



The Voice of the Guard

National Guard Association of South Carolina

Omni Grove Park Inn

February 22-24, 2019

This year, our 71st annual state conference takes us back to the Omni Grove Park Inn in beautiful Asheville, NC! The Grove Park Inn is a member favorite and many of you have requested to go back for many years! Your NGASC office is hard at work in preparations for what is expected to be a fantastic weekend of fun and fellowship!

Friday evening will kick off with our Icebreaker event. Food and refreshments will be served alongside wonderful items that will be up for auction through our Spouses Auxiliary! Remember that every penny raised in the auction goes toward scholarships!

Our Saturday morning speaker is Jeff Struecker! Jeff served on the raid in Mogadishu which later inspired the movie "Black Hawk Down." Spouses are invited to listen to Jeff's speech before they head to their meeting and event late Saturday morning. The highlight of Saturday evening will be the formal banquet and Mr. Glen Ward will provide entertainment/comedic relief. As always, the hospitality suites will be up and running both Friday and Saturday nights for your enjoyment!

Corporate exhibitors will be on hand to showcase their goods and services. Please thank them for their support and participation. Without our corporate exhibitors (and their financial support!), our annual conference would not be possible.

If you have not received a registration packet, please call Maria Vick at 803-254-8456 or email mvick@ngasc.org. We can't wait to see you all in the mountains in February!

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NGASC Staff, Officers, & Executive Council

a word from the Adjutant General

Dear Supporters of the South Carolina National Guard Association:

The year 2018 has been a historic year with deployments, homecomings, emergency response, homeland defense, training and partnerships. Throughout it all, the South Carolina National Guard continues to answer the call time and time again with unyielding dedication and professionalism. Our men and women stand Ready, Relevant, Responsible, and Resilient through everything asked of them.

We could not do our missions without so many who are committed to our success when we answer the call. The support of the American people is made stronger by individuals and Associations who engage and educate the public about our roles defending the homeland, supporting the war fight, and building partnerships. One of our biggest advocates is the South Carolina National Guard Association. They, along with the National Guard Association, Enlisted Guard Association and others, ensure policy leaders and legislative personnel are aware and informed of the issues impacting our Guard's readiness and families. They have done so much to secure the future of our organization and we are extremely grateful for their unyielding hard work and dedication.

As my term serving as the Adjutant General for South Carolina comes to a close, Barbara and I want to take this opportunity to offer our deepest gratitude to the South Carolina National Guard Association Family and all we have had the honor of serving with these past 40 years. We have been blessed immeasurably to serve alongside America's greatest treasure, those who place service above self and take the oath to lay down their lives to defend freedom. We will forever embrace these memories and stories of the thousands of Soldiers, Airmen and their families who touched our lives. Our state and nation is stronger and safer and far better as a result of your service and sacrifice. We wish you and yours the very best in the future.

For State and Nation - True and Tried



MG Robert E. Livingston Jr.

The Adjutant General for SC

a word from the NGASC President

Wow, this year has flown by really fast and now it's officially the holiday season. During this season of giving, don't forget our veterans, Soldiers and Airmen who cannot be home with their friends and family and those that have gone before us. May God Bless all who are currently serving and those Veterans who have served in our armed services.

I want to remind everyone that it is also membership recruitment time in the South Carolina Army and Air National Guard. Our membership numbers are "VERY" important to our organization for several reasons. It allows our state to have a bigger say in the direction of our National Guard Soldiers and Airmen, equipment, training and interactions with the Army, Air Force, Congressman and Senators. Everyone knows the bigger the organization, the more they are listened to (or the louder their voice is). ***We are only as loud as we are strong.***

Part of our national and state mission statement is to lobby our representatives in Washington and Columbia for:

- (1) better pay and equipment
- (2) assigned to the missions we train to do

We need you to be part of the National Guard Association, both the National Guard Association of South Carolina, NGASC, and either the National Guard Association of the United States, NGAUS, or Enlisted Association of the United States, EANGUS.

Why is this important to you? Simply put, do you have the pay and compensation you want? Do you have what you need to do your job? Is your unit training and fighting the way you should be? These are the things that these associations are fighting for, for you.



If you are asking about what we are advocating for, please visit WWW.NGAUS.ORG and WWW.EANGUS.ORG which are the national organizations that we belong to. The resolutions are issues that are being pursued by us and our lobbyists on Capitol Hill. Again, the more membership we have in the NGASC, NGAUS and EANGUS, the more we can go after the issues that benefit us, the SCARNG and the National Guard as a whole.

Don't just talk about what is not getting done, get involved in your associations, both state and national. There are committees and boards for you to share your views, if you are willing to work to improve the issues. We have plenty of room for you on a number of committees.

We will be hosting annual state conference, 22-24 February 2019, in Asheville, North Carolina. We are returning to the Grove Park Inn after many years and invite you to join us for a weekend of productive meetings and have fun for all in our MSC Hospitality rooms!

Respectfully,
Bill Giles, MSG (Ret)
NGASC President

a word from the Executive Director



We members of the United States Military are held to a higher standard. Each branch of service has a set of core values that binds our entire United States Military together. These core values guide military members' decision making. Living by our values empowers us to meet the higher standards our nation expects and demands of us.

If you have not had the opportunity to do so, I would highly recommend that you Google each of our sister services' core values. I have listed below the core values of each branch of the United States Military. However, as your knowledge of the Army and Air Force Core Values makes you aware, there are deeper definitions for each of these values.

