



NGA of AZ NEWS

VOLUME 3, ISSUE 3

DECEMBER 2008



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NATIONAL GUARD ASSOCIATION OF ARIZONA

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Take the New Year CHALLENGE!

Fellow Officers,

As of Nov 30, 2008 our NGA of AZ membership totals at 31.7% of eligible members. Of that total, the ARNG has 24% and ANG has 46.4% membership. Unfortunately, we have been fighting a total membership downward trend over the past four years: 2004 at 50.5%, 2005 at 45%, 2006 at 45.6% and 2007 at 37.9%.

I am sad to say that we appear to be losing the battle; but, we do not have to lose the war! **You** can make a difference and **take the challenge** to bring in just two new members in 2009. If every current member did this, we could be back on track. Our membership base, as you know, is the best means to provide our Soldiers and Airmen with a truly effective voice in Washington.

Remember, all membership dues are to be paid by 1 January 2009. The membership period is actually from 1 January to 31 December each year. We must continue to educate all Arizona National Guard Officers about the importance of our Association so that each Officer has the understanding of how valuable their membership is to this organization. Also, we must increase our Junior Officer and retired membership and involvement within the Association. As an Officer and a professional you should be very concerned about the issues and initiatives that confront the National Guard.

Please contact me any time to discuss any membership issues. Thanks for your support.

The Board wishes you all a Happy Holiday & Peace, Health & Prosperity in 2009!

Robert E. Moscarello, LTC
Membership Chairman
Work Phone (602) 267-2581
azminuteman@cox.net

New Year's Eve Opportunities



The NGA of AZ will have another opportunity to volunteer to raise funds for our organization at the December 31, 2008 New Year's Eve Tempe

Fiesta-Bowl Block Party. Once again our members will brave the chilly night by working the Johnsonville Big Taste Grill— the granddaddy of all barbecue grills!

So far we have had several volunteers, but we won't turn you away if you want to come on down. Donna Woslager is our event coordinator and she can be reached by emailing her at donna.woslager@aztucs.ang.af.mil.

Mark Your Calendar

2009

Jan 8 ~ NGA AZ Board Meeting

Feb 12 ~ NGA AZ Board Meeting

Mar 12 ~ NGA AZ Board Meeting

Apr 9 ~ NGA AZ Board Meeting

May 7 ~ NGA AZ Board Meeting

May 29-30 ~ State Conference,
Westin La Paloma, Tucson, AZ

* The Board normally meets on
the 2nd Thursday of each month

LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

Legislative Action Center



The NGAUS legislative staff is a team of highly qualified analysts and lobbyists that interact on a daily basis with Congress to promote the issues that will ensure the relevance and readiness of the National Guard. However, they need our help!

Members of Congress respond to the concerns and needs of their constituents. Together with the NGAUS legislative staff, we urge you to visit the Legislative Action Center located at <http://www.ngaus.org/index.asp> and use the tools found there to let your voice be heard loud and clear. This web link can serve as your direct link to the issues and means to help you connect with your legislators on Capitol Hill.

Write to Congress

The Write to Congress feature is the best tool for contacting your elected officials via email. Just enter your zip code in the space provided on the site, and you will immediately be connected to a page that lists your representatives. Then, select the desired option, create your own message or use one of the preformatted letters that can also be edited to your own liking, fill in the "Sender Information" (required so the legislator knows you are a constituent), and select "Send Message." It's as simple as that!

Your voice does make a difference, so contact your representatives often and encourage your friends and family to do the same.

Current Legislative Alerts

One of the first lessons you learn in Washington is the importance of good "timing". When the time is right, "Legislative Alerts" are posted on the NGAUS web site with all of the information you need to make an input using the Write to Congress feature. Visit the NGAUS web site often and take action. Current Legislative Alerts include:

- Restoring Full Funding for JCA Procurement #08-14 (September 18, 2008)
- TRICARE for Gray Area Retirees #08-13 (September 16, 2008)
- National Guard Empowerment Act of 2008 #08-12 (September 12, 2008)
- Retirement credit for Reserve Component members under Sec. 647 of the FY08 NDAA Retroactive to September 11, 2008 #08-11 (September 12, 2008)

Source: NGAUS.org

Shout Out to all GANG Members



The Graduates of the AZ National Guard— or GANG— are a group of retired Arizona National Guard Officers who remain committed to the well being and future of the Soldiers/Airmen of the AZ National Guard through continued participation in the National Guard Association. GANG members participate in State and National Association activities and are encouraged, like all officers, to become lifetime members of the NGA of AZ.

