YOUR COMMUNICATOR

Wisconsin National Guard Association, Inc.

The Wisconsin National Guard Association exists to promote the readiness, modernization, and relevance of the Wisconsin National Guard family and its members.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S NOTES

January 2021

I am providing the welcome letter this month in lieu of President Leckel because of ongoing mobilizations. Beginning in 2021, WINGA will now publish six issues of the *Communicator* instead of the usual three issues. The *Communicator* will now be published in January, March, May, July, September and November. The new *Communicator* will be shorter in length, but it will give the Association the opportunity to communicate information to our members about WINGA and NGAUS on a more regular basis.

Please mark your calendars for the rescheduled WINGA State Conference on 25-27 June 2021 at the Sheraton Hotel in Brookfield. The Conference Planning Committee, hosted by the 128th Air Refueling Wing, is optimistic the pandemic landscape will improve by June and thus they will be able to deliver a higher quality conference for our soldiers, airmen and their families. This year's conference will be co-sponsored with the Wisconsin National Guard Enlisted Association (WNGEA) and the Red Arrow Veterans Association (RAVA). Conference registration information will be included in the March 2021 *Communicator*.

The 2021 WINGA/NGAUS membership campaign is underway. Information about 2021 dues paying options was included in the November 2020 *Communicator* which can be found on the www.winga.org website. An overview is also included on page 2 of this newsletter.

WINGA members can now nominate individuals and businesses for the 2021 WINGA Distinguished Service Award. Award criteria and the nomination form is available on the WINGA web site. The WINGA Board of Directors will make the final selection.

COL (Ret) Mike Williams
WINGA Executive Director

NGAUS Annual Conf

143rd: 9-12 Sep 2021
Charlotte, NC

144th: 26-29 Aug 2022
Columbus, OH

145th: 18-21 Aug 2023
Reno, NV

146th: 23-26 Aug 2024
Detroit, MI

NGAUS
The National Guard Association of the United States

IMPORTANT NOTICE

WINGA CONFERNECE POSTPONED

On the recommendation of the 128th Air Refueling Wing Conference Planning Committee, the WINGA Board of Directors has approved rescheduling the State Conference for 60 days.

This decision was made in an effort to conduct the conference at a later time when the pandemic threat has subsided and more people will be vaccinated.

The State Conference has been rescheduled from 23-25 April 2021 to 25-27 June 2021.

The Sheraton Hotel in Brookfield will remain the conference site location.

Volunteers Wanted

The WINGA Board created a Standing State Conference Planning Committee. Currently, conference planning is rotated between Major Commands. This new committee would be responsible for planning future conferences, beginning in 2022. The committee will include Army and Air Officers and Enlisted as well as Retirees. Interested individuals can contact the Executive Director for at: michael.j.williams@winga.org or 608.242.3114.

The WINGA Board of Directors has approved creating an Association 501(c)(3) Foundation. We are looking for volunteers to serve on a Steering Committee to make recommendations to the Board on how the Foundation should be organized to include a Foundation name, number of members, terms, fund-raising goals, etc. Interested members can contact the Executive Director for more information at: michael.j.williams@winga.org or 608.242.3114.

The WINGA Legislative Committee is looking for an Air Guard officer to serve on the WINGA Legislative Committee. Interested members can contact Executive Director for more information at michael.j.williams@winga.org or 608.242.3114.

TAPS

If you are aware of the passing of a member, please notify us.

LtCol Quentin (Ret) Blome
Capt Durwood Jones, 115FW
CW4 (Ret) Everett Seeley
CPT Stuart Terhorst
LTC (Ret) Walter Webber
COL (Ret) David Wilhelm

Your Communicator Electronic vs Printed Copy?

Would you like to reduce paper clutter **and** save WINGA money? If you prefer to receive the *Communicator* via email — or if you do not to want to receive a printed copy — please notify us at lrasmussen@winga.org

WINGA and NGAUS

Additional information on both WINGA and NGAUS organizations can be found on our websites: www.winga.org and www.ngaus.org

RETIREE INFORMATION

The Retiree Office is open on Tuesday and Thursday mornings; they are located in Classroom 160 in JFHQ. They can be reached at 608-242-3115.

Websites & Links:
WI Retiree website:
http://dma.wi.gov/retirees
To sign up for email notifications: https://public.govdelivery.com/accounts/WIDMA/subscriber/new?category_id=WIDMA_C1
Army Echoes website:
https://soldierforlife.army.mil/Retirement/army-echoes

2021 WINGA/NGAUS MEMBERSHIP DRIVE

1. It is easy to pay your 2021 WINGA & NGAUS membership dues:
- Pay via Venmo. **WINGA-WINGAAssn**. The last 4 digits of the phone number associated with the WINGA Venmo account is **6274**. You will need to enter the amount of your dues..
- Call our office (608-206-7006) & provide credit card information.
- Pay online on the WINGA website www.winga.org ; click on the Join or Renew button and follow the prompts to pay online. Please do not use a government computer.
- Mail a check to the WINGA office; make checks payable to "WINGA".