Air Force Core Values: Integrity First, Service Before Self, Excellence in All We Do

Army Core Values: Loyalty, Duty, Respect, Selfless-Service, Honor, Integrity, Personal Courage

Coast Guard Core Values: Honor, Respect, Devotion to Duty

Marine Corp/Navy Core Values: Honor, Courage, Commitment

If you read the definition of each of these sets of core values, you will find that one of the strongest common threads is integrity. Integrity is an extremely important value. If a military member does not live by the core value of integrity they will not and cannot be trusted.

The Air Force Core Value of Integrity First demands courage, honesty, responsibility, accountability, justice, openness, self-respect and humility. It is necessary that we act with integrity both in our professional and personal lives because our word is our bond.

The Army Core Value of Integrity is defined as "Doing what is right, both legally and morally." This is not a new concept. Roman Emperor Marcus Aurelius, considered to have been the first (as defined by Plato) philosopher king of the Roman Empire, offered this guidance concerning integrity, "if it is not right do not do it, if it is not true do not say it."

I believe that The Army and Air National Guard are the face of our Nation's military in our communities. Our communities and our nation hold us to a higher standard. We are also held in high esteem by our Nation's people. However, this high esteem is fragile, and we must maintain our high standards to ensure it endures. Here is what I feel our core values (Air Force) should stand for in an all military lives:

INTEGRITY FIRST

Being truthful and honest with ourselves at all times is critical, whether or not our actions are being observed. Many of us were taught that we are always being watched by a higher power. We need to let our consciences guide our decision making.

Military members who lack integrity often make the headlines of the local and national news. Their actions do not meet the higher standard we are held to by our nation or our military profession. It is our responsibility as leaders to ensure that we and the Airmen that work for us meet and exceed the high standards expected of us.

SERVICE BEFORE SELF

Concentrate on what you put into a task rather than what you get out of it. Each Airman must put the mission ahead of his personal goals or agenda. If we must work a little longer or harder, we must simply remember that *what* we do and *how* we do it affects mission accomplishment. Service before self also means treating others with respect and dignity.

EXCELLENCE IN ALL WE DO

We must always do our best! If we practice doing things right the first time, we can expect our performance to reflect this statement. Our peers will recognize it, our supervisors will also, and of course, and we will always have the satisfaction of knowing we did our best.

In closing, the Army and Air Force Core Values guide us in all of our decisions. These

enduring values anchor and bind all Soldiers and Airmen together each and every day. It is important to remember that any compromise diminishes the character of our service.

Finally, it is an honor and a privilege to serve you as the Executive Director of the National Guard Association. I look forward to continuing representing you at the State and National Level. I am available 24/7, and my mobile number is 803-360-1918. Have a great new year!



Larry Crowson
Executive Director

2019

JAN
21-24

NGEDA Conference
Denver, CO

FEB
22-24

NGASC State Conference
Asheville, NC

AUG
4-7

48th EANGUS Conference
Des Moines, IA

AUG 3 -
SEPT 2

141st NGAUS Conference
Denver, CO

ARE YOU AT A LOSS ON HOW TO HELP A LOVED ONE WITH PTSD? THIS IS WHAT YOU CAN DO!!

By: Stan Popovich

Do you know someone who is in the military or is a veteran who struggles with PTSD and don't know how to help them? Are you not sure how to help a family member or colleague get relief and stop their suffering from PTSD and other fear related issues? If so, here are 8 helpful tips to help the person cope in these kinds of situations.



1. Learn as much as you can in dealing PTSD, Anxiety, And Depression. There are many books and information that will educate you on how to deal with PTSD and mental health issues. Share this information with the person who is struggling. The main point is that the person who is struggling gets as much information as possible on how to overcome their PTSD. In addition, other family members should be aware on how to deal with someone who is struggling without making things worse. Education is the first step in overcoming a person's mental health issues.

2. Be understanding and patient with the person struggling with their fears: Dealing with PTSD, depression, and anxiety can be difficult for the person so do not add more problems than what is already there. Do not make things worse by getting into arguments with someone who is suffering. Yelling at your loved one with PTSD will only make things worse.

3. Talk to the person instead of talking at them: It is important not to lecture the person who is struggling with PTSD. Talk to the person about their issues without being rude. Most people will listen if you approach them in a proper manner. It is also important to listen to what they have to say so you get an idea of where that person is coming from.

4. Get the person to see a PTSD Counselor: It is very important to get the person who is struggling with PTSD to talk to a professional counselor. A counselor can give advice and ideas on how to overcome PTSD. Getting advice from a professional is the number one priority in helping your loved one deal with their mental health issues.

5. Find Out The Reasons Why The Person Won't Get Assistance: Some PTSD sufferers may not want to get help for various reasons. If this happens, find out the reasons why that person won't talk to a counselor. Many people who are struggling are fearful and frustrated. Try to find out the reasons why he or she

won't get the advice they need and then try to find ways that will overcome their resistance of seeking treatment. Addressing a person's issues and fears of getting assistance will go a long way in helping your loved ones.

