

VIKANG NEWS

Volume 48 Issue 2

October 2009

To: Minnesota National Guard Officers

While at the National Conference in Nashville last month, I thought to myself about what a sight it must be for the Secretary of the Air Force and Army Chiefs of Staff, Senators, and others to appear before the 3,000 National Guard Officers gathered in the room. The attendees were all there with one common goal, betterment of the National Guard and keeping this nation's military strong. The guest speakers must have thought about the fact that the Air Force, Army and National Guard Bureau can't lobby, but this organization can. With 45,000 Army and Air National Guard Officers being active members, the Association truly has some clout in Washington, and is an organization that must be listened to.

To make the Association even stronger, we need all current members to encourage all Guard Officers to join the national association. Loss of fighter aircraft in the Air National guard and early retirement with credit for all service back to 9/11 are just two examples of the issues lawmakers addressed in Nashville. To remain a viable force, the National Guard must continue to attract and retain good people. To do that, it needs adequate equipment, training, and funding.

Lt Gen Wyatt, Director of the Air National Guard, said yesterday that "With the DOD trying to reduce costs due to the economy and to pay two wars, the Guard is in great position because we provide the equivalent force at about one sixth the cost of active duty." Now is the time. A strong National Guard Association with a high percentage of membership translates to a strong National Guard, properly equipped to perform all missions required to keep the citizens of our state and country safe.

Paul Cummings
President, NGAMN

News from MG Shellito

The Minnesota National Guard continues to sustain its active pace. Our deployments have consistently shown that there is something special about Minnesota units and wings. They consistently perform very well-regardless of theater of operation.

Most recently we completed a site visit from an "Army Communities of Excellence" (ACOE) evaluation team. Minnesota has won this award before but what was most noteworthy this time were the significant changes made since our last visit. I was and am very proud of the work done by all. I truly believe the Minnesota National Guard raised the 'bar' to new heights.

As we enter yet another phase of change with new administrations both on the national and soon on the state levels that we must remain vigilant as to the needs of the state-and on all levels-national, state, and local.

Our associations (NGAUS/EANGUS) have served us well but we must continue to support these critical assets as we navigate the mazes of competitive interests that we will face in the future.

I thank you and your families for your service to our great nation. You have done well most faithful servant. Take time to enjoy the holiday season with family and friends.

Onward!

NGAUS General Conference 2009 at Nashville, TN

A Retired Perspective.

This conference was the largest ever with over 4,000 attending and also with the most vendors displaying their wares. Fifty-eight attended from MN, of which 13 were retired bringing 9 spouses/guests/children. Opryland Hotel (2800 rooms) and Convention Center housed the whole event with the exception of the Grand Ole Opry that ended the Conference after the closing Banquet. Speakers included Secretary of the Air Force Michael Donley, Chief of Staff Air Force General Schwartz, Chief of the National Guard Bureau McKinley, Secretary of the Department of Homeland Security Napolitano and Army Vice Chief of Staff General Chiarelli.

The National Guard theme was CONCURRENT and PROPOR-TIONAL meaning the National Guard needs updated equipment delivered at the same time as the active force and in numbers proportional to the present ratio of National Guard to active forces. For example, the F-22 buy has been cut from over 400 to 187. Normally, the

Air Guard gets hand-me-down airplanes from the Air Force and this cut could mean a number of Air Guard units will go out of business because their old airplanes cannot survive the future battlefield. The same situation is true regarding Army Guard equipment.

The DOD/Army/Air Force message was "big cuts are coming to the Defense Budget! The Air Guard is going to have more non-flying missions such as Remotely Piloted Vehicles and Cyber."

Eighty-five Resolutions were passed regarding many weapon system upgrades, communications upgrades and personnel issues such as Army physical and dental health readiness and early retirement based on combat duty time.

The Retired Luncheon/Caucus was very well attended by about 200 retirees. Notables there were Generals Davis, D'Arujo and James plus former TAGs. Col. Pete Duffey, NGAUS Dep. Legislative Director spoke to us about the early retirement issue, the need to have Title 32 count as Title 10 and the threat the Obama Healthcare Plan poses to Tricare for Life. His message: "contact your legislators." Donald L. Samuels, Vice Commander DAV also spoke to us. He said many veterans are unaware of benefits or are reluctant to ask. Examples included Agent Orange, cold weather injuries, hearing due to noise, asbestos and post traumatic stress. His recommendation: Go to the DAV to see if you qualify. It could be very important to your family. 888-236-8313 or www.DAV.org.

The final Banquet was not mess dress, but cowboy shirts, hats and boots. After we walked five minutes to the Grand Ole Opry, Wynona Judd, Trace Adkins and others performed for us. (Charlie Daniels opened the Conference. Wow!)

My recommendations: Attend a national NGAUS Conference. It is a good time for MN Guard camaraderie and a good party with great people from all over the US. If you know of someone who is not a Life Member, tell them what a great bargain it is for \$175 and with looming budget cuts we need all the political clout we can get.

Larry Burda
Secretary, Retired Group

Including in this VIKANG News you will find an invitation to the Christmas Party on Friday, December 4th. Retired and active, air and army, spouses and significant others are all invited to enjoy the evening with us at the Ft Snelling Officer's Club. 1800 is the social hour with the program beginning at 1900. Last year's keynote speaker was MG Shellito, The Adjutant General, and we had nearly 40 people attend. Please fill out and mail this invitation or send an email with the necessary information to carl.madsen@gmail.com or excdir2@aol.com. The cost is \$28 per meal, please pay in advance.

