

EANGMT NEWS

June 2002

ENLISTED ASSOCIATION OF THE NATIONAL GUARD FOR MONTANA

Message from the President

First of all let me thank all of you for being at the conference in Great Falls last month. I think we accomplished some good things, learned a lot from each other, gained new friends and even found time to have a good time. Of course you folks from the air side of the association produced some great numbers and I especially commend you folks for the number of new and younger Airmen and women who attended. I am guessing you had the largest number of Chiefs in attendance in many years and I congratulate you for that. We also had a great turnout on the retired side of the house and I want to give special thanks to all of you for attending. Also a special thanks to Jeff and Ruth Mortag for all they did to make the conference a great experience.

I am particularly excited about the number of younger people who have stepped forward and taken positions on the executive board. As I have said before we need your voice and enthusiasms to start a path to the future with

Thanks for who you are.
Jim Lantz

the well being of the younger members of the National Guard as our major focus.

I finally located the handbook for executive members of the Association and in reviewing it I find there is a lot we as Executive Members need to pay attention to in order for us to be more successful as an organization. The interesting thing I found in reading it is it really does make sense. I am getting copies of it to all members of the Executive board and am asking that everyone do their best to attend the meeting in June to discuss what the handbook says we are all about and what we do.

Keep up the good work on gaining new memberships and remember all you have to do is ask. Get on the EANGUS web page and you will find a plethora of issues making it wise to be a member. We must also be thinking of what we need to do to make it an even greater benefit here in Montana.

National Guard and Reserve Early Retirement A Hot Topic!!!

By CMSgt Roger Hagan

As long as you can remember, and since 1948, the earliest that we could receive our military retirement as a National Guard member was when we reached age 60. But things may be changing. On March 4, 2002. Representative Jim Saxton (R-NJ) introduced legislation (H.R. 3831) calling for the retirement annuity eligibility age to be lowered from age 60 to age 55. Contrary to many rumors, this bill does not change anything else about our current military retirement system. We still can stay until age 60 if our commanders need us and we still have our annuity computed based upon the same

retirement points and values as we currently do. The only difference is that we can begin to draw it five years earlier, at age 55! This is an effort by Mr. Saxton to bring the Guard and Reserve service more in line with the active components, who can begin drawing their annuity immediately upon separation after 20 years of service.

Your Enlisted Association, at their 30th Annual Conference in Great Falls, affirmed its support for this type of legislation by passing Resolution 02-03. That resolution is included at the end of this article. Since our

conference, Senator Jon Corzine (D-NJ) has introduced 25. As of the writing of this article H.R. 3831 has 73 cosponsors and S. 2250 has none. Neither Representative Rehberg or Senators Burns or Baucus are cosponsors of this legislation.

To amplify the momentum that this issue has, EANGUS Executive Director Mike Cline testified in Congress on H.R. 3831 in March stating that while EANGUS supported the concept of H.R. 3831, our membership wanted a retirement annuity IMMEDIATELY upon retirement, with no age restriction. On May 7, 2002, Representative Joe Wilson (R-SC) introduced H.R. 4676. This bill provides for an immediate National Guard and Reserve retirement annuity 'without regard to the age of a person', which means immediately upon retirement from the National Guard (See EANGUS Press Release in this Newsletter). This bill has no cosponsors yet since it is so new. But you can contact Representative Denny Rehberg and urge him to co-sponsor either H.R. 3831 or H.R. 4676. See The Call 02-02 following the Press Release

companion legislation in the Senate (S. 2250) on April for suggested format of letter and how to contact Mr. Rehberg.

Following this article is the resolution passed by your membership relating to this issue. Please read the resolution, talk to your friends and gather support for this very important legislation. If you believe that your association is on the right track with initiatives like these and you haven't renewed your membership, DO IT TODAY! If you are a current, paid-up, member then you should immediately go out and get us five more members. Strength in numbers is our best hope for success. For more information concerning legislative efforts, contact me at (406) 459-0773 or e-mail me at rahagan@juno.com. Thanks for your efforts; let's make a difference this year.