6. Your Learning How To Overcome Your PTSD. Some people in the military may think that getting help is a sign of weakness. In this case, remind your loved ones that they are not asking for help. Instead, they are learning how to overcome their PTSD. Remind your military friends and fellow veterans that when they were in the military, they had to constantly learn new ways of doing things. Every member of the military had to learn new things on a regular basis during their time in the service. Dealing with PTSD is no different. There is nothing wrong with learning new things; whether your learning how to start a new job, learning a new hobby, learning how to drive a car, or learning how to deal with your fears and PTSD. Learning is learning and there is nothing wrong with that.

7. Find a local veteran's support group for your loved one. It is also important that the person who is struggling join a local veteran's support group so they can get advice from other veterans. Many people who have been in the military and are struggling with PTSD will be better able to relate to other veterans who may have similar experiences and insights.

8. How To Deal With The Nightmares: Many veterans and military members who have been in combat may get nightmares regarding their past war time experiences. It is not easy to stop the nightmares, but you can start to reduce the frequency of these dreams by getting advice from a PTSD counselor or local veteran's group. The more time you spend in getting assistance to address your PTSD issues, the better the chances that you will be able to reduce those nightmares. Some veterans turn to drugs and alcohol to fix their problems, but that will only make things worse. In addition, suicide is not the answer.

BIOGRAPHY: Stan Popovich is the author of a popular managing fear book, "A Layman's Guide To Managing Fear." Stan's book has received over 400 book reviews and offers a lot of free mental health advice on his website. For more information and some more helpful advice, visit Stan's website at www.managingfear.com

a word from the SCARNG Command Chief Warrant Officer

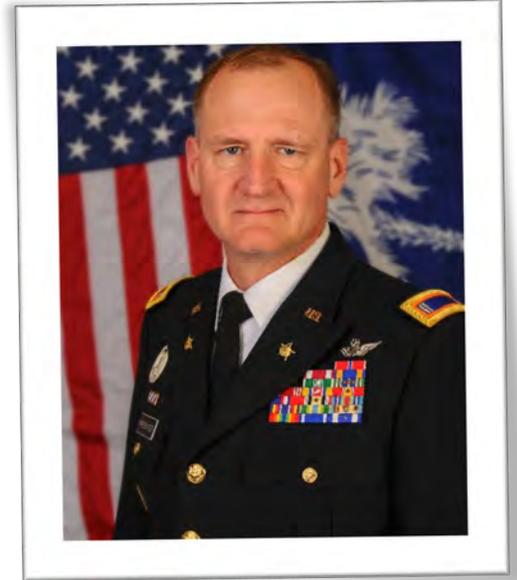
It has been another bellwether year for the South Carolina National Guard (SCNG) and for our great National Guard Association of South Carolina (NGASC) which supports our Soldiers and Airmen so well. Every year our National Guard rises to the challenge. Whether it's supporting the state during natural disasters, or supporting our nation against a constantly evolving array of potential adversaries. One thing that remains constant is the unwavering commitment of the National Guard Association to our service members and their families.

This past year, the South Carolina National Guard battled the flood waters of hurricane Florence as they slowly moved through our state as a result of the massive rains which fell in neighboring North Carolina. We also had our National Guard serving on the front lines in Afghanistan, and projecting power in Eastern Europe and Southwest Asia. Although, our mission is constantly changing and evolving, the National Guard Association of South Carolina is always ready to support of our troops.

In 2018, your National Guard Association of the United States (NGAUS) tackled big issues like reducing the timelines for service member promotions and making sure our deployed National Guard Soldiers and Airmen receive the same pay and benefits as their active-duty counterparts when they are on mission.

It's a great time for our young National Guard men and women to participate in a combined membership in the National Guard Association of the South Carolina (NGASC) and National Guard Association of the United States (NGAUS). There has not been a better time for a younger service member to join as a Life member of our association. I regret that I did not make that decision early on in my military career since it would have been much less expensive in the long run.

As we remembered the 100th year anniversary of the Army Warrant Officer on July 9th of this past year, and the 100th Anniversary of the Armistice of World War I on November 11th, let us never forget the legacy of those that have gone before us in the noble cause to serve our great state and nation. As you know, the South Carolina National Guard is a time honored organization with a rich history that can be traced back to 1636. It is imperative that we pass on the torch of this great organization to the next generation of leaders. The future success of the South Carolina Army National Guard will depend on participation in professional organizations like the National Guard Association.



True and Tried!

CW5 Kent B. Puffenbarger

Command Chief Warrant Officer
SC Army National Guard

senior enlisted Leadership

Letters to the Soldiers and Airmen of South Carolina National Guard,

As the year of 2018 draws to a close, I wanted to reflect on the Service Members of our Great State. I have been honored to be your Senior Enlisted Leader over this past year and you, the Soldiers and Airmen of South Carolina, have made myself and the Adjutant General so proud by conducting multiple deployments and dealing with many natural disasters. Whether it was here in our State, on the Southwest Border, in the National Capital Region, Kuwait, Iraq, Afghanistan, Germany, Romania, Colombia, Poland, Syria, Alaska, Cuba, the National Training Center, XCTC-Fort Bliss, JRTC-Fort Polk, South Korea, DSCA missions in Texas, DSCA Florida, DSCA Puerto Rico, DSCA Virgin Islands, or serving in one of the Combatant Commands, NORTHCOM, SOUTHCOM, EUCOM, or CENTCOM, you answered the call, “For State and Nation—True and Tried”, I could not be prouder of all of you. The Home Team, our world class Regional Training Institute (RTI), Joint Force Headquarters (JFHQ), and Rear Detachments from each deployed unit performed admirably and deserve just as much credit and respect for our successes as one of the best National Guard organizations in the Nation. We have come a long way towards being the most modernized and strategically relevant joint fighting force in the United States, but there is always room to improve our foxhole, fighting position, tactics, techniques, procedures, as well as improving our communications between our Service Members and their Leadership. Never stop seeking knowledge and mentorship from your Leadership, developing yourself and your formations, to be the very best our Nation has to offer. I will always be available to our Soldiers and Airmen for feedback or just to talk if you need to ask a question. I will promise you that I will never stop living the



