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June 2004

President's Message: MSG Ruth Mortag

It seems so hard to believe that another conference has come and gone. The Mardi Gras theme was great fun and Bonnie Larsen and Blue Manzanaras took the best costume prizes of \$25.00 each home with them. Little Elmo and the Mambo Kings were fantastic and everyone had a blast dancing. Blue Manzanaras did an outstanding job as the conference chairman this year and I hope that all attendees took an opportunity to thank him for his hard work.

I would like to thank everyone for electing me as the President for one more year. I am very excited about this next year. I think we have some fantastic new faces on the Executive Board and I am looking forward to new and fresh ideas. I would like to thank Larry Westfall and John Bagley for all their hard work and commitment to the Executive Board and wish them the best of luck in their retirement. I would also like to welcome Steve Lyczewski, Nick Conway, Cynthia Marshall and Tim Sowa to the Executive Board and look forward to working with them; as well as all the incumbent members, some of whom have taken on a new position and others who continue working right where they have been, Jim Gustafson, Lisa Smith, Patti Hagan, Steve Hagan, Jeff Mortag, Ronda Scott, Monte Herrin and Neil Young. Thank you all in your commitment to the Enlisted Association.

In the next year I hope to educate everyone about what the Enlisted Association is, who we are and what we do. The Purpose of the Association is:

- To promote and support State and National Security.
- To foster and improve the National Guard of Montana and the National Guard of the United States as a component of the Armed Forces of the United States.
- To promote "Esprit de Corps" among enlisted personnel in the National Guard of Montana.
- To improve the position and status of the enlisted personnel in his/her military environment.
- To promote and foster programs for the betterment of all members of the Montana National Guard.

If we continue to promote our purpose and mission we will be able to better serve our active members and to reach out to those individuals who currently are not members of the Enlisted Association.

To that end, I believe the Legislative resolutions that were passed at the recent conference directly reflect our purpose and believe that by supporting them we will have done our job. The resolutions that were passed include the following State Resolutions: Funding of the State National Guard Scholarship Program; A Comprehensive Review of all facets of the State Active Duty (SAD) Process; Extend the Provisions of State Income Tax Exemptions to all Federal Military Duty and all State Active Duty; Modify the State Military Leave Provisions to Recognize Current Military Duty Requirements; Modify the Montana National Guard Civil Relief Act; Provide Montana Conservation, Hunting and Fishing Licenses at no charge to all Montana Military Members who have served in ONE, OEF and OIF and future operations; Provide One Set of Free License Plates to each Active Montana National Guard Member; Provide Employers of Members of the Montana National Guard or Reserve and Self-Employed Members a State Tax Incentive; Provide Members of the Montana National Guard Protections under a State Employment and Reemployment Rights Act; Clarify the provisions of Registration of Motor Vehicles by a Montana Resident on Active Military Duty Stationed outside of Montana; and Ensure Adequate Funding for Veteran's Rest Homes in Montana. For National Resolutions, the following: Double Retirement Points for Deployed Guard and Reserve Member and Establish an Early or Immediate Annuity Retirement System for Guard and Reserve Members Upon Retirement with 20 Years of Service. Additional information about all these resolutions can be found on Pages 3-7 of the Newsletter and on the website.

Thank you again and I look forward to the next year. If you have any questions please feel free to contact myself at 406-791-0457 or eangmt@eangmt.org or contact any member of the Executive Board.

1st Vice: SFC James A. Gustafson

Well, we had an exciting and informative annual conference in Missoula this year and I would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone for his or her hard work putting it together! Also, a special thanks to our distinguished guests and first time attendees.

We elected several new executive board members, and they're hard at work establishing their unit responsibilities and finding additional unit representatives. This task has taken on a sense of urgency due to the upcoming deployments, and everyone is stepping up and getting it done prior to the deployments.

I have made the executive board members, who have unit deploying, aware that we need to make sure to have a unit representative in place prior to deployment, so that we can assure that our members are represented while on their deployments! If anyone is willing to take on the responsibility of being a unit representative for the enlisted association, please contact me!

We also need to keep in mind that another legislative year is coming up. We need to make sure that our legislature representatives are aware of our association and our membership needs and that they see us in a positive manor.

