

2006 CONVENTION REPORT
by Michael L. Smith

I was privileged to attend the 119th Annual Convention of the Amateur Athletic Union from October 23-27 at the Sheraton Waikiki Beach. This is the 27th such convention at which I was present. After registering on Monday October 23rd, I took advantage of some free time to tour the Island of O'ahu especially the USS Arizona Memorial and the USS Missouri.

On Wednesday, October 25, I along with other delegates attended the Awards Breakfast. We were glad to see that our own Roland Williams was honored by the National Athletics Committee with the Jack Milne Award. Jack Milne was a past president of the Middle Atlantic District. We were all honored with the presentation of a plaque by representatives of the Southern District of the AAU in recognition of our \$1,500 donation at last year's convention to assist in helping athletes subjected to the ravages of Hurricane Katrina.

I next attended the District Governors' Council co-chaired by Chet Lemon and Teresa Parmenter. Since there were no law and legislation items to be addressed there was little business to be transacted. There was one election in which Martha Townley was elected as the representative to the Zone C & D Meetings.

I was able to attend the end of the Convention Committee chaired by Kathy Campbell. I learned that the 2007 Convention will be held at the Renaissance Hotel in Schaumburg, IL from October 2-6. The 2008 Convention has been moved from Reno, NV to Cancun, Mexico.

At 1:00 p.m., I attended the Zone A Meeting chaired by Joe Gura. Again there were few items for consideration. Joe Gura was again voted as the Zone A representative to the Board of Directors.

I attended the Volunteer Hall of Fame Committee meeting chaired by Larry Monroe who was appointed due to the untimely passing of Pat Kavadas. It was announced that Kathy Campbell, Carroll Graham, Joe Mirza and Rod Seaford will be so honored at the banquet on Friday night. The committee is in need of nominees for the class of 2007.

At 3:00 p.m. I attended the Girls' Basketball bid session where I witnessed a most professional presentation by Steve Chapman to host the 2008 National Championships in the Middle Atlantic District. His presentation was complete with a detailed bid booklet and a power point.

I next attended the AAU Junior Olympic Games recap meeting chaired by Paul Campbell. He reported that first ever West Coast Games held at the University of California-Davis attracted 1,098 participants. It is anticipated that the attendance will more than double next year. The 2006 AAU Junior Olympic Games held at

Hampton Roads, VA attracted 13,609 athletes in 23 sports. Track & Field led the way with 7,558 entries. Local representatives reported that the Games generated an impact of \$47 million to the local economy. Approximately 40,000 persons traveled to the area for an average stay of 5 days. Approximately 90% of the attendees were non-local. A total of 360,000 tickets were purchased. The 2007 Games will be held in Knoxville, TN with the 2008 Games slated for Detroit.

I was able to attend a portion of the Library and History Committee chaired by Dave Davis. Long-time chairman Mason Bell has asked to be relieved of his duties. There is still a quandary as to the method of organizing the boxes of materials housed at AAU Headquarters.

The last meeting I attended for the day was the Sullivan Award Committee chaired by Louis Stout. He announced that the 2006 award winner was J.J. Redick, a star basketball player at Duke University. Chairman Stout related that it is becoming more difficult to assemble the ten finalists at the Awards Banquet. Many of the top-flight Olympic athletes have agents and are receiving monetary awards. The status of the award may be changing. The nominees may come from the high school and college ranks. The 2007 Awards Banquet is scheduled for April 11 at the New York Athletic Club.

On Thursday, October 26, I along with others attended the Compliance Task Force Seminar chaired by Henry Forrest. This was truly an informative session. The topics of parliamentary procedures, district board of managers meetings and district sport committee meetings, district officer election policies and district sport director election policies were outlined in detail. It is unfortunate that emphasis was not placed on these items at last year's seminar which would have eliminated the misunderstandings that took place in the Middle Atlantic elections this past Spring. It will be necessary to keep these procedures at the forefront during upcoming seminars leading to the elections of 2010. Obviously any changes in existing policies must be highlighted and stressed.

I next attended the Wrestling Committee meetings chaired Bob Johnson. He reported that wrestling memberships have grown to 52,721. The Executive Committee approved the creation of a media relations position. Norm Palovcsik of Lock Haven, PA was selected to fill this post. It was also announced that Jim Meyerhof, Eric Kopsch, Bart Freidenberg and Emily Carpenter were selected as this year's newly elected AAU Wrestling Hall of Fame inductees.

The financial report was presented and accepted which had a positive balance. The wrestling budget for

2007 reveals a surplus of \$3295.00.

It was announced that the 2007 World Folkstyle Championship will be held on April 6 & 7 at Detroit, MI; The Ironman Championships on May 18-20 at Millersville, PA; The Grand Nationals on June 15-17 in Butte, MT; The Disney Duals on June 24-29 at Lake Buena Vista, FL; and The Junior Olympics on July 30-August 3 at Knoxville, TN.

A meeting of tournament directors is scheduled for November 25-26 at Omaha, NE. The Wrestling Committee appears to be headed for another positive year.

The last meeting I attended was the AAU National Softball Committee chaired by Robin Phillips. Fifteen districts have softball programs with a total membership of 3,249 which is the most ever. The 2006 National Championships were held on July 5-8 at Concord, NC. AAU Softball Championships have been held every year since 1996.

Each attendee at the meeting received a handbook which would be the envy of any sport committee. It is well organized with tabs and a table of contents. I look for the AAU Softball program to keep increasing the participation and membership.

On Friday, October 27, I along with other members of our delegation attended the AAU Congress Meeting. This is a necessary but uneventful session with the most decisions being preordained and little voting transpired. In the only contested election, Carol Lambert was victorious in her quest for a seat on the National Board of Review. Bobby Dodd, president; Bill Tooke, first vice-president; Louis Stout, second vice-president; Roger Goudy, secretary; and Ron Crawford, treasurer were all re-elected to a four-year term with no opposition. The highlight of the morning was an address by Elisa Au, a world champion in the sport of Karate.

In summation I feel that my trip to the convention was worthwhile. For the first time I attended meetings of other sports besides my own which has given me a basis of comparison. I would recommend that in the future each delegate take this opportunity to attend other sport committee meetings and thereby become more aware of the various programs offered by the Amateur Athletic Union.