Warrior Ethos:

“I will always place the mission first”

“I will never accept defeat”

“I will never quit”

“I will never leave a fallen Comrade”

I encourage each of you to rededicate yourself to the Army & Air Force Values and help me continue to change the very culture of our force into the most lethal, modern, proficient fighting “Joint Force” in the Country. We can do this best by communicating freely with each other and building relationships with our Warrior Brothers and Sisters at every opportunity we have. By doing this, we will reach the Adjutant General’s strategic vision of a “Ready, Relevant, Responsible, & Resilient” organization that is unmatched anywhere in the world. I encourage you to seek out opportunities to excel, whether it’s during deployment, at MOS or NCOES School, Best Warrior Competition (BWC), German Armed Forces Proficiency Badge, Air Assault, Ranger, Sapper, Mountain Warfare, or Master Fitness Trainer. Strive to be the Distinguished Honor Graduate or Honor Graduate at every opportunity, I will be there to back you up with resources and support. The South Carolina National Guard is the best our Nation has to offer, and I am proud to put on the uniform with each of you. Whether it’s on the weekends, during deployment, Full-Time AGR, Technician, M-Day, SC State Military Department, State Guard, Title V, or one of our many organizations such as the National Guard Association of South Carolina, we are all in this together, and together no one can beat us! “For State and Nation—True and Tried”, “Always Ready, Always There”!



"For State and Nation - True and Tried"

Russell A. Dickery

SC State Command Sergeant Major



senior enlisted Leadership

Membership in Professional Organizations.

Membership in professional organizations is important in any profession. In my civilian medical sales career, I am a member of several professional organizations. Professional organizations don't just take membership fees, they provide much more of a benefit to me as a member. They provide training and lobby for my benefit with state and national governing bodies.

As a member of the profession of arms in the United States military, you should be a member of at least one professional military organization. I am a member of the National Guard Association of South Carolina, Enlisted Association of the National Guard, National Guard Association of the United States, Air Force Association and the Air Force Security Forces Association. These organizations provide different benefits to their members. Not only do I recommend to our airmen to become a member of a professional organization, the Air Force handbook 36-2618 instructs you to be a member of a professional organization.

In addition to suggestions from your supervisor and requirements from the Air Force, why should you be a member of professional organizations? Networking and job opportunities are a couple of great reasons to join. Just as I was doing research to write this article I ran across a job posting on a professional organizations website where a company was looking to hire retired Security Forces/Law Enforcement personnel for several jobs in Florence, SC. It paid \$350 a day which equates to \$91,000 a year. That is one heck of a reason.

I would make the argument that even more than those Security Forces jobs, that membership

in professional organizations result in representation for you in state and national governmental bodies that help the interests of their membership. When members of the National Guard had the threat of Tricare benefits being reduced and increasing rates, the NGAUS and EANGUS were fighting for your benefits. When the Army was looking to take helicopters from the National Guard, the NGAUS was fighting for the guard on that issue.

The mission of EANGUS is to give a voice on Capitol Hill for Enlisted National Guard men and women, their families and retirees. EANGUS represents 35,000 members. When they walk into an elected official's office, their staff asks how many members they have. When they are told 35,000 they listen, because in their eyes membership equals votes.

Many airmen ask, what do professional organizations do for me? With the NGASC and the EANGUS combined annual membership costs for both the state and national organization of \$16, you get the following benefits for less than 5 cents a day. You actually make money by being a member of these organizations. I encourage every member of the SCANG to join this and other professional military organizations. Take a look at these membership benefits:

- Each year, EANGUS works with legislative issues to benefit National Guard members
- Legislative goals come from the membership
- **Pay!** We lobby for pay raises to reduce pay equity

