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 **January/February 2024**

Welcome to the February issue of **Your Communicator**! December's newsletter spotlighted the WINGA Team's efforts, and I would like to highlight NGAUS' engagement on your behalf. The following are some of the top NGAUS advocacy priorities:

***Zero-Cost TRICARE and Dental:**
- Increase readiness
- Authorizes TRS for Fed Techs

***Protecting National Guard Equities in Duty Status Reform:**
- Maintain current benefits
- Obtain equity w/Active Duty

***Benefits & Leave Policies Befitting the Operational National Guard:**
- ↑ Mil leave from 15 to 30 days
- Allow full IRA $ in Mil and Civ Acct

***Tax Incentives for Guardsmen & Employers:**
- Benefit for members to serve
- Support member's employers

***Robust National Guard & Reserve Equipment Account (NGREA) Funding**
***Expansion of GI Benefits for the Guard and Reserve**
***Increased National Guard Military Construction (MILCON) Funding**
***Federal Recognition (Win):** NGAUS worked with lawmakers to add the following 2023 NDAA requirements effective 2 January:
- Backdate the effective date of rank of any National Guard officer waiting more than 100 days for federal recognition of their state promotions.

Special and Incentive (S&I) pay parity (follow-up):
- NGAUS president, asked the leaders of the House and Senate Armed Services Committees and the Appropriations Committees' defense subcommittees in separate Feb. 5 letters to use their "oversight authority to investigate the Department's delay on S&I payments to the Guard and Reserve."
- This includes aviator and medical officer incentives

NGAUS provides an opportunity for your grassroots level engagement at NGAUS.org (write to congress function). Your membership and active participation matters; not only in gaining benefit equity but also retaining the benefits we have earned. Renew your membership and participate in your professional organization. I look forward to interacting with you and discussing our federal and local priorities more at the State Conference!

President Dan Statz

WINGA Annual Conference Absentee Ballots

Elections will be conducted at the annual business meeting in Elkhart Lake on Saturday 27 April. WINGA members in attendance will cast their ballots. Absentee ballots must be requested in writing – via email or letter – NLT 28 February. Absentee ballots must be returned to WINGA, 2400 Wright St, Room 151, Madison, WI 53704 NLT 12 April. Please contact Lynn Rasmussen at lrasmussen@winga.org if you have any questions.

Retiree Info

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

United States Air force Retiree Activities Office (RAO):
widma.retiree@wisconsin.gov or 608-242-3115.

WI Department of Military Affairs (DMA) G1 Retirement Services Office (RSO): 608-242-3454 or ng.wi.wiarng.mbx.rso@army.mil

Army Echoes website: https://soldierforlife.army.mil/Retirement/army-echoes

TAPS

Brig Gen (Ret) Ralph C. "Bud" Jensen
COL (Ret) Howard Miller

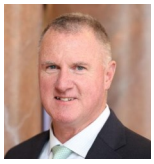
Please notify us if you are aware of a member's death. We publish the names of those who pass away as we are notified, which may result in a delay of notifying you, our members.

Awards, Gift & Grants

WINGA RECOGNITION AWARDS

These awards recognize any person, group, business or firm, who has demonstrated significant support to the Wisconsin National Guard. Any WINGA member can nominate a recipient. Award nominees must be recommended through command channels since each major command is limited to one nomination. Retired members may submit a nomination to the WINGA office. The WINGA Board of Directors makes the final selections. If selected, the awards will be presented at the WINGA Annual Conference in April. Nominations must be received at the WINGA office NLT 1 April 2024. More information and nominations forms are available on our website at: www.winga.org under the "Members" tab then download the WINGA Awards Program Brochure.

NEW NGAUS PRESIDENT BEGINS TERM



Retired Massachusetts Army National Guard Maj. Gen. Francis M. McGinn now has responsibility for the association's daily operations in Washington, D.C.

The association's board of directors elected McGinn to be NGAUS president Nov. 18 at its annual fall meeting. McGinn succeeded retired Mississippi Army Guard Brig. Gen. J. Roy Robinson, who had been president since 2017.

The NGAUS president is the association's chief executive officer, with responsibility for a 28-member staff that works from the NGAUS headquarters in Washington, D.C. This includes providing the Guard in the 54 states, territories and the District of Columbia with unified representation before Congress.

Full Story at: https://www.ngaus.org/newsroom/new-ngaus-president-begins-term

Space National Guard

ISSUE: Support S. 503 and H.R. 3048, the Space National Guard Establishment Act, to create the Space National Guard as the primary reserve component of the U.S. Space Force.