Carl Madsen
President, Retired Group

NGAUS Warrant Officer Caucus Report
Nashville, TN
By: CW5 (ret) Richard Hathaway

CW4 (ret) Walter Schulz and I attended the NGAUS Warrant Officer Caucus in Nashville, TN. The Warrant Officer Representative to NGAUS CW5 (ret) Larry Masse had a family emergency and unable to attend the caucus and was replaced by CW5 (ret) Howard Haider. Due to the absence of our NGAUS board representative (Larry Masse) the only business conducted was the required election of our Warrant Officer NGAUS Representative, Area 3 representative and the Area 5 representative. CW5 Howard E. Touchstone of Mississippi is the new NGAUS Warrant Officer Board Member and CW3 Scott E. Wolff of Indiana is the new area 5 representative.

Executive Director Report
CW5 (BVT) Walter Schulz

A special thanks to every-one that attended the 131st Conference in Nashville, TN. As you read through the Vikang Newsletter you can tell everyone who attended the conference had a wonderful time and brought back lots of knowledge from the speakers. There were a total of 58 attendees from the state of Minnesota, who helped make this conference a great success, which included 38 members (20 of those were delegates), 17 spouses, 2 guests and 1 child.

Next year the 132nd NGAUS Conference will be held in Austin, TX. I will meet with members from NGEDA in January to

discuss events, reserve hotel rooms, etc. (MN is number 18 in the lottery drawing) A little bit I can share at this time, is attire for the States Dinner in Texas is "TEXAS FORMAL" which is blue jeans, white tie, boots, and state bandana. Rumor is that the Governor's Reception includes a rodeo, so western wear is already required, so hand on to your boots, and hats.

We are starting our 2010 membership drive. Member-ship can be renewed by visiting our website at www.ngamn.org & use your credit card or print off a copy and mail it with a check payable to NGAMN and send it to Walt Schulz at 3530 East Medicine Lake Boulevard, Plymouth, MN 55441. There is also a membership form included in this newsletter. If you are a newly commission-ed officer, you receive free membership for a period of one year, and any portion of the year in which appointed. Membership begins upon initial state appointment, when reported to the Association and ends 31 December of the following year.

The National Guard Association is hosting a holiday party, 4 December, (Friday) evening at Fort Snelling Officers Club. The party will be held in the commander's room. Social hour begins at 1800 hr with program following at 1900 hr. This is open to everyone. Please join in the fun and fill out the invitation form included in this Newsletter.

The cost of this event is \$28 per person and payment in advance is appreciated.

Please take time to visit our website www.ngamn.org any suggestions for improving the website and strength-ending our organization are greatly appreciated. I can be reached at 763-545-1391 cell 763-218-4059 or email me at excdir2@aol.com.

2009 NGAUS Conference Re-cap
By Brian C. Winter, NGAMN
Legislative Liaison

Greetings from Nashville, Tennessee, a.k.a "Music City", home of the 2009 NGAUS Conference. If you didn't make it to this year's conference, you missed out on an amazing time.

You missed out on a night out at the Wild Horse Saloon in downtown Nashville with live bands, line dancing lessons and appearances by NASCAR drivers Dale Earnhardt Jr. and Jeff Gordon. You missed a spectacular kickoff to the business meeting by none other than Charlie Daniels, his band, and of course, his fiddle.

You missed out on visiting over 400 exhibitors at 950 booths. You missed your chance to mix, mingle and network with

your fellow officers from all of the fifty-four states and territories.

You missed out on the Governor's Reception, the Hospitality Night, and a States Dinner where western wear – not mess dress – was the required uniform. You missed an exclusive evening at the historic Grand Ole Opry – reserved for NGAUS conference attendees only – with performances by Ricky Skaggs, Craig Morgan, Kelly Pickler, Wynonna, and Trace Adkins.

Most importantly, you missed out on a one-of-a-kind officer professional development opportunity. You missed your chance to listen in on keynote speeches by several top military and government officials including: Secretary of the Air Force, Mr. Michael Donley, Chief of Staff of the Air Force, General Norton Schwartz, Army Vice Chief of Staff, General Peter Chiarelli, Chief of the National Guard Bureau, General Craig McKinley, Director of the Air National Guard, Lieutenant General Harry Wyatt, Acting Director of the Army National Guard, Major General Raymond Carpenter, Assistant Secretary of Defense for Reserve Affairs, Mr. Dennis McCarthy, U.S. Secretary of Homeland Security, Janet Napolitano, U.S. Representative Neil Abercrombie and U.S. Senator Kip Bond, co-chair of the senate National Guard Caucus.

You missed out the meaning of the hot buzzwords, "concurrent and proportional," pertaining to the distribution of airframes like the F-22 and F-35 for the air guard at the same time as active duty air force. You missed discussions on topics such as: the guard's role as a strategic vs. operational force, possible future missions, Army and Air Guard equipment and air-frame procurement priorities, legislation pertaining to active and retired guard member benefits, and opportunities for Q&A with leaders in both Army and Air breakout sessions.

What a truly valuable experience for any National Guard officer. If you didn't make it to this year's NGAUS conference, you missed a lot.

Don't miss out again next year.

Vice President Army Report
By MAJ Kent Porter

First off I want to thank all the members for tending to my duties while I was deployed. It has been a tough year on membership mainly because we had two large units deployed for the first half of 2009. One division (34th ID) and one brigade (34th CAB) size element deployed

at the same time and with all the operational tempo we missed many officers. Since my return, I have focused all my NGAUS energy on membership and re-energizing Army group representatives. Both, in efforts to help us strive to 100%. I have been pushed for national assistance and starting this winter, I will be on the NGAUS Membership board. I hope to provide NGAMN the extra "umph" to get us in the upper level of membership compared to the rest of the nation. We are currently in bottom fifth of the nation.

