

# VIKANG NEWS

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October 2010

## A Few Words From

**MG Larry Shellito**

It is with mixed emotions that I write my last article as your Adjutant General. My task of the day is to submit my application for NGAMN as a retired member. It sounds simple but trust me, it is also eerie.

First and foremost, I want to thank all of the membership for your leadership and dedication. You truly are doing the heavy lifting for the total force. Over the seven years of my tenure, I have witnessed a transformation of the National Guard and in turn our great associations. Our Airmen and Soldiers have served with distinction. Minnesota, specifically, is viewed as a benchmark state for all reserve components and active forces consistently sing our praises.

While the view from the top is great, we must also be aware that it is perishable. The current budgetary state of our State and Nation clearly forewarns us of leaner times. Our elected leaders will be faced with competing demands for our reduced resources. We must never forget that we are a 'small fish' in a very big pond. Many times in the past this was good in that it was small numbers in comparison to other departmental budgets. On the federal side we must avoid becoming the orphan and once again relegated to hand-me-downs.

Minnesota NGAUS has been diligent in keeping our issues in the forefront. The demands and performance of our service members has been the catalyst for support – both from the public and private sectors. The support has been unprecedented during my lifetime. Our mission must include our continued efforts to keep the National Guard on our leader's 'front burner'. Simply said, our nation needs us even more. We are Ready, Relevant, and Reliable . . . slogan words seven years ago, reality now!

God bless you and your loved ones!

## President's Report

**By MAJ Kent Porter**

First off I want to thank all the members for the continued improvement in writing Congress on the NGAUS Legislative alerts. I

know you may not always agree with the alert, but we will continue to provide all of them to you for review on our website, [www.ngamn.org](http://www.ngamn.org). Your writing to Congress is working, please continue to do so. I will highlight some of the efforts later in this article.

Next, we had the fortune this year to send six Army and two Air company grade officers (see Company Grade reports) to the NGAUS convention this year in Austin, TX for professional development. There were plenty of OPD topics and I will let them discuss in their articles for this newsletter. Talking with them, they learned quite a bit, including hearing from Vice President Biden's son, who is a Delaware national Guardsman, who led one of the OPD topics. We are going to add some professional development topics this year at our State conference, so commanders will have the option of sending their officers in a duty status.

Next, the second annual NGAMN scholarship was presented this fall to a deserving student, (see the Scholarship article for details). Yet another great benefit of being a member of NGAMN is the ability to apply for \$500 member scholarship or a \$500 dependent scholarship to a member and dependent of a NGAMNB member. This year, we received no applications for the dependent scholarship.

Speaking of benefits, everyone needs to check out all the legislative action that has happened over the past year. A roll up of them can be reviewed at <http://www.ngaus.org/content.asp?bid=621> for more details. They are too numerous to mention, but the few that stand out are the improvements in mental health, multiple equipment issues, and probably the one that most affected our members, gray area retirees' health care benefits.

Gray area retirees are those active RC, IRR, or Retired Reserve "service member who have received 20-year letter but have not received retirement pay." Though Gray Area retirees receive many benefits, (see <https://www.hrc.army/site/Reserve/soldierservices/retirement/grayarea.htm> for a complete list) health care was not one of them. Legislation passed this year changed that. This is one of those "good news stories" for the efforts of NGAUS and members like you.

**CHANGE IN CONFERENCE DATES:** Everyone needs to mark 25-27 March 2011 down on their calendars for the next state conference. We changed the dates due to the

possible deployment of 1 HBCT and 34<sup>th</sup> ID conducting a major exercise during the original weekend in late April. We want to give as many officers the opportunity to attend as possible. Currently, I have letters drafted to all candidates for Governor asking them to speak at our conference. This will give our new governor a chance to meet as many of their National Guard officers as possible. Hope everyone can make it.

It is an honor to serve as your President.

## Legislative Report

Greeting NGAMN members,

If you haven't heard, there is currently legislation before the House to elevate the Chief, NGB (the National Guard's only four-star general position) to a permanent seat on the Joint Chiefs of Staff (see NGAUS Legislative Alert # 10-22 at [www.ngamn.org](http://www.ngamn.org) or [www.ngaus.org](http://www.ngaus.org)). What a great opportunity to secure a seat at the table for the Guard! I highly encourage you to write your elected officials and ask them to support this measure.

We are in interesting times-the DoD and Secretary of Defense are taking a hard look at how the military does business, especially from a cost standpoint. In short, it's belt-tightening time and the SecDef is pushing all chiefs to take a hard look at ways to reduce costs and increase efficiencies.

So what does this mean to you? It's time to get dialed-in to the political process and what's happening on Capitol Hill. If you enjoy the benefits that go along with military membership or being a veteran and you would like to maintain those benefits-now is the time to pay attention. If you appreciate the equipment and training your troops receive-or need better equipment and more training-now is the time to pay attention.

One of the easiest ways to stay engaged in the political process and make your voice heard is to subscribe to the NGAUS legislative alerts. By signing up you will automatically receive email alerts on important and timely issues impacting the National Guard. By clicking on the link within, you can read more about the issue and, if you choose, send an email directly to our elected officials to communicate your support. Also, be sure to bookmark the NGAMN association website, [www.ngamn.org](http://www.ngamn.org), and visit often as the NGAUS legislative alerts and "Write to Congress" tool are always posted right on the front page of the site.