ACTION: Immediately notify your congressional delegation and ask them to support S. 503 introduced by Sen. Dianne Feinstein (D-CA) and Sen. Marco Rubio (R-FL) and H.R. 3048 introduced by Rep. Jason Crow (D-CO) and Rep. Doug Lamborn (R-CO).

HOW: Fill out the form at https://www.ngaus.org/legislation/write-congress/space-national-guard, submit it to your Member of Congress, and urge them to support S. 503 and H.R. 3048.

DESIRED OUTCOME: S. 503 and H.R. 3048, if enacted, would allow the nearly 1,000 airmen currently performing space missions in the National Guard to continue executing these crucial missions unimpeded, while providing the Space Force with combat surge capabilities and delivering space-trained personnel and capabilities to support domestic operations and natural disasters.

DETAILS: This legislation is crucial for resolving ongoing disconnects that continue to impact unit and personnel readiness, and it delivers the most cost-effective solution. The cost of establishing a Space National Guard is substantially less than previously reported. Gen. Daniel R. Hokanson, the chief of the National Guard Bureau, "The actual cost is about $200,000 and that's just to change the name tapes of their uniforms, the sign outside their buildings and the flags of the units. ... We're basically just taking the folks doing the mission today and instead of Air Force it'll say Space Force on their name tag."

DoD Expands Program to Renew USID Cards Online

Most Uniformed Services Identification card holders can now renew their cards online and receive them in the mail, instead of having to schedule an appointment at an ID card office, according to a Jan. 16 Defense Department press release.

Before this expansion of a year-old pilot program, only *sponsors* with a common access card could request online renewals. The program now allows family members, retirees and others to renew USID cards via the ID Card Office online.

Officials caution the pilot program is only for the *renewal of* a USID card — not for the card's initial issue. The pilot program is also limited to cardholders within the United States, though expansion to non-U.S. addresses is in the works.

Full Story at: https://www.ngaus.org/newsroom/dod-expands-program-renew-usid-cards-online

FEDREC: Language in the fiscal 2023 National Defense Authorization Act now requires the appropriate service secretary to backdate the effective date of rank of any National Guard officer waiting more than 100 days for federal recognition of their state promotions. The provision took effect Jan. 2. NGAUS worked with lawmakers to add the language to last year's annual defense policy bill.

DIGITAL ACTIVE LIFE MEMBERSHIP (DALM) - GIFTED

DONOR	RECIPIEINT
COL (Ret) Mark Mathwig	CPT Nicholas Mathwig
COL (Ret) Leah Moore	CPT Christopher Zeman
COL (Ret) Mike Williams (1/2 membership)	1LT Apiwit "Ben" Chulawan
Dan Beck / AMI Health	2nd Lt Rachel Jones

Wisconsin NATIONAL GUARD FOUNDATION

The Wisconsin National Guard Foundation, Inc., a 501(c)3 foundation, was established in 2021 to support the Wisconsin National Guard, its service members, and their families. The foundation consists of 11 volunteer board members. The Board of Directors is looking for individuals who have specialized skills in marketing and communications. If you or someone you know is interested in helping or getting more information, please contact the Foundation Executive Director, COL (Ret) Mike Williams wingfoundation21@gmail.com or 608.242.3104.

For more information on the organization go to their website at: www.wi-ngfoundation.org or by scanning the QRC.

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 Credit or debit *or*

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

WINGA WINGA Assn
@WINGA-WINGAAssn

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

Save these 2024 Dates

WINGA/WNGEA Joint State Conference
Location: The Osthoff Resort in Elkhart Lake, WI
Host Units: 426th Regt & RRB
Dates: 26-28 April 2024

Onsite, the Osthoff Resort offers golf, spa amenities, cooking classes, multiple eateries, and more.

Things to Do in nearby Elkhart Lake go to: https://osthoff.com/explore-elkhart-lake/things-to-do/

Conference Schedule offers FREE Childcare (for select events), Spouse Listening Session, cooking class, SMSD, Family Yoga, Professional Development, and more.

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

2024 NGAUS Legislative Workshop
27-28 Feb.

2024 NGAUS Capitol Summit
17-19 Mar.

WINGA/WNGEA Sporting Challenge
20 Sept. 2024

WINGA/WNGEA Joint Annual State Conference
26-28 April 2024 at The Osthoff Resort in Elkhart Lake, WI
Host Units: 426th Regt & RRB

NGB approved a limited number of company grade officers/enlisted to attend professional development (PD) in a paid status. Selection of personnel will be determined by the chain of command. Individuals in a paid status **must** attend **all** PD sessions and official functions.