Secondly, we had the fortune this year to send four company grade officers (see Company Grade report for their reports) to the NGAUS convention this year in Nashville as professional development. Don't worry, I made them work hard for their OPD, However, I believe the highlight of their OPD was when they got to meet the National Guard NASCAR drivers, Dale Earnhardt Jr and Jeff Gordon at the Company Grade mixer. They were all appreciative of the opportunity and recommend all Company Grade to consider this opportunity in future years.

Next, the first annual NGAMN scholarships were presented this fall to two deserving students. (see the Scholarship article for details) Yet another great benefit of being a member of NGAMN to apply for \$500 to a member and child/grand-child of a NGAMN member. We had ten applications this past year for the two, next year we hope to have many more applicants.

Speaking of benefits, everyone needs to check out all the legislative action that has happened over the past year. They are too numerous to mention, but the two that stand out and they affect everyone and positively may I add. One, is the new GI Bill pays for all costs of college to include rent, fees, etc and not just tuition.

Now, you might be asking how does this positively affect us senior officers, one word, transferability. Those soldiers who are done with their education, can transfer their benefit to their immediate family members. Using myself as an example, I used 36 months of GI Bill back in the 80s which is the maximum benefit. The new GI Bill increases the maximum benefit to 48 months, so I transfer my benefit to my daughter. The benefit I have remaining is 12 months which I transferred to her to use during her first year of college. Now if you have never used the GI Bill before, you have a new maximum of 48 months. There is a proportion depending on how long you were deployed, but as I write this article, NGAUS is fighting hard for Title 32 active time to count into this proportion.

Reduction in retirement age has been passed and currently it stands at for every 90 days on Title 10 since January 2008, that equal time is reduced from the retirement age of 60. Though this is a good start, we need to let our elected official know that we favor this date to be move back to September 2001.

Those are just a couple benefits that directly affect our members. Hopefully you can see that your member dues are being used wisely and are paying great dividends for our soldiers and members. Just the early retirement alone, if you start receiving your retirement earlier than 60, how much more money is that in your retirement plans? Most people would think that is a great investment. NGAUS is a great investment, pass this to those who do not know about these benefits or think it is not worth it.

It is an honor to be your VP-Army and your participation is always encouraged and welcome.

Special Troops Battalion /34th Infantry Division Submitted by: CPT Chris Kline

The 34th Red Bulls continue to improve their Fox-hole overseas. Whether it is updating the base Post Office to except Eagle Cash, over-seeing the construction of new bridges, opening a new Iraqi bazaar-the Oasis, or helping the Iraqis prepare for elections, the 34th Infantry Division is continuing to build its legacy. They have reached their halfway point of the tour this month, with each day brings them closer to home.

One specific highlight is that the 34th Infantry Division was awarded an Emmy by the National Academy of Television Arts and Sciences Upper Midwest Chapter Sept. 26 at a gala at the Pantages Theater in Minneapolis. The "Governor's Award" Emmy recognized Fox Sports Net North, the Minnesota Wild and the Minnesota National Guard for "Hockey Day-Minnesota," a collaborative broadcast showcasing the 34th Combat Aviation Brigade, the 834th Aviation Support Battalion and the 148th Fighter Wing as they played hockey during their deployment to Balad, Iraq in January 2008.

To read more on these stories or to keep up on currents with the Red Bulls, check out their website:

www.theredbulls.org.

[The following articles were submitted by the OPD attendees at 131st NGAUS General Conference](#)

131st NGAUS General Conference Report By Major Curt Grayson

What a great opportunity I had to attend the 131st General Conference in Nashville, Tennessee. It was truly an experience I will never forget.

The Conference itself was awesome starting with the opening ceremonies right down to the closing gavel. We had great entertainment starting out with the Charlie Daniels Band for the opening session. The speeches throughout the three days were tremendous. Being on the "Air" side of the house, I was particularly impressed with Secretary Donley and General Schwartz, along with General McKinley. The Professional Development breakouts were also very educational and interesting.

The separate Air Guard session was interesting with the comments from Lt. General Wyatt and our future. And I was very fortunate and proud to be able to accept the Distinguished Flying Unit Award on behalf of the 148th Fighter Wing, Duluth MN.

The social side was more than I could ever imagine. From the opening Company Grade Mixer at the Wild Horse Saloon that included a surprise visit from Dale Earnhardt Jr and Jeff Gordon from NASCAR to the ending concert at the Grand Old Opry with Wynonna Judd, Trace Adkins, Kellie Pickler and others. It was truly "grand" and I thank the Tennessee Guard for putting on such a great Conference.

This experience has shown me just how important NGAUS is. We really must do more to educate all our officers about NGAUS and get them to become NGAUS members and to become more involved.

Thanks so much for allowing me this opportunity and it definitely will not be my last.

133rd Airlift Wing 2nd Lt Ann Feist

I had the honor of attending the 131st NGAUS Conference in Nashville as the Company Grade Officer (CGO) selectee for the 133rd Airlift Wing. A free opportunity to socialize with other officers, entertainment at the Grand Ole Opry and a chance to hear about the future of the Army and Air National Guard from the Secretary of the Air Force? Why not!

