

Esteemed USAWOA Member.

As detailed in this month's August *Newsliner*, this year's election marks a new milestone as for the first time in our 54-year history, the voting ballots for the candidates running for national leadership positions, **WILL NOT** be mailed out to the members. Instead, you are receiving the ballot via the email address we have on file in our membership system. Attached you will find the USAWOA 2026 National Election voting ballot as well as a link to an easy-to-complete version of the ballot on our www.usawoa.org website.

Our national bylaws state "at least sixty (60) days prior to the Annual Meeting of the Members, the final list of candidates shall be published in the Association publication and on the Web Site and the official proxy and ballot forms printed. The ballot forms shall be mailed or electronically transmitted to the members neither earlier than sixty (60) days nor later than ten (10) days prior to the Annual Meeting of the Members. The proxy forms will be in accordance with Virginia State Law. The forms shall be preaddressed to National Headquarters or elsewhere depending on the location of the Annual Meeting of the Members. The forms shall contain the name, member number and return address of the member. All official proxy and ballot forms must be completed in accordance with the enclosed instructions and must be received at the Meeting location prior to noon of the first business day of the Meeting."

The USAWOA Executive Committee (EXCOM) decision to eliminate the printing and mailing of nearly 4900 ballots came after in-depth discussions regarding the continued raising costs associated with printed ballots. A primary focus was to ensure that any change to the election process complied with our national bylaws and that every member was still afforded the opportunity to vote. Additionally, the EXCOM wanted to ensure there were multiple means available for members to complete the voting ballot. USAWOA Parliamentarian, CW4(Ret) Roy Valiant also confirmed the EXCOM's understanding of the bylaws.

As mentioned, the stewardship of USAWOA finances was a significant factor in the decision to change the method of delivery. This year's cost estimate to print ballots and provide return envelopes for nearly 4,900 members was approximately \$2,500. As the cost of First-Class postage increased to \$0.82 per piece in July, mailing expenses alone would have added another \$4,000.

Costs alone, however, were not the only deciding factor. For the past three elections, a review of the voting statistics revealed less than 25 percent of members voted by returning the ballots mailed to them. Additionally, we would receive 100 to 200 ballots returned to the USAWOA headquarters as "undeliverable mail" because members did not provide us with updated address for the membership system.

In a time of limited resources and being ever mindful on how and what USAWOA funds are expended on, coupled with the fact that email/electronic distribution of a voting ballot is authorized, the EXCOM unanimously voted to change the delivery means of this year's ballot. By moving to electronic distribution, USAWOA reduces

unnecessary expenses while continuing to provide every eligible member with voting options.

We recognize this change will likely come as a surprise to many. We saw financial success with the Annual Fundraiser by moving away from printing and mailing of ticket booklets and incorporating the ability to purchase online. While saving USAWOA money, we are also optimistic that electronic delivery of the voting ballot will lead to a larger amount of returned voter ballots. Additionally, with the easy-to-use fillable format posted to our website [2026 USAWOA Election Ballot](#), member voting can be accomplished in minutes. As always, the voting ballot is printed in the *Newsliner*. Instructions for completing and submitting your ballot are contained on the form.

On behalf of the entire USAWOA leadership team, I respectfully ask that you take a few minutes to review the resumes of our ten outstanding candidates and then complete your voting ballot. The results of the election will be announced at conclusion of this year's 54th Annual Meeting of the Members (AMM) in Gettysburg, PA, 5-8 October. Registration for the 54th AMM is open at <https://keystonewoa.org/54thamm> and members looking to attend should also make their hotel reservations soon as availability at the discounted rate is going fast.

Click on any of the below links to cast your votes.

[2026 Election Ballot](#)

[2026 Election Ballot - PDF](#)

[Fillable Election Ballot](#)

CW5 Michael D. Dye

National President