2. WINGA is once again offering the membership incentive program to financially assist officers to become life members of NGAUS and WINGA. NGAUS Life membership is $1,000; WINGA Life is $80. **WINGA will underwrite 50% ($500) for company grade officers and 25% ($250) for field grade officers.** This program is available to a limited number of officers on a first-come, first served basis. Officers must also become WINGA life members at a cost of $80. Interested officers should contact us at 608-206-7006.
3. Commands who achieve 100% membership by the Early Bird deadline will be eligible for the 5% Early Bird rebate. **The Early Bird Membership deadline is Monday, 29 March.**
4. The second deadline for membership dues will be 28 June. Dues for membership year 2021 will continue to be collected through 28 September.
5. Membership, participation, and the payment of dues in and for WINGA & NGAUS are a completely voluntary decision of each service member.

Pay Grade	NGAUS Dues	WINGA Dues	Total
O-1 thru O-3; W01 thru CW3	$40	$5	**$45**
O-4 thru O-6; CW4 & CW5	$80	$10	**$90**
O-7 & O-8	$130	$20	**$150**

LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

by MAJ Brian Faltinson

The recently passed 2021 National Defense Authorization Act provides several important benefit reforms for National Guard members.

- The act provides Active Component parity by providing 12-weeks of paid maternity leave with retirement points for drill-status women in the Guard and Reserve.
- It also provides six-months of transitional TRICARE coverage to Guard members supporting COVID operations in a Title-32 status; this benefit matches what Guard members receive when they deploy in a Title-10 status.
- President Trump also signed veterans legislation that awards VA home loan eligibility for Guard members who serve more than 90 cumulative days in a Title-32 status with at least a 30-day consecutive period of service.
- The legislation also presumes service-connection for military members who contract COVID-19 within 14 days of the completion of duty in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Additional language extends federal employment protections and reemployment rights to Guardsmen who serve at least 14 days of State Active Duty or who are mobilized to respond to a national emergency or natural disaster. There were previously no federal job protections for State Active Duty.
- Finally, the legislation expands counseling for military sexual trauma at VA facilities to former Guards members who previously only received such counseling if they were current members of the Guard or Reserve and it allows the VA to treat physical health conditions arising from military sexual trauma.

WELCOME TO NEW NGAUS/WINGA MEMBERS

The individuals listed below were recently appointed as officers in the Wisconsin National Guard. Newly appointed officers with no prior NGAUS and WINGA membership receive 1 year of complimentary membership in NGAUS and WINGA. New accessions with no prior WINGA membership receive 1 year of complimentary membership in WINGA.

Congratulations to those officers who have been discharged from the Wisconsin National Guard and became a NGAUS and/or WINGA Retired Life Member. NGAUS Retired Life Membership is $125 and WINGA Retired Life Membership is $15.

Complimentary Membership
2LT Michael Bahr, 173 Engr Bn
2LT Ethan Beilfuss, 950 Engr Co
2LT Brady Bellin, 132 BSB
2LT Michael Black, 168th Avn
Maj Jonathan Bourke, 128ARW
CPT Michael Branda, 132 BSB
2LT Jason Brasch, 732 Spt Bn
2LT Kyle Brockman, 1-121 FA
2LT Christine Brooks, 128ARW
2LT Michelle Brown, WI Med Det
2LT Bryla Cullen, 1-128 Inf
2LT Nicholas Bures, 950 Engr Co
CPT Derek Burkum, 724 Engr Bn
2LT Brett Chojnacki, 108th Spt Co
2LT Harrison Collar, 2-127 Inf
Maj Joseph Cook, 128ARW
2LT Alfonso Cordova, 2-127 Inf
2LT Cory Corson, 115FW
WO1 Colin Crawford, 1-168 Avn
1LT Jacob Curtis, 115FW
2LT Zachary Dickmann, 128ARW
CPT Abraham Dispennette, 1-147 Avn
MAJ Rhoda Dobeck, WI Med Det
WO1 Leon Duginski, 32 BCT
2LT Daniel Duncan, WI Med Det
2LT Ethan Effinger, 1-147 Avn
WO1 Brandon Fetting, 157 MEB
2LT Daniel Finger, 1-105 Cav
2LT Parker Foster, WI Med Det
1LT Andrew Gertner, 132 BSB
2LT Dana Gertschen, 2-127 Inf
WO1 Renae Giertych, 173 Engr
2LT Jessica Goodew, 132 BSB