Feeling curious about what this was all about, I attended the CGO functions, the business sessions and numerous other meetings on the agenda. I was in awe of the high level of the speakers. We heard from

Secretary of the Air Force Michael Donly, Air Force Chief of Staff General Norton A. Schwartz, Chief of National Guard Bureau General Craig R. McKinley, Director of the Air National Guard Lieutenant General Harry M. Wyatt III, and the Secretary of the Homeland Security Janet Napolitano. Each speaker allowed time for questions. I guess when you are speaking to a room full of Generals and Colonels, you make time to answer their questions and you answer them directly and honestly as the audience probably knows the answers better than you do! There were so many Generals around, it made me feel like being a Colonel was no big deal. So, being a 2d Lieutenant, I definitely felt like small potatoes!

The CGO functions were fun and empowering. Lt Gen. Wyatt stressed professional development. He stressed that as CGO's we need to prepare for our future and for positions we may hold that we cannot even image right now. Why not visualize myself being the future Chief of the National Guard Bureau! I'll start studying and preparing right after I finish this article.

After having a great time at the numerous social functions and enjoying the business sessions, I am already making plans to attend next year's conference in Texas. It is a great way to keep in touch with what is happening at the National Guard, Army and Air Force levels that affect you and your base, as well as simply having a great time!

Article by:
2d Lt Jodi Kiminski

The 131st NGAUS General Conference was my first experience attending a conference as an Officer in the United States Air Force...and what an experience it was. Never in my life did I think I would be in the same room with so many high ranking officers. Wait, with so many important high ranking officers! To have the opportunity to listen to individuals like Gen. Craig McKinley, the Honorable Michael Donley, and Lt Gen. Harry Wyatt was an unbelievable way for me, a newly commissioned 2nd Lt., to begin my USAF officer's career. The experience of listening to these leaders, having the opportunity to speak to these leaders and participating in discussions regarding the future of the Air National Guard was not only eye-opening but inspirational. Having the opportunity to be a part of such a great group of people and such a great organization was humbling.

During the conference I was able to meet new people, as well as reconnect with friends, fellow officers and classmates. The Gaylord Opryland Hotel was a perfect place to have an event as grand as this. The accommodations were amazing, the food absolutely delicious and the service was exceptional. What a great way to experience Nashville and all it has to offer.

From the meetings, to the exhibits, to the dinners...the 131st NGAUS Conference was an event like no other. I am honored and proud to be part of the Air National Guard and I can't wait to attend the 132nd!

Army Company Grade Report submitted by:
CPT Dan Dobler

I would like to thank my fellow CG officers for assistance on the NGAMN board while I was deployed. The following are trip reports from all the CG officers that attended the NGAUS Conference in Nashville. Four CG officers attended using the NGAUS Development Program funds. The four officers attending: CPT Peter DeCrans, CPT Amanda Clerc, 1LT David Adams, and 1 LT Karly Mangen.

2009 NGAUS ENGINEER TASK FORCE MEETING
By: CPT DeCrans

I attended the 131st NGAUS national conference in Nashville on September 10th-14th 2009. During the conference I had the opportunity to attend the Engineer Task Force meeting.

Here are a few of the highlights discussed during the meeting.

1. Creation of BEBs
BG Watson's presentation on the creation of Brigade Engineer Battalions (BEBs) into the BCTs. "The Course of Action recommended is to convert the current BSTB structure into Brigade Engineer Battalion with organic Combat Engineer Company (including assault bridging and breaching) and a Construction Company (including vertical, horizontal and clearance capabilities) using Force pool as bill payer". I found this particularly interesting because E Co 2-136 and E Co 1-194 were just combined into the BSTB this month.

2. Route Clearance Companies
LTC Knitzen discussed the current challenges and sourcing requirements for the engineer route clearance companies (see attachment). All companies are currently sourced under the minimum dwell and will not be able to meet the growing demand

unless changes are made. I led RSTs (Route Security Teams) in Iraq and had the honor of working with some Engineer Clearance team platoon leaders in Iraq. It is an incredibly a hazardous and stressful occupation. The dwell time has been reduced for many of these companies under the recommended 1:1 AC and 1:3 RC.

3. US Army Engineer School
There are many changes being made at the US Army Engineer School with off site education. See attached the presentation for additional information. I was surprised to see the lines of engineer support change from Mobility, Counter mobility, and Survivability. To Assure Mobility, Enhance Protection, Enable Expeditionary Logistics, and Building Capacity. With the change to the BCTs there has been a loss of a sense of Regiment. To change this there are many changes planned such as changing the mission of the engineer association and Creating Career Coaches. Engineer Career Coach /Advisors will play a role in the Engineer leader University concept. This will change and consolidate courses such as EOBC, and ECCC to focus on the mission of the Engineers assigned unit. The Engineer Career Coach will pick the courses needed ahead of time, and as the leader progresses they will continue to get additional training on or off site to qualify them for new positions. An example of this is when a 2LTs enrolls at EOBC and is attached to a route clearance company about to deploy can take in depth courses on route clearance instead of focusing on vertical horizontal tasks, and just get the basic. Later each leaders career when moving to a different unit they can take additional classes to get additional skill identifier qualifying them for the new position. These identifiers will also make it effortless to get civilian certification to match each identifier.

4. 1st Army
LTC Borel gave an update on 1st Army. I attached his presentation, One thing that I found particularly interesting was the resources now at Fort McCoy there are 3 x Buffalo surrogates, 8 x RG-31s, 3 x Meercats, 2 x Husky Surrogate, and 3 Huskys used to train deploying Engineers on C-IED lanes. There are also 6 additional Rg-31s coming this year. They are always updating TTPs with leaders who just returned for deployment as trainers.

5. EQT for Vertical Horizontal Companies
As a group we voted to create Engineer Qualification Tables for Vertical/horizontal companies similar to the TC 5-150 EQT that combat engineers use.