It all boils down to "EDUCATION" educating ourselves, the membership and the community at large on what we can do for them and what support we need from them.

The Board members are looking forward to a great year and will need your support to make things happen!

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

17 July 2004 ~ 2nd Annual Veterans Park Benefit Golf Tournament, Lewistown MT
19-21 July 2004 ~ Legislative Workshop, Alexandria VA
12 August 2004, 6:00p.m. ~ Quarterly Board & Auxiliary Meeting
22-25 August 2004 ~ National Conference, Galt House, Louisville KY
7 October 2004, 6:00p.m. ~ Quarterly Board & Auxiliary Meeting
21-24 August 2005 ~ National Conference, Clarion Plaza, Orlando FL
20-23 August 2006 ~ National Conference, Grand Casino, Biloxi MS

Executive Army: SFC Tim Sowa

This article is about working in the Joint environment at the CAOC in Qatar and then as Ground Liaison Officer with the wing in Bagram Afghanistan.

The 414th GLD (Ground Liaison Detachment) was activated on 22 Aug 03 to do a 90 day rotation. We were to be assigned to the 1st BCD (Battlefield Control Detachment). The BCD works in the AOC or in this case CAOC. We were there to help answer the AF questions on the Ground commander's requirements for CAS. We would get the requests from both OIF and OEF. We would then take the requests to the MAAP meeting to get the request filled with the available aircraft. When the MAAP cell was done assigning the planes for the sorties then the BCD would make products for the sipernet on the make up of the planes and missions data. The Plans section would handle this task. The Ops section would handle any immediate request for CAS that came in after the MAAP cell meeting. On the second half of our tour we were assigned to the 354 fighter squadron at Bagram Afghanistan. We were assigned to inform the pilots of the ground situation for their missions. The where abouts of the artillery. If they were firing and how high to fly so they would not have to worry about the "little bullet big sky theory." We would answer the pilots Army questions. We would brief the Intel section on the current and future ops. This was some of our daily missions during the 210 days we were active.

Enlisted Association Questions Tobacco Tax Initiatives Impact on State Veteran's Nursing Homes

By: CMSgt Roger A. Hagan

During our annual state conference our membership passed EANGMT Resolution 04-13, “**Pertaining to: PROTECTING ADEQUATE FUNDING AND OPERATIONAL SUPPORT FOR OUR STATE VETERAN’S NURSING HOMES**”. You can read that resolution in this issue of your newsletter. A few short days after the conference, Initiative No. 149 was certified by the Secretary of State’s office for signature gathering. The initiative, if placed on the November election ballot, would ask the voters if they are - for or against “increasing tobacco taxes to fund new health insurance and Medicaid programs”.

The initiative proposes to increase the cigarette tax from 70 cents per pack to \$1.70 per pack. While the EANGMT does not take a position on the initiative, a review of the proposed statutory language gave us pause for concern. The proposed language does modify existing law in areas that establish the current funding mechanism and funds allocation for operation and maintenance of the two Montana Veteran’s Nursing Homes in Glendive and Columbia Falls.

As a result of the concerns, EANGMT joined other military and veteran organizations in sending a letter requesting clarification of the “Statement of Purpose”, “Statement of Fiscal Impact” and the proposed language to change the law, if passed. We sent our letter to the Secretary of State, Attorney General, Governor’s Budget Director and Legislative Services Legal Council. We included a courtesy copy of our letter to the legal counsel of the proponents of the initiative.

When we receive replies from the agencies, the organizations that sent the letter will meet to determine if our concerns are resolved and, if not, what action to take next. The other organizations who signed on the letter are: Montana National Guard Association, Montana Veteran’s of Foreign Wars, and Montana American Legion.

Since we are creating veterans these days at a much faster rate than at any time since the Vietnam War, it is in our association’s best interest to remain vigilant to this issue. This is just another way your dues work for you and your friends in the Montana National Guard. Have you gotten another member to join yet?

RESOLUTIONS

Visit www.eangmt.org to read the resolutions in their entirety.

