

JULY 2022



A Message from the President

By Holli Nelson

As the new president of the National Guard Association of West Virginia, I am extremely excited about what the next year hold's for our organization. I personally want to take a moment to thank Jason Diaz for his leadership, mentorship and guidance for the NGAWV over his tenure as president. Jason implemented many strategies that place us in the right direction and has been an instrumental member of the Guard association for many years.

Since the last newsletter, the NGAWV held interviews for a new Executive Director, as Tom Mills is stepping down this year after more than five years in the position. We are grateful for everything that Tom has done during his time as Director to advance Guard initiatives, take care of all aspects of the Association, membership, NGAUS conferences and so much more. Tom is one of the best people and will continue to help us as we transition to a new Executive Director.

Beginning July 1st, Christopher "Mookie" Walker took over as the Executive Director for NGAWV. Mookie boasts an impressive resume which includes serving as the Special Assistant to the DANG for Diversity and Inclusion, Assistant Adjutant General - Air for West Virginia, and as a master navigator in the C-130. In addition to his military accomplishments, Mookie is a long-time member of NGAUS and NGAWV and a strong advocate for the mission of the organization. He is well-known and respected by colleagues throughout the Guard and will leverage his connections to advance NGAWV and NGAUS initiatives.

Your association has many great things in the work and we have hit the ground running following the changeover of executive team members. During the last meeting, we voted to establish scholarships for NGAWV members and/or their dependents, donate funds to the National Guard Foundation to help Soldiers and Airmen in need, discussed legislative accomplishments and goals for the year, and will be reviewing and updating our committees. If you are interested in serving on a committee within NGAWV, please reach out to any of the executive council members for more details.

As a final note, we are less than six weeks away from the National Conference in Columbus, Ohio. We are nearing the final planning for this year and are looking forward to a great showing of West Virginia members. We look forward to seeing you all there!

Newsletter Highlights

A Message from the
NGAWV President

2022 NGAUS Conference
in Columbus, Ohio

NGAWV Legislative
Update

Spotlight: WVNG in the
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NGAWV Executive Committee

PRESIDENT: Holli Nelson
PRESIDENT-ELECT: Steve Moore
VP: Sammi Brown
SECRETARY: Paige Hunter
TREASURER: Brad Dorsey
INSURANCE REP: Mark Houck
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR:
Christopher "Mookie" Walker

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE:
Vic Dumrongkietiman , Keith
Hammack, Rick Hunter, Dave
Cadle, Sam Fabian, Scott Bossie



NGAUS Conference Update

Your NGAWV is currently planning all the details for this year's 144th General Conference & Exhibition in Columbus, Ohio. There are a number of exciting events taking place each day of the conference.

If you plan on attending, please contact an Executive Committee member so we can begin the registration process for you. Spouses and/or significant others are encouraged to attend as well.

We will have hotels in downtown Columbus at two locations - The Drury Inn and Suites and the Hampton Inn & Suites. The NGAWV will pay for half of the basic room cost (approximately \$92) and the conference registration (\$180) for NGAWV members.

We looking forward to seeing everyone in August!

Details on the events from NGAUS:

The action begins with a motorcycle ride Aug. 25. It will take riders from Columbus to the Rocky Boots factory in Nelsonville, Ohio, and back through Hocking Hills and the Wayne National Forest. Cost is \$25 per rider.

Bent Tree Golf Club in Sunbury, Ohio, about 25 minutes from Columbus, will host the NGAUS golf tournament Aug. 26. The course stretches across 167 acres of naturally wooded, rolling terrain. Cost is \$100 per player.

The "Chasing the Sun" fun run is later that day on a 2½-mile route along the scenic Scioto Mile in downtown Columbus.

Social events begin that evening. The separate Company Grade/Warrant Officer, Senior Warrant Officer and Field Grade Officer mixers are at Huntington Park, home of the Columbus Clippers, the Triple-A farm team of baseball's Cleveland Guardians. The stadium is three blocks from the Greater Columbus Convention Center. Attendees will have the whole place to themselves; no game is scheduled. Cost is included in the \$180 registration fee.

Meanwhile, adjutants general and invited guests will gather at the National Veterans Memorial and Museum in Columbus. The museum focuses on the stories of veterans and individuals rather than military accomplishments, with the mission to "honor, inspire, connect and educate."