I had a great time in Nashville, and recommend anyone who is able attend next year's conference in Austin.

Article submitted by CPT Clerc

Mentorship. The importance of mentorship was stressed over and over during various events and speeches during the NGAUS conference. If you don't have a mentor, get one and if you're not a mentor to someone else, be one.

What has NGAUS done for me lately? A video was shown that summarizes nicely just what NGAUS has done for the National Guard which can be found on the NGAUS website (<http://www.ngaus.org/content.asp?bid=12823>). One thing I didn't realize is that the affordable TRICARE benefits offered have to be voted on annually. This is why consistent membership support is important. Involvement equals resources.

Diversity. The hour of diversity training was one of the most important of the training offered. The instructor, COL Ondra Berry, is a dynamic and motivational speaker who stressed the importance of self improvement. He urged the audience to get out of our comfort zones because we do not learn in the comfort zone. We need to be an organization that attracts, inspires, and retains talented accountable soldiers with passion and the right attitude versus those with only talent.

Experience of a lifetime. From the networking opportunities to the words and availability of National Guard leadership, this conference was an experience that we could not have without the planning and organization of NGAUS and the Tennessee Guard. Other than professional events, my favorite event was the free performance at the Grand Ole Opry after the State's dinner on the final evening. Performing were Ricky Skaggs and Kentucky Thunder, Craig Morgan, Kellie Pickler, Wynonna Judd, and Trace Adkins.

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131st Annual General NGAUS Conference

Article submitted by 1LT Karly Mangen

The annual National Guard Association of the United States General Conference; a grand title for a grand event. NGAUS, an association comprised of nearly 45,000 current or former Guard members puts on quite the annual conference, of which 4,000 members and guests recently attended. I wrote a small write-up on the 130th conference in 2008 when I had the opportunity to attend in Baltimore. Now, one year later, I am writing on the 131st General Conference, which I had an amazing opportunity to attend in Nashville, TN. Here are the reasons I still highly recommend attending the event (either on TDY or on your own (tax deductible dollar))

To kick off the conference for young officers there is a Company Grade/Warrant Officer mixer. This year the Tennessee National Guard coordinated a wonderful evening at the Wild Horse Saloon, Nashville's #1 dining and entertainment destination. There was delicious food, a talented live band, line dance instructors, and a guest appearance by Jeff Gordon and Dale Earnhardt Jr., our patriotic Nascar sponsors. And I can't forget to mention that one of the conference exhibitors, Drash, opened up the bar for two hours. Fun to be had by all!

The first day of the conference for the Company Grade officers started with an OPD class from NGB-LL (National Guard Bureau- Legislative Liaison). Brig Gen Demeritt is the current NGB-LL and I learned that the first NGAUS conference took place in 1878. The Civil War had officially ended and the National Guard leaders got together to discuss funding, personnel, and logistics for the future. During afternoon brunch, we had the great privilege of listening to Gen Craig R. McKinley; the first four star General in the National Guard and the current Chief of National Guard Bureau. We had the opportunity to ask questions, which sparked very interesting conversations.

The afternoon rolled into the first business meetings in the great ballroom. This is a site to see as Maj Gen Bunting called the room to order, TN welcomed us with guest speakers and the Charlie Daniels Band, and the roll call of the states commenced. The roll call is one of my favorites as each state has 60 seconds to brag, boast, and fact drop about their state, while friendly jests are

made between borders. Somehow we had the entire room (including MG Nash from the 34th ID on VTC) debating over which state could claim the birthright of Spam (MN won).

The Governor's Reception was a great way to end the evening. The Tennessee Guard did something a little different this year and had the Reception in the Exhibitor's hall. NGAUS broke records with over 800 companies and corporations set up in the Exhibit hall where we found finger food, flight simulators, and life-size warzone video games. It was great to learn about the up and coming projects and be able to thank the exhibitors for their support of the military.

Saturday began with recognition of the Junior/Senior Minutemen (newest and oldest attendees). Congratulations to Col (Ret) Anton Johnson, a MN member, for winning the Senior Minuteman award! Some additional speakers included the NGAUS Treasury, AGAUS, NGEDA, and EANGUS. Particularly noteworthy was listening to Gen. Norton Schwartz, the Air Force Chief of Staff.

Saturday afternoon's agenda was a luncheon with MG Carpenter, acting director of the Army Guard. It was an intimate lunch where questions outnumbered the time we had to discuss. We also spent a half hour picking our future Company Grade Representatives through area elections. Following lunch, there was a multitude of Task Force meetings to pick from and attend. I choose the C4I brief, which stands for Command, Control, Communications, Computers, and Intelligence.

Saturday evening was the usually crazy "Hospitality Night". Every National Guard state and territory opened up their hotel hospitality room or planed a party of their own. As always, dinner and drinks are included and with the right plan of action you can visit every state in one evening. The highlight of this year's hospitality night was the Area VI Bash (AK, AZ, CA, CO, GU, HI, ID, MT, NV, NM, UT, WA, and WY) held at the hotel's famous Jack Daniels Saloon; great live band, great food, and two free drink tickets. I also can't leave out the piña colada's from Puerto Rico, the 'Vermont Dollar' auction, and the ozprano room put on by Kansas and New Jersey (Wizard of Oz and Soprano theme).

Sunday morning consisted of additional OPD classes to include BG Wolf, Director of Army Safety, Congressman Patrick Murphy from Pennsylvania, COL Berry who spoke on Diversity and another opportunity with MG Carpenter. The third and final Business Session in the afternoon was comprised of the Honorable Christopher "Kit" Bond, Co-Chair of the Senate National Guard Caucus, the Honorable Janet Napolitano, Secretary of the Department of Homeland Security, and GEN Peter Chiarelli, Army Vice Chief of Staff.

