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'Changes'—Round 2

y now, the word should be out regarding our new winter National Convention at the Hilton Washington in D.C. Feb 7–10, 2010, its registration process and fees, and its programs. You probably noticed a couple of significant differences in the usual events, particularly the food events.

The primary change to point out now is that we are in a transitional year. The 2010 National Convention

will be our first of the new generation of national meetings. Remember, Orlando was the last summer Convention; officers elected at that meeting will be in place until February 2011. That is when the expanded, annual National Convention in Washington, D.C., will take place.

Let's start with the hotel for 2010. You recall that our February Mid-Winter meeting was at the Marriott Wardman Park. The Hilton Washington, our traditional Mid-Winter site, was undergoing a facelift, and we were allowed to modify our contract to meet at a different location, with the Hilton making up any financial losses resulting from the change

(there were none). In February 2010, we will be back at the now mostly remodeled Hilton, but only for the one year. As is our practice, when we approach the end of a contract, we go out for bids, using a set request for proposal. The two leading hotels responding were the Hilton Washington and the Marriott Wardman Park, with the latter submitting the winning bid. So, the National Convention will be at Wardman Park for two years beginning in February 2011.

The other significant changes have to do with registration, food events, and timing. This year we're planning to give you more food for your convention bucks. We have recommended that the following be included in the registration fee, which will not be increased significantly from the last convention:

- Opening night reception in the exhibit hall;
- Monday morning;

- Buffet lunch on Tuesday in the exhibit hall;
- President's formal reception and entertainment, featuring heavy hors d'oeuvres and bar.

What happened to the formal banquet? The president's formal reception is replacing it. No speeches. No presentations. Just an elegant cocktail party.

What happened to the formal presentations and

awards? These will take place at the opening ceremony immediately after the joint service breakfast.

Are these permanent changes? Maybe. If this format is successful, it can be continued in 2011. If not, the formal banquet is still an option.

Why is 2010 considered a "transition year"? Other than the changes I outlined, the 2011 National Convention will combine the key activities of the old Mid-Winter Conference and the old summer National Convention: namely, ROA business, elections, service section meetings, Capitol Hill visits, the expo, committee meetings, the joint officer professional de-

velopment programs, and other educational opportunities such as continuing legal education programs and medical seminars. Also, the new convention will be a four-day event compared with a three-day event. Yes, the usual special meetings and seminars that occur for selected groups on Saturday and Sunday will still take place this year.

As I indicated in my last column, the Washington national meetings are historically our most successful events. More people attend. They like coming to Washington every year. They enjoy seeing their friends and former comrades in arms, visiting the nation's capital, seeing the exhibits at the ROA Reserve Component Expo, and participating in ROA's business.

So, bring your heavy coat and be ready for an enjoyable and event-filled first winter National Convention. See you in D.C. in February 2010!

Go to page 34 for the registration form, or visit www.roa.org/convention.

Joint service breakfast for the opening event on

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