

NGAA News

Introducing Your New President



Colonel Mark H. Berry serves as maintenance group commander for the 188th Fighter Wing, Fort Smith, Arkansas. He assumed the position in November 2001 with more than twenty years' active duty and fifteen years as an Air Reserve technician.

Colonel Berry was born into a military family at Perin Air Force Base in Sherman, Texas. He traveled the world as an "Air Force brat" until his father retired in 1971 and moved his family to Booneville, Arkansas. Colonel Berry graduated from Booneville High School in 1974 and subsequently enlisted in the Air Force that summer as an air traffic controller. After completion of his undergraduate and graduate studies he attended Officer Training School and received his commission as a second lieutenant.

Separating from active duty after eighteen years, in September 1992 Colonel Berry joined the Arkansas Air National Guard as a drill status Guardsman and public affairs officer, while in his civilian capacity he was a registered investment representative with a major New York Stock Exchange securities firm and served on the board of directors for the Booneville, Arkansas, Chamber of Commerce.

Since joining the Arkansas National Guard, Colonel Berry has been deployed in support of combat operations in Operation Enduring Freedom and Operation Iraqi Freedom as well as Operations Allied Force, Decisive Edge and Joint Task Force Katrina.

Colonel Berry resides in Ozark, Arkansas, and is married to the former Theresa Price of Jerseyville, Illinois. They have two sons, Mason and Kyle.

Colonel Berry was installed as 2011-2012 NGAA president in April during the association's annual conference in Hot Springs.

The illiterate of the 21st century will not be those who cannot read and write, but those who cannot learn, unlearn, and relearn ~ Alvin Toffler

Work spares us from three evils: boredom, vice, and need ~ Voltaire

Presidentially Speaking

Colonel Mark H. Berry
President

I am honored to serve this year as president of the National Guard Association of Arkansas. As I begin my term, I would be remiss if I did not recognize the outstanding leadership and dedication of our past president, Colonel Mike Merritt. Mike spent countless hours contributing to the success of our organization, and it has been a pleasure to work with him on the executive committee during the past two years.

I want to also recognize the tremendous efforts of the association board of directors, the NGAA staff and the numerous committee members for orchestrating the outstanding conference earlier this year in Hot Springs. Countless hours went into planning and organizing both the business and social activities of the conference. We are indeed fortunate to have highly motivated and, more importantly, dedicated men and women to make our conference a success every year.

Now, to get down to business Despite the extensive mobilizations, deployments and other state and federal commitments in which we are all involved, I am happy to report that our membership remains strong. There is always room for improvement however, and we always have room for one more member in NGAA. As president, I want to emphasize to everyone that membership is the lifeblood of our organization at both the local and national levels. Naturally, one of my goals over the coming year is to increase membership; however, I consider it more important to inform our members of exactly what they get in return. I am convinced that our membership will grow if we share those benefits with all members and prospective members of the Arkansas National Guard. Our membership, in direct association with the National Guard Association of the United States (NGAUS), is actively working issues such as:

- Expanding the post 9/11 GI Bill benefits to include time served retroactive to 11 September 2001
- Providing an incentive for continued service beyond 20 years by authorizing one year early retirement credit for every two years served beyond twenty
- Enabling drill status Guardsmen to travel space available with dependents without restrictions as do their active duty counterparts
- Continuing to provide robust funding for Army National Guard equipment and the National Guard and Reserve Equipment Account (NGREA) which enables the National Guard to acquire critical dual use equipment for homeland disaster response operations

We are already seeing potentially historical changes at the highest levels in the National Guard Bureau under legislation introduced in Congress. The House version of the fiscal 2012 National Defense Authorization Act passed on May 26th with an amendment that would designate the Chief of the National Guard Bureau as a full member of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. It is no secret that our state and nation continues to face great economic challenges that affect everyone in uniform. For that reason alone, a strong voice is essential for the future growth and modernization of the Guard. Your active membership is critical to our organization both in the state of Arkansas and at the national level. Your support affords NGAA and NGAUS a crucial voice within the Arkansas legislature and in Washington, DC, to address the needs critical to our infrastructure and equipment and, most importantly, our soldiers and airmen as they perform their state and federal missions. If you are in a position of leadership in the Arkansas National Guard, I ask you to help educate our officers in relation to how vitally important it is to be a member of a professional organization Ours, the *Profession of Arms*. You can make a difference through your example and by encouraging others to follow.