Sunday evening was the grand finale of the event and reason in itself to attend the conference. The States Dinner is usually a very formal dining experience. Again, the Tennessee Guard did something a little different. Instead of Dress Blues, Dress Mess, or an evening gown, they determined the uniform would be 'western wear'. Although the group donned their cowboy boots, belt buckles, and hats, it did not downplay the decadent meal, entertaining speeches, and wonderful company.

It would not have been an appropriate Nashville conference without a trip to the Grand Ole Opry. Immediately following the States Dinner, all attendees made the short hike from the hotel area to the "home of American music"; the Grand Ole Opry. As a private, first come/first serve, NGAUS event the seats filled up fast with western-wearing Guard members. We proceeded to be awe-inspired by performances from Ricky Skaggs, Kellie Pickler, Craig Morgan, Wynonna Judd, and Trace Adkins. To top it all off, these performers volunteered their time to play for free!

To wrap it up, the National Guard Association of the United States General Conference was again one of the best opportunities I have ever been awarded. There is no doubt I will attend the conference in the future and persuade my fellow officers to do the same. I have come away from the event with a wealth of knowledge and some good friends. I hope to see you next year in Austin, TX!

Article Submitted by 1LT David Adams

1. COMBAT VEHICLE TASK FORCE REPORT:

The National Guard's high operational tempo and increased missions have adversely affected combat vehicle readiness and conditions. The demands of overseas

missions, particularly in Iraq, have badly depleted the Guard's domestic store of combat vehicles, leaving units with one-third of the equipment needed to meet requirements for homeland defense missions. For example in September 2001 the Guard had 75 percent of its needed equipment "on hand." Today, that number is less than 35 percent.

Among the factors contributing to this problem is the fact that active duty Army units have received the majority of funding and new equipment. The Reserve component has been equipped AFTER active duty units. This has resulted in an extreme variance in the level of equipment available to the Army Guard. For example, some Army National Guard units still use M113 armored personnel carriers, and the older M1 tanks with 105mm guns.

Currently the Army Guard is being fielded with new equipment at a historically high rate. Among them is modernizing the Guard's Battle Tank force and plans to field an additional Stryker Brigade in the Guard. Across the country New Equipment is surging to units at a historic pace. The goal is to bring the Army National Guard to equipment readiness levels reflective of the Guard's transformation from a strategic reserve to an operational force.

2. LESSONS LEARNED / PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT:

a. The Future of the Reserve Components.

How we can maintain what we have achieved and protect ourselves in a changing fiscal environment? This was a common theme early in the convention. Reserve component leadership at the highest levels have no intentions of reverting to a strategic reserve in which Guard members drill once a month and train for two weeks every summer. The Guard is now a CRUCIAL operational force in the Nation's defense and will remain active.

Leadership also needs to anticipate a decrease in funding and begin to consider and implement measure to be more efficient in anticipation of having to maintain a high optempo and workload on a smaller budget.

b. The value of membership in a professional organization, specifically the

NGAUS, and the value of attending a convention.

Having never attended a convention such as this I had no idea what to expect. Through numerous speakers and updates during the business meetings I gained an appreciation and an understanding of some of the work NGAUS does on our behalf. A brief example of the "fight" NGAUS fights for us is through representation in Congress. NGAUS, through lobbying (a necessary component of political representation today) protects the Guard/Reserve Component from getting squeezed out by the Active Component. A good example is NGAUS's role in educating Congressional leadership that of the new Fueling Tankers proposed by the Air Force, the largest Tanker, if chosen, would result in many of the current Air Guard landing strips being too short to support the new plane. This would result in a subtle, but significant removal of Air Guard facilities able to support current operations.

c. GEN Craig R. McKinley, Reserve Component JCOS:

GEN McKinley, the first 4 star General representing the Reserve Component, spoke about developing yourself as a young officer in order to best prepare yourself for long term success. His main recommendations:

1. Develop your media skills. The media wants sound bites. If you launch into a long conversation on film or tape, you will open yourself up to looking foolish by being misquoted. Learn how to give short, intelligent, concise answers.....or keep your mouth shut!

2. Find a mentor. We need good mentors, 1 inside the Guard and 1 outside. This is crucial. A mentor can help us in ways we cannot imagine. A good mentor can truly be the difference between and average career and a GREAT career simply by offering us thoughts and guidance from their experience.

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.

NGAMN Scholarships Awards

After a one year process of determining the criteria for the newly passed NGAMN scholarships, the first annual NGAMN Scholarships were given out this summer. CPT Joseph Lunsford, 1st Brigade Combat Team was the first recipient of the academic scholarship. Lunsford pictured with Vice-President Army, MAJ Kent Porter, accepts his \$500 for his continuing studies at Bethel University. Also, the first recipient of the Child/Grandchild of NGAMN members, also \$500, went to Eric Stokes, pictured with NGAMN President Col Paul Cummings. Eric goes to school at University of Minnesota, Duluth and is majoring in Exercise Science.

Two more \$500 scholarships are planned for next year. Spouses are eligible to apply in 2010. Criteria for application is found at the NGAMN website, <http://www.ngamn.org/scholarship.php>.



