Delegate registration began at 9am on Tuesday morning in the Marriott Hotel with mini Moon Pies and peppermints offered to all registrants at the booth. With the majority of AVVA's preregistered attendees accounted for on Tuesday, the VVA office personnel completed AVVA's registrations on Wednesday. A total of 199 AVVA members registered for the convention. Registration workers were Kaye Gardner (MD Chapter 304) Susan Price (TN Chapter 203) Ann Rice (TN Chapter 240), and Suzie Meeks (TX Chapter 343), Nancy Montgomery (VA Chapter 969), Cecilia Essenmacher (MI 494) and Rosie Wright (TN Chapter 240).

Delegate Credentialing

The process of credentialing delegates began in January. As delegate forms were received by the Elections Chair, the Membership Chair checked the national membership roster for active status; the Database Coordinator verified the election results; the Finance Chair confirmed all financial reports were submitted by our incorporated states and chapters; the Disciplinary Chair confirmed that there were no outstanding charges against the delegate.

Credentialing ended on July 15, 2017. There were one hundred-twenty (120) delegates and alternates credentialed for the 2017 AVVA Convention; one hundred-three delegates (103) attended. The Credentialing Committee included Kaye Gardner (Elections Chair), Susan Price

2017 Convention Report to the Membership

(Finance Chair) Suzie Meeks (Database Coordinator), Cecilia Essenmacher (Membership Chair), and Nina Schloffel (Disciplinary Chair)

Business meeting / Bylaws revision

Although the Annual Business meeting was called to order on Thursday, Aug 10th, a Delegate briefing was held on Wednesday afternoon with the National Parliamentarian, Barbara Miller PRP, in preparation for the upcoming meeting. On Thursday, the Bylaws Committee Chair explained each proposed amendment to the delegates. Each bylaw was projected onto a large screen to make viewing and following along easier; each bylaw was presented with time allotted for comments/amendments from the delegation. Kathy Andras, National Treasurer, was the appointed Timekeeper. Most were passed without question or comment; however, an amendment to the qualifications of the Regional and Deputy Director was adopted and a debate on term limits ended with an amendment from the floor being passed. The entire document was completed and adopted by the end of the business day.

The Bylaws Committee included Cecilia Essenmacher, Chair (MI Chapter 494), Penny Chamoisis (CA Chapter 982), and Nancy Rekowski (Region 2 Director). The AVVA Parliamentarian, Barbara Miller, PRP (Columbia, MD), played a significant role in advising the Committee before the convention. Our Sergeants-At-Arms, Charlene Holloway (TN Chapter 203) and Antonio Perry (NV Chapter 17), did an outstanding job of crowd-control and counting delegate votes when exact totals were needed.

Product Sales

During the Convention, our vendor table included AVVA flags, challenge coins, Agent Orange pins, and other numerous small items. Total collected was \$444. A basket was donated by LA State Council, the drawing took place on Saturday morning with all proceeds going to our general fund. Susan Henthorn (GA State Representative) and John Birch (Region 8 Director) did an outstanding job of making sure that the table was covered with adequate help during the convention.

Awards Luncheon

The AVVA Awards Luncheon was held on Wednesday, August 9th. There were approximately 312 people in attendance. Debbie Sprague, *Military & Veterans Caregiving Network* (MVCN), was our guest speaker. Menu included: barbecue beef brisket, slaw, baked beans, rolls, tea, & brownie w/ ice cream for dessert.



During the Luncheon, AVVA awards were presented.

Member of the Year

Penny Meinhardt (MI Chapter 1083)

Fellowship Award

Martha Escajeda (TX Chapter 574)

2017 Convention Report to the Membership

AVVA Commendation Medal

Kathy Andras (LA Chapter 553)
Dr. Tom Burger (DC)
Blanche Duggins (VA Chapter 48)
Dr. Tom Hall (KS)
Beverly Pounds (TN Chapter 950)

CATHY KEISTER SPIRIT OF EXCELLENCE

VISTA Volunteer Hours

PA Chapter 542

1st Place: Connie Jones (WV Association State President)
2nd Place: Linda Myer (TN Chapter 1004)
3rd Place: Rita Clifton (GA Chapter 772)

Top Group Collective Hours: Region: III
State: Tennessee
Chapter: TN 1004



Member of the Year



1st Place VISTA



SPIRIT OF EXCELLENCE

Elections

Election Day was Friday, Aug 11th. Since no office had opposition, the candidate's forum was bypassed. Although unopposed, the candidates for President, Secretary, and Treasurer took a few minutes to speak to the delegates. The Election Committee included Kaye Gardner, Chair (MD Chapter 304), Suzie Meeks (TX Chapter 343), Ann Rice (TN Chapter 240) and Diane Nicholson (KS Chapter 604). The Election Tellers were Bernie Rekowski (PA Chapter 948), Joyce Luper (TN Chapter 1004) and Rosie Wright (TN Chapter 240). The Convention Sergeants-at-Arms mentioned in the Business Session also assisted with the elections.

2017 Election results:

Officers

President: Sharon Hobbs (TN Chapter 203)
Vice President: Elayne Mackey (CA Chapter 47)
Secretary: Nina Schloffel (CA Chapter 391)
Treasurer: Kathy Andras (LA Chapter 553)

Board of Directors

Region 1: Joanne Blum (CT Chapter 120)
Region 2: Nancy Rekowski (PA Chapter 948)
Region 3: Kaye Gardner (MD Chapter 304)
Region 4: Jeri Wallis (GA Chapter 772)
Region 5: Cecilia Essenmacher (MI Chapter 494)
Region 6: Fran Davis (MO Chapter 1119)
Region 7: Teresa Rangel (TX Chapter 574)

Deputies

Region 1: Vacant
Region 2: Bobbie Morris (PA Chapter 864)
Region 3: Hope Summers (SC Chapter 523)
Region 4: Susan Henthorn (GA Chapter 772)
Region 5: Don Jones (OH Chapter 55)
Region 6: Diane Nicholson (KS Chapter 604)
Region 7: Suzie Meeks (TX Chapter 343)

2017 Convention Report to the Membership

Region 8: John Birch (OR Chapter 585)
Region 9: Casey Farrell (AZ Chapter 975)

Region 8: Vacant
Region 9: Vacant

NOTE: Friday was “Support Our Active Troops” Day. Everyone was asked to wear red. The sea-of-red on the delegation floor was beautiful!



Project Friendship

The 2017 Project Friendship was **Volunteers of America Greater New Orleans**. On Monday, eight (8) people from AVVA and VVA, visited the facility, toured, and met with the leaders and staff. On Saturday morning, donations of \$15,099 was presented to the Director during the Closing Ceremonies of the convention. (Another record year!)



Conclusion

After all business was completed, the elections were conducted and the pole was closed; the votes were counted, the election results announced, and the ballots were destroyed. The newly elected Board and the Deputies took the Oath of Office and the 2017 AVVA Convention was adjourned.

On Friday afternoon, with all business concluded, a peer group support meeting on Secondary PTSD was held. Dr. Tom Burger, Dr. Tom Hall, and Nina Schloffel led the session. Audience participation was encouraged and well received.



2017-2019 BOARD OF DIRECTORS & DEPUTIES
ABSENT: VP MACKAY