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.

PRESIDENT'S NOTES

December 2023

Welcome to the December issue of **Your Communicator!** This is a special time to reflect on the past year, enjoy spending time with family and friends, and taking time to think about the upcoming year. Your state association has been working hard and I would like to personally thank the staff and volunteers for their continued commitment to WINGA members and supporting the people, mission, and families of the Wisconsin National Guard.

WINGA achieved 100% membership status again in 2023 with over 70 members taking advantage of the Digital Life Membership discounts. The 2024 membership drive has begun and I ask WINGA members to discuss the benefits and value of professional organization involvement with your fellow officers. There is no better recruiting tool than personal testimony and one-on-one conversations with your Soldiers and Airmen. Share your experiences and encourage others to attend one of the conferences or events.

The Joint WINGA/WNGEA Conference Committee is firming up April's State Annual Conference events at the Osthoff Resort., details on page 5. Earmark your calendars and take part in an information-filled weekend at a unique location. This is a target rich environment for senior-leader engagement in a social setting. Take advantage of this event to see old friends, make new connections, and enjoy free time in Elkhart Lake.

As many are aware, Wisconsin is hosting the 2025 National Guard Association of the United States (NGAUS) annual conference in Milwaukee. This is a combined effort between WINGA, NGAUS, and the Wisconsin National Guard. Committee chairs have been appointed and frequent planning meetings will kick off in January. Hosting the National Conference is a lot of work, yet it is a great opportunity to showcase the Wisconsin National Guard while making attendance very accessible and affordable to our members. If you have never been to a NGAUS conference, 2025 will be a great one to target.

In October's edition, I discussed ways to serve. You will find on page 2 WINGA's nominations committee is seeking members interested to serve on our Board of Directors Executive Committee. I highly recommend these opportunities to learn more about your organization while networking and collaborating with those in the profession of arms.

Lastly, I wish you and your family a safe and happy holiday season. It's an honor representing you and working with such dedicated professionals.

President Dan Statz

Coming in 2024:

SSLI Changes and the **NEW** Fed Protect Program. See inside for details.

TAPS

Col (Ret) Francis Parker
MAJ (Ret) Jonathan D Phibbs
CPT (Ret) James Reigel
Lt Col (Ret) Philip Scarpace
CW4 (Ret) William Scholz
Lt Col (Ret) Gary Tenney
CPT Hedy Vincent
Col (Ret) Robert E Woodward

Please notify us if you are aware of a member's death. We publish the names of those who pass away as we are notified, which may result in a delay of notifying you, our members.

WINGA OFFICER NOMINATIONS SOUGHT

Nominations Our Nominations Committee seeks individuals interested in running for the WINGA offices of President, Vice President Army, Vice President Air, Secretary, and Treasurer. The term of office is two years—2024-2026.

The Nominations Committee provides the names of eligible candidates, which are to be included on the official ballot not later than **1 February.** Elections will be conducted at the annual business meeting in Elkhart Lake on Saturday **27 April**. Members in attendance will cast their ballots. Absentee ballots must be requested in writing, via email or letter, NLT **21 February**; absentee ballots must be returned to the WINGA Office NLT **12 April**. Candidate photos and biographies will be included in a newsletter prior to the annual conference.

The duties of these officer positions are:

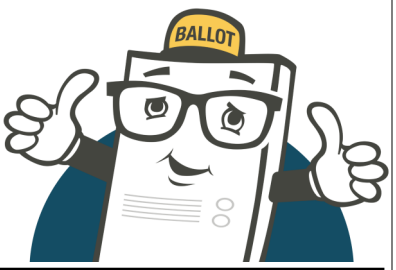
President—presides at all WINGA conferences and all meetings of the Board of Directors. Chairs the Executive Committee and appoints all standing and special committees of WINGA. Exercises all executive powers to carry out WINGA policies and signs all contracts, deeds, or legal obligations in the name of the Assn.

Vice President-Army—performs the duties of the President during the absence of the President and in the event of death, resignation, or removal from office. Serves as the Chair of the Finance Committee and responsible for the budget processes and for coordinating all committee activities.

