

# 117th NGAMN State Conference Duluth, Minnesota



NGAMN State Conference President's Reception.  
(Photo courtesy of Lt. Col. Jay Hackett).



Summer 2022

## VIKANG NEWS

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### Welcome



President  
Col. Mike Piontek  
(former Vice President - Air)



Lt. Col. Babette Van Hees  
(Vice President - Air)



Lt. Col. Jason Hull  
(Vice President -  
Legislative Affairs)



# President's Report

Col. Mike Piontek

I'll open with saying thank you.

First of all, thanks to now Past-President Jay Hackett. Jay took on the role of NGAMN President during a tumultuous time. Many of our meetings and functions had to be done remotely. It was a difficult task to maintain that human connection which is the foundation of every organization. As the President he set priorities for the association to make us stronger. Thank you Jay.

Next I'd like to thank everyone who worked to plan and execute our 2022 NGAMN State Conference in April. Thanks to the NGAMN board and special thanks to Col. Lyle Shidla and Team 148th Fighter Wing. We hadn't come together for a live conference since 2019. I thought it was a great to be together face to face to do some work and be able to reconnect. I didn't have a full appreciation of the effort to bring an event like that together. Lyle and everyone on the 148th team did a fantastic job to coordinate and execute the conference.



NGAMN State Conference Guest/Spouse Social Brunch. (Minnesota National Guard Photo by Master Sgt. Lynette Hoke)



President Jay Hackett (middle) presents a photo of two F-16 Fighting Falcons from the 148th Fighter Wing to NGAMN State Conference guest speakers Brig. Gen. Dan Gabrielli (left) and Lt. Col. Jake Helgestad (right). (Minnesota National Guard Photo by Master Sgt. Lynette Hoke).

Lastly, I'll thank everyone who attended the conference.

Being together live makes a difference. For 2023 the NGAMN team will be working with TAG to see how we can bring an element of professional development to the conference to broaden our attendance particularly with our younger officers.

So, how do we move forward? Membership and corporate partnerships have been priorities for the last year and will continue to be. I looked back a short period and found our membership had fallen from a high of 68% in 2019 to 23% in 2021 and rose to 38% as of the 2022 conference. Compared to other states, we have a way to go. I ask our leadership to engage with their units as advocates for NGAMN & NGAUS and tell the story of how these organizations work to benefit the National Guard in providing benefits for us personally that ultimately lead to greater readiness as well as lobbying for the equipment we need to execute our missions.

Lifetime membership cost is significantly lower today than what it was even two years ago. I will work with the board to show our non-members what their investment looks like from a financial perspective. It's easy to talk about benefits & equipment, but more effective to show a return on investment. I'm open to suggestions.

**I look forward to another great year.**

**MEMBERSHIP MATTERS! OUR VOICE MATTERS!**



## Vice President - AIR

Lt. Col. Babette Van Hees

Hello to all NGAMN members and followers, I am Babette Van Hees the new Vice President - Air for NGAMN. My career in the U.S. Air Force has spanned across active duty, the Air National Guard, and the Air Force Reserve. I transferred from the Wyoming Air National Guard to the Minnesota Air National Guard where I have spent the last 21 years. I have had the good fortune of working in various full-time positions at the 148th Fighter Wing that include my commissioning opportunity as the budget officer; I have also held positions in the Maintenance Group (MOF and MXS) as well as the Logistics Readiness Squadron.

Historically my NGAMN/NGAUS membership has been haphazard at best, however, I recently took advantage of the opportunity to obtain a Lifetime Membership. Prior to the state conference I was asked by Lyle Shidla to consider taking on the Vice President-Air position. The Minnesota National Guard has given me a wealth of opportunity, and after brief consideration of Lyle's request, I decided it would be a good way to "give back." I am looking forward to working with the NGAMN board members to advance the priorities of this important organization.

Over my twenty-one years in the Minnesota Air National Guard I have heard a lot about the need for increased membership in NGAMN and NGAUS. But not until recently was I aware of how important membership is with regard to obtaining viable and relevant missions for our organizations. In a time of shrinking budgets, along with competition for state of the art equipment, it will be important to better educate fellow officers on the impact NGAMN and NGAUS lifetime memberships have on our future. If you have not considered a lifetime membership I encourage you to educate yourself on the many ways we benefit from their support.

## Executive Director

Maj. (ret.) Julie Grandaw



### Minnesota is heading to OH-IO!

More than 30 NGAMN members and their guests are heading to Columbus, Ohio (Aug. 26-29, 2022) for the NGAUS 144th General Conference where we'll meet with over 2,000 other Army and Air National Guard officers/guests from all 50 states, three territories and the District of Columbia to connect, party and get down to business setting the NGAUS upcoming legislative agenda.



