

# 2015 Convention Report to the Membership

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The 2015 AVVA National Convention was held July 22 – 26<sup>th</sup> at the Hilton and Double Tree Hotels in Springfield, Illinois. 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 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 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 did a phenomenal job in gathering the information and working with the printer.



## Registration:

Although official delegate registration opened on Tuesday, July 22<sup>nd</sup> the task of stuffing convention bags began early Monday morning. Each bag was given an AVVA Convention Notebook, AVVA challenge coin, ballpoint pen with the AVVA logo, Kleenex, a protective bag for eye glasses, fruit chews, and peanut-butter crackers. A total of 180 bags were made ready for Tuesday. Workers included Sharon Hobbs (National President), Cathy Keister (National Vice President), Bill Williams (National Treasurer), Joanna Henshaw (National Secretary), Cecilia Essenmacher (MI Chapter 494), Beverly Pounds (Region 3 Director), Penny Meinhardt (Region 5 Director), Joyce Baldwin (MI Chapter 1083), Jerry Pounds (VVA TN Chapter 1053), and Charlie Hobbs (VVA TN Chapter 203).

After completing the AVVA bags, it was on to assist VVA with their convention bags. There, 850 bags were stuffed in a record time of approximately one hour and ten minutes. Sandy Miller (VVA PA Chapter 67) was added to the above mentioned crew.

Delegate registration began at 9am on Tuesday morning in Salon A of the Double Tree by Hilton. 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 186 AVVA members registered for the convention. Registration workers were Beverly Pounds (Region 3 Director), Cathy Keister (National Vice President), Casey Farrell (AZ Chapter 975), Elayne Mackey (Elections Chair), and Suzie Meeks (Elections Database Coordinator).

## Delegate Credentialing

The process of credentialing delegates began in January. As delegate forms were received by the Elections Committee, the Membership Chair checked the national membership roster for active status and the Database Coordinator verified the election results.

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Credentialing ended on July 15, 2015. There were one-hundred-two (102) delegates credentialed for the 2015 AVVA Convention; ninety-two (92) attended. The Credentialing Committee included Elayne Mackey (Elections Chair), Suzie Meeks (Database Coordinator), and Cathy Keister (Membership Chair).

### Business meeting / Bylaws revision

The Annual Business meeting was called to order on Thursday, July 23<sup>rd</sup>. Full accounting of the session can be found on the AVVA website in the meeting minutes. The Bylaws Committee Chair began with explaining the necessity of a total revision. 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.



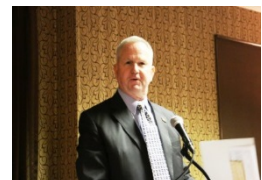
Bill Williams, National Treasurer, was the appointed Timekeeper. Most were passed without question or comment; however, there was much discussion on the place of residence of the Regional Director candidate. The vote on this bylaw was postponed until after lunch; an amendment was offered by one of the delegates and accepted by the body. The entire document was completed and adopted by the end of the business day.



The Bylaws Committee included Cecilia Essenmacher (MI Chapter 494), Penny Chamoisis (CA Chapter 982), Nancy Rekowski (Region 2 Director), and Sharon Hobbs (National President). The AVVA Parliamentarian, Barbara Miller (Columbia, MD), played a significant role preparing the committee for the convention. Our Sergeants-At-Arms, Charlene Holloway (TN Chapter 203) and Bonnie Grant (SC Chapter 1017), did an outstanding job of crowd-control and counting bylaw votes when exact totals were needed.

### Luncheon

The AVVA Luncheon was held on Wednesday, July 22<sup>nd</sup>. There were approximately 300 in attendance. Four-Star General B.B. Bell (Ret) was the guest speaker; Bill Roberson, former POW, and his wife were invited guests. Gourmet burgers, slaw, pasta salad, and french fries were the main course. A warm brownie with ice cream was dessert. Kathy Andras (Region 7 Director)



and the ladies from her home state of Louisiana and Texas did a superb job of decorating the tables with American flags that were donated by Woodman's Life Insurance Chapter in Dickson, TN. Each attendee was given a flag, flag stand, a small notebook, and pen compliments of AVVA.

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During the Luncheon, AVVA awards were presented.