Vice President-Air—performs the duties of the President and Vice President Army during the absence of both. Responsible for the administration of the Awards Program.

Secretary—is the recording officer of the organization responsible for WINGA records and a member of the Executive Committee.

Treasurer—receives, collects, and disburses all funds of the Assn. Keeps regular accounts of all sums received and disbursed, and shall notify all members in arrears. Makes an annual report of the financial status.



Those interested in running for these offices should contact the WINGA Office at 608-242-3114 or michael.j.williams@winga.org .

IS JOINING A MILITARY ASSOCIATION RIGHT FOR YOU?

For the full article go to: https://www.military.com/money/personal-finance/is-joining-a-military-association-right-for-you.html

Key Takeaways:

1) Professional associations encourage and spur camaraderie and offer membership benefits.
2) "Some provide advocacy, help you network and access job opportunities, tap into benefits at a reduced cost, lobby congress concerning issues vital to military life, or find support for you and your family in times of war and peace."

Membership Advantages: Professionals Who Identify With Members, Sense of Community, Member Focused and Committed to Service, Long History of Serving the Military, and Quick Response in Times of Rapid Deployment, among others.

Contact your WINGA BOD Rep to connect and volunteer with one of our committees:

Finance
CGO Advisory Committee
Awards, Gift & Grants
By-Laws
Legislative
Communications
Credentials
Investments
Insurance
Nominations
Resolutions

Dear Wisconsin National Guard Association:

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the scholarship committee for the Wisconsin National Guard Scholarship I was awarded. I was honored to be one of the recipients of this award. I am completing my senior year at the University of Wisconsin Stevens Point and am currently completing an internship at a local elementary school.

By awarding me this scholarship, you have lightened my financial burden. I am looking forward to beginning my career teaching. I hope one day I will be able to help students achieve their goals just as you have helped me. Thank you for your generosity and willingness to help me achieve my educational goals.

Sincerely,

Brooke Blader-Lucht

PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATION DUES FOR MEMBERSHIP YEAR 2024

Overview & History: For the 43d consecutive year (2023) Wisconsin achieved more than 100% membership in the National Guard Association of the United States (NGAUS). That is more consecutive years of 100% membership than any other state or territory. Again for 2024, our goal is for Wisconsin to meet its 100% membership goal no later than *28 June 2024*. Commands achieving 100% membership by the 27 March 2024 deadline will be eligible for the 5% Early Bird rebate. In doing so they will receive a check which represents 5% of all annual dues paid by Wisconsin for achieving Early Bird status.

The NGAUS & WINGA membership year is a calendar year from 1 January – 31 December; Wisconsin's membership campaign runs from 1 November 2023 to 25 September 2024. Membership is voluntary.

Life Membership Dues: In 2024, NGAUS is again offering Digital Active Life Membership for only **$500**. Officers must also become WINGA life members at a cost of $80. WINGA is offering an incentive of $250 for company grade officers and $125 incentive for field grade officers. **This option means that company grade officers can become active life members of NGAUS & WINGA for only $330 while the cost to field grade officers is only $455.** The only difference in the digital life membership vs. the traditional life membership is members receive a digital copy of the National Guard Magazine and WINGA newsletter rather than a printed copy. Traditional NGAUS life membership dues cost $1,000 making this is a ***50%*** savings. Active life members are members forever—even after they retire—so there is no need to become a retired life member.

Pay Grade	NGAUS DALM	WINGA Incentive	WINGA	Total
O-1 thru O-3 WO1 thru CW3	$500	-$250	$80	**$330**
O-4 thru O-8 CW4 & CW5	$500	-$125	$80	**$455**

Pay Grade	NGAUS Dues	WINGA Dues	Total
O-1 thru O-3 WO1 thru CW3	$40	$5	**$45**
O-4 thru O-6 CW4 & CW5	$80	$10	**$90**
O-7 & O-8	$130	$20	**$150**

Annual Membership Dues: Annual membership dues remain unchanged from previous years.

Scan this QR Code to take you to the WINGA Website www.winga.org

Dues Payment Options on the WINGA Website—www.winga.org. You can pay your membership dues (annual, DALM, and retired life) directly on the WINGA website using:

Credit or Debit

PayPal, it is WINGA's PayPal account; no requirement for payee to have a PayPal account.