If you are approaching retirement, or know of an eligible AZNG retiree, please join our GANG! Our NGA of AZ needs YOU! For more information on the GANG contact MAJ(R) Clayton Marlowe at ckmarlowe@cox.net or COL (R) Jeanne J. Blaes at blaesjj@uswest.net.

WANTED

MEMBERS FOR THE NGA AZ LEGISLATIVE BN
Volunteer to support our National Guard bills!

Add your name to a list of people that we can contact via email who would volunteer their time to make an appearance at upcoming bill committee hearings to represent the National Guard. Other participation can include putting in a call, email or fax to your senators and representatives about your legislative priorities. To join the BN or for more information please call Mike Krouse @ (602) 275-8305 or email NGAofAZ@aol.com.

131st NGAUS General Conference Nashville, TN ~ September 11-13, 2009



The 131st NGAUS General Conference will be hosted by the Tennessee National Guard in Nashville from September 11-13, 2009. Participant guestrooms and business sessions will be held at the Gaylord Opryland Resort and Convention Center. The resort boasts nine acres of indoor gardens, cascading waterfalls and an indoor river with its own Delta flatboat. Within this lush landscape, guests will have access to a variety of restaurants, shops, and a spa and fitness center. For more information about the location of the event, visit their Web site at <http://www.gaylordhotels.com/gaylord-opryland/>

Monthly Premiums Decrease for **TRICARE Reserve Select**



No. 08-114, FALLS CHURCH, Va., November 19, 2008

Effective Jan. 1, 2009, TRICARE will reduce the rates for TRICARE Reserve Select (TRS). Monthly premiums for TRS individual coverage will drop 44% from \$81.00 to \$47.51, and TRS family coverage will drop 29% from \$253.00 to \$180.17.

The 2009 National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA), section 704, required TRICARE to analyze Reserve Select costs from 2006 and 2007, and set new rates for 2009. "Now that TRS has been in place for several years, we were able to calculate premiums for 2009 from actual cost data obtained in earlier years," said Army Maj. Gen. Elder Granger, deputy director of TRICARE Management Activity. "It is important to provide high quality and affordable healthcare coverage for our National Guard and Reserve families."

Established in 2005, TRS is a premium-based health plan for National Guard and Reserve personnel available for purchase by members of the Selected Reserve who are not eligible for or enrolled in Federal Employee Health Benefit plans.

TRS provides a health plan option to members of the Selected Reserve and their families when they are not on active duty status. The TRS plan delivers coverage similar to TRICARE Standard and Extra to eligible members who purchase the coverage and pay monthly premiums. TRS also features continuously open enrollment.

"It's an excellent health care option we are proud to offer," Granger said.

For more information about TRS visit the TRICARE Web site at <http://www.tricare.mil>.

About TRICARE Management Activity and the Military Health System

TRICARE Management Activity, the Defense Department activity that administers the health care plan for the uniformed services, retirees and their families, serves more than 9.2 million eligible beneficiaries worldwide in the Military Health System (MHS). The mission of the MHS is to enhance Department of Defense and national security by providing health support for the full range of military operations. The MHS provides quality medical care through a network of providers, military treatment facilities, medical clinics and dental clinics worldwide. For more about the MHS go to www.health.mil.

Reduced Age for Receipt of Retirement Pay

Among the top priorities for NGAUS is the reduction in age for its members to receive retirement pay. Current law states that a retired Reserve Component member will begin to draw military retirement pay upon reaching 60 years of age. A National Guard member who joins the Guard at age 18 and retires after 30 years of service must wait twelve years before drawing a military pension. In contrast, an active component member who joins at the same time and serves the same number of years receives a pension immediately upon retirement. NGAUS believes that a more equitable Reserve Retirement Program would greatly aid recruiting and retention in the National Guard.

