2016 NATIONAL CONVENTION SUMMARY

Read Full Convention Report in September Issue of *AMRA News*

National President Kirk Bennett called the National Convention to order at 9:00 a.m. on Saturday, June 4, 2016. The JROTC Bengal Battalion Color Guard from Bonanza High School advanced and posted the Colors.

Roll Call, Approval of Convention Rules and Minutes of the Cincinnati Convention were followed by reports from the National Officers on their activities since the last convention. Of note, First Vice President William Knepshield, who serves as the Membership Chair, reported the chartering of two new chapters in Charleston, SC and Worcester, MA.

National Legislative Director, Ted Painter, provided an in-depth report on AMRA's legislative activities during the past year. "Firsts" for the Association included being invited to present testimony for the congressional record during key committee hearings – invitations to "round table" discussions sponsored and attended by Members of Congress and an invitation for Mr. Painter to serve as a panel member at the Congressional Military Family Summit to bring the retiree perspective to the discussions.

Mr. Painter outlined AMRA's efforts and the results of our advocacy since last convention:

1. Military Compensation and Retirement Modernization Commission Recommendations
2. Pentagon Health Care Proposals
3. Honor America's Guard-Reserve Retirees Act
4. CHAMPVA Beneficiary Proof of Eligibility
5. Uniformed Services Former Spouse Protection Act
6. Concurrent Receipt
7. Survivor Benefit Plan (SBP)
8. Promise for Antibiotics and Therapeutics for Health (PATH) Act
9. Commissary & Exchange Benefits
10. Amend Section 715 of the 2016 NDAA (Prescription medications)
11. Vet Connect (Sharing of VA medical records with non-VA providers)

To learn AMRA's position on each of these legislative issues and get information on the results of AMRA's advocacy, please visit the Advocacy page of the website to read the **National Legislative Director's 2016 Convention Report.**

National Chaplain John Babcock conducted a moving Memorial Service honoring all military retirees who have passed away since the last convention.

Resolutions Committee Chair, Ted Painter, presented the **2016-2017 Legislative Resolutions** that will guide the Association's advocacy efforts in the coming year. Members may review the Resolutions approved by Delegates on AMRA's Advocacy page on the website.

The convention recessed for the Awards Luncheon at which awards to Members, Chapters and Departments were announced. President Bennett made the following presentations:

- Department of the Year – Department of Florida
- Chapter of the Year – Carolina Lowcountry Chapter SC1 – Charleston, SC

- Highest Percentage Membership Gain – Phantom Warrior Chapter TX2 – Copperas Cove, TX
- AMRA Member of the Year – Roy Brewer, Port St. Lucie, FL
- President's Award – Ted Painter, Littleton, MA

The **FUN METER** was turned way up after lunch when President Bennett opened the second session and invited Foundation President J.B. Kump to join him at the podium to accept donations for the scholarship fund during the annual Parade of Checks. When all the joking was set aside and the smoke had cleared, the Parade of Checks brought in a whopping $3,289.63!

Executive Director Bergeron presented the proposed bylaw amendments for Delegate approval. Minor changes were made to the National Bylaws and the Department Bylaws but Chapter Bylaws remained unchanged. Members may access all sets of bylaws in the Member Resources section of the website.

Delegates elected the following National Officers and Directors:

President – Kirk Bennett
First Vice President – William Knepshield
Second Vice President – J.B. Kump
Treasurer – Stephen Wood
Secretary – John Monahan
Director – Thomas M. Best
Director – Michael J. Fayette
Director – Ronald D. Mills
Director – David M. Thiel

Guest speaker at the Annual Banquet was Mr. Richard Small, Executive Board Chairman of the Nevada Veteran's Foundation. Mr. Small advised that the Foundation was formed to build a Fisher where patients from the Las Vegas VA and their families could stay during extended treatment periods. The Foundation's dream was fulfilled and the Fisher House was dedicated just a few short weeks ago and now the Foundation will accept the role of care and maintenance of the facility. President Bennett presented AMRA's donation of $1,000 which Mr. Small gracefully accepted and sincerely thanked AMRA for.

Following the banquet, President Bennett called the third session of the convention to order for the purpose of installing officers and directors. Past National President Ronald K. Knepshield was escorted to the podium and proceeded with the installation. Following the installation ceremony, President Bennett adjourned the convention, to reconvene in Kissimmee, FL (Orlando) next June.