Finally, my pledge to you as your association president is that we will stay engaged in support of Arkansas soldiers and airmen, past and present. Thank you in advance for your support, and I hope you will visit our website (www.ngaa.org) often where you will find association news, events, current initiatives, board meeting minutes, the opportunity to pay membership dues online, and much more. This is YOUR association make the most of it!

Minutes – NGAA Board of Directors Meeting

June 7, 2011

Absentees

LTC Damon Cluck, 2nd Vice President (TDY)
MAJ Betty Anderson (25 ROC)
MAJ Jeffrey Bookout (233 RTI)
1LT John Chase (2-142 FA) (AT)
1LT Candice Coleman (1-153 Inf)
Capt William Ginger (184 FS)
MAJ David Grant (39 BSB)
MAJ David Harrison (Title 10)
MAJ Charles Hartwick (1-206 FA)
Col (Ret) Tom Landers (Retiree Rep)
CPT Brian Lawrenz (1-142 FA) (AT)
CW2 Lucien McConnell (871 Trp Cmd) (AT)
COL Michael Merritt, Past President
MAJ Clint Miller (87 Trp Cmd) (AT)
Maj Toby Morrow (154 Tng Sqdn) (TDY)
CPT Dwayne Page (CMTC)
WO1 Antonio Pouncy (217 BSB)
MAJ David Stapp (Hq 39 I BCT)
1LT John Tatum (875 Engr Bn)
MAJ Anthony Wilmington (ISU)

Guests/NGAA Staff

BG Richard Swan, Chief, Joint Staff
Col Tammy Hutchins-Frye, Director, Air Staff, AR ANG
Maj (Ret) James Lamb, NGAA staff
Mrs. Wanda Thomen, NGAA staff
MSG (Ret) Bob Morgan, NGAA staff
Mrs. Judy Shere, NGAA staff

Proper notice of this meeting was given prior to the meeting.

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 5:45 p.m., and a quorum was verified. Guests were recognized and welcomed. President Berry expressed his appreciation for Past President Merritt's leadership and help during the past two years and thanked everybody who contributed to the success of the 2011 state conference in Hot Springs.

President Berry discussed his visions and goals for the upcoming year to include increasing membership and providing members with more information about what NGAA and NGAUS is doing for them. He recently had an opportunity to visit NGAUS headquarters in Washington, DC, and said that organization does a phenomenal job for the National Guard. He wants to encourage all NGAA members to be more active in the organization. Another goal is to grow the corporate member program within NGAA, and he has plans to work in the western and northwestern areas of the state to that end.

Old Business

The minutes of the 18 January 2011 board meeting were reviewed. A motion was made, seconded and carried to approve the minutes as written.

New Business

Board Representative Action

Representatives were asked to approve the following board representative change:

2LT Scotty Parker to fill the unexpired term of MAJ Matt Anderson representing 77th Avn Bde through April 2012.

A motion was made, seconded and carried to approve the appointment.

President Berry advised that orientation information for new members on the board of directors is being updated by the NGAA staff and when completed will be distributed via e-mail to all members and/or posted to the NGAA website for all to see. He said the orientation presents a good overview of the duties and responsibilities of board members and much more.

Attendees were asked to provide their updated contact information to the NGAA staff as appropriate.

2012 Budget Proposal/Finance and Insurance Reports, Maj (Ret) James Lamb

James Lamb presented the proposed 2012 budget for approval. He also presented the NGAA finance report (as of 31 May 2011) and NGAA Trust 1 and Trust 2 finance reports (as of 30 April 2011) for approval. There were no questions; and a motion was made, seconded and approved to accept the 2012 budget and finance reports as presented.