Legislative Efforts. Although NGAUS has taken a broad-based approach to this issue and not recommended a specific method for reducing the age to receive retirement pay, it believes that the new law should apply to all members of the Reserve Component and be an incentive to serve beyond 20 years. Source: [NGAUS.org](http://www.ngaus.org)

130th NGAUS General Conference ~ Baltimore, Maryland



The 130th NGAUS General Conference was held in Baltimore, Maryland, September 20-22, 2008. Our Arizona delegates stayed at the lovely Hyatt Regency Baltimore, located directly on the Baltimore Inner Harbor. The Convention Center was a mere short walk from the hotel, as was the National Aquarium of Baltimore, science center, Baltimore Hard Rock Café, and Oriole Park at Camden Yards.

Pre-conference activities included the NGAUS Golf Tournament on Sep 19th, and the official Ribbon Cutting Ceremony. Later that evening, the TAG Reception and Dinner was held at the Baltimore and Ohio (B&O) Railroad Museum, and the Company Grade/Warrant Officer Mixer was held aboard the *Bay Lady* cruise ship. The next three days of the conference were filled with informative meetings and presentations. Of particular note was that our own Senator James Waring of AZ was awarded the "Charles Dick Medal of Merit" and Mr. William Valenzuela, AZ Employer Support to the Guard and Reserve (ESGR) Ambassador, received the "Patrick Henry" award during the business session.

As always, NGAUS invited key lawmakers and defense leaders to speak. Since this was a presidential election this year, attendees were treated to a speech by Presidential candidate, Senator John McCain and Vice-President candidate (now elect) Joseph Biden. The Governor's Reception was held on Sep 20 and was a wonderful mix of history and fun. It was set at the Fort McHenry National Monument and Historic Shrine. Festivities included a re-enactment of the Battle of Baltimore and fireworks. The Spouse's Luncheon was held the next day in the convention center. Later that evening was the Hospitality Night held in several state hotel suites and all around town. The NGA of AZ joined with HI and WI to host a Hospitality Room on Sep 21st, held from 6-9 p.m. at McCormick & Schmicks Seafood Restaurant on Pier 5. We all had a GREAT time ... and the beer and local/state appetizers hit the SPOT! The annual States Dinner concluded the conference on Sep 22, in the evening.

A special thanks goes out to all of our 2008 Hospitality Suite Sponsors: AM General, BAE Systems, Bentley, General Atomics Aeronautical Systems, GoreTex, Northrop Grumman, Oshkosh, Robertson Aviation, and TriWest!

*Oh, say can you see,
By the dawn's early light,
What so proudly we hailed
At the twilight's last gleaming,
Whose broad stripes and bright stars,
Through the perilous fight,
O'er the ramparts we watched
Were so gallantly streaming?
And the rockets' red glare,
The bombs bursting in air,
Gave proof through the night
That our flag was still there.
O, say, does that
Star-Spangled Banner yet wave
O'er the land of the free
And the home of the brave?*



HISTORY The Governor's Reception was held at Fort McHenry, where the defense of Baltimore inspired a poem that evolved into the national anthem.

130th NGAUS General Conference ~ Photos



Senator James Waring of AZ is awarded the "Charles Dick Medal of Merit"



Mr. William Valenzuela, AZ ESGR Ambassador, receives the "Patrick Henry" award



Senator Biden addresses the forum



The Hard Rock Cafe



Senator McCain is greeted with applause



Baltimore's Aquarium & Maritime Museum



Roger Soden & John & Roxanne Vitt wander Baltimore's Inner Harbor



Zoe Salome, Patrick McDonnell & Aimee Storm enjoy the Governor's Reception



U.S.S. Constellation ~ the jewel of Baltimore's Inner Harbor



CW5 Vitt & COL (Ret) Blaes ready the Roll-Call loot

130th NGAUS General Conference ~ States Dinner Photos



MAJOR GENERAL DAVID P. RATA CZAK RETIRES



Photo by Sgt. Ed Balaban, AZNG Public Affairs

After serving 43 years in the U. S. Army and 9 1/2 years as the Director, Arizona Department of Emergency and Military Affairs and The Adjutant General of Arizona, Major General David P. Rataczak will retire on December 16, 2008.