Registration: Register online at: **https://wngea.org/conference-registration/** , also linked on the **WINGA website** to the conference registration site. If you prefer to mail in your registration and payment, send the registration form (see page 5) and your check, payable to "2024 Joint WING Conference" to: WNGEA, ATTN: SGM (Ret) Gary R. Hans, 2400 Wright Street, Room #158, Madison, WI 53704.

Through **12 April**, the **Early Bird Registration** fee is $10 per adult for Company Grade (E6/O3/CW2 & below) and $20 per adult for Field Grade (E7/O4/CW3 & above). **Effective 13 April**, the registration fee increases to $20 per adult for Company Grade (E6/O3/CW2 & below) and $30 per adult for Field Grade (E7/O4/CW3 & above). No charge for kids (17 & under). The only meal you pay for is the Saturday evening meal at $30 per person, all other meals are complimentary. Also, there is no charge for any professional development, business meetings, training, etc.

Conference App: There is a conference app (search "WNGEA" in the App Store) to register for the conference and obtain the latest info.

Hotel Rooms: The Osthoff Resort, 101 Osthoff Ave, Elkhart Lake, WI 53020, 1-800-876-3399. You must call the hotel directly to make room reservations if you plan to take advantage of the room block. Ask for a room in the "**Wisconsin National Guard Conference**" room block to receive the reduced rate for a Single $90 or $129 Double, plus tax. There are also 2 bedroom suites for $180 per night, plus tax. The room block deadline is **5 April.** After 5 April, the Osthoff will honor the above rate if there are still rooms available.

Special Note: Event rooms & times may change from what's depicted on the registration form. An updated schedule of events will be provided in your registration packet at check-in and will be maintained on the WNGEA app. You can anticipate a firmer schedule and speaker's list in the March newsletter. The information will also be distributed on the WINGA website and on our Facebook page (search "Wisconsin National Guard Association - WINGA" or @WisconsinNationalGuardAssociation).

Conference Registration Check-in: Friday from 1200-1930 and Saturday morning 0700-0800.

FREE Childcare: Friday evening from 1800-2100 and Saturday evening 1800-2100.

Icebreaker/Social/Trade Show: Come experience a tailgate-like atmosphere with a Tailgate Buffet of burgers, brats, BBQ chicken, potatoes, tossed salad, coleslaw, potato salad, potato chips, corn on the cob, & dessert, plus complimentary beer & wine taste-testing tables. A cash bar will be available. Wear a jersey or other attire to show us who you root for. Our **Trade Show corporate partners & their exhibits** will be co-located with the icebreaker. Enjoy a game of BINGO for a chance to win prizes by engaging with them; they attend to meet you, their attendance helps reduce conference costs. Weather permitting, there will be a **Bonfire Social** following the conclusion of the Icebreaker.

Dress Code: Business Casual attire is authorized for all attendees including those in a military duty status or anyone in a paid duty status for Professional Development/Meetings. Attire for Saturday evening dinner is business attire/semiformal; those wishing to wear military uniform (ASU/Class A/Mess Dress) are authorized to do so.

Joint WINGA/WNGEA Hospitality Room: The Hospitality Room will be available Friday after the Ice Breaker ends and Saturday after the Dinner ends. (Casual civilian attire)

Professional Development (PD): Sessions may be attended by any conference attendee and are REQUIRED for those in a paid status. PD comes in many forms e.g. service and organization breakouts and panels, and the speakers come from both the military and civilian sector.

- Saturday Joint WINGA/WNGEA Opening Ceremony and Awards Program
- Saturday Army & Air DAG Breakouts
- Saturday WINGA Business Meeting
- Saturday Corporate Partner Luncheon
- Saturday Army & Air Officer & Enlisted Breakouts
- Saturday (PM) multiple PD sessions, including State Leadership Panel, China/Taiwan Breakout,
- Saturday Social, Evening Meal and entertainment A brief social precedes the banquet; a cash bar will be available.
- Sunday Command Breakouts

Warrant Officer Caucus: Saturday morning
Company Grade Officer Caucus: Saturday morning
Retiree Caucus: Saturday morning

The Osthoff House Cooking School is offering a session on Saturday 27 April from 1330-1500 for $25 per person.

Golf: On Sunday enjoy 9-holes of golf at the Quit Qui Oc Golf Club. $35 per person, includes cart. Tee time is 1030. Weather dependent. Pay at the Golf Club on Sunday.