EANGMT RESOLUTION 02-03: ESTABLISHMENT OF AN EARLY OR IMMEDIATE ANNUITY RETIREMENT SYSTEM FOR GUARD AND RESERVE MEMBERS UPON RETIREMENT WITH 20 YEARS OF SERVICE

Background: In 1989, the Sixth Quadrennial Review of Military Compensation (6th QRMC) recommended that the Guard and Reserve Retirement System be modified to address the need to maintain a younger force in view of the increased op tempo. The "two-tier" system as proposed by the 6th QRMC would allow members to draw their earned retirement prior to age 60, but at a reduced rate, similar to Social Security benefits drawn prior to reaching age 65 (or later in recent years). A decade later, efforts are again being made to address that recommendation.

The Enlisted Association of the National Guard of the United States (EANGUS), in response to EANGUS Resolution 00-09, testified in Congress recently that Guard and Reserve members should have the opportunity to draw an immediate annuity upon retirement with at least 20 years of qualifying service.

Concurrently, Representative Jim Saxton, (R-NJ), has sponsored HR3831 which would reduce the age for receipt of military retired pay for Guard and Reserve

members from 60 to 55. That bill has 39 co-sponsors and sets in the House Armed Services Committee (HASC). The Guard participates in real world contingencies on a regular and frequent basis and maintains the same readiness standards as their active duty counterparts. After twenty years of dedicated service in uniform, a disparity exists between the traditional Guard members and the AGR and Active component members.

Recommendation:

That the Enlisted Association of the National Guard of Montana, in General Conference at Great Falls, Montana, this 20th day of April 2002, urge the National Guard Bureau, Departments of the Army and Air Force and the Department of Defense to work with Congress to pursue an early or immediate retirement annuity system for Reserve Component members upon completing at least twenty years of eligible service.

The Honorable Dennis Rehberg
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Representative Rehberg,

I am writing to you to ask for your assistance on a matter that concerns all National Guard and Reserve members and me. Congressman Joe Wilson (SC) has introduced a bill, H.R. 4676, which would allow National Guard and Reserve members who have served 20 years or more to be able to begin to draw their retired pay immediately, based on the current point system. There would be no change in the way Reserve Component retirement is computed.

An immediate annuity would provide a significant recruiting and retention incentive. Reserve retirement is significantly less than an active duty retirement; forcing National Guard and Reserve members to wait potentially decades to receive their retired pay is inequitable and is yet another glaring disparity between the active duty and the Reserve Components.

Please co-sponsor H.R. 4676. Please respond with your perspectives on this matter. If you have any questions, please contact my representative at the Enlisted Association of the National Guard of the United States, 1-800-234-3264 or me.

Sincerely,

Enlisted Association Establishes Legislative Priorities

During the 30th Annual Enlisted Association Conference held in Great Falls, MT, our membership acted on a variety of legislative initiatives. These initiatives, in the form of resolutions, chart the direction of your Executive Council and your organization for the next year. Of the eleven resolutions passed, one pertains to support for national legislation and is addressed in a separate article in this newsletter (EANGMT Resolution 02-03). The remaining ten resolutions are topics that directly affect your membership and career in the Montana National Guard.

These ten resolutions become the template for our legislative efforts during the upcoming 58th State Legislative Session that begins in January of 2003. I believe you will be quite impressed with the results of your membership's actions during the General Business Meeting.

Please remember that, although these resolutions are our 'wish list', there is no guarantee that the initiatives will find a sponsor or if the sponsored legislation will become successful. That is where you, as a member, must do your part. When you get a call for support, you must respond by contacting your legislator and asking for their support. You can be a vital part of the success of the Enlisted Association and at the same time help your career and that of all members of the Montana National Guard. Here is a short synopsis of the resolutions passed. If you would like more information please contact your EANGMT representative or myself.

EANGMT RESOLUTION 02-01: FUNDING OF THE STATE NATIONAL GUARD SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM

Support inclusion of a \$350,000 funding request in the budget for the 2005 Biennium and that the appropriation be included in the baseline budget for future years.

EANGMT RESOLUTION 02-02: REMOVING DD FORM 214'S FROM PUBLIC ACCESS WHEN FILED WITH COUNTY CLERK AND RECORDERS - PROTECTION OF MILITARY MEMBER'S SOCIAL SECURITY ACCOUNT NUMBER (SSAN)

Determine if Montana statutes preclude military members from retrieval/removal of previously filed DD Form 214's. Further, if it is determined that a law change is necessary, that the Association pursue legislation to correct the situation.