**The National Guard: At the Heart of It All** theme has many of the traditional business and social events but some with a twist. This year's Friday night mixer will be held at Huntington Ball Park where folks will enjoy the rooftop and right field terraces, and during the State's Dinner we'll be wearing our sports team gear and enjoying tailgating foods. Minnesota will be there to represent!

Of course, you can't have the conference without Hospitality Night! This is your time to get out and meet other members, guests and sponsors. Minnesota, along with Wisconsin, Ohio, Michigan, Indiana, Arizona and Utah will be hosting our party at the Marriott Rooftop Deck and will be the place to be!

### Want to register for next year's conference?

**Save the Date! The 2023 NGAUS General Conference will be held in Reno, Nevada**

**August 18-21, 2023.**





## Vice President - Alumni

Brig. Gen. (Ret.) Tim Kennedy

NGAMN conducted a successful state conference in April in Duluth. There was a good turnout for the Alumni hosted dinner and two excellent presentations about the mission to help evacuate Afghan refugees at the Kabul airport and the excellent work done to receive and help with their integration at Holoman Air Base in New Mexico. Our soldiers and airmen were well led and performed exceptionally. It makes me proud to see how the Minnesota Guard continues to provide excellent service to our great nation. If you missed the conference this year, plan to attend in April of 2023 when the conference will be in the Twin Cities.

Summer is a busy time for volunteering for many Alumni Group members. During this time, many non-profits have fundraising activities ranging from golf events to shooting events to motorcycle rides. The annual fundraiser for Youth Camp, an all volunteer golf event called Tee It Up For Kids, will be held on August 10th at the Majestic Oaks Golf Club, 701 Bunker Lake Boulevard NE in Ham Lake, Minn. Put together a foursome, come out and have a good time while supporting a great cause. CW5 (Retired) Tom Maxwell and his wife, Sandra, started this tournament more than 10 years ago and have provided invaluable financial support to Youth Camp.

The Minnesota Military Family Foundation (MMFF) helps currently serving military members and their families when they are in a financial crisis. This all volunteer organization has six retired military members and one spouse of retired military on a board of 11 members. Along with golf events, the MMFF works with Shoot for the Troops to put on a Sporting Clays fundraiser. That event will occur on August 16th at Wild Wings in Hugo, Minn.

The NGAUS annual conference takes place in Columbus, Ohio on August 26th through the 29th. There is more information about how to sign up, costs, etc. in this newsletter. I always enjoy going to hear from Air and Army leaders. If you choose to go, you should also check out the National Veterans Memorial and Museum, 300 West Broad Street in Columbus.

To all Alumni Group members, thank you for your continuing support. If you know of someone who is not an Alumni member, please invite them to join or let me know and I will invite them. The cost for a lifetime membership to both state and national is only \$175. The Guard needs all the support we can provide to ensure that we stay relevant.

Contact Brig. Gen (ret.) Kennedy at [alumni@ngamn.org](mailto:alumni@ngamn.org).



## MEMBERSHIP MATTERS!

NGAMN & NGAUS Promotional Membership

# Huge Savings

to First 400 Registrants! (See page 7 for details)



# Vice President - Legislative Affairs

## Legislation Update

Lt. Col. Jason Hull

The Senate Armed Services Committee has recently been debating over whether to add \$45 Billion to the annual defense policy bill, contrary to the House Armed Service Committee which have stood by President Biden's proposed spend plan proposed on March 28, 2022. The president requested \$773 Billion in spending for the Department of Defense, for an initial increase of 5.75%. H.R. 7900 FY 2023 NDAA mark-ups are expected to start June 22, 2022.

## Some of the accomplishments of NGAUS since the 2020 NDAA

- Early retirement credit under 12304B orders, for those having deployed since 2012 under title 10, 12304B.
- Tricare Reserve Select Access Starting in 2030 for Federal Employees who served in the National Guard including dual status technicians.
- Continued UH-60 Blackhawk Modernization and Recapitalization.
- Continued C-130 Modernization and Recapitalization.
- Continued High Mobility Multipurpose Wheeled Vehicle Modernization.
- F-16 Viper Modernization.
- Army National Guard JLTV Procurement.
- Robust NGREA Funding.
- Enhanced National Guard Mental Health and Suicide Prevention.



## 2023 NGAUS Legislative Priorities

- H.R. 3512, Healthcare for our troops act, better known as zero cost Tricare for all reserve component members.
- Concurrent and Proportional Fielding of Army and Air National Guard Equipment.
- Space National Guard as Primary Combat Reserve within U.S. Space Force.
- C-130 Modernization.
- F-15 Eagle Recapitalization.
- F-16 Viper and A-10 Thunderbolt Modernization.
- HH-60 Combat Rescue Helicopter Modernization.