CPT Joseph Lunsford (Left) Presented by MAJ Kent Porter (Right)



Col Frankie Stokes (Left) Eric Stokes (Center) Presented by Col Paul Cummings (Right)

CHANGE OF INFORMATION FORM

RANK _____

FIRST _____

MIDDLE _____

LAST _____

ADDRESS _____

Mail to:
 NGAMN
 3530 East Medicine Lake Blvd
 Plymouth, MN 55441

NGAUS FUTURE CONFERENCES

132nd NGAUS GENERAL CONFERENCE
 AUGUST 21-23 2010
 AUSTIN, TEXAS

133rd NGAUS GENERAL CONFERENCE
 AUGUST 27-29 2011
 MILWAUKEE, WISCONSIN

FUTURE STATE CONFERENCE

2010 NGAMN State Conference
 Sofitel Hotel, Bloomington, Minnesota
 April 23-25, 2010

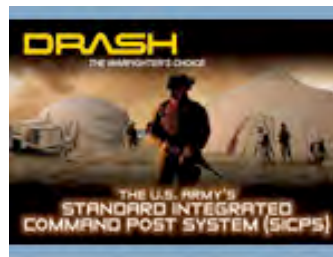
2011 NGAMN State Conference
 Location TBD Rochester, Minnesota

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

2013 NGAMN State Conference
 Location TBD
 Central Minnesota

2009 NGAMN CORPORATE MEMBERS AND SPONSORS VISIT NGAMN.ORG for more information on our Corporate Sponsors





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 East Medicine Lake Blvd Plymouth, MN 55441 or e-mail to EXCDIR2@AOL.COM. Items are subject to editing for style, clarity, accuracy, length and propriety

EXECUTIVE BOARD MEMBERS

- President -Col Paul Cummings**
- Past President -LTC Robert Intress**
- Vice President Army -MAJ Kent Porter**
- Vice President Air – Col Deon Ford**
- Executive Director -CW5 (ret) Walter Schulz**
- Secretary- Lt Col Donald Dahlquist**
- Treasurer-COL (ret) Al Timm**
- Webmaster-MAJ (ret) Carl Madsen**
- Company Grade Rep- CPT Daniel Dobler**
- Company Grade Vice-1LT Jason Hull**
- Brigade- 1LT David Adams**
- RSG-MAJ Joseph Sharkey**
- Division/Separates- CPT Chris Kline**
- 133 AW/HQ-Major Mark Schutta**
- 148 FW- 1Lt Chris Rogge**
- JFHQ- LTC Greg Kaiser**
- Aviation-CPT David Wagner**
- Troop Command-CPT Samuel Andrews**
- Warrant Officers Representative- CW5 Richard Hathaway**
- Retired Officers-MAJ (ret) Carl Madsen**
- Legislative Liaison- Capt Brian C. Winter**

**COME AND JOIN US FOR
AN EVENING OF FUN!
Renew old friendships and make
new friends!**

**MINNESOTA NATIONAL GUARD ASSOCIATION
OFFICERS HOLIDAY PARTY
FRIDAY, 4 DECEMBER 2009**

FORT SNELLING OFFICERS CLUB
In the Commanders Room (downstairs to the right)

SPONSORED BY THE RETIRED GROUP- ALL OFFICERS, ACTIVE OR RETIRED AND GUESTS ARE ENCOURAGED TO ATTEND. IT IS A TIME THAT WE CAN SHARE A MEAL, SOME HOLIDAY CHEER AND SPEND SOME TIME TOGETHER!

Club has handicapped access - uniform is business / business casual

COCKTAILS 1800 TO 1900

DINNER 1900

MENU SELECTIONS

Commanders Sirloin Steak w/ mushrooms with twice Baked Potatoes, and roasted fresh vegetables, Salad, Rolls and Butter, Coffee or Tea and Dessert\$28.00 per person

OR

9oz Parmesan Walleye sautéed in parmesan bread crumbs and served with twice baked potato and a Zucchini summer squash medley, Salad, Rolls and Butter, Coffee or Tea and Dessert\$28.00 per person

**Detach and Return this Reservation Form with Your Check Made Payable To
“Retired Officers Group” by November 24th.**

.....

Name _____

Guest Name _____

Address _____

City _____ **State** _____ **Zip** _____

Telephone(____) _____

Email _____

MENU/SELECTION:

Commanders Sirloin Steak [] \$28.00

Parmesan Walleye [] \$28.00

Total amount enclosed (Make check payable to “Retired Officers Group”) \$ _____

**Mail to: LTC (Ret) Wayne Becker
10666 107th Place
Maple Grove, MN 55369 763-424-6505 email: waynel211@live.com**

2010 Membership Enrollment Form
National Guard Association of Minnesota
3530 East Medicine Lake Boulevard
Plymouth, Minnesota 55441
This form is available at www.ngamn.org

Name _____
Address _____
City _____ State _____ Zip _____
Home Phone _____ Work Phone _____ Cell Phone _____
Unit Assignment _____ Group Rep _____
E-mail _____

Amount Due _____ (See table below) Make check payable to NGAMN send to address above
To pay by credit card, fill out the following: Circle credit card type: Master Card [] Visa []
Account Number _____ Exp Date _____
Signature _____

	0-1	0-2	0-3	0-4	0-5	0-6	0-7	0-8	WO1	CW2	CW3	CW4	CW5
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
TOTAL	\$45	\$60	\$79	\$102	\$120	\$143	\$163	\$179	\$41	\$50	\$66	\$89	\$103

Associate Member: \$10

Newly commissioned officers and warrant officers receive free membership for period of one year and any portion of the year in which appointed

Active Life Membership NGAUS \$1,000

Membership may be issued to a commissioned or warrant officer of the Army or Air National Guard upon payment of \$1,000. Payment may be made in a lump sum or over two years in four, \$250-installments.