Bank Resolutions and Transfer of Taxable Funds, Maj (Ret) James Lamb

James Lamb asked the board to consider approval of bank resolutions for the upcoming year, explaining that this will allow the association staff to coordinate any necessary bank signature card changes generated by changes of staff members and/or elected officers. A motion was made, seconded and carried to approve the action.

James Lamb asked for authority to transfer taxable monies into the association set aside non-taxable account if such funds are identified by the auditor. This authority will allow the association staff to move those funds into the non-taxable account; however, any money that needs to be taken out of the non-taxable account would have to be approved by the board of directors. This action has never been necessary but there is a set aside account in place to receive such funds in the event it is needed. A motion was made, seconded and carried to approve this action.

There were 5719 Insurance policies in force as of 30 April 2011, and death claims in the amount of \$200k have been paid for the 2011-2012 insurance year.

James Lamb discussed the fees associated with processing dues payments using PayPal and credit card. The PayPal fee is \$3.84 per transaction and credit card fee is \$5.06 per transaction. The association will discontinue use of the credit card machine to complete credit card transactions and will do those using a computer based program (thus saving \$53.50 per month for the use of that machine). Dues may be paid using PayPal, credit card, cash or check. He added that there are a few debit cards that PayPal will not accept as some banks will not do business with PayPal.

President Berry discussed the PayPal/credit card transaction fees that NGAA currently pays. A discussion during the last board meeting to consider passing those fees to association members resulted in the issue being tabled until today. He said over 500 transactions have been completed on PayPal since that opportunity was offered to our members. He suggested that people who use PayPal know there is a fee associated with that and should not have a problem paying the fee. Those who do not wish to pay the fee can pay using cash, money order or by check. Lieutenant Colonel Papineau recommended tabling this issue once again and said he and the two other individuals on a 3-person committee to look into this issue will make a recommendation at the next board meeting.

NGAUS Membership

Thanks to everyone's hard work in getting their unit to 100 percent membership, NGAA will be recognized at the NGAUS Conference as being at 100 percent in NGAUS membership. That does not mean that every NGAA member has paid his/her dues, and NGAA is still collecting dues for 2011. NGAA has until 30 June 2011 to send additional dues to NGAUS to determine the number of delegates Arkansas will be allowed at the NGAUS Conference. In addition, our 100 percent membership status in NGAUS entitles us to a 5 percent rebate.

133rd NGAUS Conference

This year's NGAUS Conference will be held in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, 27-29 August 2011. Conference information and registration forms are posted at the NGAA website, www.ngaa.org. The Arkansas delegation will be housed in The Aloft which is within walking distance of the conference center. Arkansas and other SEC states plan to host a joint event on Hospitality Night, and one of two places is being considered for those activities. The NGAUS Conference is always a great event, and the exhibits are really something to see. NGAA will provide the Arkansas delegation with matching fleece vests emblazoned with a Razorback Hog and the word "Arkansas". The Arkansas conference trading pin also depicts a Razorback and a Harley motorcycle within the shape of the state of Arkansas.

Other Discussion

President Berry discussed correspondence recently received by NGAA from a retired life member of the association dealing with the NGAA newsletter being posted to the website and not mailed in hard copy. The member requested that

the board consider a newsletter mailout again. President Berry said the cost to mail the newsletter in FY-08 was approximately \$5,100 and approximately \$4,000 in FY-09. Postage costs are now even higher. Other concerns raised by the correspondence included retired and life members not receiving information about NGAA activities and events. In an effort to address those concerns and update the member database, NGAA will mail postcards this month to the retired/life members requesting current mailing and e-mail addresses. Based on the list to be compiled from the updated information, the NGAA staff and the retiree representative on the board of directors will make a continuing effort to e-mail or mail notices about activities and events to those individuals on a regular basis. The correspondence did ask that the board vote on the issue of re-establishing a hard copy newsletter. If the hard copy route is taken, it will necessitate an addition of approximately \$5,000 to the budget. Further discussion included a suggestion that board representatives advertise the NGAA website to their constituents and ensure the retired/life members are informed that all NGAA activities are posted regularly to the website. Another recommendation was to ask commanders to give their NGAA board representatives a few minutes during staff call to inform their officers of NGAA activities such as conferences, legislative issues, the annual membership drive, etc.