Things to Do | The Osthoff Resort: https://osthoff.com/explore-elkhart-lake/things-to-do/

WINGA/WNGEA Joint State Conference Registration Form

Hosts: Recruiting & Retention Battalion & the 426th Regional Training Institute

Location: The Osthoff Resort, 101 Osthoff Ave, Elkhart Lake, WI 53020 **Dates:** 26-28 April 2024

Room Block Name: "WI National Guard Assoc." Must Call to Book Rooms in the room block: **1-800-876-3399.**

Hotel Room Block Deadline: 5 APR 2024 - $90 (single), **$129** (double), **$180** (2-bedroom suite) /night plus tax.

Registration Methods: 1) Online: https://wngea.org/conference-registration/

2) Phone App: search (WNGEA) & download from your app store

3) Submit this form & enclose a check payable to "2024 Joint WING Conference". Send to: WNGEA, ATTN: SGM (Ret) Gary R. Hans, Rm #158, 2400 Wright Street, Madison, WI 53704

Conference Registration Deadline: April 12, 2024

Member Name (Last, First): _____	**Rank** (write-in)	◯ **Active/** ◯ **Retired** (Select One)	☐ **WINGA/WNGEA/ Paid Status** ☐ (Select One)	**Army/Air** ☐ ☐ (Select One)
Guest Name (Last, First): _____				
Home Address: Street, City, State, Zip Code				
Unit:				
Civilian Email:			**Phone:**	

Event	#	Price	Total
Conference Registration Fee (Early Bird Special) **CG=Company Grade**		$10.00/**CG** per adult	
CG (E6, O3, CW2 & below) / **FG** (E7, O4, CW3 & above)		$20.00/**FG** per adult	
Conference Registration Fee After 12 April 2024 **FG=Field Grade**		$20.00/**CG** per adult	
CG (E6, O3, CW2 & below) / **FG** (E7, O4, CW3 & above)		$30.00/**FG** per adult	
Conference Registration for Kids (17 & under)		FREE	
Friday, April 26, 2024			
Registration (Grand Libelle Foyer)		Prices Listed Above	
Ice Breaker/Trade Show/Yoga Demo/Bonfire (Grand Libelle Ballroom) **Theme**: Tailgate **Attire**: Casual/Sports Team **Food**: Wine & Beer Tasting, BBQ chicken, brats, burgers, etc.		FREE	
FREE Childcare (Villa Gottfried A): List names & any special needs: _____	0-11 mo. ____ 1-3 yo. ____ 4-6 yo. ____ 7-12 yo. ____ N/A ____ (Enter qty in ea. range)		
WINGA/WNGEA Hospitality Room (Elkhart Lake Ballroom) Attire: Casual		FREE	
Saturday, April 27, 2024			
Registration (Grand Libelle Foyer)		Prices Listed Above	
Continental Breakfast (Grand Libelle ABCDEF)		FREE	
Joint Opening Ceremony/Awards Program (Palm Gardens Ballroom ABC) [PD] **Attire:** Business Casual		N/A	
Deputy Adjutants General Breakouts [Professional Development]		N/A	
Family Yoga (Villa Gottfried B)		TBA	
WINGA/WNGEA Association Business Meetings (Palm Gardens Ballroom ABC/Villa Gottfried A) [PD]		N/A	
Luncheon with Corporate Partners (Grand Libelle Ballroom) [PD]		FREE	
Afternoon Sessions [PD] Army/Air & Officer/Enlisted Breakouts, Joint PD, State Leadership Panel, China/Taiwan Breakout, Spouse Listening Session		N/A	
Osthoff House Cooking School (Osthoff Kitchen)		$25.00/person	
Social, Dinner & Entertainment (Grand Libelle Ballroom)		$30.00/person	
Attire: Semiformal, Business Attire, or Military Uniform (optional) **Dietary Restrictions**: e.g. Gluten Free (GF), Vegetarian, Vegan, other: _____	Chicken Marsala (GF) _____ Pork Scallopini _____ Three Cheese Ravioli _____		
FREE Childcare (Villa Gottfried A): List names & any special needs: _____	0-11 mo. ____ 1-3 yo. ____ 4-6 yo. ____ 7-12 yo. ____ N/A ____ (Enter qty in ea. range)		
WINGA/WNGEA Hospitality Room (Elkhart Lake Ballroom) Attire: Casual		FREE	
Sunday, April 28, 2024			
Commander's Time Hot Breakfast (Garden Foyer)		FREE	
9-Hole Golf Outing @ Quit Qui Oc Golf Club (Tee Time: 10:30 AM weather permitting)	Pay the fee at the clubhouse.	$35.00/person, includes cart	
VOLUNTARY CONTRIBUTION (to help cover expenses)			
		Grand Total:	

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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