

An Important Message to ALL AMCA Members.

First we need to explain that this message will be longer than usual and it also addresses some big changes that are being considered by the AMCA staff. We feel that input and ideas from the membership are critical in the decisions that will have to be addressed, so therefore we are asking that this message be carefully read and that in the following days and weeks we would like to receive your input on the items specified as well as any other AMCA aspects as you see fit. In order to make this update a little easier to work through we are organizing it into three (3) parts as follows:

**I. Re-cap of the June 2016 Summer Show, “The Good, the Bad and the Ugly”**

**II. Changes we are considering for the future (2017 and beyond) “The Road Ahead”**

**III. Member Input and comments, “Tell us your thoughts, concerns and recommendations”**

Please bear with us as we attempt to lay this message out and please provide feedback via email so that we can weigh the feelings of the membership and factor that into our decisions between now and the Jan. 2017 show.

**I. Re-cap of the June 2016 Summer Show, “The Good, the Bad and the Ugly”**

Well at least it was kind of like “the Good, the Bad and the Ugly”.

- **The Good** was that even though for the second straight year and after having been assured that “OVMS” would not move their Show date they moved it over ours, however we still managed to attract ten (10) new vendors and the table count was nearly average. I say nearly, as it was down slightly approximately 140, due to several no shows, however we understand that conflicts and illness will always arise. That’s Life! The Good was that we have had a “good run” of support from the staff of the facility, coordinated use of the work release prisoners from the city jail to set-up, free tables and the costs are reasonable. The Good was that we gained four (4) new LIFE Member, James Watkins, John Neely, Mike Seibert and Steven Toth. We also had three (3) new member join our ranks, Peter Turek, Garth Thompson, and Mark Stewart. Finally the other Good was the AC worked very well. Several folks told me that had to put on a jacket...
- **The Bad** was the public support was below average for a summer show, approximately 700 attending. While nothing has changed in our advertising campaign the downturn in public support may have been due to other local events occurring in the area on Saturday, folks going to OVMS, maybe gun show burn out, and perhaps a few due to the heat! For some vendors sales were way down and for others, it was a good show. Due to the other local activities in the area our normal food concession cancelled early in the week and we scrambled to get “I Love Bacon”, but they were hit and miss and didn’t show up at all on Saturday!
- **The Ugly** was not knowing until Thursday that we couldn’t park on the east side of the building and unload. Initially the city was only going to permit one vehicle at a time at the “roll-up door” to unload. Are you kidding? After a long pointed discussion we were permitted to park parallel on either side of the center passing lane open, as the road was not opened..Yet! I also want to thank everyone for their patience and taking in stride this unexpected situation. The rest of the Ugly is that the entire old airport property that includes John Hunts Park where the Jaycees building is located, is undergoing a \$100M make over. The city plans to overhaul the 378-acre Park in phases over several years, gradually transforming the site of Huntsville's first airport into a lush setting for concerts, picnics, team sports, family outings and more. This endeavor, which is already underway puts at risk future use of the building, to wit we were assured last year that nothing would be happening for some time but we see that this is just not the case...

**II. Changes that we are considering for the future (beyond 2017) “The Road Ahead”**

After a long deliberation at our recent June Post-Show Board Meeting, where we addressed Lessons Learned, etc... the staff agreed to consider some bold steps which will, if enacted, affect everyone! Seeing & taking into consideration your continued and growing support of AMCA and its Mission, the fact that preparation in manpower, coordination and cost for AMCA is equal for each show, as are your expenditures in time and travel cost, we have decided to discontinue the Summer Show beginning in 2017. This decision was driven by several factors (1) uncertainties regarding the availability of the Jaycee’s building, in particular reasonable parking and off/up loading space (2) the fact that summer shows statically have lower public attendance for the obvious reasons, (3) the inability to pick another June show date, while

moving to the first weekend in May was an option, factor (1) remains an unacceptable & unpredictable RISK. In short, we feel that everyone would be happier if we can host one GREAT show per year as opposed to two average shows.

The path ahead is challenging but with your support and patience we are confident that the following proposal is achievable and may be the only course of action for AMCA given the circumstances and aforementioned inherent risks in retaining the current venue. We are proposing that AMCA host its Winter 2018 Show at the Von Braun Center in downtown Huntsville! This is not the first time that we have considered the VBC. It is however the only other local venue with sufficient space & access to address our needs. Some highlights; (1) maintain a Friday/Saturday Show on the weekend preceding MLK Weekend (MLK is booked for another event), (2) increase the AMCA Staff by at least five, (3) the table length will go from 6ft to 8ft and the count will be **300, conservatively**, in effect this will almost triple the current show size in terms of linear table space! (4) The cost per linear foot will remain the same, \$7.50 l/ft. or a 6ft table = \$45.00, thus an 8ft table will be \$60.00. (5) We expect to provide for "drive-in" access to off/on load! (6) A full time Concession operated by the VBC, (7) Parking below the hall with elevators access for those that opt not to drive-thru, and (8) retain our HPD/Security personnel @ a reduced cost.

We feel that two factors are critical in being able to make this proposed show a success:

1. Sell at least 300 tables and this means more than doubling our typical winter show vendor participation.
2. Being able to draw at least 2000 attendees to the show, with perhaps ½ of that number coming from outside a 100 mile radius of Huntsville.
3. Achieving both of the above without compromising the quality of the show as a Military show.

We feel that in order to achieve the goals above, we will need some real support from our regular vendors to assist in encouraging other vendors to set up as well as encouraging their regular customers to attend.

### **III. Member Input and comments, "Tell us your thoughts, concerns and recommendations"**

The following areas are not intended to be exhaustive, but are some points to consider and we would appreciate any feedback on these items and anything else about the show possibilities that you can provide us. We will read and consider all input. We cannot promise to respond to every comment, however we will send out some kind of synopsis of the input to the areas below and our thoughts on those points as well.

#### Areas for Consideration:

1. *Is a move to the VBCC a positive or negative "thing" overall compared to staying where we are?*
2. *Do you feel like a 300 (8 ft table) show would be a sufficient draw (given good advertising outside of this geographic area) to attract 2000 plus attendees?*
3. *Is the first weekend of January (AFTER the NEW YEAR) a good, bad or indifferent weekend? Other recommendations?*
4. *Are you satisfied with a Friday-Saturday show like the timeframe that we are now doing or do you want a longer show?*
5. *Would you be willing to spread the word of this show (flyers, word of mouth or email) at other shows that you attend in 2017?*
6. *Other comments:*

As we move forward from where we have been for the past 10 years to a new venue and the future of AMCA, I will be calling upon you to assist in various ways to make this move a win-win for everyone. More to follow!

Tom