<i>Member of the Year</i>	Nina Schloffel (CA Chapter 391)
<i>Fellowship Award</i>	John Emery, Sr. (WI Chapter 635) John Emery, Jr. (WI Chapter 635) Kathy Kutac (TX Chapter 876)
<i>AVVA Commendation Medal</i>	Cathy Keister (PA Chapter 542) Joanna Henshaw (NV Chapter 17 ) Sandy Miller (PA Chapter 67 ) (dual VVA member )
<i>VISTA Volunteer Hours</i>	1 <sup>st</sup> Place: Bobbie Morris (PA Chapter 864) 2 <sup>nd</sup> Place: Nancy Briggs (AZ Chapter 975) 3 <sup>rd</sup> Place: Karen See (TN Chapter 240) Region: III State: Tennessee Chapter: TN 1004
<i>Committee Appreciation</i>	Agent Orange: Nancy Switzer (NY Chapter 20) UPDATES E-Newsletter: Elayne Mackey (CA Chapter 47) Website: Joanna Henshaw (NV Chapter 17)
<i>Years of AVVA Service</i>	Penny Meinhardt (Region 5 Director) (MI Chapter 1083) Bill Williams (National Treasurer) (MT Chapter 334) Kaye Gardner (Finance Chair) (MD Chapter 304)

## Elections

Election Day was Friday, July 24<sup>th</sup>. It began with the candidate's forum. Only one national office had opposition. The candidates for Treasurer were each given five minutes to address the delegates and to field questions. Although unopposed, the candidates for President, Vice President, and Secretary took a few minutes to speak to the delegates. The Election Committee included Elayne Mackey (CA Chapter 47), Suzie Meeks (TX Chapter 343), and Diane Nicholson (KS Chapter 604). The Election Tellers were Teresa Brewer (CA Chapter 982), Lynda Kilby (MI Chapter 1083), and Joyce Luper (TN Chapter 1004). The Convention Sergeants-at-Arms mentioned in the Business Session also assisted with the elections.

## 2015 Election results:

### Officers

*President:* Sharon Hobbs (TN Chapter 203)  
*Vice President:* Cathy Keister (PA Chapter 542)  
*Secretary:* Joanna Henshaw (NV Chapter 17)  
*Treasurer:* Kathy Andras (LA Chapter 553)

### Board of Directors

*Region 1:* Vacant  
*Region 2:* Nancy Rekowski (PA Chapter 948)  
*Region 3:* Beverly Pounds (TN Chapter 950)  
*Region 4:* Jeri Wallis (GA Chapter 772)  
*Region 5:* Cecilia Essenmacher (MI Chapter 494)  
*Region 6:* Diane Nicholson (KS Chapter 604)  
*Region 7:* Percilla Newberry (TX Chapter 404)  
*Region 8:* John Birch (OR Chapter 585)  
*Region 9:* Elayne Mackey (CA Chapter 47)

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



### Product Sales

During the Convention, our vendor table included AVVA flags, challenge coins, Agent Orange pins, and other numerous small items. Total collected was \$1,633.50. A 50/50 drawing took place on Saturday morning with all proceeds going to our ***In Memory Plaque*** project. The person winning the drawing donated \$47 back to AVVA; making a total of \$196.00 going toward the project. Penny Meinhardt (Region 5 Director) and Joyce Baldwin (MI Chapter 1083) made sure that the table was covered with adequate help during the entire convention.

### Project Friendship

The 2015 Project Friendship was ***Spring Street Veterans Renaissance***. On Monday, three of the AVVA Officers, Sandy Miller (VVA Advisor from PA Chapter 67), Beverly Pounds (Region 3 Director), Jerry Pounds (TN VVA Chapter 1053) and Charlie Hobbs (TN VVA Chapter 203) visited the facility, toured, and met with the leaders and staff. On Saturday morning, AVVA presented a check for \$10,000 to their Board Chair, Debbie Williams, during the closing ceremonies of the convention.



### Conclusion

After all business was completed, the election pole was closed, votes were counted, the election results announced, and the newly elected Board took the Oath of Office, the 2015 AVVA Convention was adjourned.

The minutes of the business meeting and the newly revised bylaws are posted on the AVVA website. [www.avva.org](http://www.avva.org)

2015-2017  
National Board