- ◎ **Money!** Hazardous duty pay was increased
- ◎ **Benefits!** \$300 per weekend for IDT travel
- ◎ **Education!** Post 9/11 GI Bill with stipends and benefits
- ◎ **Affordability!** Held TRICARE fees at today's level instead of 350% increase
- ◎ **Healthcare!** Extended 5-year VA care eligibility
- ◎ **Retirement!** Retirement points of 130 per year, up from 90
- ◎ **Earlier Retirement!** Deployment time counts for earlier retirement
- ◎ **STATE PENSION** The State House of Representatives adopted a budget proviso during the latter part of March 06. The proviso offered by Representatives James Smith, Harry Ott, and Dan Cooper was for the purpose of reinstating the SC National Guard Pension Retirement Fund to those members who joined the Guard after 1993. Under previous action of the General Assembly, the retirement fund was closed to all Guard persons who entered the Guard after 1993. More specifically, the provision was to reinstate the pension fund which would provide a monthly stipend of \$50 to all Guard members who have served 20 years in the SCNG or \$100 to all Guard members who have served 30 years in the SCNG. The measure was approved by the Senate Finance Committee and the full Senate and all SCNG personnel with 20 or more years are eligible for this pension. Again, this reinforces the thought process that we need to maintain strong membership in the NGASC.
- ◎ **TRICARE BENEFITS** TRICARE RESERVE SELECT (TRS) coverage is available to members, and TRICARE RETIRED RESERVE (TRR) to former members of the National Guard. To purchase coverage, please visit <https://www.dmdc.osd.mil/appj/trs/> and for more information about Tricare benefits, please visit <http://www.tricare.mil>. Once you have entered your profile, you can explore the plan you are using and see how the benefits change when you are activated, deactivated, and deployed. Registration in the Defense Enrollment Eligibility Reporting System (DEERS) is required before family members can become eligible for any TRICARE coverage. To register, please visit a uniformed services identification (ID) card issuing facility near you.
- ◎ **SOUTH CAROLINA COLLEGE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (CAP)** For further information, please contact the SC National Guard Education Office at <http://www.scguard.com/education> or at 866-345-8400 or 803-806-4253. For more information about your TRICARE benefits and how they change during periods of activation and deactivation, visit the TRICARE Website at <http://www.tricare.mil>. Once you have entered your profile, you can explore the plan you are using and see how the benefits change when you are activated, deactivated, and deployed.
- ◎ **NO SC INCOME TAX ON NATIONAL GUARD PAY FOR CURRENT OR RETIRED MEMBERS** According to a national tax firm this equates to a 3% to 7% annual savings to the member contingent on income and tax bracket. Based on the assumption that a member earns a minimum of \$2,000 per year from the National Guard that would equate to

savings of \$60.00 to \$140.00 per year for the member. In reality, all NGASC members are able to pay their annual dues without any cost to them based on this benefit alone. I might add that most states pay income tax on their NG pay. Also, the membership dues are tax deductible because you are a member of a Professional Organization. We have had comments that all SCNG personnel were entitled to this benefit regardless of whether they participated as a member of NGASC or

not. This is correct, however; we don't want any of our existing benefits diminished or taken away as was the State Pension. This reinforces the thought process that we need to maintain strength in numbers.

- ◎ **DISTINCTIVE NATIONAL GUARD LICENSE TAG** This is an attractive NG TAG that can be purchased by Active or Retired SCNG personnel at no additional cost. Go to www.dmvonline.com and then follow the link for vehicle plate gallery. In the military section you can view all South Carolina military plates. Plus download the form and instructions.
- ◎ **SCHOLARSHIPS** Since inception of this program, NGASC has contributed over \$1,000,000 for higher education of guardspersons or their dependents. The Scholarship applications are sent out to the units during September of each calendar year with specific criteria as to form completion and mail in instructions. NGASC usually awards approximately 32 (\$1,000 scholarships per year), with another 10-15 being awarded by individual persons or other entities. The winners are announced and receive their scholarship awards at a scholarship luncheon each year. Scholarship applications are located on our web site.

- ◎ **SOUTH CAROLINA COLLEGE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (CAP)** On 1 July 2007, the tireless work of your NGASC coupled with the strong support of the SC General Assembly produced a landmark college assistance program for the men and women of the SC National Guard. For the first time in our history, we have a fully-funded college assistance program that pays toward the cost of attendance of South Carolina colleges and universities. Funded at \$3,000,000 and anchored in the base budget of the state of South Carolina, you can count on these funds now and in the future. Eligible members may receive up to \$4,500 per academic year; up to a total of \$18,000. Specifically, members of the South Carolina National Guard enrolled or planning to enroll in an eligible institution may apply for a college assistance program grant. To qualify an applicant must: Be in good standing with the active South Carolina National Guard at the beginning of each academic year and remain a member in good standing with the active South Carolina National Guard throughout the entire academic year for which benefits are payable; Have valid tuition and fee expenses from an eligible institution; Maintain satisfactory academic progress the institution to remain as a student; And satisfy any additional eligibility requirements as may be promulgated. For further information, please contact the SC National Guard Education Office at <http://www.scguard.com/education> or at 866-345-8400 or 803-806-4253

- ◎ **TUITION LOAN REPAYMENT PROGRAM** Members of the SC Army and Air National Guard are eligible to receive tuition assistance under this program. Details concerning assistance are available from local unit administrative offices or by

calling the Education Officer at the Adjutant General's office 803-806-4253.

- ◎ **VA HOME LOANS** Veterans will be able to get no-down payment loans of up to \$417,000. VA-Guaranteed home loans are made by banks and mortgage companies to veterans, service members and reservists. A National Guard member has to have 6 or more years of service to be eligible. More information is available at <http://www.homeloans.va.gov>.
- ◎ **FURNITURE DISCOUNTS** The discounts are available through Palmetto Furniture Company in Society Hill, South Carolina on Highway 15 & 401. Just show your NGASC membership card to receive 45% off the retail price on any items of furniture. Palmetto Furniture carries a large line of name brand furniture.
- ◎ **COMMISSARY PRIVILEGES** According to the Defense Commissary Agency, patrons enjoy savings ranging from 25 to 30 percent on their purchases. A typical family of four regularly shopping at the commissary can save about \$2,000 per year.
- ◎ **PX PRIVILEGES** We would not enjoy this benefit today without the collaborative efforts of our predecessors.
- ◎ **ANNUAL CONFERENCE** A regular annual conference of the association is held on such date and at such place as determined