Thomas Jefferson said "We in America do not have government by the majority. We have government by the majority who participate." I hope you will choose to participate in the political process.

**Respectfully submitted,**  
**Maj Brian C. Winter**  
**President-Legislative Affairs, NGAMN**

### Retired Article

**By Col (Ret) Larry Burda**

A few notes from the Retired Luncheon

Retired luncheon was held Sunday, August 22, 2010, 12:00-2:30 at Austin Convention Center.

MN attendees were: Rod Hannula, Larry Burda (Air Delegate), Albin Timm, Tony Johnson, Wayne Becker, Jean McDonald and Jeri Longfellow.

The Luncheon began with introduction of distinguished guests, former TAGs, and NGAUS staff members. Then nominations for Retired Air Representative were called for. Michelle Sweeney-KS, Nick Gritty-GA, and Ron Wagner of WI were nominated. We heard comments from the three nominees. MN cast its vote for Sweeney-KS. Ron Wagner of WI was declared the election winner and is the new Retired Air Representative.

COL Pete Duffy, Deputy Legislative Director, was the principal speaker and he discussed a variety of legislative issues.

- TriCare for Grey Area Retirees has been approved, but the premiums are too costly. 2010 premiums are \$388.31/mo for Member-only coverage and \$976.41/mo for Member-and-Family coverage.
- Although it currently has no legs, support was requested for a bill to make Grey Area Retirees and family dependants eligible for Space A

Benefit, same as Active Duty

Military families.

- Regarding Equitable Retiree Pay, requested support for legislation to allow Reserve Retirement to be reduced from age 60 by 1 year for every 2 years after 20 year letter is received.
- Also 90 day service rule reduction for early retirement is not retroactive to September 11, 2010-It did not go forward because of Pay Go Rule with entitlements. The only way to action retroactive change might be through emergency spending authorized by congress.
- Suicide, PTSD, and depression. Approved effective May 10, 2010, mental health care for family is now available through the VA for 3 years

post-deployment. Also, Mental Health Providers are embedded at units during weekend Training through the Military Life Consultant Program.

- The Family Care Giver Bill was approved (S1933).
- Support was requested to amend the Post 911 GI Bill to include Title 32 Active Service (S3447). HR5933 bill addresses AGR better and includes distance learning issues.
- Last year MILCON of \$30 million was approved for Army & Air Guard.
- NGAUS will continue to work on Dwell time care legislation.

NGAUS offers Retired Life Membership for \$125. This is a very good value, so please encourage membership.

COL Ray McGill, who is leaving the NGAUS Board, was recognized for 15 years of exceptional service.

The next NGAUS Conference will be held August 27-29, 2011 in Milwaukee, WI. Retiree Luncheon concluded.

### A few words from the Executive Director

**By CW5 (Bvt) (Ret)Walter D. Schulz**

The 132<sup>nd</sup> NGAUS Conference was held in Austin, TX 20-23 August, 2010. We had total of 58 attendees from MN, which consisted of 39 members, 12 spouses 5 guests. Our Officer Professional Development attendees have wrote great articles, (included in this newsletter) covering the conference. As you can see by the articles, everyone had a great time.

I'd like to thank our delegates who took the time and served on the committees. Thanks to MAJ Kent Porter for all his support to the association, and to all Board members, Group Reps (past and future) who take time out of their busy schedules to attend meetings, collect dues etc. Thanks to MAJ (RET) Carl Madsen for all his time spent on the web, and thanks to Maj Brian C. Winter our Legislative President for all his time and effort spent on our Legislative issues. Legislative issues can be found on our web site at [www.ngamn.org](http://www.ngamn.org) Please take time to check them out and voice your opinion by writing to Congress on these issues to ensure that we are heard and that our concerns are addressed

Once again this year there will be a Holiday dinner at Fort Snelling Officer's Club. All officers and retirees are welcome. One of the speakers for the event will be Assistant Adjutant General-Air BG Tim Cossalter. You will find a registration form in this newsletter.

We also need to have a strong organization. We can build this through our membership, by encouraging eligible

members to join and participate in the efforts we put forth. You can join the organization by visiting the National Guard web site at [www.ngamn.org](http://www.ngamn.org) you can either join on-line via credit card or complete the application in this newsletter and mail to:

NGAMN

3530 E. Medicine LK Blvd.

Plymouth, MN 55441

Finally I encourage you to attend our State Annual conference 25-27 March, 2011, to be held in Rochester, MN at Kahler Hotel.

### Webmaster Article

The association's website is constantly being updated and I encourage everyone to check it out.

<http://www.ngamn.org>

We offer online membership, both renewal and new members. A printable version in PDF format is available for those who want to mail a check.

The bylaws are easily found and searchable, again available in webpage, PDF and Word formats. It is important for every member to read these bylaws so they know what governs our association.

Every time a new piece of legislation is proposed by the National Association a link is placed on our website, enabling you to easily send an email to your representatives. This important piece is critical to the advancement of the National Guard as a whole, not just the association. All you need to do is input your zip code and your representatives are quickly linked to a draft letter, which you can edit, print, or email.

The new logo for the organization is in the top left corner of the page, and printable versions are linked to the image. Click on the logo and a page will allow you to download color versions in several different formats.

Information on the upcoming state and national conventions are always front and center on the home page. The closer we get to those events more information appears. In years past we have even allowed online registration for the state conference. This, along with the membership, is on an encrypted page, to protect your information.