A motion was made and seconded to continue publishing the NGAA newsletter on the NGAA website. A suggestion was made to amend the motion to add mailouts of the newsletter to those individuals requesting that. The motion was amended to continue publishing the NGAA newsletter on the NGAA website with the exception to policy that in accordance with feedback received, copies will be mailed to individuals requesting that means. The amended motion was seconded and was approved.

President Berry and LTC Moix visited recently with Advertising and Promotions Commission personnel in Fort Smith about the 2013 state conference and will report on that in August and present conference site proposals for consideration.

Brigadier General Swan noted that the 39th IBCT recently completed a successful NTC rotation and praised the troops for their good work during the recent tornado and flood response.

Next Meeting

The next scheduled board of directors meeting is Tuesday, 2 August 2011, in the NGAA conference room. Dinner will be served at 5:00 p.m., and the meeting will start at 5:45 p.m. A reminder will be sent prior to the meeting date.

Adjournment

There was no further business, and the meeting adjourned.

Attention All Members

The NGAA office regularly uses e-mail as a means for quick dissemination of items of interest to our members. If you would like to be added to our e-mail contact list, please send your e-mail address to jshere@ngaa.org or kmoix@ngaa.org. In addition, please keep NGAA updated with your current mailing address.

Your input and ideas are always welcome concerning any and all issues that are important to you. NGAA works for YOU!

New Partners in Patriotism

We are pleased to welcome two new *Partners in Patriotism* to the NGAA corporate family:

DHS Technologies LLC

DHS Technologies LLC is parent company for DHS Systems and DHS Systems International and holds numerous brand names and patents including DRASH, Reeves EMS, DC2E and the Reeves ICP. DHS Technologies was formed in 2004 when global private equity firm, the Carlyle Group, became an investor. **DHS Systems**, begun in 1984, manufactures Deployable Rapid Assembly Shelter (DRASH) systems and their components for the military. The company also offers a full line of emergency medical products and accessories through its Reeves EMS brand, including decontamination systems and equipment and patient movement equipment. The Reeves ICP is the newest product offered by the company and provides an independently operational command shelter and trailer for first responders. **DHS Systems International**, formerly known as MilSys (UK) Ltd, began in 2004 and serves as the company's international subsidiary, providing rapidly deployable high specification expeditionary equipment and technical support to clients around the world. Learn more about DHS Technologies LLC at www.dhstechnologiesllc.com.

University of Phoenix

Offering a full spectrum of online and campus based college education, the University of Phoenix considers the military community a large and important part of its student population. Whether you are active duty, a veteran, a member of the Reserve or National Guard or a military spouse, you are eligible for special tuition rates. The course schedules are extremely flexible so that school can be balanced with work, family, and the unpredictable nature of military life. The University's team of military enrollment advisors has served in the military themselves, so they are specially trained to support you. Well versed in financial options, they can help you navigate through all the resources available, to include tuition assistance forms and the GI Bill. Their office of veterans affairs can answer your questions about claiming entitlements or finding a regional veterans affairs office. Much more information is available at the University of Phoenix website, www.phoenix.edu.



PLAN TO ATTEND

National Guard Association of the United States

133rd General Conference and Exhibition

August 26 - 29, 2011

Frontier Airlines Center, Milwaukee, Wisconsin

Program: www.ngaus.org

Exhibits: 410-997-0763 301-596-3028 Fax 410-997-0764

Hosted by the Wisconsin National Guard

Website Update

The NGAA website has recently been updated to include:

- Current roster of NGAA board of directors
- April 2011 NGAA/EAANG Joint Conference review (business meeting report, golf tournament results and photo gallery)
- Partners in Patriotism corporate member information
- Auxiliary to the NGAA (ANGAA) update (current officers/meeting dates)
- Click on Scholarships to see the list of 2011-2012 NGAA/EAANG scholarship recipients
- 133rd National Guard Association of the United States (NGAUS) General Conference information to include downloadable registration form and online registration. Make your plans soon to join the Arkansas delegation 26-29 August 2011 in Milwaukee, Wisconsin!