EANGMT RESOLUTION 02-04: PROVIDING MEMBERS OF THE MONTANA NATIONAL GUARD A PUBLIC EMPLOYMENT HIRING PREFERENCE

Pursue legislation that includes active members and former members of the Montana National Guard in the Veterans' Public Employment Preference law (Title 39, Chapter 29, MCA) and provide a hiring preference for public employment opportunities to Montana National Guard members.

EANGMT RESOLUTION 02-05: PROVIDING MEMBERS OF THE MONTANA NATIONAL GUARD PROTECTIONS UNDER A STATE EMPLOYMENT AND REEMPLOYMENT RIGHTS ACT

Pursue legislation that establishes a state version of the Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act (USERRA) to protect members who serve our Montana Citizens while on State Active Duty (Title 10, MCA).

EANGMT RESOLUTION 02-06: PROVIDING EMPLOYERS OF MEMBERS OF THE MONTANA NATIONAL GUARD AND SELF-EMPLOYED MEMBERS OF THE MONTANA NATIONAL GUARD A STATE TAX INCENTIVE

Pursue legislation that establishes a tax incentive for employers of members or self-employed members of the Montana National Guard

EANGMT RESOLUTION 02-07: ESTABLISHMENT OF A MODIFIED VERSION OF THE FEDERAL SOLDIERS AND SAILORS CIVIL RELIEF ACT (SSCRA) FOR MONTANA NATIONAL GUARD MEMBERS

Pursue legislation that establishes a modified version of the Federal Soldiers and Sailors Civil Relief Act (SSCRA) to protect members of the Montana National Guard activated on military duty for contingency operations under Federal status (Title 32, USC) or activated on State Active Duty (Title 10, MCA).

EANGMT RESOLUTION 02-08: PROVIDING AN

EQUITABLE BENEFIT PROGRAM OF MEDICAL COVERAGE, WAGE LOSS COMPENSATION AND DEATH BENEFITS FOR MONTANA NATIONAL GUARD MEMBERS INJURED OR KILLED WHILE SERVING ON STATE ACTIVE DUTY (SAD)

Pursue legislation that provides an equitable benefit program of medical coverage, wage loss compensation and death benefits (similar to that of Federal Active Duty) for Montana National Guard members injured or killed while serving on State Active Duty (Title 10, MCA).

EANGMT RESOLUTION 02-09: PROVIDING THE MONTANA CONSERVATION LICENSE AT NO CHARGE FOR MONTANA NATIONAL GUARD MEMBERS

Pursue legislation that provides the Montana Conservation License at no charge for each active Montana National Guard member who desires it.

EANGMT RESOLUTION 02-10: PROVIDING A PACKAGE OF HIGHER EDUCATION PROTECTIONS AND BENEFITS FOR MEMBERS OF THE MONTANA NATIONAL GUARD

Pursue legislation that provides higher education protections and benefits for members of the Montana National Guard. This legislative package would include: a) 100% tuition waiver, b) tuition, scholarship and curriculum protection for students called to serve in support of federal or state missions, and c) defining Montana National Guard members as residents regardless of their previous residency status.

EANGMT RESOLUTION 02-11: PROVIDING ONE SET OF FREE LICENSE PLATES TO EACH ACTIVE MONTANA NATIONAL GUARD MEMBER FOR A VEHICLE OF THEIR CHOICE

Pursue legislation that provides one set of free license plates to each active Montana National Guard member for a vehicle of their choice.

If you believe that your association is on the right track with these initiatives and you haven't renewed your membership, DO IT TODAY! If you are a current, paid-up, member then you should immediately go out and get us five more members. Strength in numbers is our best hope for success with one or more of these initiatives. For more information concerning legislative efforts, contact me at (406) 459-0773 or e-mail me at rahagan@juno.com. Thanks for your efforts; let's make a difference this year



EANGUS SUPPORTS EARLY NATIONAL GUARD MILITARY RETIREMENT

Press Release
May 9, 2002
Point of Contact: Erin
Harting, (703) 519-3846
ext.22



Wilson Introduces Guard and Reserve Retirement Bill - Bill would allow members of the National Guard and Reserve to draw an immediate annuity at the time of retirement.