Drop down menus will display the correct dollar amount for each rank within each membership type.

In addition to our website, you can pay dues using the following:

Calling Lynn Rasmussen at 608-206-7006 and paying via venmo

Scan the QR Code on the right of this page (if asked, last 4 digits of phone number are 6274)

Credit or debit *or* or search for WINGA or WINGAAssn

WINGA WINGA Assn
@WINGA-WINGAAssn

venmo

With this lower life membership rate, senior officers could consider sponsoring a life membership for a junior officer. Being a mentor and sponsor for a young officer can bring many personal and professional rewards. This is an excellent way to "pay it forward" and start a junior officer's military career with a "gifted" life membership in NGAUS and WINGA. If you are interested in gifting an annual or life membership, please contact WINGA at: michael.j.williams@winga.org

You can find additional membership documents on our WINGA website at www.winga.org: WINGA Membership Flyer, NGAUS Membership Flyer, NGAUS Accomplishments and Priorities, and Why Should I Join WINGA/NGAUS.

FREE AUSA MEMBERSHIP FOR NGAUS MEMBERS

NGAUS + AUSA

In 2022, NGAUS partnered with the Association of the United States Army (AUSA) to provide NGAUS members with the benefit of becoming an AUSA member at no cost. This offers members' AUSA membership benefits throughout the duration of their NGAUS membership. When NGAUS members sign up for the free AUSA membership they have access to all AUSA member benefits: access to AUSA savings, educational products, member access & pricing to PD & networking opportunities, employment assistance, scholarships, legal document preparation system, etc.
Go to: https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSeoPM-Ae1gqE7KwpOPEb6oY2syXGe_tz935i0igqN7qWCK_2Q/viewform

ACCIDENTAL DEATH & DISMEMBERMENT BENEFIT FOR NGAUS MEMBERS

Dues-paying and life members of the NGAUS have an accidental death and dismemberment (AD&D) benefit at no extra cost to the member. NGAUS members under the age of 80 are automatically enrolled for $2,500 in AD&D coverage. This $2,500 benefit, will automatically cover all members under age 80. There are no other enrollment requirements for the member to be covered. WINGA will coordinate completion of the form so that the claim can be paid. The AD&D benefit is viewed as a significant addition to the membership package.

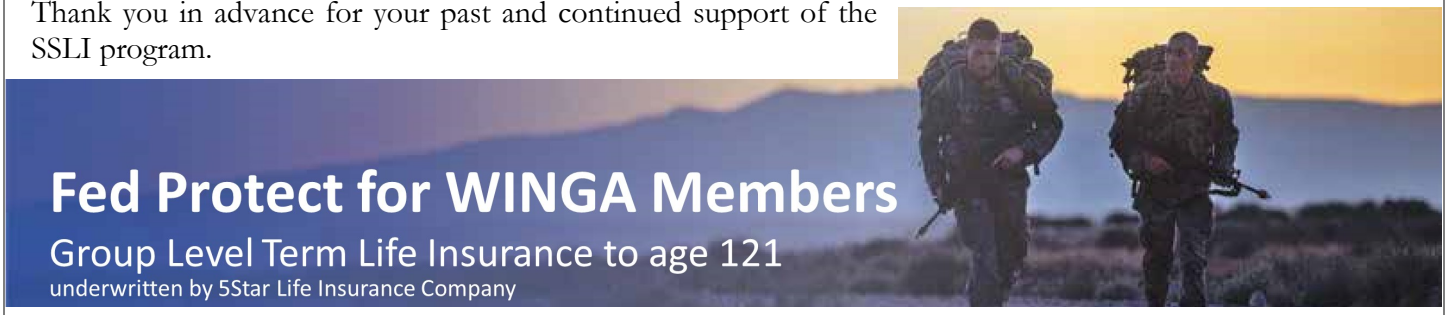
Changes to the State Sponsored Life Insurance Program: Coming January 2024

The State Sponsored Life Insurance (SSLI) is a Department of Military Affairs (DMA) program which is administered by the Wisconsin National Guard Association (WINGA). SSLI has not had a premium increase or other significant program changes since its inception in 1971. The following changes will take place effective 1 January 2024.