Always the largest social event of the conference, the Governor's Reception is set for Aug. 27 at the Center of Science and Industry in Columbus.

COSI is a 321,000-square-foot learning center featuring 300-plus hands-on exhibits, the state's largest planetarium and a unique partnership with the renowned American Museum of Natural History that includes a permanent dinosaur gallery. There will also be plenty of food and drink. Cost is included in the registration fee.

Hospitality Night is Aug. 28 in the evening. ONGA officials anticipate some states will book space in bars and restaurants in the Short North and Arena districts. The Short North is located just north of the GCCC and is known as the "art and soul" of the city.

The concluding event is the States Dinner on Aug. 29. It will be held in the GCCC's Battelle Ballroom, which features signature LED lighting fins in the ceiling capable of 65,000 color combinations.

"Bring Your Sports Teams to CBUS" is the theme. Sports jerseys are the recommended attire — college, pro or Olympic. Expect the locals to wear scarlet and grey. After all, the Ohio State football team opens its season in Columbus versus Notre Dame later that week. Cost of the States Dinner is included in the registration fee.



NGAWV Legislative Update

The NGAWV has been working closely with the Adjutant General's office and EANGWV to outline legislative priorities for our Guardsmen, their families and our retirees for this year. Of the many great proposals that were submitted from the services for consideration this year, there will be a focus on two specific items at the state level: providing flexibility for the one time uniform allowance to increase the amount in correlation with inflation and uniform costs and to authorize a one-time payment for maternity uniforms or specialized equipment/uniform items and to develop a Readiness Enhancement Program that gives the Adjutant General flexibility to offer incentive payments for critical vacancies, MOSs/AFSCs or retention of personnel to meet readiness requirements.

These items will be worked through the state legislative process for potential introduction in the next legislative session.

On the federal side, the House recently passed their version of the NDAA. The senate has a separate version that they will mark up and vote on before a conference will be held to refine the final details of the legislation. The Senate has not set a date for its markup at this time.

Of note, many West Virginia priorities were introduced this year in the NDAA process from our Congressional Leaders in the House and Senate.

Senator Manchin, member of the Senate Armed Services Committee, introduced the following specifically related to the WVNG:

- **East Coast Joint All Domain Training Center:** Supports a feasibility study to determine the need of East Coast based military units for a modern training facility that can simulate all domains of warfare, and gives special consideration to areas that can transfer land ownership to DoD and zero to minimal cost that are located in areas with economies impacted by a reduction in timber and mineral extraction jobs.
- **Army Interagency Training & Education Center (AITEC):** Recognizes AITEC, which is part of the West Virginia National Guard, as the National Guard Bureau lead for Chemical, Biological, Radiological, Nuclear, and high-yield Explosives and Critical Infrastructure Protection training.

- **Ridge Runner Irregular Warfare Training Activity:** Recommends for the expansion of the Ridge Runner training activity with allies in the State Partnership Program to simulate all domain and full mission profile activities to build interoperability and the capabilities necessary to address irregular warfare challenges. This training activity is ran by the West Virginia National Guard and takes place annually in West Virginia.

There is still a long road ahead for the NDAA to become law, and the NGAWV will continue to provide updates to our members on this process. At the state level, we are seeking proposals for amendments to the NDAA for FY24 by September of this year. *If you have an idea, please submit it to holli.r.nelson.mil@army.mil.*

Spotlight: WVNG in the news

Over the past few weeks, the West Virginia National Guard has played an important role in assisting with the honor and recognition of the last World War II Medal of Honor Recipient, Hershel "Woody" Williams. Soldiers and Airmen supported the state memorial service over July 4th weekend and the 130th Airlift Wing had the distinct honor of flying Woody's remains to Washington, D.C. for him to Lay in Honor at the U.S. Capitol.



Soldiers from the West Virginia National Guard's 115th Engineer Company, 1092nd Engineer Battalion, recently arrived in Flores, Guatemala to provide support to Operation Resolute Sentinel 22. While deployed to Guatemala, the 115th is tasked with continuing the construction of a grade school that will be used by Guatemalan students as early as this fall. The 115th will continue the work on this project until they rotate out of country.



Upcoming Events

JULY 2022

24-29

NATIONAL BWC
Tennessee

24-26

INTERIM SESSION
WV Legislature | Morgantown

AUGUST 2022

26-29

NGAUS
Columbus, Ohio



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