Washington, D.C. - With the support of the Enlisted Association of the National Guard of the United States (EANGUS) and two other prominent Reserve Component organizations, Congressman Joe Wilson of South Carolina recently unveiled new legislation, H.R. 4676, which would allow National Guard and Reserve members who have served 20 years or more to be able to begin to draw their retired pay immediately upon retirement.

"The retirement program for the Reserve Components have gone unchanged since 1948. We believe it is time to allow members to received their retired pay immediately upon retirement," stated MSG Michael P. Cline, Executive Director of EANGUS.

With this legislation, members of the National Guard and Reserve would qualify for an immediate annuity based on the current point system upon completion of a minimum of 20 good years for retirement. There would

Answer the Call 02-02

SUBJECT H.R. 4676, Immediate Retired Pay for National Guard and Reserve Members

BACKGROUND: Congressman Joe Wilson of South Carolina has introduced a bill, which would provide for an immediate annuity for retired National Guard and Reserve members. H.R. 4676 would allow National Guard and Reserve members who have served 20 years or more to be able to begin to draw their retired pay immediately, based on the current point system. There would be no change in the way Reserve Component retirement is computed.

EANGUS has had a resolution on this issue for several years now and believes that an immediate annuity would provide a significant recruiting and retention incentive. Reserve retirement is significantly

be no change in the way Reserve Component retirement is computed.

President George W. Bush, in Charleston, West Virginia, on Feb. 15, 2001, said, "Guard and Reserve members display values that are central to our nation's character, courage, and sacrifice and demonstrate the highest form of citizenship. And while you may not be full-time soldiers, you are full-time patriots."

EANGUS is an organization made up of Enlisted men and women of the Army and Air National Guard and their supporters who have banded together to pursue mutual goals in support of the National Guard and the national defense. The idea of EANGUS was conceived in 1970 by a group of senior enlisted soldiers and airmen; the formal organization was created in 1972. Today, EANGUS represents 75,000 enlisted National Guard members in all 54 states and territories.

When the events of 9-11 transpired, National Guard and Reserve members did not wait for the call to action, they responded. Units from the Massachusetts Air National Guard were the first to respond to fly Combat Air Patrols over New York City. Units from the North Dakota Air National Guard responded to Washington, D.C. and the Pentagon. While members of the New York National Guard and other Reservists responded to Ground Zero, members of the District of Columbia, Virginia and Maryland National Guard responded at the nation's Capitol. The days of the weekend warrior are long past. Today in the National Guard and Reserves, it's not if you will be called to active duty, but when you will be called to active duty.

less than an active duty retirement; forcing National Guard and Reserve members to wait potentially decades to receive their retired pay is inequitable and is yet another glaring disparity between the active duty and the Reserve Components.

RECOMMENDATION

Call, write, fax or email your Representative to voice your opinion. Attached is a sample letter for your convenience. It may be duplicated and used, however we encourage you to rewrite it in your own words, just address and sign it. Put your return address at the top. Add your Congressman's name after "The Honorable." After "Dear," put his/her name again. Then sign the

bottom.

Mail delivery to the Washington, D.C. area, Congress, the Pentagon and National Guard Bureau have been seriously delayed because of the Anthrax attacks and contamination at various Capitol Hill Congressional offices. These senseless attacks have caused mail problems and have affected effective communications with elected Representatives. EANGUS has devised a new strategy to ensure your voice and concerns are heard on Capitol Hill.

Step one: Dial 1-866-877- HILL (4455). This is a toll-free number. Calling it will connect you to the Capitol Switchboard where you can ask to be connected to your Congressional member or Senator's office.

Step two: Tell the individual who answers the phone in the Capitol Hill Office that you are a constituent of the Congressional member or Senator. Give your name, address and phone number. Tell them what the issue is and that you would like to have the Congressional member or Senator support the issue. Ask that you receive a phone call or letter back concerning your phone call. Ask for the individual's name who you talked to and tell them you will follow up the call with a letter or a fax.

Step three: Write or fax a letter to the Congressional member or Senator to the Capitol Hill Office. Tell them in your letter that you called the office, the date you called and the name of the person you talked to. Remember to ask for a reply.

Step four: Forward a copy of the correspondence you sent to the Capitol Hill Office to the Congressional member or Senator's local or state office. Ask them to contact the Capitol Hill office to express your view on the issue. State and Local offices are in constant communication with the Capitol Hill Offices.