NGAA welcomes your ideas/input for items to add to the website ... call or e-mail the NGAA office with your suggestions. Phone No. 501-758-6422/e-mail kmoix@ngaa.org or jshere@ngaa.org.

Company Grade Officer Awards

The NGAA Company Grade Officers for the Year 2010 received special recognition during the NGAA Conference business session on Saturday, April 9, 2011. Selected for the award were:

*CAPTAIN BRIDGETTE SCOTT
188TH MEDICAL GROUP
ARKANSAS AIR NATIONAL GUARD*

*CAPTAIN ADAM YOUNG
NATIONAL GUARD MARKSMANSHIP TRAINING CENTER
ARKANSAS NATIONAL GUARD*

*CW2 LUCIEN MCCONNELL
871ST TROOP COMMAND
ARKANSAS ARMY NATIONAL GUARD*

NGAA Welcomes New Staff Member

Mrs. Wanda Thomen joined the NGAA staff in January as insurance administrator. She comes to the association from her previous position as family readiness support assistant for the 39th Infantry Brigade Combat Team where she served for over two years. She also worked in the insurance and banking industries for over ten years, serving in management and new employee training positions.

A seven year member of the Auxiliary to the National Guard Association of Arkansas (ANGAA), Wanda is the current president of that organization.

Wanda is married to Captain Rex Thomen, Survey Team Leader, 61st Civil Support Team (WMD), Arkansas National Guard. The couple lives in Jacksonville and is the proud parents of Myranda (age 18) and Phelan (age 15).

Wanda's working knowledge of all aspects of the insurance industry makes her a definite asset to the association.

NGAA Corporate Members

Headline Corporate Member

HDR | Engineering Environmental Management, Inc.
Coca Cola Enterprises of Arkansas
Pepsi Beverages Company

Platinum Corporate Member

Aflac Insurance
Nabholz Construction Corporation

Gold Corporate Member

Arkansas National Guard MWR
DRS Technologies
W. L. Gore & Associates, Inc.

Corporate Member

ADS, Inc.
Amtech, LLC
The Boeing Company
DHS Technologies LLC (Drash)
EADS North America
Humana Military Healthcare Services
Old Mill Wines and Spirits
Pinnacle Pointe Hospital
Tyson Foods, Inc.
University of Phoenix
Verizon Wireless

NGAA Goals

- Serve those serving
- Achieve 100 percent annual dues paying membership
- Increase corporate membership income by \$10K
- Foster working relationships with state legislators and members of Congress to achieve goals of command and association interest
- Sustain a minimum of 70 percent participation level in the group term life insurance program

**National Guard Association of Arkansas
P.O. Box 663, North Little Rock, Arkansas
72115**

**Mark Berry, Association President
(mark.berry@ang.af.mil)**

Kenneth Moix, Executive Director (kmoix@ngaa.org)

**James Lamb, Office Manager (jlamb@ngaa.org)
Wanda Thomen, Insurance Administrator
(wthomen@ngaa.org)**

**Bob Morgan, Insurance Technician (bmorgan@ngaa.org)
Judy Shere, Administrative Assistant (jshere@ngaa.org)**

**Phone: 501-758-6422 FAX: 501-758-2097
www.ngaa.org**

Coming Events

**NGAA Trusts Board Meeting, 4:00 p.m.
NGAA Board of Directors Meeting, 5:00 p.m.
2 August 2011
NGAA Office, Building 8100, Camp Robinson**

**133rd NGAUS General Conference & Exhibition
Frontier Airlines Center
26-29 August 2011
Milwaukee, Wisconsin**