MG Rataczak's military education includes the U. S. Army Aviation School where he received instruction in various fixed and rotary wing aircraft; the Transportation Officer Basic Course, 1972; the Infantry Officer Advanced Course, 1979; the U.S. Army Command and General Staff College, 1986; and the U.S. Army War College, 1995, where he served as class president. He enlisted in the U. S. Army in 1965. After completing Aviation training, he was assigned to the 334th Armed Helicopter Company, First Aviation Brigade in Vietnam where he flew over 1,000 combat hours.

Upon his release from Active Duty in 1968, MG Rataczak was appointed as an officer in the Minnesota Army National Guard where he served as Aviation Safety Officer, Platoon Commander, and Company Commander. In 1982, he was transferred to the Arizona Army National Guard (AZARNG) where he served as Aviation Operations Officer, Army Airfield Commander, State Aviation Officer, and Commander, 385th Aviation Group and Chief of Staff, AZARNG. In 1996, he was appointed as the Assistant Adjutant General, Army. On June 1, 1999, MG Rataczak assumed the position of The Adjutant General of Arizona.

To celebrate MG Rataczak's long and distinguished career, the NGA of AZ hosted MG Rataczak's Retirement Dinner on Dec 6, 2008. In the picture above, MG Rataczak is presented with a flag that was flown over the 161ARW by Governor Janet Napolitano. More than 400 people attended the gala event that was held at the Scottsdale Resort and Conference Center.

In a Dec 10 letter to Family and Friends, MG Rataczak wrote that "All who have been given the responsibility of leadership, management, or just being in charge have only risen to the challenge because of the support of people." MG Rataczak attributed his success to the support of his family and people who share a common goal with him *to make the world a better place*. "People make an organization what it is, not machine or tools". In the close of his letter, MG Rataczak thanked everyone for all they had done for his career and him personally. Although he envisioned his role to simply be our Cheerleader, he should know~ he was much more. On behalf of all of the Soldiers and Airmen, the NGA of AZ thanks **you~ MG Rataczak ~ for your 43 years of selfless service to our state and nation!**

Avondale's Salazar to be First Hispanic to Hold State's Top Military Post

The following is an excerpt of an article written by **Scott Wong** - November 22, 2008

Source: **The Arizona Republic**



Governor Janet Napolitano has tapped Bridger General Hugo E. Salazar as the next adjutant general of the Arizona National Guard, making the Avondale resident the first Hispanic to hold the state's top military post. Salazar replaces Major General David Rataczak, who faces mandatory retirement when he turns 64 next month. Since January 2007, Salazar has served as assistant adjutant general for the Army National Guard, overseeing more than 5,600 soldiers.

After 17 years of service in the Army National Guard, Salazar will become adjutant general on December 16, 2008. He will serve out the remaining portion of MG Rataczak's five-year term, which ends in 2012.

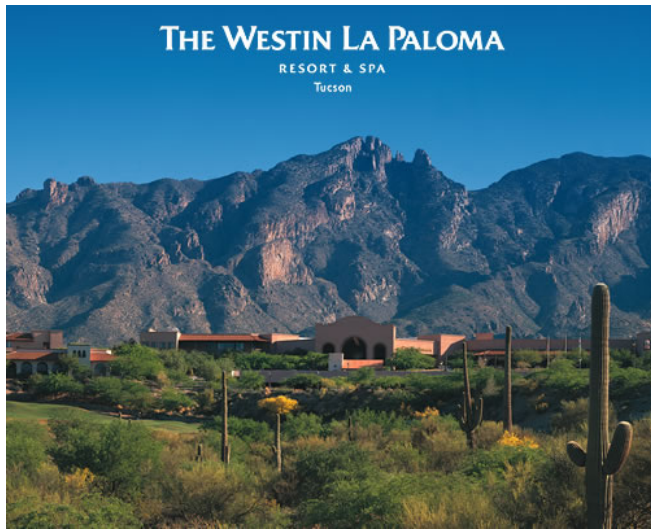
Legislation was introduced this year that would have extend the state's retirement age for adjutant generals to 66, keeping it in line with federal law. That would have allowed Rataczak to stay in his post through 2010. The bill easily passed the House but stalled in the Senate.