by the membership. Some of the activities occurring at the annual meeting are as follows: Friday Night: Usually a meal, beverages and entertainment are available to personnel attending the meeting. Saturday Morning: A business session is held on Saturday morning, with outstanding military and civilian speakers in attendance. Spouse's Activity/Auxiliary Meeting: Some specific activity for spouses, including a Spouse's Auxiliary Meeting scheduled while the Saturday morning business meeting is in session. Saturday Evening: A social hour, formal banquet and entertainment are usually observed on Saturday evening. The Governor and other dignitaries, together with known military and civilian guests, usually participate in the activities. Personnel designated as the Outstanding Army and Air Guardsperson for the year are recognized and honored at the banquet. Distinguished service awards are also presented to recipients at this function. Plus ... Visiting Hospitality rooms are a must!! Numerous hospitality rooms are open for all attendees. Sunday Morning: Following memorial/religious services conducted by the presiding Chaplain, the business session resumes. Report from various committees will be given, and the business session will adjourn following the election of new officers.

CCM Kevin Thomas



DeVry WORKS

EANGUS



The Enlisted Association of the National Guard of the United States (EANGUS) was formally organized in 1972 with the goal of increasing the voice of enlisted persons in the National Guard.

Beginning with twenty-three states, EANGUS now represents a constituency base of over 414,000 Soldiers and Airmen, their families, as well as thousands of retired members, all 50 states, Guam, Puerto Rico, the US Virgin Islands, and the District of Columbia, and has an association comprised of those who serve the National Guard on national tour.

Historical Legislative and Policy wins by EANGUS membership from 2000 2017 total over 300.

Examples:

- ✓ TRICARE for all reservists (TRS)
- ✓ **EANGUS testimony helped lead to pre- and post-mobilization healthcare coverage for RC Service members serving on 12304b orders.**
- ✓ **EANGUS testimony before the Senate Armed Services Committee's Personnel Subcommittee lead to a DOD-funded study by the Center of Naval Analysis regarding continuity of Reserve Component Healthcare and expansion of TRICARE Reserve Select to eligible Federal Employees**
- ✓ Championed the elimination of the Guard and Reserve retirement credit "fiscal year glitch"
- ✓ Broadened reemployment rights protection for Guard – Reserve members
- ✓ Won up to 15 days non - chargeable rest & recuperation for service members serving over 270 days in a combat zone
- ✓ Post 9/11 Veterans Education Improvement Act of 2010 - Signed into law on January 4th, this legislation expands GI Bill benefits to over 84,000 members of the National Guard. This will allow, for the first time, soldiers and airmen who have served under Title 32 full GI Bill educational benefits.
- ✓ Reserve Component Pre-Mobilization Health Care- doubles from 90 to 180 days the amount of time a Reserve Component member is eligible for TRICARE coverage prior to mobilization
- ✓ BAH II all but eliminated; moved threshold from 139 days of AD to less than 30 days for full BAH

CCM STEPHEN SHEPHERD

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retiree Corner



The past year has been a very active one for NGASC and the retirees within the Association that make up over 40% of its membership. Last year at our annual conference in Myrtle Beach, retirees were very active in business meetings, committee work and, of course, hospitality room visits. We are allotted a special place on the business hall floor where our slogan "Still Alive" reminds every one of our presence and our vitality within the NGASC.

In August, many retirees attended the NGAUS Convention in New Orleans. We were very active in the business meetings and the retiree lunch gathering. A NGAUS official commented, "South Carolina has very active retirees. I wish all of our states were as enthusiastic in sending the message of how important it is to stay involved in the work of the National Guard even after retirement. We also enjoyed a special guided tour of the National World War II Museum. The photo in this report shows several of the retirees and spouses who enjoyed this tour at the Museum. The trustees and volunteers were very gracious to our retirees and spouses as we examined through the eyes of an adopted service member the war in the Atlantic and Pacific Theaters. Put late August on your calendar for next year to attend the NGAUS Conference in the Mile High city of Denver. This meeting promises to be a very important one to active as well as retiree Guard members.

The NGASC enlisted retirees travelled to Charleston, West Virginia for the EANGUS Conference. Our members were very active and served on several committees and engaged leadership to make sure our voice was heard. Next year the conference will be in Des Moines, Iowa and we hope to have a large group of enlisted retirees attending.

One problem that several retirees have shared with us, is that after retirement your record of membership has been misplaced. If you feel that you are a Life member of NGASC but you think you have been inadvertently dropped from the membership rolls, please let us know. We can check and if an error has been made, we can get you right back on our membership list.

Over the last year, retirees throughout the state greeted us with wonderful hospitality as we attended monthly meetings. We travelled the state from the Upstate to the Midlands, and from the Pee Dee and Coast to the Low Country to meet our National Guard Retirees and let them know what was going on at NGASC. Thank you, South Carolina National Guard Retirees for your kindness and welcoming spirit. You represent the continuing family of the military when monthly drills have ended and uniforms are hung up for the last time but the flame of the spirit of service burns brightly. Those now actively serving are inspired by you.

We hope you already have signed up to attend the NGASC Annual Conference this year when it returns to the beautiful Grove Park Inn in Asheville, North Carolina. If you have not attended an annual conference in a while, this is one you do not want to miss. If you are a regular, then you know how special Grove Park is to NGASC. We are your representatives, if we can assist you in getting registered please let us know.

