

# NERA and AUSN join forces in supporting the Annual Salute to Hospitalized Veterans



*Nick Marine - NERA National President*

It's a great honor to have been asked by Rear Admiral Casey Coane to write something for AUSN. Being a Lifetime member of AUSN and NERA, I truly value and know the importance of supporting military organizations. For many years, I have watched from the sidelines witnessing the many accomplishments each organization has achieved and it's amazing how quickly some have been forgotten.

Being recently elected as the NERA's 26<sup>th</sup> National President at the 53<sup>rd</sup> Annual National Conference in Oklahoma City this past October was also a great honor. As president, my goal over the next two years will be to get NERA members more involved which leads into my subject of discussion.

What can we do to get our members out and about? Glad you asked! NERA and AUSN have joined forces for this one great annual event. We will be working closely with the Department of Veterans Affairs in supporting the Annual Salute to Hospitalized Veterans. The dates for 2010 are February 7-13<sup>th</sup>, because the 14<sup>th</sup>, Valentines Day, is on a Sun. and Mon. the 15<sup>th</sup> is a federal holiday, Presidents Day. VA wanted a full week. The real key is getting our members to

visit the hospitalized veterans and just talk to them. The personal gathering by each chapter from local delivery of the schools is also a way to get military organizations noticed locally. The gathering of Valentine cards is one way to start that process. No recruitment, just to let them know we care and recognize their sacrifices and contributions to our country. We have put a short blurb on the NERA Web site that has some basic info; check it out at [www.nera.org](http://www.nera.org).

We request support from all hands from both organizations to ensure maximum participation. Mike Hughes (NERA) and Bill Overend (AUSN) will be the contact points and will be working closely on this soon-to-be annual project. They will strategize to ensure we get maximum coverage/participation. What a great way to do something important, while giving chapters or new members a reason to want to be a part of your organization. Let's show our brother and sister veterans that WE HAVE NOT FORGOTTEN THEM! Creating organizational change isn't always easy, but events like this are the right thing to do. Take care and may God bless you all!

*~ NERA Nick*