The Vikang news and all insurance information (SSLI) is available through links on the left side. Contact me if you want to be able to update your group's page.

The advertisers on the right have paid for the privilege of having their ad on our home page, please click and visit their website. We report to each company the number of clicks, complete with analytics so they can see the value of their advertisement. If you know of a company who wants to advertise on our website, have them get in contact with Walt Schulz. His contact information, and all board members, is listed on the contact page of the website.

We have a presence on Face book as well;

[www.facebook.com/national.guard.association.of.minnesota](http://www.facebook.com/national.guard.association.of.minnesota)

Or look for a face book link on the bottom left of the home page.

I want to thank the association for trusting me with the website. It is my honor to keep it in good working order. If you notice anything you want to add, or corrections, please contact me at [carl.madsen@gmail.com](mailto:carl.madsen@gmail.com)

**Carl Madsen-Major (Retired)**

### **34<sup>th</sup> Cbt Avn Bde – In the News**

For the first time in over five years the entirety of the aviation units in Minnesota was in the state for training summer 2010. Not since early 2005 has the aviation brigade been able at annual training to bring to bear the full combat power of the rotary wing assets of the state until annual training 2010 (AT10). COL Mike Huddleston, the 34<sup>th</sup> Combat Aviation Brigade Commander, took full advantage of the collocation of his units flying the 34<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division command group on Air Assault missions, the Marine Reserve Regiment on air movements, and the 1/34<sup>th</sup> BCT with MEDEVAC training flights during XCTC. Flying during AT10 totaled over 300 flight hours and hundreds of passenger movements in just two short weeks of intensive air mission training. Hundreds of additional flight hours were flown supporting Maple Guardian in Canada and 1/34<sup>th</sup> BCT at Camp Ripley for their pre-deployment XCTC event.

Beyond training for mission readiness, the 34<sup>th</sup> Cbt Avn Brigade is preparing two units for upcoming deployments. On November 27<sup>th</sup> the MNARNG will see off the B/2-211<sup>th</sup> for a second tour in Iraq in four years. The 80 soldier unit will likely be stationed in Western Iraq flying the CH-47 Chinook helicopters conducting critical resupply and air movement missions throughout the theater of operation. The next deploying unit is bound for Afghanistan in the early part of 2011; C/2-211<sup>th</sup> is a MEDEVAC company comprised of

detachments from Minnesota and Iowa. Best wishes and GODSPEED their safe returns from deployments in both theaters of operation.

Always growing and transforming in Guard aviation, the helicopter units of the state will gain another important unit. The new unit is an additional medical evacuation detachment designated C/1-171<sup>st</sup> with three more UH-60 MEDEVAC helicopters on the way to the state to support the 30 personnel assigned within the unit. These additional airframes will be added to the heavy lift, air assault and medical evacuation helicopters of the MNNG enhancing the rotary wing capabilities within Minnesota.

As always, the 34<sup>th</sup> Cbt Avn Bde stands ready to support units across the Guard in Minnesota as well as the citizens of the state while building deployment readiness for all federal missions here and abroad.

**Submitted by MAJ Patricia Baker**

### **Division Separates' Report**

**By CPT Christopher P. Kline**

The 34<sup>th</sup> Red Bulls returned this year from a successful deployment in Basra, Iraq. BG Elicerio is selected as the new 34<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division Commander. Special Troops Battalion (STB), 34<sup>th</sup> ID rolled up its colors and transformed into the Division Headquarters Headquarters Battalion (DHHB). LTC Matthew Vatter assumed command of the DHHB.

**Following Conference reports submitted by OPD (Officer Professional Development) attendees at NGAUS Conference in Austin, TX**

### **208<sup>th</sup> Weather Flight 2010 NGAUS Convention Trip Report**

The 208<sup>th</sup> Weather Flight (WF) sent three unit members to the 2010 NGAUS convention to receive a NGAUS 2009 Distinguished Mission Support Plaque. Selection for the trip was based on individual performance and recognition – a 208<sup>th</sup> WF tradition of rewarding efforts that helped the unit achieve the group award.

Senior Airman (SrA) Ryan Keever had been recognized as the Air Reserve Component Battlefield Weather Airman of the Year, primarily as a result of his service in Basra, Iraq from April to October of 2009, providing weather support to first the 10<sup>th</sup> Mountain Division and then the 34<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division as the U.S. led Multi National Division-South took over for the British forces

in southern Iraq and then transitioned to 'out of cities' operations in the summer of 2009.

Senior Master Sergeant (SMSgt) Daniel Gardner had been recognized as the Air Reserve Component Battlefield Weather Senior Non-Commissioned Officer of the Year. As the senior enlisted member of the Task Force XII and then Task Force 34 weather support team at Joint Base Balad, Iraq he managed weather support for missions varying from ground convoys to air transport of distinguished visitors.

Lieutenant Casey Brown had been recognized as the Air Reserve Component Battlefield Weather Company Grade Officer of the Year. Lt Brown was the Staff Weather Officer for the 10<sup>th</sup> Mountain and then the 34<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division in Basra, Iraq from April to October of 2009. His airmen provided direct support and coordinated with private weather contractors to provide weather support to all Army operations in the Multi National Division-South.

