

## USAWOA CHAPTER 319 PRESIDENT'S REPORT OF THE 37TH ANNUAL MEETING

### EXCOM, members: Highlights of the 2009 Annual Meeting of the Members

Fellow "Hawkeye" members – this is my first address to the chapter since being elected as your chapter president. I have just returned from the USAWOA 37<sup>th</sup> annual meeting of the members (AMM) held the first week of November. The AMM provided me with the opportunity to better understand what my specific role is as your chapter president, but more importantly what are the needs of the organization and how to become a productive entity for Iowa. Each chapter representative presented a variety of ideas and programs that has made their organization successful. I had an opportunity to address the USAWOA National President CW5 Gary Nisker and our Regional Director CW5(R) Phil Tackett. In a separate meeting Mr. Tackett addressed all mid-northern personnel at the AMM and what we can do to move forward. I intend for our organization to work more closely with Mr. Tackett in the future for ideas and support.

One of the key issues addressed during the AMM was membership – are we maintaining our membership and if not why not. Membership is not only important to our chapter, but to the USAWOA. Everyone has heard the phrase "strength in numbers" which is important if we want to have our voice heard on issues that affect our corps. In the past our voice has made a difference in our pay, our promotions and other issues that concern Warrant Officers in the past. Without this voice current warrant officer issues will have difficulty gaining support. In relation to these membership enrollment challenges are the demographics of our current membership. Many of our members are eligible for retirement with fewer junior warrants maintaining their membership past the first year. One possible reason is the word is not getting out to the Warrant Officer Candidates. One proposal at the AMM was to provide the WOCs with an orientation on "who is the USAWOA?" and the important role the organization plays in warrant officer issues throughout your career and beyond. The membership of Aviation Warrants is still a dilemma as a result of the conflict with the Army Aviation Association (AAAA). Overall, Aviation Warrants are 48% of the corps, yet only 14% of the membership. USAWOA and AAAA have collaborated to offer a dual membership option at a savings for the Aviation Warrant. As noted earlier the USAWOA is the voice of the corps, so what is important to you as a warrant officer can be addressed in this forum. On a side note affiliation appears to be another issue. Currently there are 16 members not associated with our chapter which could equate to a 25% increase in our chapter membership. So the question that remains is this – what is being done to encourage the next generation of Warrant Officers to join the organization and carry the torch? Only we can decide. Membership goals - I am looking for any suggestions or ideas that any chapter member has to improve not only membership but benefit the chapter as well. Some suggestions presented during the AMM were resume writing and other retirement services, career advice, guest speakers and other areas that would be of interest to Warrant Officers. Other points of discussion were "Are all Warrant Officers are getting the information being sent out?" "How many Warrant Officers are there in the state?" "Who is deployed or in the process of being deployed?" "What are we doing to assist these deployed Warrant Officers and their families?" Part of the issue with our

chapter is communication and accountability of our current members. Memberships can now be submitted through the USAWOA website using a credit card for those who were unaware. Please select the “Hawkeye” 319 for your chapter affiliation when submitting your membership or renewal. A membership chairperson to manage our roles will be discussed at our next chapter meeting.

Proxy submission – Our chapter only received 7 out of 65 proxies for the AMM this year. The proxy is your voice on issues voted on during the AMM. Proxies can be submitted through the mail (all members should have received a form in the mail), via fax, email or on the USAWOA website. Instructions as also enclosed in the member proxy you receive in the mail. In the future I will make it a point to remind everyone to submit their proxy and who to appoint as your proxy. If no one is able to attend then the region director can be your proxy. I anticipate with better visibility for next year the majority of members will submit their proxy.

Corporate membership - Discussed at the AMM which could boost the visibility and support of the organization. More research will need to be conducted on what corporate membership will mean to the chapter, who can approve the membership (at this time National) and any legal guidelines that must be followed.

Four Annual Meeting Focus Group Topics were conducted during the last two days of the AMM addressing issues in our corps. Areas addressed were the management of senior warrant officers (CW5), who speaks for the Warrant Officers in the Army, Save Basic Allowance for Housing (BAH) for junior Warrants, and the Commander’s perception of Warrant Officers. Four groups were assembled with each getting a topic of discussion. A course of action was then developed by each team with the data available then presented to the members. Some topics were resolved; others will be taken higher by the USAWOA BOD. The results of these group topics can be reviewed at the link below.

Memorabilia – Many chapters brought a variety of Warrant Officer memorabilia for sale, from ball caps to polo shirts. These items were not only available for purchase at the AMM, but can also be purchased on the host chapter’s web site. Our chapter currently does not have any products for sale for our Warrant Officers within and outside of the state however this has been a great fund raising activity for other chapters. I believe this is something we need to seriously consider in the near future for our organization.

Community events – Ideas were presented to the AMM by other members on ways a chapter can benefit the community they reside in. Some of these ideas were highway cleanup, golf tournaments, children hospital and/or veteran homes visits and any other contributions to other community charities.

Guest speakers – I believe this is something of value for all Warrant Officers. Our regional director Phil Tackett is willing to attend one of our meetings with enough notice; I can see this growing to at least a semi-annual event. Again, your input on speakers is greatly encouraged.

Social events – In our chapter bylaws a family oriented activity can be conducted as a regular meeting. Since being president of the chapter we have not conducted such an activity, which would present the opportunity for fellow Warrants and their families to get together. Ideas for 2010 are encouraged. The last social event we had was in 2008 with the hay ride on Camp Dodge.

Website – We do have a chapter website maintained by CW3 Danberry. There is no charge for maintaining our site. The site has all chapter meeting minutes, when and where the next meeting is going to be held, and other chapter information. The webmaster is looking for ideas to make the website better. Link: <http://iowahawkeyewoa.org/>

News Liner – The cover design on the News Liner has been updated to look even more professional than it did before. There is a need for any new agendas/issues/topics that would benefit Warrant Officers and the corps.

WO Net – This is an excellent site to collaborate and receive “what’s happening now” in the Warrant Officer community. With this site you are able to post your comments and reply to others Warrant Officers questions, concerns or other issues that they would like to be addressed. In fact there is already a conversation addressing the issue of why Warrants are not joining professional organizations. For those not already a member I strongly encourage everyone to join. Go to link: <https://wonet.bcks.army.mil>. Your AKO user name and password is needed to log in.

The Next AMM will be held at Redstone Arsenal in Huntsville, Alabama 1-5 November 2010. The Fort Bragg chapter has submitted a request to host the 2011 39<sup>th</sup> AMM. Another southeast region chapter has also submitted a request to host the 2012 40<sup>th</sup> AMM in Dallas, TX.

I am aware 2010 will be especially challenging for most Iowa Warrants due to scheduled and pending operations. However, for those that can support the organization, if even by renewing your membership and encouraging other warrants to join would make a tremendous difference in the strength of our organization. Your ideas, suggestions and contributions of any kind are welcome and encouraged on any topic within this address or otherwise.

Additional information about the AMM can be found at: <http://www.usawoa.org/AMM2009.htm>

Thank you.

Respectfully submitted,  
For the Corps!

CW3 Brian Clevon  
Hawkeye Chapter 319  
President