Napolitano called Rataczak a "truly exceptional adjutant general."

"Even as we welcome a great new leader in General Salazar," she said in a statement, "it's important that we honor General Rataczak for his service to the Arizona National Guard during a transformative time."

Salazar becomes the 40th adjutant general in the Arizona National Guard's 143-year history.

**NGA of AZ 2009 State Conference
29-30 May 2009**



60th Annual State Conference

The 2009 National Guard of Arizona Annual Conference will be held at the Westin La Paloma Resort and Spa, located North of Tucson in the lush high Sonora Desert.

Nestled in the foothills of the Santa Catalina Mountains, the Westin La Paloma is widely known as a premier destination resort. It offers luxurious guest rooms, a myriad of recreational activities and the superb service expected at a winning resort.

Due to the holidays and weekends that fall in May 2009, the Westin La Paloma became available to service our conference on the last weekend of that month. Our conference will be held 29-30 May 2009 and the ANG has graciously agreed to host the Golf tournament on Friday at a course to be announced at a later date.

You are invited to virtually tour the Westin La Paloma Resort at their Web site:

<http://www.westinlapalomaresort.com/>

NGAAZ & NGAUS 2009 Membership Application
STATE AND NATIONAL DUES BY GRADE 1 JAN — 31 DEC

| <u>PAY GRADE</u> | <u>STATE</u> | <u>NGAUS</u> | <u>TOTAL</u> | <u>PAY GRADE</u> | <u>STATE</u> | <u>NGAUS</u> | <u>TOTAL</u> |
|------------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|------------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|
| O-1 | \$20 | \$30 | \$50 | WO1 | \$20 | \$26 | \$46 |
| O-2 | \$20 | \$45 | \$65 | CW2 | \$20 | \$35 | \$55 |
| O-3 | \$29 | \$59 | \$88 | CW3 | \$20 | \$46 | \$66 |
| O-4 | \$31 | \$72 | \$103 | CW4 | \$30 | \$59 | \$89 |
| O-5 | \$35 | \$85 | \$120 | CW5 | \$35 | \$73 | \$108 |
| O-6 | \$37 | \$108 | \$145 | Retired Life | \$50 | \$125 | \$175 |
| O-7 | \$40 | \$123 | \$163 | Active Life | NA | \$1000 | \$1000 |
| O-8 | \$40 | \$139 | \$179 | | | | |
| O-9 | \$50 | \$153 | \$203 | | | | |

Mail, fax or email payment information to:

National Guard Association of Arizona
5640 E. McDowell Rd Fax: 602-275-9254
Phoenix, AZ 85008 NGAofAZ@aol.com

Rank / Name _____ Unit _____

Address _____

City, State, Zip _____

Email _____

Home Phone _____

Work Phone _____

New Officer: Date of Commission _____

New to the Guard: Date joined _____

Check # _____ Amount _____ Date _____

Credit Card Number _____

Amount _____ Exp. Date _____

Signature _____



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Your Voice in Arizona

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Please come and check out our Guard Store,
located East of 52nd Street,
next to the Distance Learning Center.

We carry a large selection of military
clothing, collectibles and equipment.



2008-09 NGA AZ Board of Directors

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Member-1 BN 158 INF – MAJ Bradley Branderhorst

Member-852 RAOC – LTC John Hoefort

Member-850 MP BN – LTC Robert White

Member-98 TC AVN – LTC Tom George

Member-98 TC AVN – CPT Mike McCasland

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