The 208<sup>th</sup> WF received the Distinguished Mission Support Plaque on the basis of the support provided by unit members in a variety of missions. In addition to the three members mentioned above, seven other flight members served in Iraq (90% of eligible flight members) for a total of 1,398 CENTAF support days. 208<sup>th</sup> WF members distinguished themselves by not only providing outstanding support to a variety of Army missions, but in their willingness and ability to solve problems outside of the "standard" weather support mission – creating new support procedures, self training on and testing new equipment, and establishing new coordination procedures for private contract weather support as some examples. Additional CONUS missions brought the unit total to 3,252 support days, an average of 163 days per member. CONUS mission support covered a wide variety of missions in short term, quick response scenarios, including counter-drug assistance, weather support for flood emergency response, icing forecasts for C17 crews transporting a space station module, and even 25% of the flight volunteering on short notice for ORE/ORI augmentation in non-weather roles for the flight's parent Air Lift Wing, the 133<sup>rd</sup>.

The Distinguished Mission Support Plaque itself is awarded to five outstanding Air National Guard mission support (non-flying) units each year, with a Distinguished Mission Support Trophy going to the most outstanding unit. As such, it is a high honor to receive for a weather flight with only 16 members. The experience of receiving the award (and swapping coins) with the Command Chief and

Commander of the Air National Guard was both impressive and humbling to all three members – none of whom had attended a NGAUS conference before this.

In addition to the award ceremony, the 208<sup>th</sup> attendees participated in the ticketed events and the hospitality night, taking the opportunity to swap war stories with guard members from across the country. SMSgt Gardner (having a little more personal military history than SrA Keever or Lt Brown) also had the opportunity to re-connect with several friends and associates from past adventures. Flight members also took the opportunity to explore the local music scene and a few local restaurants and SMSgt Gardner and his significant other took the bus to visit San Antonio, catching the Alamo and River Walk. Lt Brown was able to travel to Austin by motorcycle, visiting relatives along the way and catching some curvy roads in Arkansas on the way back.

SrA Keever and Lt Brown also visited the exhibitors, collecting some significant information on both new weather equipment possibilities and field equipment of potential interest to the 208<sup>th</sup>, future funds provided!

All 208<sup>th</sup> NGAUS conference attendees were impressed with the significance and scope of events, appreciated the opportunity to attend, and look forward to having a chance to return in the future.

**Lt Casey Brown**  
**208<sup>th</sup> Weather Flight**  
**Minnesota Air National Guard**

### **NGAUS 2010 Conference Article**

This August I had the opportunity to attend the National Guard Association of the United States (NGAUS) national conference in Austin, TX. I've only been active in NGAUS for a short time so my intent was to find out for myself why my membership in the organization is important. Why should I be involved in this organization? Here are a few things I discovered:

1. NGAUS truly acts as the voice of the National Guard when working with our nation's political leaders. I've yet had the opportunity to work at a national level for the guard, but while at the conference I was introduced to the complex nature of business that takes place in our national capital. Often, I heard many veterans of the Washington D.C. "AOR" speak about the wickets that must be worked in order to get any agenda through and approved.

NGAUS provides an invaluable resource through its lobbying abilities and the human resources it hires in order to get National Guard issues elevated to the highest levels in our representative government. Military members in Washington aren't able to sell their agendas to publicly elected officials without an invitation, NGAUS ensures the voice of the National Guard is heard at the capital.

2. NGAUS is supported by the highest levels of the National Guard. During several of the breakout sessions I had the opportunity to hear from Gen. Craig McKinley, Lt. Gen. "Bud" Wyatt, and CMSgt Chris Muncy in an informal, personal setting which provided opportunities to hear what our guard leadership is thinking about in Washington. They provided insight into recommended career paths and rising missions that will most certainly play a part in the career of today's officer corp. They were also open to hearing about the concerns that officers, both Army and Air, had from working in the field. It was refreshing to hear that they're still aware that officers working the front lines and dealing with airmen and soldiers on a daily basis are one of the key components to growing a successful organization.
3. There are many great private partners in industry that are developing products to help the military execute the mission. The opportunity to tour the vendor floor provided a great chance to interact with product and software developers to get a glimpse into the research and development required to bring the highest quality equipment into the field. Again, these partners in industry were hungry to learn about how their products are actually used and open to ideas on how to improve them, making them more valuable to the end user. Many of them were excited to share the capabilities of their products and glad to demonstrate the effective employment of these systems.
4. In the end, the biggest benefit of the organization is certainly the variety of people with different backgrounds that I had the opportunity to meet. There were representatives from all over the country and territories, both Army and Air, that I was able to connect with to share commonalities and ideas about what it means to be an officer in today's National Guard. Attending this type of event reinforces the fact that none of us are operating in a vacuum.

I'm grateful for the opportunity I was give to represent the 133<sup>rd</sup> Air Wing and the State of Minnesota. This conference

gave me the insight as to what NGAUS is and why it's such an important organization for any National Guard officer to be a part of. I'm looking forward to the next year's conference in Milwaukee; I fully expect it will be just as rewarding!

**Kurt Steinmetz, 1Lt, MNANG**

### **133<sup>rd</sup> Airlift Wing**

#### **Conference Report**

**By Christopher V. Grupe**

I had a great opportunity to attend the 132<sup>nd</sup> General Conference this year for OPD. I'd like to thank the Maj. Baker and Maj. Porter for selecting me. The conference was held in the convention center at Austin, TX. We stayed in the Omni hotel which was a short walk to the convention center. The hotel accommodations were great and so was the food.

