

The Bugle

Quarterly Newsletter of the National Guard Association of Maine

Volume 1, Issue 1, 1st Quarter 2016

Welcome from the President

Our way ahead,

Our first mission for 2017 is to increase our membership. Currently only 29% of our officers are a member of NGAUS. Hopefully the joint resolutions listed on page two will provide you with the importance of being a member of NGAUS and how you and your family directly benefit by paying your dues.

Our next goal over the coming 3-6 months is to review our Constitution and By-Laws and reestablish who we are as an organization and what we should be focused in 2017.

The following is our initial Strategy Map that should guide us as we begin to rebuild our organization.

So we need you to go to <http://ngame.us/news-article/> and register to receive our newsletter.

Lastly, our organization is founded on the following principles:

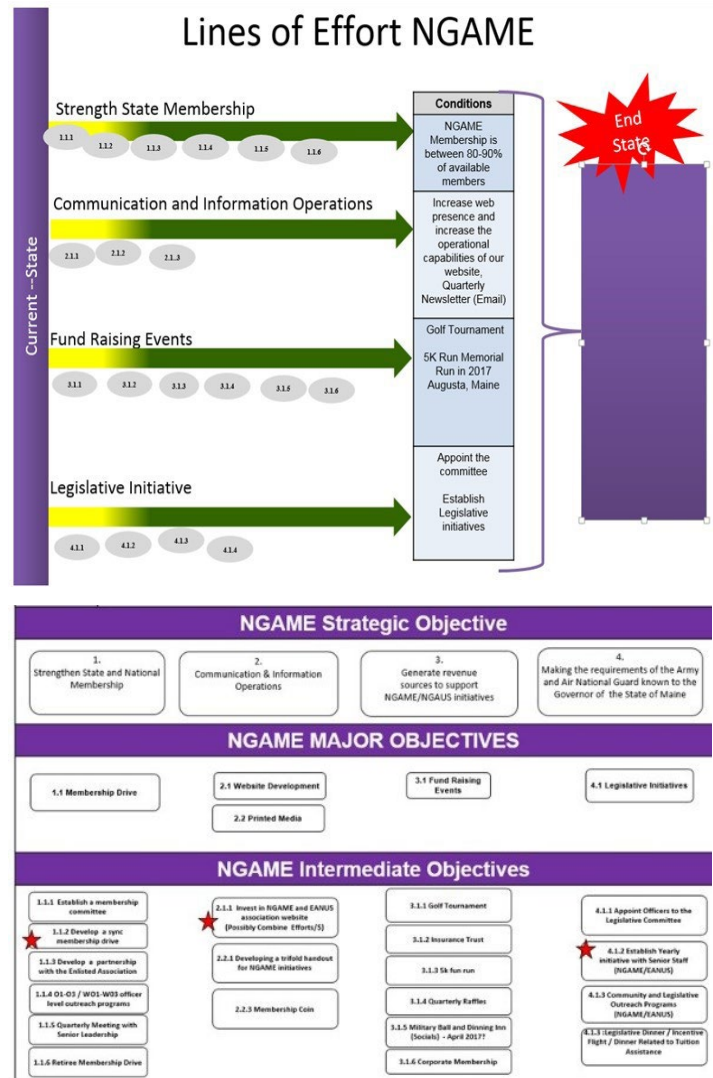
1. To promote and support adequate State and National security under the provisions of the Constitution of the United States of America.

2. To foster and improve the Army National Guard and the Air National Guard of the State of Maine, and their relations with the general public.

3. To promote close association, friendship, understanding, and cooperation between all members of this Association.

In keeping with our founding principles, I hope that 2017 will see our organization grow and thrive.

- Lieut. Col. Jeffery M. Bilodeau, President, NGAME



NGAME Doings

Golf Tournament

This year's NGAME golf tournament was another fun event for the attendees and the organizers. Plans are already in the works for next year's tournament, which will be in July at Natanis. Details will follow in further editions of this publication.



NGAUS Conference

Several key joint resolutions were passed at this year's NGAUS Annual Conference, including:

- Compensation for distance learning coursework
- Authorizing more than 30 days of Annual Training per year
- Enacting law to provide Back Pay and Date of Rank for excessive delay in vacancy promotion processing
- Provide tax credits to employers of National Guard members
- Allowing members of the National Guard who have served honorably to be "veterans" and qualify for receipts of retired pay and benefits consistent with their active duty counterparts
- Reducing the age at which a member of the reserve component is eligible to receive military retirement pay by one day from age 60 for every day the individual serves on AD (Active Duty) status, either Title 10 or 32
- Streamline reserve component duty statuses into the

three categories: Active Duty for Operational Support, Active Duty for Training, Readiness and Administrative Functions; and Inactive Duty while standardizing benefits

