

## 2016 Annual Meeting/Report of the Convention Committee

Terry Kurdzionak, chairman  
Paul Wadsworth  
Bob Ockenden  
Dana Cerullo (Tybro Meetings and Events)

The AWCI Board of Directors chose the city of Chicago for the 2016 convention as it was the site of the first official meeting of this organization back in 1960. The search for a hotel venue began right after last year's convention and became problematic as many of the Chicago hotels were already booked for other conventions, or were not suitable for our group's needs. The search then went outside the city limits, and the Eaglewood Resort and Spa was chosen by our executive director and Dana Cerullo as a venue that would meet our needs. They made a site visit which is valuable in that they were able to see the space and meet the people that would be hosting our event.

Our conventions are evolving from a series of prolonged business meetings to that of more education, networking, and increased vendor participation. Our conventions also provide a venue for the annual Education, Museum, and Library Trust fundraising dinner. Everything is geared toward assisting our member watch and/or clock makers, and our Industry Advisory Board members in negotiating the changing dynamics of this industry. We also include an awards banquet which recognizes and honors the contributions of many of our volunteers.

As chairman of this committee, I would recommend that for future conventions, several cities should be considered using online searches for hotels, ease of travel from the airport, as well as offsite venues that will offer extra added interest for our attendees. This information should be compiled by the committee with coordination with the executive director prior to having the Board of Directors vote. If a site visit is warranted, as well it should be, then it should be in the one city, with several hotels to be visited. The convention committee should be involved and should present its findings to the executive director, unless the ED is on the site visit, as well as to the president. Once the site is chosen and a contract is signed, the ED, convention committee, and meeting planner (if the BOD determines) should have regular meetings to update one another on the progress being made.

*Terry Kurdzionak*