I arrived on Friday the 20<sup>th</sup> of Aug. Once I checked in to the hotel I immediately went to the Company Grade Mixer which was held at Scholz Garden. I had a chance to network with other company grade officers from different states and territories. The food was amazing and I had my fill of BBQ & Texas Brisket. I thought if this was an indicator of future mixers and events, this conference was going to be a blast.

On Saturday we did roll call is most memorable for me. I had the opportunity to attend OPD 3 years ago and enjoyed roll call then and look forward to it. Anything can happen at roll call and each state has its own method of garnering recognition. Some states threw candies that were local to their geographical area; others threw objects that had some tie to their state or state motto. Before we had roll call, the Douglas MacArthur High School JROTC Drill Team from San Antonio, TX did a great job with their ceremony. The TX Governor, Hon Rick Perry spoke shortly after. I enjoyed listening to him and his speech. He spoke highly of the Guard and our reputation for our service locally and abroad. An interesting tidbit of information – he was a former C-130 pilot. It's great to see military leadership and veterans are active in politics and hold high levels of government. Maj. Gen. Bunting narrated an informative power point on where we are, resolutions (Army & Air), etc. It's nice to get a high level overview of the National Guard and our current standing. He mentioned that the Secretary of Defense is looking for ways to trim cost and a way could be to merge the Reserve and National Guard. I think we owe it to the tax payers to consider this option. I'm

sure there could be many challenges or hurdles towards making that happen.

Saturday evening's Governors Reception was great. This was another fine meal with Texas style entertainment. I was surprised by a visit from my fiancée. CPT Kline had arranged her visit and kept it a secret. We haven't had an opportunity to spend much time with each other due to schedules, travel, etc. This was a nice surprise and I was happy she came out for the evening. The Rodeo was perfect. Jane (fiancée) had a chance to meet with some of the other officers from MN at the hospitality suite. This was another introduction for her into the Guard family and she likes our culture and everything we represent and proud of us.

Each day we had the opportunity to network and interact with other officers from different states. Discussion ranged from upward mobility, current state of affairs within the National Guard, challenges we face, and our future. This conference also gave me a chance to reach out to other company grade officers within the MN Guard from different units and attend several OPD sessions. The most notable for me was our last OPD session on diversity. It was hosted by COL Berry Ondra and he brought a different twist or perspective to diversity. This is a tough subject to talk about or lecture. COL Ondra mixed in a sense of humor and provocative thought into the discussion. I hadn't laughed that hard in a long time. I think he could easily do stand-up comedy as a second profession and do well at it. COL Berry also brought a science to diversity and hard facts which provoked thought. He had a tough time slot to lecture it was after lunch towards the end of the afternoon. If he travels to MN for a lecture I'd definitely enjoy listening to him again.

The hospitality night is always a blast. I think the challenge is making it back to your room from your initial voyage out. I met two company grade officers from the 1-94 CAV from Duluth. Great guys! They helped me understand that squadrons exist beyond the aviation community.

The finally was the States Dinner. I had put some time and effort into my Western Attire and so did my battle buddy (CPT Kline). We went all out with the cowboy hats, etc. but were upstaged by the 1-94 CAV guys and their Stetsons. The food and camaraderie was great and lasted throughout the evening. This was a great way to finish the conference.

This was my second OPD experience with NGAUS. I was new to the National Guard when I was at my first conference. The past seven years in the National Guard have been a learning experience and helped me understand

the business aspects. I see the reason and need to have NGAUS and the benefits they provide to us. NGAUS gives us a voice in politics and can enhance our standing within the uniformed services. Thanks to all for making this trip possible.

**Regards,  
CPT Christopher Grupe**

### **2010 NGAUS General Conference**

This year's conference in Austin, TX was a fantastic experience for Company Grade Officers. The opportunity to hear from the National Guard's senior leadership on critical issues such as the Guard's role over the next few decades was critical to the formative development of us Company Grades. In addition, the inherent networking with leaders and peers from other components and states during social events was beneficial as it allowed us to increase our base of contacts.

We had the opportunity to attend several OPD sessions of which I found the session with NGB Chief, General McKinley, the most interesting. The primary topic of this OPD was the question of the National Guard remaining an Operational Reserve. This question strikes me as relevant and not as simple as I had first thought. There are so many aspects of the question to consider such as what would the ARFORGEN cycle look like, where would deployments occur, and the effects on retention. This is the subject that the Company Grade Caucus has taken up and there has been a lot of email correspondence on the topic since the adjournment of the conference.

The Company Grade Caucus focused on elections and our new Area V company grade rep, CPT Laura Pratt from Indiana, has been true to her word about increasing the communication channels to the officers in the field. We have received no less than one email a week detailing correspondence with senior guard leadership.

The industry exhibits are always a crowd favorite at the convention. As an avid player of Modern Warfare 2 on the Play station 3, I was impressed with some of the newer virtual combat trainers displayed at the convention. The static displays of some of the newer vehicular platforms such as the Bradley Mortar Vehicle were interesting as well.

The social events were excellent this year. Starting with the Company Grade Mixer at Scholz Garden, the evenings were packed with opportunities to enjoy Austin and sport a Stetson. Additional events included the Governor's Reception with a Rodeo and a

performance by Rick Trevino, hospitality night, and the State's Dinner wrapping it up. During these events we were able to meet many officers from around the country.

The 2010 NGAUS General Conference was a success and I highly recommend attendance of the 2011 event. I hope to see you in Milwaukee.