(complimentary mbr contd)
2LT Shelby Hansen, 132 BSB
2LT Jenna Harrington, 173 Engr
2LT David Hathaway, 1-128 Inf
2LT Austin Heimann, 32 BCT
2LT Joshua Helton, 1-105 Cav
1LT Jeffrey Hilgendorf, 732 Spt Bn
2LT Miranda Holmes, 157 MEB
2LT Nicholas Hugo, 2-127 Inf
2LT Jonathon Jennings, 1158 Trans
2LT Eric Jones, 273 Engr Co
2LT Sarai Juarez, 724 Engr Bn
Maj Gen Paul Knapp, HQ WI ANG
2LT Kolt Knutson, 229 Engr Co
2LT Hunter Kolberg, 1-120 FA
2LT Mariya Kolodiy, 132 BSB
CPT Andrew Kordus, WI Med Det
2LT Christopher Kuechenmeister, 132 BSB
2LT Andrew Kyle, 724 Engr Bn
2LT Thomas McAdams, 32 MP Co
2LT John Michalak, 1-121 FA
2LT Dustin Nolan, 1-105 Cav
CPT Elizabeth Ott, WI Med Det
2LT Christian Pecore, 2-127 Inf
WO1 Vanessa Pederson, 32 BCT Bde
2LT Tyler Phernetton, 132 BSB
2LT Carly Philpot, 115FW
2LT Christina Porter, 357 Sig Co
2LT Trevor Quade, 1158 Trans Co
WO1 Brian Reier, 1-147 Avn
2LT Bryce Richey, 1-112 Avn
2LT Chadalan Rihn , 829 Engr Co
2LT Nicholas Rudd, 1-147 Avn
2LT Jacob Sandy, 1-121 FA

(complimentary mbr contd)
2LT Kathryn Schultz, 2-135 Avn
2LT Caitlin Schwanke, 157 MEB
WO1 Zachary Shaha, 1-147 Avn
2LT Jacob Solomon, 115FW
2LT Jenna Sorenson, 132 BSB
2LT Michael Stephenson, 173 Engr
2LT Michael Streblow, 1-121 FA
1LT Zackery Tegge, 173 Engr Bn
2LT Alexander Tillotson, 1-120 FA
2LT Ethan Turk, 950 Engr Co
2LT Jennifer Vandenbosch, 132 BSB
2LT Francoi Vang, 132 BSB
1LT Diana VangBrostoff, WI Med Det
MAJ Blaises Vitale, WI Med Det
2LT Austin Webber, 108th Spt Co
2LT Shane Wedekind, 128ACS
2LT Kellen Witty, 1-105 Cav
WO1 Alex Wotachek, 18th Spt Co
1LT Daniel Yarnall, 112 PAD
WO1 Harrison Yi, 1-135 Avn
2LT Michael Zornow, 1-120 FA

Compl WINGA Only Mbr
Capt Alexander Logsdon, 128ARW
Capt Natalie Miller
Col Leslie Zyzda-Martin

Retired Life Members
COL (Ret) John Blaha
COL (Ret) Dennis Konkel
MAJ (Ret) Dean Prestegaard

ORDER OF MILITARY MEDICAL MERIT
awarded to CPT Sarah Skelton

CPT Sarah Skelton is assigned as a Behavioral Health Officer in Co C (Med) 132 BSB. She most recently volunteered to serve overseas as the Division Behavioral Health Officer for the NYARNG and was awarded the prestigious Order of Military Medical Merit award. The Order recognizes those individuals who have clearly demonstrated the highest standards of integrity and moral character, displayed an outstanding degree of professional competence, served in the Army Medical Department for a minimum of 15 years with selflessness, and have made a sustained contribution to the betterment of Army Medicine. She has been credited her with implementing and designing a Combat Stress Model to increase prevention measures for Behavioral Health (BH). She obtained DOD Victim Advocate credentialing in 2012 as an E5 and over the years has utilized skills she learned in the AMEDD community to support survivors of military sexual trauma. She is a Master Resiliency Trainer. She has held the role of Suicide Intervention Officer in many of her assigned units. She was selected as the only soldier in Wisconsin to become a consultant trainer for the Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training program. CPT Skelton was awarded the Military Outstanding Volunteer Medal for her selfless work with her community.

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michael.j.williams@winga.org
or
lrasmussen@winga.org

DIRECT BENEFITS OF YOUR WINGA/NGAUS MEMBERSHIP

- Tax-free retired military pay in Wisconsin
- WI State Tuition Assistance Program and post 9-11 GI Bill
- Since 2016, funded $84,750 for NGAUS Life Membership Incentive for 168 officers
- Since 2013, funded over $55,000 Educational Scholarships for 85 members and dependents
- Annual WINGA Conference, including sponsoring of no-cost Professional Development
- No-cost $10,000 life insurance policy to new members of the WI National Guard for 1 year
- No-cost $1,000 life insurance coverage for all actively serving WI National Guard members
- Annual funding for Hall of Honor & Hall of Fame Programs
- Annual grants of $500 to each MSC and Wing Commands
- Funded Officer and Warrant Officer Summits
- VA Home Loans available for Title 32 service
- Reemployment rights for State Active Duty
- Definition of "veteran" now includes NG and reservists with 20 years of service
- Post-deployment mental health care & TRICARE Coverage
- WINGA newsletter (published 3 times per year) & monthly NGAUS magazine
- Benefit parity for the National Guard