- All premiums for Guard members and spouses will increase $.50/ month
- All premiums for dependents will increase $1.00/month
- Our bonus insurance coverage of 70% will be reduced to 50% for those actively serving

This premium increase is necessary to cover increasing costs to operate the insurance office. The 50% bonus is still an excellent benefit. We are not aware of any other insurance program that offers 50% more coverage at no additional cost to the insured. If you and your family are currently insured under the SSLI program, you should have previously received a direct mailing from us explaining these program changes in more detail. If you have any questions, please call the SSLI office at 608.242.3106.

Thank you in advance for your past and continued support of the SSLI program.



The Wisconsin National Guard Association (WINGA) is excited to announce a new life insurance program for Wisconsin Guard members and spouses called "Fed Protect." This program is available to Guard members between ages 70-75. Fed Protect is a term life insurance program with coverage from $5,000 to $30,000 in $5,000 increments. Currently, Wisconsin National Guard members and families can apply for term life insurance through the State Sponsored Life Insurance (SSLI) which is a Department of Military Affairs (DMA) program. SSLI term life insurance provides coverage until age 70. This new Fed Protect program provides continuous life insurance beyond age 70 until age 121. Fed Protect will be available to retired and separated Wisconsin Guard members and spouses effective 1 January 2024.

For more information about the Fed Protect program or to speak with a Fed Protect agent, review the program's flyer on pages six and seven. Fed Protect coverage is offered through our partnership with the Armed Forces Benefit Association (AFBA) and their underwriter, 5Star Life Insurance Company.

Veterans Grant Available for Students Attending Private, Nonprofit Schools

- ***What is it?***
  - New grant program for qualifying veterans, spouses, and dependents toward bachelor's and graduate degree programs
- ***What does the grant offer?***
  - $2,000 maximum grant per semester/session (including summer)
  - With a per semester/session match grant from participating colleges or universities
- ***What is the max one can receive?***
  - Maximum of eight semesters of grant funding or 128 credits
- ***Where can people apply?***
  - Apply online at the Higher Educational Aids Board (HEAB) website, found via the QR code below, or at:
    - http://heab.state.wi.us/features/vets.html
  - The Department of Veterans Affairs works in collaboration with HEAB to determine veteran's eligibility for the program.

For more information, visit

https://www.wisconsinsprivatecolleges.org/student-resources/veterans-wisconsins-private-colleges

WISCONSIN'S Private Colleges

NGAUS Professional Development Events

2024 Capitol Summit | Mar. 17 - 19 The program brings one company-grade officer or junior warrant officer from the Guard from each state, territory and the District of Columbia to the nation's capital for a close look at how the federal government works and the role NGAUS plays in the legislative process. More information is available at www.ngaus.org/events/2024-capitol-summit . Applications are available on our WINGA website and are due to the WINGA office 02 Feb. 2024. Officers must be Company Grade and current members of WINGA and NGAUS in order to be selected. Direct your questions or concerns to COL (Ret) Mike Williams. Location: National Guard Memorial Museum, the NGAUS headquarters in Washington, D.C.

2024 Legislative Workshop | Feb. 27 - 28 The Legislative Workshop provides a unique opportunity for Legislative Liaisons and Congressional Affairs Contact Officers from each state, territory, and D.C. to learn about the legislative process and hear from National Guard leaders regarding upcoming priorities and insight on the issues affecting the Guard. Location: National Guard Memorial Museum, the NGAUS headquarters in Washington, D.C.