**Submitted by CPT Alvin Graham**

### **Rally in Milwaukee in 2011**

The National Guard Association annual conference was held in San Antonio, TX this year and what a wonderful event it was. National Guard soldiers and airmen from all over the fifty states and territories assembled for a historic weekend of meetings, conferences and special events. The theme this year was Texas Formal which meant blue jeans, a white western shirt, and a cowboy hat. We were really a sight to see. Of course, our friends from the Cavalry came with their Stetsons and spurs and gave the Minnesota delegation an air of authenticity.

As a company grade officer this was an exciting and thrilling event to attend. Too often I learn about new initiatives in the Army through a newsletter, online article, or the Army Times. It was eye opening and illuminating to learn where the Army and the National Guard are going through the remarks of such leaders as: Admiral James A. Winnefeld, Jr., USN, Commander of NORTHCOM, or General James D. Thurman, Commander of FORSCOM, and Major General Raymond W. Carpenter, Chief National Guard Bureau.

Admiral Winnefeld spoke to the audience about States' rights and how it was his intention to turn the NORTHCOM culture away from providing a Joint Task Force, to a state requiring assistance, to a Joint Support Force. He emphasized the importance of the National Guard in homeland defense and the constitutional and historical perspective of that mission.

General Thurman spoke about returning to our roots as an expeditionary force. He cautioned that we were becoming too dependent upon contractor assets. He shared a concern that the Army was getting too used to moving into mature theaters pre-set by Army contractors. He urged leaders to train skill-sets required for moving into areas where little to no assets are available. He reminded the audience that one failing we have in the Army

is the tendency to train for the next war with the lessons learned from the past war.

General Carpenter spoke to the company grade officers during lunch. He spoke about deployments, the ARFORGEN model, and the need for increased soldier care. He spoke about the rise of suicides within our ranks and the need for every leader to be a soldier sensor. After his comments he took questions from the audience for over an hour.

It truly was an honor to be part of the Minnesota delegation. I urge all of my fellow officers to join me next year in Milwaukee. For golf enthusiasts Milwaukee is only a short distance from Kohler, Wisconsin which is home to no less than five championship level golf courses. For those motorcycle enthusiasts there will be a "freedom ride" next year in honor of the ten year anniversary of 9/11.

**Respectfully,**

**CPT John G Donovan  
Joint Forces Headquarters  
MN Army National Guard**

**Conference Report**

**By CPT Christopher P. Kline**

I had the privilege to attend the 132<sup>nd</sup> General Conference this year in a TDY status. The conference was held in Austin Texas at the Austin Convention Center with nearly 5,000 attendees in presence. The theme of this year's event being "The National Guard: America's Solution," and it quite fitting!

Hotel accommodations were great and within walking distance to the Convention Center. There was a bus running looped transportation to the conference, but I found it to be easier just to walk. The only downside to the accommodations was that attendees were spread between five hotels across the city; it would have been nice to be all located at on site if possible to allow for more interactions/networking with members from the different states.

I arrived Friday afternoon and my first objective for the conference was the Company Grade Mixer. Here all Captains and below gather together for camaraderie, food and drinks. The event took place at Scholz Garden where they served BBQ brisket, chicken, tator salad and peach cobbler. This is a time to meet your peers from the other states, share war stories and build new friendships.

Next target of opportunity was the Company Grade luncheon/caucus. Business accomplished while there; company level and region level representatives for National level

representation were elected and CPT Laura K. Pratt from Indianapolis, IN was elected as our (Region V) representative.

In parallel meetings, senior Board members were elected, as well as a new chairman. Maj. Gen. Frank Vavala, the Delaware adjutant general, was elected to a two-year term as chairman.

The Roll Call of States was event was very entertaining and educational, if speakers can be believed. The next time I attend this event, and for ya'll reference, you may want to wear safety glasses and a helmet because there are things flying everywhere!

One of my Professional Development sessions I attended, and the most memorable one, was on diversity presented by COL Berry Ondra. He put a whole new spin on the concept and made us think of this word in a new light. One key point I took away from this lecture was that "you don't have to endorse to tolerate." I think in some aspect, that statement brought a sigh of relief for a number of us. I will let you all make your own assumptions on what this means. He also recommended a number of good books to read.

On the technical side of the house I attended a session focused on "C4I Task Force (Army)." The caliber of speakers they get for these events is reason enough to attend. You get to hear things right from the proverbial "horse's mouth" on the concepts, and designs of what is coming down the pipe. You get to ask questions and make recommendations on things will have impact on future generations of soldiers.

More than 1,500 industry representatives were on hand, along with a sprawling trade show. From what I have been told, the trade show gets better each year and is a must for anyone in uniform who wants to know what could be showing up in the training area or on the battlefield in the near future. I was particularly interested in all the simulator training and brought back a whole lot of literature to review and recommend to my leaders for consideration; especially the kind that can be set up on the drill floor.

Of interest, Maj. Gen. Tod M. Bunting was never shy about using the chairman's soapbox to push for things such as increased funding for Guard facilities and a more rapid modernization of the Air Guard. Most recently, he suggested the Reserve force be integrated with the Guard, which sparked a wave of mostly supportive e-mails to the Kansan. This was a particularly interesting

concept to hear about, very curious to see how this will play out in the distant future.

One special guest at the conference spoke to a professional development session. Beau Biden, the attorney general of Delaware and a captain in the Delaware Army Guard, encouraged Guardsmen to feel proud of their organization.

