



NGAAZ NEWS

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2007

MG Rataczak Accepts Another Term as TAG

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MG Rataczak had planned on enjoying the retired life by now; planned on handing the responsibilities of The Adjutant General of Arizona on to a successor and watching the successes of the AZ Guard from outside the organization. Governor Napolitano had a different plan in mind. Amidst the current deployments and rapid growth of the Guard, she wanted the Arizona Guard to remain under his leadership. Therefore, on December 9th it was announced that MG Rataczak would stay on as TAG for another four years.

The military and leadership experience that MG Rataczak brings to his position as the Adjutant General is vast. He led his first group of Soldiers in basic training as a recruit squad leader and later became a member of the Candidate Battalion Staff during flight school. Shortly after that, during his service in Vietnam as a WO1 pilot, he was a team leader responsible for 2-3 attack helicopters, providing close air support to troops on the ground. MG Rataczak values that experience, "I was privileged to have that responsibility at that early age. Following that, I was responsible for training new helicopter pilots before they went to Vietnam. You take that very seriously."



"When you stand in front of a formation of young Soldiers who look to you for their safety and mission accomplishment, it doesn't make any difference what level you are at, it is serious business."

After Active duty he continued to lead Soldiers at platoon and company levels in Minnesota then on to Arizona Guard positions as State Aviation Officer, Brigade commander, Chief of Staff and ATAG. With these various positions in his biography, he can't say that one was more important than the other, "When you stand in front of a formation of young Soldiers who look to you for their safety and mission accomplishment, it doesn't make any difference what level you are at, it is serious business."

MG Rataczak was appointed into his current position as TAG of Arizona in June of 1999 and has led the AZ NG through many changes and events. He listed the most significant events as Desert Storm/Desert Shield, September 11th, 2001, and the current Global War on Terrorism (GWOT). MG Rataczak was the ARNG Chief of Staff during the Gulf War when Arizona mobilized over 1200 Airmen and Soldiers, "That was significant, but it happened fast and was over fast. We sent our first units in August of 1990, and had all of our units back by the summer of 1991." The current conflict brought new challenges. "This GWOT clearly is very different and has taken extraordinary measures to mobilize fully trained and equipped units. The dedication and total commitment of all Arizona Guard personnel has made this possible."

The goals that MG Rataczak carries into his next term as TAG remain the same as they were when he started, adjusted of course by the war. "Recruiting and training Soldiers and Airmen is the first priority. Secondly, I want to build more quality facilities for our personnel." The latter goal has been a slow process because of the strong support needed from many agencies along with

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LEGISLATIVE UPDATE



There are several bills that the National Guard Association of Arizona is supporting this year that have already made it through several legislative hurdles. To follow the progress of these bills as well as the other legislation that affects you as an Arizona resident visit www.azleg.state.az.us and click on "Bills."

SB 1007—Vehicle license Tax: Military Exemption

Details: an Arizona resident who is a member of the United States armed forces, including a member of a national guard or reserve unit, who is deployed in support of a worldwide contingency operation of the United States armed forces may register or renew the registration of a motor vehicle for one year without payment of registration fees and the vehicle license tax if the applicant presents evidence satisfactory to the department that the applicant meets the requirements of this section

Status: Passed the Senate Finance, Transportation and Rules Committees with no opposition and has been forwarded to the House.

SB 1011—SGLI Life Insurance Reimbursement for National Guard Members

Details: Monies in the fund shall be used, as determined by the adjutant general, to reimburse members of the national guard for premiums paid for benefits under the service members' life insurance program pursuant to 38 united states code sections 1965 through 1980.

Status: Passed the Senate Financial Institutions, Insurance and Retirement (FIIR) committee, waiting for a vote in Appropriations and Rules.

SB 1012—Office Uniform Allowance

Details: A newly commissioned or warranted officer in the national guard shall receive an allowance of two hundred fifty dollars for uniforms and related equipment on the date that the officer receives the commission or warrant. An officer on record as of January 1 of each year shall receive an additional two hundred fifty dollars on April 1 of that year for uniforms and related equipment.

Status: Passed the Senate Government and Appropriations committees, waiting for a vote in Rules.

SB 1025—Income Tax Exemptions for Military Pensions

Details: Exemption for benefits, annuities, and pensions in an amount totaling not more than two thousand five hundred dollars for the United States government service retirement and disability fund, the United States foreign service retirement and disability system and any other retirement system or plan established by federal law (other plans also included).

Status: Passed the Senate Finance Committee, waiting for votes from Appropriations and Rules.

A Moment in Guard History ~ January 29th, 1945



Near Luzon, Philippines, OPERATION M-7 began, which was a plan to open a second front in support of the main American effort of securing the island from the Japanese. To accomplish this goal the 38th Infantry Division (made up of units from Indiana, Kentucky and West Virginia) landed north of the Bataan Peninsula (site of the infamous "death march") to cut off enemy reinforcements and supplies from reaching the area around Clark Airfield and Fort Stotsenburg. With heavy fighting at Zig Zag Pass and other areas of the peninsula, Bataan and later Corregidor Island were secured from the Japanese by February 21st, opening Subic Bay to U.S. Navy ships. For their determined offensive actions General Douglas MacArthur, overall commander of this invasion, bestowed the title "Avengers of Bataan" on the 38th Division.