- Provide pre-mobilization health care, reduced age for retirement, education assistance protections, and voluntary separation recoupment protection for mobilizations and activations
- Enact laws to provide pre-mobilization TRICARE benefits and post Transitional Assistance Management Program (TAMP) benefits upon deactivation to members of the Guard mobilized under Title 10
- Relating to Survivor Benefit Plan, Enact law to allow members of the Guard and Reserve who have reached 20 years of service to pay into the Survivors Benefit plan before they reach age 60
- TSP penalty exemption dual status technicians retiring after age 50
- Enact laws to make TRICARE benefits available to members who retire from the National Guard or are honorably discharged persons before reaching age 60

For full listing of resolutions enacted and passed, visit: <http://www.ngaus.org/advocating-national-guard/ngaus-resolutions-legislative-issues-important-members>

Legislative News

The Maine Legislative Assembly passed an amendment to the Tuition Assistance Bill, providing funding for the next five years in the form of \$2.5 million from the State General Fund. \$500,000 has been allocated for each year; anything above and beyond that each year will be funded by state universities in the form of a tuition waiver.

What is NGAUS doing for you right now?

NGAUS is supporting the Veterans First Act, passed by the Senate Veterans Affairs Committee on May 16, 2016. Amongst other things, the Veterans First Act contains a provision that would authorize veteran status under Title 38 for National Guard and Reserve members of the Armed Forces who are entitled to a non-regular retirement under Chapter 1223 of 10 USC, but were never called to Title 10 active service other than for training purposes during their careers.

The bill also contains language that would provide Post 9/11 GI Bill benefits to members of the Guard and Reserve who deploy under Title 10 12304(b). Expanded use of pre-planned 12304(b) activations this year and in the future requires changes in law that provide equal benefits for the National Guard and Reserve who serve under these Title 10 tours.

National Guard History Moment

Why do we even have the National Guard Association of the United States?

We now have a National Guard that is trained, equipped, and manned on nearly the same level as our Active Duty counterparts; this was not always the case.

In the 1870's, the organized militia – forerunners of the National Guard – received no Federal support and little from the States themselves. Companies were only paid for one week of annual training; pay for individual drill periods did not even exist. Because of this, readiness in the organized militia varied greatly between organizations. The Militia Law then on the books had not been revised since 1792! It still called for each militia man to provide himself with a flintlock musket.

NGAUS was formed in 1878 by former members of the Union and Confederate armies in the Civil War. Their intent was to fight for the modernization of the militia and create a standardized National Guard. Their efforts culminated in the National Defense Act of 1903, which created the National Guard and provided a \$1 million annual budget. This was increased to \$2 million in 1908. The biggest victory came in 1916, when the War Department authorized the National Guard standardized training and equipping on par with the Regular Army, provided pay for drill periods and two weeks of annual training, and organized the National Guard into divisions.

It was this National Guard force that led the way in World War I to eventual U.S. and Allied victory in 1918. The National Guard Association of the United States played a direct role in the creation of this force and set the stage for continued lobbying on behalf of National Guard Soldiers' rights.

Calendar

NGAME, 1st Quarter Meetings

- o 12 OCT 2016, 1630 executive and subcommittee meeting, TAG Conference Room Camp Keyes
- o Membership committee meets and membership drive kicks off NOV-MAR
- o DEC 2016, submit amendment for By-Laws and Constitution changes
- o Education Scholarship kick off for AY2017

NGAME, 2nd Quarter Meetings

- o JAN 2017, Initial meeting of the resolution committee to develop a list of ME Air and Army readiness issues
- o FEB 2017, Initial delegate selection for Air/Army
- o FEB 2017, Draft FY2018 Budget and file taxes
- o TBD, Legislature Appreciation Breakfast in support of the State of the State TAG Briefing
- o 31 MAR 2017, Early Bird Membership drives end (5% rebate on membership dues between OCT-MAR)
- o MAR 2017 Education Scholarships selected for AY2017 and presented at the annual meeting
- o Annual Meeting tentatively scheduled for Friday, 31 MAR 2017 (TBD)

NGAME, 3rd Quarter Meetings

- o TBD, Legislature Appreciation Breakfast in support of the State of the State TAG briefing
- o APR-JUN final membership drive for delegates

NGAME, 4th Quarter Meetings

- o Golf Tournament
- o NGAUS level resolution submitted NLT: 30 JUN 2017
- o NGAUS Conference 7-10 SEP 2017 Louisville Kentucky.

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The Bugle is a quarterly newsletter for the National Guard Association of Maine. Content is assembled by the editor and approved by NGAME leadership.

Would you like to write for The Bugle? This newsletter accepts contributions of no more than 350 words, on topics ranging from National Guard history to legislative proposals affecting National Guard members.

Send any contributions to Editor 1st Lieut. Jonathan D. Bratten at jnbratten@gmail.com