Despite being the son of Vice President Joe Biden, he said the military is a great "equalizer" and told of being deployed to Iraq as a member of the Judge Advocate General Corps. "I was just another captain," he said. "And I hope I was a good captain." I think the point trying to be made is that it really doesn't matter "who" you are, when you wear the green suit, we all face the same issues while being deployed as well as when we return home.

The annual NGAUS conference is known for much more than its business sessions and the host state came through with flying colors. The annual Governor's Reception on Saturday evening included a dinner of brisket and baked beans, with a rodeo as after-dinner entertainment.

The rodeo was quite the event, and for my first one, I got a good taste of the sport when two cowboys who were tossed from their bucking broncs needed medical attention in the arena. It got even rougher when the bull riding started and not one rider was able to stay on for the necessary eight seconds.

Country singer Ricky Trevino provided post-rodeo entertainment before posing for pictures and signing autographs for appreciative fans when the music ended. Some people may have seen Trevino before. He's performed with the USO show in Iraq.

I must end on this report with a blurb about hospitality night. To be honest, this event runs through the entire conference and is another venue for you to meet and talk to other guardsmen/women in a more relaxed environment. This year's event could be loosely compared to a pub crawl as many States joined forces to host activities at various locations around the city. It was almost like a scavenger hunt with the grand prize being "finding your way back to your own hotel!"

The NGAUS Convention was a great experience. I will highly recommend and encourage my peers to attend in the future, as well as to be active members of NGAUS. I greatly appreciate the opportunity I was given to attend the conference TDY. I plan on attending again in the future, which is 27-29

AUGUST 2011 in Milwaukee, WI, and yes there is a planned Motorcycle ride for all you enthusiasts!

#### NGAUS 2010 Article

By CW4 Peter Panos

I recently attended the 2010 NGAUS conference in Austin, TX as a representative of the Warrant Officer Corp. One of the requirements for the honor of representing us was that I was required to attend Professional development briefings provided at the conference.

While I found most of the briefings to be interesting and have application to the entire junior warrant and O-grade officers in attendance, two briefings stood out. The first was the EEO brief presented by USAF COL Ondra Berry of the Nevada Air National Guard. Col Berry challenged the audience to incorporate the principals of diversity in their lives as well as careers. Colonel Berry promotes that "every human being is under construction and has unlimited potential. He challenged the status quo in diversity education and made each participant look at their own bias and preconceived ideas of diversity in a humorous format. Through this humor, he was able to achieve a thoughtful and honest discussion on what has typically been a difficult topic for most individuals and organizations.

Now, for one of the most disappointing portions of the entire 4-day event, the Warrant Officer Professional Development event. "Go see the exhibits, have lunch and listen to an out of touch, self-serving Senior Warrant Officer tell a room full of junior warrant officers that only senior warrant officers should be in leadership positions within NGAUS. As I chocked on my meal upon hearing this, I started to look around the room and, almost to a person, the look of shock, disgust and just plain dismissal was on everyone's face. Here was a senior leader of the Warrant Officer Corps who has lost sight of a major benefit of the National Guard, we are citizen soldiers, and we bring a wide variety of skills and talents to the table irrespective of our position in the National Guard.

We had just heard a very passionate and inspiring brief from Col Mark Jones, Commandant of the Warrant Officer Career Collage, about the changing and challenging responsibilities of the Warrant Officer in today's Army and how the Warrant Officer Corps must be prepared to face and even embrace these new responsibilities.

The Warrant Officer of today is not the same as when I entered the Corps 26 years ago. We were appointed by the Secretary of the Army based upon a sound level of technical and tactical competence, for most of us high school was our highest education level and our formal non-technical training, as we moved up the ranks, consisted of a few correspondence courses and on rare occasion, a two week or so residency course were we would usually be on the golf course by 1200. Thankfully, in 2002 the Army Training and Leader Development Panel (ATLDP) focused on training and leader development requirements for Warrant Officers as the Army transforms to the Future Force.

The Warrant Officers Corps has a legacy, a core value, of the "Quiet Professional"; as such, we do not seek promotions or awards. We strive to be the best at what we do. We strive to better our units and fellow soldiers by our professionalism and knowledge. While junior warrants need to embrace this legacy and strive to uphold this core value, we as leaders and mentors for the future of the Warrant Officer must realize that the next generation of Warrant Officers are looking to build on our successes. We must therefore be willing to pass the leadership torch on to them, and stand by to give guidance and direction when needed.

The Warrant Officer of today must now take the honor and respect we have earned as "The Quite Professional" to the next level, one of ever increasing responsibility and leadership.

So, what did I learn from the 2010 NGAUS National conference? To get involved, you cannot make change if you are always sitting on the sidelines, letting someone carry the burden and the complaining when the organization does not seem to respond to our concerns. The Warrant Officer Corps has a seat on the NGAUS Board of Directors; it is incumbent upon us to use this position to advance our profession and strengthen our position as the "Quiet Professional" in both the technician and leadership role.