At Grove Park, we will have our Annual Retiree Breakfast, which is included in the registration fee, where we will all have a chance to meet old friends that shared with us the honor of wearing the uniform of our nation while serving the country and South Carolina. The breakfast will be at 7AM on Saturday morning. The actual room within the Grove Park Inn will be included in the registration packet. We hope to see you there and come ready to shout out at Roll Call that we are STILL ALIVE!!!!

The Retirees of NGASC have two representatives on the Executive Board. We attend the meetings each month and make sure that retirees are considered in all matters taken up by NGASC. If you have a matter you would like for us to bring up to the board please contact one of us immediately. We are there for you and will do all we can to assist.

COL (R) James E. Lockemy
MSG (R) Eddie Eigner
NGASC Retiree Representatives



starbase SWAMPFOX



"I am the parent of two fifth graders who attend Riverbanks School in West Columbia, SC. Both of my children attended the STARBASE week long STEM Learning Expedition this September of 2018. I consider myself to be a bit of a "technophobe" as my strengths aren't STEM based. But as the parent of four, I'm always looking for ways to engage my children in science experiments that are fun, yet still educational. We make sure to especially encourage our girls to pursue STEM related activities. The STARBASE program is invaluable to students, teachers and parents alike. The instructors are engaging and enthusiastic. That enthusiasm is contagious, and I watched as the projects consumed the children.I am so thankful that I was fortunate enough to attend as a chaperone, and even more thankful that my children got to attend. I sincerely hope that my son will have the opportunity to attend STARBASE in two years."

From time to time our STARBASE Swamp Fox staff is reminded of what we are here for and the positive impact we are having on the students in our program. This parent's comments speak for themselves. In addition to putting smiles on students faces and getting them excited about learning science, technology, engineering, and math, we are reinforcing state standards that are tested in the schools' annual evaluation process. Our mission at STARBASE Swamp Fox is to raise the interest and improve the knowledge and skills of program participants (focusing on at-risk youth) in math, science, technology, and engineering by exposing them to an exciting, dynamic, technological environment and the positive role models found at McEntire Joint National Guard Base. We continue to meet this mission year after year. Here is what one of our former visiting school teachers sent us concerning the impact we had as a result of their visit to STARBASE Swamp Fox:

" we looked at our science PASS scores today and noticed that our

Properties of Matter and Force & Motion scores have steadily increased over the past 3 years. We think STARBASE has a lot to do with that and shared those thoughts with our science District 5 representative today. She said that she has heard the same thing from another elementary school. So, THANK YOU for what y'all do at STARBASE. We are your biggest fans!"

School year 2017-2018 was a banner year for STARBASE Swamp Fox. We conducted 57 classes with representation from 8 school districts and 20 different schools as we achieved a record high of 1,384 students who completed our week-long academic program. This growth was noted by DoD STARBASE and STARBASE Swamp Fox was confirmed to be now operating as a Level II program as noted during a compliance visit by the OASD-RA representative this past April. In addition, our new Deputy Director SMSgt (ret) Lola "Sugarr" Banks successfully coordinated our first official STARBASE 2.0 Program at Southeast Middle School. This is an expansion of the basic program and is conducted during the school year as a part of Southeast's School Club Program. Additionally, another fun-filled summer camp was conducted in June for 5th and 6th grade dependents of our SC Air National Guard personnel, SC Army National Guard personnel, Active Duty members assigned to SCNG units, and SC Military Department civilian employees.

Lastly, as has been the case the past few years, DoD STARBASE funding has been added to the DoD budget by Congress on an annual basis. As you conduct NGASC/NGAUS/EANGUS business with our Congressional delegation and their staffers, please take the opportunity to thank them for their continued support of this very valuable and worthwhile program. If you would like more information on the STARBASE Swamp Fox program, check out our website at www.scstarbase.org, stop by to see us at the Joint Armed Forces Reserve Center (JAFRC, Suite A202), or give us a call at (803)647-8126.

Insurance benefits Manager

My name is Robbie Hill. I am the Benefit's Manager for our National Guard Association. One of the greatest benefits offered to Association members, members of the South Carolina National Guard, and retirees is our group term life insurance. It provides supplemental financial protection for the Soldiers, Airmen, Retirees, and their families in a time of need.

In May 2017, our association started providing a no cost \$1,000 death benefit for active guard members. This new benefit is provided at no cost to you by the National Guard Association of South Carolina. Active Guard members are covered 24/7 whether drilling or not as long as you meet one stipulation. You must complete the application, designate a beneficiary, and have your signature witnessed by one of the licensed association representatives.

The existing basic program provides financial protection in the event of death. It also provides coverage for your spouse and/or children, all at an affordable monthly cost. Basic coverage gives you five benefit options, between \$5,000 and \$50,000, and you can apply for \$5,000 without evidence of insurability. Answer three simple health questions for additional coverage. Spouse and dependent coverage is also available. Premiums are payroll deducted. You may continue this insurance at the same rate upon retiring or separating from the SCNG up until the age of 70. Soldiers and Airmen that have the Basic coverage can receive an emergency death benefit payment up to \$10,000 (as long as you have at least \$10,000 in coverage) payable within one business day of notification.

Building on the success of the Basic coverage, the National Guard Association of South Carolina now offers a new Enhanced coverage to Soldiers and Airmen who have the maximum coverage amount on the basic program. The Enhanced program provides affordable term life insurance with a level death benefit and only three age bands for contributions.