Source: National Guard Bureau Historical Services

Mark Your Calendar

March 15, 07 ~ NGAAZ Board Meeting

April 19, 07 ~ NGAAZ Board Meeting

May 18 & 19, 07 ~ NGAAZ State Conference

May 19 ~ NGAAZ Board Meeting

*following the business session

August 25-27, 07 ~ NGAUS National Conference

MG Rataczak continued...

federal and state support in order to make it happen, but he stays committed to it and is certain that progress will be made. "I also want to continue to educate our families, the public, and our employers about how important their support is for our Soldiers. We can't be successful without that support. We have enjoyed good participation, and we will do what is necessary to continue that support."

Besides his goals for the state, MG Rataczak has high goals set for his officers of the Arizona Air and Army National Guard. "I think it is important that every Officer realize how important it is to mentor subordinates, train their replacements, do what is necessary to produce the best Soldiers possible, and be an example for the Officer Corps. If we do nothing else, providing the right training atmosphere and planning and executing tough training is the best thing we can do for our enlisted personnel. Young kids today have a real sense of patriotism, a sense of something bigger than themselves and a desire to help other nations experience the freedoms that we enjoy and they deserve our very best effort. And by the way, I see that determination and responsibility in our Officer Corps."

And so the retirement party plans have gone back in the filing cabinet while MG Rataczak continues his quest to support the soldiers, families, and communities of the Arizona National Guard.

NGAAZ State Conference

The 58th Annual National Guard Association and Enlisted Association Conference and Golf Tournament will be held at the Carefree Resort and Villas May 18 & 19th, 2007. Like years past, the festivities will include the highly competitive Friday golf tournament followed by the opening reception and western dinner. The business meeting and formal reception will be held on Saturday. More details as well as the registration information will be posted soon on our website www.ngaaz.org. Remember, the business session is free and encouraged for all company grade officers and E1—E6.



LEGISLATIVE ALERT #07-01—February 21, 2007

The Issue: A DOD PROPOSAL TO INCREASE TRICARE ENROLLMENT FEES, DEDUCTIBLES AND PHARMACEUTICAL CO-PAY FOR ALL MEMBERS OF THE NATIONAL GUARD

During the FY07 defense budget process, the Department of Defense (DOD) proposed to triple TRICARE Prime and TRICARE Standard fees for military retirees under the age of 65. It would also have increased retail pharmacy fees for all TRICARE beneficiaries by almost 70%. NGAUS and other veterans associations pushed Congress to prohibit any increases in TRICARE enrollment premiums under TRICARE Prime and TRICARE Reserve Select, and prohibited any increase in co-payments for pharmaceuticals dispensed through the TRICARE retail pharmacy program in FY2007.

DoD has proposed to increase TRICARE fees even more for FY2008. Although the Pentagon hasn't published any "specific" plan for fee increases (claiming they are waiting on the results of the DoD-appointed Task Force on the Future of Military Health Care) the Defense Budget submitted to Congress in early February assumes a \$1.8 billion savings from TRICARE fee increases.

NGAUS strongly opposes these TRICARE fee increases and feels that are an attempt to free-up funds for other by taking benefits of retired members and families who have earned this health care benefit with their service and sacrifice.

"The Military Health Care Protection Act," legislation (S.604) introduced by Senator's Frank Lautenberg (D-NJ) and Chuck Hagel (R-NB), has been sent forward to protect the interest of the Guard Members. It would place reasonable and affordable caps on enrollment fees, deductibles, and pharmacy co-pays for military retirees. This legislation would also establish that the percentage increase in retiree's health care fees in any given year should not exceed the percentage of increase in their compensation.

Similar legislation (H.R.579) has been introduced in the House by Representative's Chet Edwards (D-TX) and Walter Jones (R-NC) that would not only stop any fee increases, but also remove the authority from DOD, shifting that responsibility to Congress.

TO TAKE ACTION:

Use the "Write to Congress" feature on the NGAUS Web site at www.ngaus.org. You can IMMEDIATELY e-mail your elected representatives. A sample letter is included in our "Write to Congress" feature. You can e-mail the pre-written message or edit the sample letter as you desire. This is the quickest and most effective method of expressing your views to Congress. Also, contact your friends and family and urge them to "Write to Congress" as well. For more in-depth information and background visit www.ngaus.org. Please direct any questions concerning this issue to Pete Duffy, NGAUS Deputy Legislative Director at 202-454-5307 or via email: pete.duffy@ngaus.org.

Source: ngaus.org

Pay Your Dues Online!!

@ www.ngaaz.org

The NGAZ is in the process of setting up a new website and the dues page is the first page launched for your registration convenience. There will be many updates to the main site over the next few weeks so we encourage you to visit, explore and learn more about our organization. If there is information that you would like to see added to the site please send comments to ngaofaz@aol.com

NGAUS NATIONAL CONFERENCE

SAN JUAN, PUERTO RICO
AUGUST 25-27, 2007



NGAUS.ORG

NGAAZ & NGAUS 2007 Membership Application STATE AND NATIONAL DUES BY GRADE 1 JAN 06—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 or fax payment information to:

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



Support the Guard Store!

Come in and check out the new products and latest ACU accessories at the new store location on the corner of 52nd Street and McDowell.



**Army
Membership
Percentage
23.3%**

**Air
Membership
Percentage
37.7%**

2006 NGA AZ Board of Directors

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