#### UPCOMING GENERAL CONFERENCES



**133rd General Conference**  
Aug. 27 - 29, 2011 in Milwaukee

Hosted by the Wisconsin National Guard

**134th General Conference**  
Sept. 10 - 12, 2012 in Reno  
Hosted by the Nevada National Guard

**135th General Conference**  
2013 in Honolulu  
Hosted by the Hawaii National Guard

**136th General Conference**  
2014 in Chicago  
Hosted by the Illinois National Guard

#### Future State Conference



**2011 NGAMN State Conference**  
Rochester, MN  
[Kahler Hotel](#)

March 25-27 2011

**2012 NGAMN State Conference**  
DECC  
Duluth, Minnesota  
April 27-29, 2012

**2013 NGAMN State Conference**  
Central Minnesota  
Location TBD  
April 26-28, 2013

#### CHANGE OF INFORMATION FORM

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## **WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU**

If you have any questions or opinions about something you read in the Vikang Newsletter, mail to NGAMN, 3530 E. Medicine Lake Boulevard, Plymouth, MN, 55441 or e-mail to [excdir2@aol.com](mailto:excdir2@aol.com) Items are subject to editing for style, clarity, accuracy, length and propriety.

## **EXECUTIVE BOARD MEMBERS**

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Troop Command-CPT Aaron Oelschlager  
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Retired Officers-CW5 (Ret) Richard Hathaway  
Alternate –Col (ret) Larry Burda  
Legislative Liaison-Maj Brian C. Winter  
Legislative Alternate-MAJ (Ret) Carl Madsen

### **Militia Insurance Trust 20 September 2010**

This past month has been busy with the New York Life's agreement to issue a new term life plan – *The Guardian Plan* effective January 1, 2011, the start of enrollments in New York.

We are hopeful that enrollment activities for the *NEW "Guardian Plan"* will commence on 1 January 2011. Here are some of the key features:

- Eligibility: Guard members between age 17 and 50; Dependent spouse and child coverage is also available.
- \$10,000 Guaranteed Issue coverage available to new guard members who enroll within 90 days of enlistment; \$5,000 of Guaranteed Issue coverage for spouses and children.
- Coverage amounts maximum is \$20,000 on the member and spouse and \$15,000 on dependent children.
- Coverage continues to age 100 with 50% benefit reductions at ages 60, 70 and 75.
- The CSR requirements will remain the same with periodic reviews by New York Life.

The Trust has been working with New York Life on developing this new plan for over five years and we are very happy this will be launched in January.

**New York National Guard enrollments** began in August with Mac enrolling 124. What a great start!!!

**Financial Stability** - New York Life, a recognized leader in the group insurance field, is one of the largest and most respected life insurance companies in the nation. They consistently receive the highest possible ratings for financial strength from some of the industries principal rating agencies. A.M. Best (A++), Fitch Ratings (AAA), Standard & Poor's (AAA) and Moody's Investors Service (Aaa)\*.

Austin Jenkins

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**NGAMN CORPORATE MEMBERS AND SPONSOR MAY ABE FOUND ON PAGE 10  
VISIT NGAMN.ORG for more information on our Corporate Sponsors**

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State	\$15	\$15	\$20	\$30	\$35	\$35	\$40	\$40	\$15	\$15	\$20	\$30	\$30
National	\$30	\$45	\$59	\$72	\$85	\$108	\$123	\$139	\$26	\$35	\$46	\$59	\$73
<b>TOTAL:</b>	<b>\$45</b>	<b>\$60</b>	<b>\$79</b>	<b>\$102</b>	<b>\$120</b>	<b>\$143</b>	<b>\$163</b>	<b>\$179</b>	<b>\$41</b>	<b>\$50</b>	<b>\$66</b>	<b>\$89</b>	<b>\$103</b>

**Associate Member: \$10**

**Newly Commissioned Officer and Warrant Officers receive free membership for period of one year and any portion of the year in which appointed.**

**Active Life NGAUS Membership: one lump sum payment of \$1,000.00 or over two years in four \$250 installments.**

**Active State Life Membership: one lump sum payment of \$250**

**For Retired Officers: NGAUS Life Member \$125 State Life Member \$50**

**GROUP REPRESENTATIVES**

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| "1 <sup>st</sup> Brigade" 1LT David Adams | "RSG" 2LT Cory Johnson                    |
| "Division/Separates" CPT Chris Kline      | "133 AW/HQ" Lt Col Mark Schutta           |
| "148 FW" 1Lt Christopher Rogge            | "JFHQ" MAJ Joseph J. Sharkey              |
| "Aviation" MAJ Patricia Baker             | "Troop Command" CPT Aaron Oelschlager     |
| "Warrant Officer" CW2 Keith Schweitzer    | "Retired Officers" CW5 Richard Hathaway   |
| "Webmaster" MAJ (ret) Carl Madsen         | "Legislative Liaison" Maj Brian C. Winter |



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FRIDAY, 3 DECEMBER 2010

**FORT SNELLING OFFICERS' CLUB - BALLROOM**

395 Hwy 5 and Post Road, St Paul, MN, 55111  
Upstairs to the left / Club is Handicap Accessible

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This is a time to renew old friendships and make new ones!  
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### MENU SELECTIONS

Prime Rib 10 oz with Au Jus, twice Baked Potato, Roasted Vegetables, House Salad,  
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OR

Parmesan Walleye 9 oz sautéed in parmesan bread crumbs, Rice Pilaf, Roasted Vegetables,  
House Salad, Rolls and Butter, Vanilla Ice Cream with Chocolate Sauce and Coffee or Tea / \$26

Please Detach and Return this Reservation Form with Your Check Made Payable To  
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## **The VIKANG News**

National Guard Association of Minnesota

3530 East Medicine Lake Boulevard

Plymouth, MN 55441

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