NGAUS The National Guard Association of the United States

146th Annual Conference
23-26 August 2024,
Detroit, Michigan

Checkout the Motor City's event video at:

https://drive.google.com/file/d/17aOPdudZGhRf61FP-v_XV3j8oJFyL8fS/view?ts=6553bb43

2024 WINGA/WNGEA Joint State Conference

WNGEA

26-28 April 2024 at The Osthoff Resort in Elkhart Lake, WI
Host Units: 426th Regt & RRB

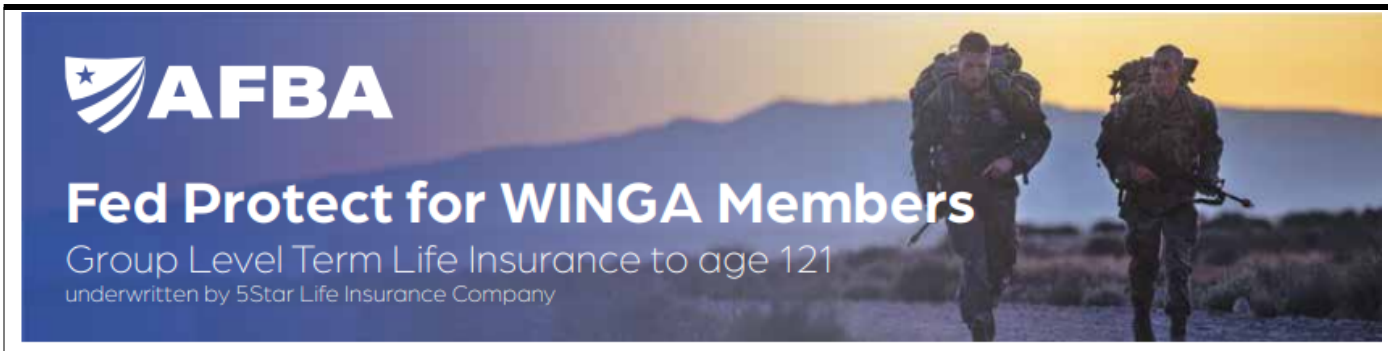
The onsite Aspira Spa offers facials, massage, body treatment, manicures, pedicures, and salon services, plus a Salt Room & Spa Café.

There are 10 golf courses within 22 miles of The Osthoff Resort.

The Osthoff Resort is home to some of the best Elkhart Lake restaurants with a variety of dining options. Their menus range from traditional favorites to imaginative regional cuisine, all prepared by award-winning chefs.

The Osthoff Resort offers cooking classes for small groups. Gather for a unique culinary adventure that combines learning, teamwork, and, of course, mouthwatering meals.

Things to Do | The Osthoff Resort



Prepare for the future. Protect your loved ones.

In today's unpredictable world, you know what it means to have others depend on you. Protect your family's financial future with coverage you can count on. All active and former Guard members and spouses between the ages of 70–75 are eligible to apply with coverage continuing through age 121.

24 hour coverage

No war or terrorism exclusions. Coverage on and off duty with no hazardous, line of duty or occupational restrictions.

Emergency death benefit

Once you have coverage for two years, up to $15,000 of the total death benefit is released as an Emergency Death Benefit (EDB).* No emergency death benefit if Terminal Illness rider exercised.

Terminal illness benefit

Receive 50% of the death benefit in a lump sum amount in the event of a terminal illness with less than one year of life expectancy (24-months in Illinois, Kansas, Massachusetts, and Washington). The money can be spent entirely at your discretion – to pay medical bills, out of pocket expenses, or anything else. The remainder benefit amount is paid to the beneficiary upon death.

Spouse coverage

Secure the same great benefits for your spouse. With our simplified enrollment form completed over the phone, applying for coverage is easy with no medical exam, simply have your spouse answer the Statement of Health (SOH) questions and sign. Coverage is dependent upon the answers to the SOH questions.

Non-insurance AFBA member benefit

Family survivor college scholarship. Your spouse and children are eligible for $10,000 per year, per family, up to a total maximum benefit of $40,000 towards an undergraduate college degree, if you are killed in a combat zone as a result of combat action or by U.S. Government recognized acts of foreign or domestic terrorism.

Founded to protect those who serve

In 1947, the Armed Forces Benefit Association (AFBA) emerged from the basement of the Pentagon to provide our military members with death benefits no one else would. We were founded with a commitment to safeguard those who serve.

We leverage a legacy of service to create a membership experience that caters to the unique needs of all who serve. We make the hardest days easier with a proactive claims process that delivers essential aid swiftly and compassionately. We provide support that goes beyond life with member benefits including a survivor scholarship.