Step five: Send the EANGUS National Office a copy of your correspondence.

Step six: Find out when your Congressmen or Senators are coming home. Meet with them at their local office or State office. Meet them at the airport and make a media event. This is the best way to get a commitment on the issue.

Why not use e-mail? The truth is, the email system in the House and Senate are overloaded and in most cases, email is not effective.

MEMBERSHIP CARDS

Obtain your membership card from the following Army guard members:

Ronda Scott – 495th Trans
Nick Smith – 631st Chem
John Bagley – 95th Trp Cmd
Jim Gustafson – HQ STARC
Wade VanGilder – HQ 208th RTI
Larry Westfall – HQ STARC
Jim Lantz – HQ STARC
John Hawkins – 1/190th FA
Jim Carver – Btry C(-) 1/190th FA
Monte Herrin – HHC 1-163d Infantry

Obtain membership cards from the following Air guard members:

TSG Ruth Mortag
TSG Jeff Mortag
TSG Tiffany Ghekiere
MSG Lisa Smith
CCM Steve Lyczewski

Please contact any one of these people to renew your membership. We are fast approaching another legislative session and we have many issues that affect us all. And we all know that when it comes to legislation, the question is always “How many members do you have?”. What they really mean is how many votes do you have!

Enlisted Association of Montana 30th Annual Conference

In April, the Enlisted Association held its 30th Annual Conference in Great Falls, Montana. Guest speakers were Representative Denny Rehberg and LG Tex Brown.



Guest speaker LG Tex Brown, President Jim Lantz, ARNG, and Vice President Ruth Mortag, ANG.

LG Brown serves as the senior Air Force officer responsible for comprehensive plans and policies covering all life cycles of military and civilian personnel management, including military and civilian end strength management, education and training, and compensation and resource allocation.



Conference attendees listen to guest speaker LG Brown.



Montana Army National Guard, CSM Bennett.



120FW and Montana State CCM's Lyczewski and Heppner.



MSgt Dorrie Hagan says farewell as Treasurer.

ENLISTED ASSOCIATION NATIONAL GUARD OF MONTANA
2002 Elected Officers

PRESIDENT

SGM JIM LANTZ (Elected 2002)
SGMLantz@yahoo.com

1ST VICE PRESIDENT

TSG RUTH MORTAG (Elected 2002)
ruth.mortag@mtgrea.ang.af.mil or
cc663@yahoo.com

2ND VICE PRESIDENT

MSG DENNY EICKERT (Elected 2002)
dennis.eickert@mt.ngb.army.mil

SECRETARY (APPOINTED)

TSG TIFFANY GHEKIERE (Appointed 2002)
tiffany.ghekiere@mtgrea.ang.af.mil

TREASURER

SRA BEV WARNKE (Elected 2002)
beverly.warnke@mtgrea.ang.af.mil

EXECUTIVE MBR/AIR

MSG LISA SMITH (Elected 2002)
lisa.smith@mtgrea.ang.af.mil or
smithls@imt.net

EXECUTIVE MBR/AIR

TSG DON KIRBY (Appointed 2002)
don.kirby@mtgrea.ang.af.mil

EXECUTIVE MBR/ARMY

MSG STENA BUSHNELL (Elected 2001)
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EXECUTIVE MBR/ARMY

SFC JIM GUSTAFSON (Elected 2002)
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EXECUTIVE MBR/ARMY

SFC JOHN BAGLEY (Elected 2002)
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EXECUTIVE MBR/ARMY

MONTY HERRIN (Elected 2001)
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EXECUTIVE MBR/ARMY

SGM LARRY WESTFALL (Elected 2002)
larry.westfall@mt.ngb.army.mil or
Westysam@qwestnet

EXECUTIVE MBR/ARMY

1SG RONDA SCOTT (Elected 2001)
ronda.scott@mt.ngb.army.mil

RETIRED ARMY

DONALD BOGUT
bogutead@digisys.net

RETIRED AIR

CMS RUSSELL JACQUES
russ_jacques@msn.com

PAST PRESIDENT

CMS LARRY SEIBEL
larry.seibel@mtgrea.ang.af.mil

Current Statistics

Air National Guard*

298 Annual Members
118 Lifetime Members
32 Associate Members
448 Total Members

*as of 23 June 2002

Army National Guard

75 Annual Members
138 Lifetime Members
213 Total Members

30th Annual Enlisted Conference, Great Falls, MT

19 April 2002

1100 Executive Board Meeting

Executive Members Present:

President - SGM Jim Lantz
1st Vice President - TSG Ruth Mortag
2nd Vice President - MSG Denny Eickert
Secretary - TSG Tiffany Ghekiere
Treasurer - MSG Dorrie Hagan

Executive Member Air - TSG Jeff Mortag
Executive Member Army - SFC Jim Gustafson
Executive Member Army - SFC John Bagley
Executive Member Army-CSM Ronda Scott

Past President-CCM Paul Heppner
Auxiliary Member-Anita Heppner
MSG Retired Ted Lott

OPENING NOTES:

Call to order
Appoint new Secretary-TSG Tiffany Ghekiere (Air)

OLD BUSINESS:

- Minutes from the last meeting were not available for discussion.
- TSG Ruth Mortag asked for some last minute help stuffing the Conference Folders.
- Discussed paying for SMS Eric Peterson & TSG Blue Manzaneres Conference fees for printing the Conference booklets.
- Past Presidents Association noted they would pay \$100 each to one Air and one Army, lowest ranking, first time conference attendee. Present cash during banquet Saturday night.
- USAA Savings Bonds will be presented to Airman, Soldier, NCO & SRNCO of the Year at the banquet on Saturday night.
- Communications Squadron won plaque for most increased membership in squadron. Plaques for Army and Air are on order and will be presented to the squadrons.
- Discussed vacancies on the Executive Board.

NEW BUSINESS:

- Discussed what the job descriptions for the member of the Executive Board are. Used to be in 3 ring binders somewhere. SGM Jim Lantz, MSG Denny Eickert & TSG Ruth Mortag said they would get together and try and track the job descriptions down for distribution to the board members.
- MSG Dorrie noted that there needs to be someone to keep the By Laws current.

-Discussed ideas on how to get members of the Enlisted Association from other cities than Helena/Great Falls to become members of the Executive Board.

-Tried to find out where the "Black Book" of addresses for all Associations is. (TSG Tiffany Ghekiere ordered a new one from National on 23 April 2002 and will have it available for the next quarterly meeting)

-MSG Dorrie Hagan read a letter from National requesting money for the building fund in the amount of a \$2500 donation for an 8 X 10 plaque of the state to honor deceased lifetime members. She suggested rather sponsoring individual plaques for \$100 - \$200. Issue discussed at next quarterly meeting.

-Noted that the business session of the Conference MUST be over by noon on Saturday for the arrival of Congressman Dennis Rehberg.

-Newsletter:

-TSG Ruth Mortag/MSG Dorrie Hagan have done research and it would be more cost effective and less labor to have the newsletter contracted out to a printing company in Helena.

-Discussed how to expand the newsletter to prospective members

-New contract would not be a bulk mail permit and therefore bad addresses would come back to us so we could research a good address for those members.

-TSG Tiffany Ghekiere volunteered to help TSG Ruth Mortag/MSG Lisa Smith with the newsletter, and would also take some extras to Customer Service in the Air MPF for more visibility.

ADJOURN

Next meeting: 20 April 2002, 0800

Enlisted Conference General Business Session – Holiday Inn, Great Falls, MT



30th Annual Enlisted Conference Evening Session Highlights

~Past President Association presented 2--\$100 awards for lowest ranking 1st time attendee at the conference: Air – A1C Sara Stokke and Army – SSG Katie Hopkins

~NCO- TSG Billy Shirley, SrNCO-MSG James Robertson & 1st Sgt-SMS Ross Gammon of the Year were presented savings bonds from USAA. Army ones will be presented at the Unit level.

~MSG John Haffner won the Auxiliary drawing for the Charlie Russel print and donated it back to the Auxiliary

~Communications Squadron won most number of new members. Plaque to be presented.

~Hagan daughters were presented with gift certificates from Applebees for their help with the last newsletter

~The "Walking Eagle" award was graciously presented to MSG Dorrie Hagan.

~Best Costume awards went to MSG Blue Manzaneres & Auxiliary Member Becky Buckmaster.