You and your spouse can purchase \$50,000 of protection for as little as \$4.00 per month if you're under 50 years of age and don't use tobacco or coverage and ages 50-59 up to \$100,000. For spouses, no medical exam under age 50 up to \$150,000. The Enhanced program is 24 hour coverage with no war or terrorism exclusions. For Soldiers and Airmen that have the Enhanced coverage, the emergency death benefit payment is up to \$15,000 payable within one business day of notification. Full coverage continues after retirement or separation as long as contributions are paid, coverage continues to age 70.

The new Enhanced coverage is available to retirees and their spouses at the same rate as active drilling guard members. The only stipulation is you must make application for this insurance, be underwritten by our underwriter, and pay the first month of premium before you reach age 60.

The Enhanced coverage comes with AFBA family survivor college scholarship. Surviving spouse and children are eligible for \$10,000 per year, per family, up to a total maximum benefit of \$40,000 toward a college degree when member dies in a combat zone as a result of combat action or acts of foreign or domestic terrorism.

Don't forget to call the National Guard Association at least one month prior to separation from the National Guard in order to arrange a premium payment method. The number you need to call is 803-254-8456.

I would like to thank each of you for serving our state and nation. If I may be of additional assistance, please feel free to contact me anytime.

Robbie Hill

Insurance Benefit's Manager, NGASC



SATURDAY

FEBRUARY 23,

2019

Spouse Auxiliary Annual Meeting/ Luncheon

We are delighted to be returning to the historic Grove Park Inn for our 2019 state conference! Please join us for a morning of fun and fellowship. We will join our military members at 10:15am to hear Jeff Struecker speak. (ballroom) Our annual meeting and appetizers/ hors d'oeuvres and a wine tasting will immediately follow.

\$30.00

10:15am Ballroom

11:00-12:00 Annual meeting and appetizers/hors d'oeuvres/wine tasting to follow

Please RSVP for this event on your conference registration form

Fun and fellowship with other military spouses/partners

Attire: Business Casual

NOT A MEMBER?

No problem! You can join the Spouse Auxiliary the day of the event!

Hope to see you there!

★ South Carolina ★
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MUSEUM**
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1 National Guard Road, Columbia | 803-299-4440 | scmilitarymuseum.com | [Facebook](#) | [Twitter](#) | [Instagram](#)

From Foxes to Tigers: The SC Air National Guard in Vietnam

During the height of the Vietnam War, the United States Air Force encountered a major dilemma. It had enough planes, but not enough capable and experienced pilots to fly them.

For a variety of political reasons, Air National Guard units were not deployable to Vietnam. Instead, they were primarily tasked with flying homeland defense missions and – more specifically – intercepting potential Soviet nuclear bombers.

While such missions were indeed important, the Air Force in Vietnam still needed the experienced pilots these Air Guard units possessed. The eventual solution was the “Palace Alert” program.

Operational from 1968 to 1970, Palace Alert called for *volunteer* and highly skilled Air National Guard pilots for frontline service in the Southeast Asia Theatre. Numerous pilots joined the program and, as a result, the Air Force was able to remedy its pilot shortage without actually activating Air Guard units.

Among these volunteers were three pilots from South Carolina’s 157th “Swamp Fox” Fighter Squadron: LTC Robert W. Merck, CPT Robert B. Dorn, Jr., and CPT John M. Johnson, Jr.

In the Fall of 1968, the three men arrived at Clark Air Base in the Philippines. After a short stint in “snake school” (pilot’s survival course), they were assigned to fly F-102 Delta Daggers with the 64th Fighter Interceptor Squadron. Rotating through Da Nang Air Base in South Vietnam, the Swamp Fox pilots flew varied combat missions including escorting B-52 Bombers into the North.

During their first tour, Merck presented Dorn and Johnson with a tiger patch that each promptly placed on their flight suits. Consisting simply of the

Chinese character for “tiger”, other similar patches suggest this symbol specially identified pilots of the Palace Alert program.

For these men, the tiger must have seemed appropriate. Southeast Asia was both beautiful and deadly – just like the big cat that regularly prowled its jungles. In this regard, the South Carolina pilots were far from alone. Many U.S. air and ground units officially and unofficially adopted the tiger, in one form or another, as a unifying and symbolic emblem.

Merck’s patch, however, was distinctive enough that years later Dorn proudly said he “never saw any worn by others elsewhere”. The Swamp Foxes had officially become Tigers, and the men proudly wore their new patches for the remainder of their deployment.

After completing their time with Palace Alert, the three pilots returned stateside and back to South Carolina. Since the tiger patch was now unauthorized, Merck decided to commemorate their Vietnam experience in another fashion. A crop duster by trade, Merck constructed a large wooden sign with the same Chinese character that adorned the pilots’ original tiger patch.

This sign was bolted to Merck’s hangar shortly after he returned from Vietnam and remained there until well after his death. Today, the tiger sign is on display at the South Carolina Military Museum along with the actual tiger patch CPT Dorn wore while a member of Palace Alert. Both items are a testament to three brave and courageous pilots who voluntarily answered their country’s call and served honorably in Vietnam.

© South Carolina Military Museum, 2014
Source: The Columbia Star

2018 REVIEW





NGASC

National Guard Association of South Carolina



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The National Guard Association of the United States



EANGUS

Enlisted Association of the National Guard
of the United States

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