# NGAUS

## Your Membership Making a Difference!

[Legislative Priorities](#)

[Legislative Accomplishments](#)

[NGAUS on the Hill](#)



Members of the 1-125 Field Artillery Regiment are performing New Equipment Training (NET) fielding of the M109A7 during their May 2022 annual training at Camp Ripley Training Center, Minnesota. Minnesota is the second state to receive the M109A7s as part of the modernization efforts across the Army. (Photo by Capt. Tyler Anderson).



Capt. Tyler Anderson, NGAMN Treasurer, presents the Minute Man statue to Paul Schutta of Schutta & Zimmer for his organization's support of NGAMN. Schutta has been assisting NGAMN to maintain good non-profit veteran organization standing with the state and federal governments for two years. (Photo by Capt. Tyler Anderson).

# Treasurer

Capt. Tyler Anderson

The 1-125 Field Artillery Regiment recently fielded the Army's new M109A7 self-propelled cannons (Paladins) and M992A3 ammunition carriers (CATs). In the past, new to the Guard meant just that, and did not necessarily mean new altogether. Not today. These systems are new to the Army overall, and that is the result of the parity NGAUS has pushed for. This is just one example, and we are seeing more and more of concurrent and proportional fielding to the National Guard.

The reason I bring this up is because the #1 priority for NGAUS in relation to Army and Air National Guard equipment is parity. Your membership helps further these causes, which results in better readiness.

The Soldiers that were part of the fielding for these cannons and related systems were as excited as kids at a fair. They loved it and knew they were getting something special and modern. The issue of parity is not a one-and-done battle. It is continuous and requires a voice speaking for the National Guard as we compete for the same budget. This is where your membership and the membership of our peers is so important in helping make that voice louder and pronounced.

The Minnesota Association still has a balance in the funds set aside to continue assisting in the cost of a lifetime membership, and if you are not already a lifetime member, this is a great time to become one.

And to continue affording the cost assistance in the lifetime membership we would gladly accept any and all tax-deductible contributions from the companies you know. Any amount is helpful towards keeping the funding going.

If you have any questions, or would like to learn more about how a company you know can support our organization, please check out [www.ngamn.org/corporatemembership](http://www.ngamn.org/corporatemembership) or contact Julie, our executive director, at (218) 349-3890 / [director@ngamn.org](mailto:director@ngamn.org).



# National Guard Association of Minnesota / National Guard Association of the United States

## Membership Registrations



Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Rank: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ City | State | Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Personal Email: \_\_\_\_\_ Telephone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Select Unit:

1 ABCT    347 RSG    34 ID    133 AW    148 FW    JFHQ    34 CAB    84 TRC    ALUMNI

### NGAMN & NGAUS DIGITAL/ACTIVE LIFE MEMBERSHIP SAVINGS!

Promotional Combined Rate to the First 400 Digital/Active Life Membership Registrants!

**PROMOTIONAL RATES:**

WO1 / CW2 / O1 / O2 / O3 = **\$300**      CW3 / CW4 / O4 / O5 = **\$375**      CW5 / O6 / O7 / O8 = **\$450**

**HUGE Discount! NGAUS Life Membership is usually \$1,000**

#### ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP DUES:

Grade	O1	O2	O3	O4	O5	O6	O7	O8	WO1	CW2	CW3	CW4	CW5
NGAMN	\$20	\$20	\$20	\$35	\$35	\$35	\$45	\$45	\$20	\$20	\$20	\$35	\$35
NGAUS	\$40	\$40	\$40	\$80	\$80	\$80	\$130	\$130	\$40	\$40	\$40	\$80	\$80
Total	\$60	\$60	\$60	\$115	\$115	\$115	\$175	\$175	\$60	\$60	\$60	\$115	\$115

PLEASE NOTE – YOU CANNOT BE A MEMBER OF NGAMN WITHOUT BEING A MEMBER OF NGAUS

#### OTHER MEMBERSHIP OPTIONS:

Newly Commissioned Officers and Warrant Officers receive their membership **FREE** for the first year!

Associate Member: \$70

Alumni/Retired Officers: NGAUS Life Member \$125 – State Life Member \$50 (Note, officers who have not “retired” and have elected to renew their service obligation with the guard will revert to annual membership while they are on active status)

**MAIL PAYMENTS TO: NGAMN, 8362 Tamarack Village #119-444, St. Paul, MN 55125**

Check Payment: Make check payable to NGAMN

Credit Card Payment:

Name on Card: \_\_\_\_\_ Card Number: \_\_\_\_\_ Exp: \_\_\_\_\_ CVV: \_\_\_\_\_

*(A 3.5% surcharge will be applied to all credit card payments)*



# National Guard Association of Minnesota

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## Board Members & Staff

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- President: Col. Mike Piontek
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- Vice President (Air): Lt. Col. Babette Van Hees
- Vice President Alumni: Brig. Gen. (Ret.) Tim Kennedy
- Vice President Legislative: Lt. Col. Jason Hull
- Treasurer: Capt. Tyler Anderson
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# Thank You to our Corporate Partners!

