



Letter From The President

Greetings to all AYA members!

The AYA convention recently held in Paso Robles, California was a huge success! Those of you who were there, and those of you who were not, I encourage you to check out the Daily Coverage photos from the convention. There is an active link on the home page of the AYA website.

At our annual Board meeting, which is always held on the opening Monday of the convention, your Board conducted the business of the AYA. One of the realities that the Board had to confront was the decline in annual revenue coupled with an increase in the annual expenses. This was made apparent in the annual financial report presented by Secretary/Treasurer, Stew Wilson. In short, the organization will be showing a deficit by the time that we reach the end of the budget year, which occurs on June 30th.

You might wonder, what happens when we are faced with a deficit position? The answer is that the difference is made up by drawing on our reserves. This will work in the near term but is unsustainable for the long term financial stability of the AYA. The solution is either to increase revenue, decrease expenses, or both. Over the years, and especially during the past few years, we have made efforts to decrease expenses. Some of the main ways in which we have controlled expenses include:

- Aligning the costs of printing and shipping the paper STAR newsletter with a surcharge to the members who desired the paper version over the electronic version, to cover the extra expenses incurred.
- Reducing the annual costs of our telephone, fax, and internet charges at international headquarters by streamlining the system and taking advantage of more economical means of communications through changing technologies.
- Reducing the compensation of our staff positions, Secretary/Treasurer, Star Editor and Electronic Services Director, which fall under the category of compensated volunteers. There have been no cost of living increases in years, and more than once we have had to reduce the compensation provided for these essential positions. The scope of the work involved, however, has increased through the years.

Every way in which we are able to economize has been examined and leveraged when it made sense to do so. There was also both a financial audit and a professional work functions assessment recently completed at AYA headquarters. In short, the professional assessment was

that the AYA receives excellent value from our two compensated volunteers that far exceeds the compensation provided.

Our revenue declines when we have a decrease in membership and/or advertisements in the Star. Despite recruitment efforts in both areas, we have had to deal with revenue declines. We will continue our efforts in both of these important revenue venues to see if we can increase our income in the future.

But, your Board has to act fiscally responsibly in deciding what we must do now to insure a balanced budget. We cannot continue to operate with an annual deficit and draw down our reserves year by year.

Beginning on July 1, 2017, at the start of the next fiscal year, the Board voted unanimously to increase our annual dues from \$50.00 to \$60.00. There are a couple of things that I would like for you to consider as you contemplate this announcement. One, we haven't had a dues increase since 2009, and this would only be our third increase in 27 years. Two, the AYA will still have the least expensive dues of any airplane type club with an annual dues structure.

Still, at an annual dues fee of \$60.00, the AYA provides considerable value and services for the investment of your money. Here are a few considerations:

- · An international staff dedicated to providing daily services to all members and attending to the business of the organization
- · An excellent bi-monthly newsletter with informative articles, reports on events and fly-ins, photos of your fellow AYA members in action, timely reports from your AYA leaders, officers and program directors, free advertising for members to sell their airplanes, or other aviation items, and literally a host of other features
- · A brand new website with added membership features, improved security, and ability to expand upon member needs and wants into the future.
- · A network of volunteers serving as your international Officers and also providing services in your region as Regional Directors, Area Coordinators, and Program Directors
- · Excellent and vetted expert advice on the maintenance, repairing and servicing of your aircraft
- · A wonderful Scholarship Fund program that is administered by volunteers and where every dollar raised and contributed by our members goes towards helping young aspiring student pilots obtain their Private Pilots Certificate
- · Dedicated volunteers who plan and host our annual fly-in convention that moves around the United States and Canada, and an annual convention that is also hosted and run by our European volunteers
- · A Pilot Familiarization Program that helps new Grumman owners receive the appropriate and necessary instruction from CFI's that follow a specialized training syllabus and are familiar with the nuances of Grumman operations
- · Cockpit Cool course offered at our annual conventions for those spouses, partners and friends who like to fly with you in the right seat but who are not pilots themselves. The instruction that they receive on the ground and in the air (if they choose)

helps them to gain the knowledge and confidence of how to take command in the event of a pilot incapacitation.

There are so many other values that I could point to, but one of the most important is being a part of an organization that truly cares about its membership, and the lifelong friendships that are possible from your association and participation with the wonderful folks that are the heart and soul of the organization. The AYA membership.

No one likes to hear that their annual dues are going up. But, to continue offering the value and services that you deserve as AYA members, the Board was fully in support of doing so. I would like to say that your Board does carefully consider all areas of our annual budget and acts fiscally conservatively in spending the money generated from your dues.

If you have any questions, concerns or comments, I would like to hear from you. I'm always available at pres@aya.org, or at 727-460-6215, from 7:00 am – 11:00 pm, Eastern Standard Time, USA.

Take care and fly safe!

Guy

Guy Warner

AYA President

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