AFBA membership provides military members, first responders, federal employees and contractors, and their families certainty and peace of mind, with benefits tailored to their real-life needs. Purpose-built for all who answer the call to serve, our benefits provide the security our members deserve and the protection their loved ones need. More than 75 years later, we remain steadfast in our mission.

Learn more at www.afba.com

* EDB is released within one business day once all requirements are met. It can be done over the phone without the need to provide a death certificate as long as third-party proof of death can be verified (subject to contestability).

Life insurance underwritten by 5Star Life Insurance Company (a Lincoln, Nebraska company), with an administrative office at: 909 N. Washington Street, Alexandria, VA 22314. Death benefits are not available in all states and U.S. Territories.

Photo by Master Sgt. Becky Vanshur courtesy of U.S. National Guard flickr

Policy #LT050197(Rev), LTCERT2016
FedProtectWINGAFlyerR1123 11/23

Guaranteed level death benefit

Your death benefit does not decrease with age. Whatever coverage amount you select, it remains the same until death. Choose the level of coverage that best suits your needs – ages 70–75 up to $30,000 in $5,000 increments. Rates are based on your current age when you purchase coverage.

Easy enrollment process

With our simplified enrollment form completed over the phone, applying for coverage is easy. There is no medical exam. Just answer a few health questions and sign. Coverage is dependent upon the answers to the SOH questions.

Payment flexibility

You have control and flexibility to pay your contributions using credit card or checking account deductions.

Contributions

Rates are the same for men and women regardless of tobacco/nicotine use and based on your current age when you purchase coverage. Rates remain level as long as you have the coverage and maintain contribution payments.

Monthly coverage rates

Age	$5,000	$10,000	$15,000	$20,000	$25,000	$30,000
70	$30.17	$56.00	$81.83	$107.67	$133.50	$159.33
71	$33.08	$61.82	$90.57	$119.32	$148.06	$176.81
72	$35.99	$67.65	$99.31	$130.97	$162.62	$194.28
73	$38.90	$73.47	$108.03	$142.60	$177.17	$211.73
74	$41.81	$79.29	$116.77	$154.25	$191.73	$229.21
75	$44.72	$85.12	$125.51	$165.90	$206.29	$246.68

Enrolling is easy. Contact us today.

Call 1-800-776-2322, option 2 to speak with a representative about the special program details for WINGA members.

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Policy #LT050197(Rev), LTCERT2016
FedProtectWINGAFlyerR1123 11/23

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NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATION
U.S. POSTAGE PAID
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PHONE (608) 242-3114

Address Service Requested

Please inform us of your rank, e-mail, and mailing address changes via phone or e-mail at:
608-242-3114
lrasmussen@winga.org
or
michael.j.williams@winga.org

DIRECT BENEFITS OF YOUR WINGA AND/OR NGAUS MEMBERSHIP

- Tax-free retired military pay in Wisconsin
- VA Home Loans available for Title 32 service
- Post-deployment mental health care & TRICARE Coverage
- Annual funding for Hall of Honor & Hall of Fame Programs
- Annual grants of $500 to each MSC and Wing Command
- Funded Officer and Warrant Officer Summits
- Definition of "veteran" now includes NG and Reservists with 20 years of service
- Reemployment rights for State Active Duty or responding to a national emergency or natural disaster
- WI State Tuition Assistance (Remission) Program & Federal (Post-9/11) GI Bill Benefits
- 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
- No-cost $2,500 Accidental Death & Dismemberment (AD&D) Benefit for NGAUS Members
- Since 2016, funded over $107,000 for NGAUS Life Membership Incentive for 306 officers
- Since 2012, funded over $75,000 in Educational Scholarships for 106 members and dependents
- Three month maternity leave from unit training assemblies with pay & retirement credit for drill-status members
- Annual WINGA Conference, including sponsoring of no-cost Professional Development
- WINGA newsletter (published 6 times per year) & monthly NGAUS magazine
- Benefit parity for the National Guard

NGAUS
The National Guard Association of the United States