Active Life Membership State \$250

Membership may be issued to a commissioned or warrant officer of the Army or Air National Guard upon payment of \$250. Payment may be made in a lump sum or over two years in four, \$62.50-installments.

For Retired Officers: NGAUS Life Member \$125 State Life Member \$50 Both \$175

Group Representatives

- “1st Brigade” 1LT David Adams “RSG” MAJ Joe Sharkey “Division/Separates” CPT Chris Kline
- “Aviation” CPT David Wagner “133 AW/HQ” Maj Mark Schutta “148 FW” 1Lt Chris Rogge
- “JFHQ” LTC Greg Kaiser “Troop CMD” CPT Samuel Andrews “Retired” MAJ (ret) Carl Madsen
- “Warrant Officers” CW5 (ret) Richard Hathaway

**Militia Insurance Trust
Newsletter
15 October 2009**

The 2009 Pool is in the last quarter of the calendar year. Through September 2009, the Pool is positive \$150,014. This year NGA Connecticut, Illinois and New York have had numerous claims exceeding their net premium to the Pool. Some of those claims are combat losses. The purpose of the Pool is to spread the risk among the Participating Associations so if a few of the associations incurs heavy claims, hopefully the other associations offset those losses.

The NGAUS conference went very well. Everyone being in one hotel certainly made visiting the different hospitality suites a lot easier.

The next event is NGEDA 28-30 January 2010 in Austin TX.

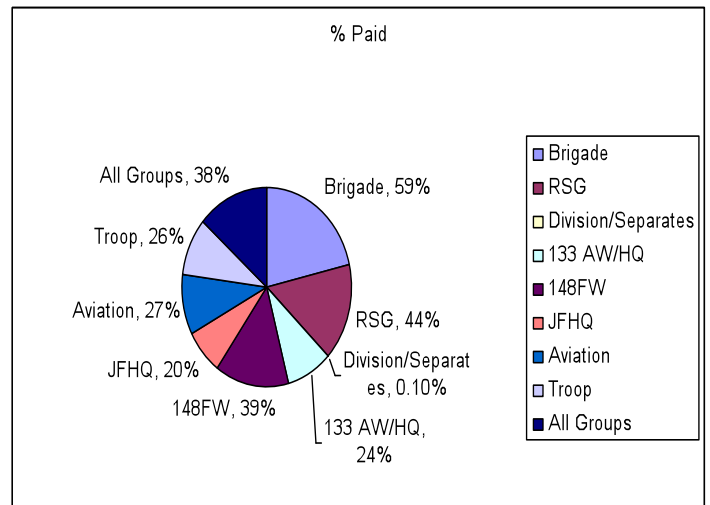
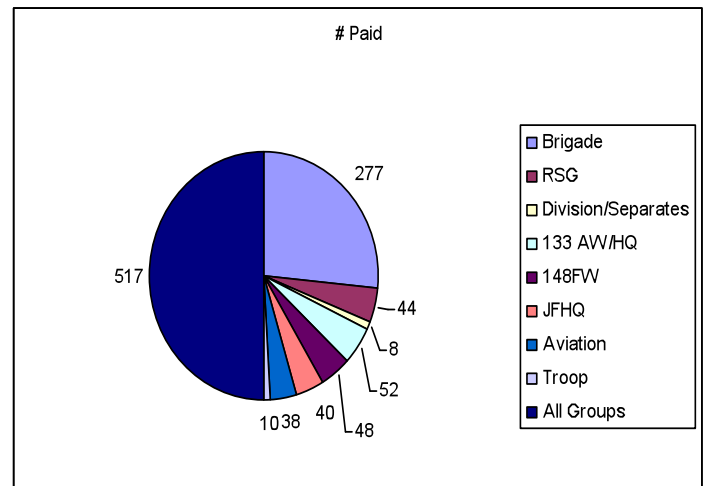
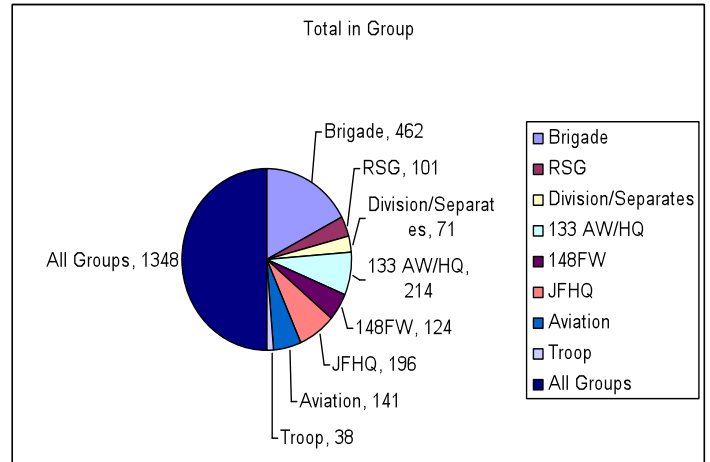
Effective 1 November 2009, the USBA Level to Age 50 policy will not be available. We have transitioned to the AFBA Better Alternative group life policy for our members under age 50. One feature of AFBA's Better Alternative group life policy that is very popular is the Line of Duty scholarship benefit. We have paid claims in which this benefit has been included.

Members over age 50, we are using the USBA Generation 3, 10 Year Renewable Term and their new 20 Year Term policy.

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)* We are proud to have NYL as our underwriter.

Austin Jenkins 1-800-633-8333
To schedule a benefit briefing
Call Dan Strong 1-800-335-5040

2009 Membership





The VIKANG News

National Guard Association of Minnesota
3530 East Medicine Lake Boulevard
Plymouth, MN 55441

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