EANGMT RESOLUTION 04-01

Pertaining to: FUNDING OF THE STATE NATIONAL GUARD SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM

Background: Although the 2003 Department of Military Affairs Biennium Budget did not include funding for the Montana National Guard Scholarship Program, the 58th Legislature, at the request of EANGMT and MTNGA, reauthorized the program in 2003 - at the \$250,000 level and again as an OTO appropriation. Although the sponsor of the amendment to the budget requested \$350,000, the lower amount authorized is once again causing projected shortfalls in supporting all eligible scholarship requests.

This program has improved recruiting and retention efforts for both the Army and Air National Guard in Montana. While it isn’t the only “tool” in the recruiting and retention tool bag, it is a benefit that we can offer to our members or potential members that the Reserves cannot. Support for this program has been the primary effort of the Officer and Enlisted Associations.

Recommendation: That the Enlisted Association of the National Guard of Montana, request the Montana Department of Military Affairs, the Governor of Montana and the 59th Legislature to 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 04-02

Pertaining to: PROVIDING FOR A COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW OF ALL FACETS OF THE STATE ACTIVE DUTY (SAD) PROCESS, TO INCLUDE: ACTIVATION/DEACTIVATION PROCEDURES, PAY AND BENEFITS COMPENSATION, RETIREMENT, LIFE AND HEALTH INSURANCE PROVISIONS, AND ON-THE-JOB MEDICAL COVERAGE, WAGE LOSS COMPENSATION AND DEATH BENEFITS FOR MONTANA NATIONAL GUARD MEMBERS INJURED OR KILLED WHILE SERVING ON STATE ACTIVE DUTY

Background: Currently, members of the Montana National Guard when serving on State Active Duty (Title 10, MCA) are treated as state employees for the purposes of pay and benefits administration. Additionally, the procedures used to activate and deactivate members for/from SAD are inadequate to effectively administer a state activation. Equitable and fair benefits, compensation and administrative procedures must be established to protect our National Guard members who are serving the State of Montana and for those injured in the line of State Active Duty. Benefits should be considered that are commensurate with those of Federal Active Duty.

Recommendation: That the Enlisted Association of the National Guard of Montana, request the Montana Department of Military Affairs, the Governor of Montana and the 59th Legislature to pursue legislation that provides for an Interim Legislative Study of the State Active Duty process, looking specifically at: activation/deactivation procedures, pay and benefits compensation, retirement, life and health insurance provisions, and on-the-job medical coverage, wage loss compensation and death benefits for Montana National Guard members injured or killed while serving on state active duty.

EANGMT RESOLUTION 04-03

Pertaining to: EXTEND THE PROVISIONS OF STATE INCOME TAX EXEMPTION TO ALL FEDERAL MILITARY DUTY (TITLE 32 U.S.C) AND ALL STATE ACTIVE DUTY (TITLE 10, MCA) MILITARY PAY, ALLOWANCES, BONUSES AND STIPENDS

Background: Currently, residents of Montana who are serving on Military Duty (Title 10, USC) are exempt from state income tax on their military pay (MCA 15-30-116(2)).

Estimated Federal (Title 32, USC) earnings that would be exempt from State Income Tax under this proposal: \$35 mil. x 4% estimated effective tax rate = \$1.4 mil. General Fund. Unable to estimate cost of State Active Duty (Title 10, MCA) impact due to the variables (i.e. Fires of 2000 required 24,470 workdays however, the Fires of 2001 only required about 300 workdays).

Recommendation: That the Enlisted Association of the National Guard of Montana, request the Montana Department of Military Affairs, the Governor of Montana and the 59th Legislature to pursue legislation that provides that all Montana National Guard member's Title 32 U.S.C. and State Active Duty (Title 10, M.C.A.) be state tax free.

EANGMT RESOLUTION 04-04

Pertaining to: MODIFYING THE STATE MILITARY LEAVE PROVISIONS TO RECOGNIZE CURRENT MILITARY DUTY REQUIREMENTS OF MEMBERS OF THE NATIONAL GUARD AND RESERVE WHO ARE PUBLIC EMPLOYEES AND PROVIDING THEM A 5-DAY PAID LEAVE OF ABSENCE UPON RETURN FROM DEPLOYMENT

Background: Current Montana statutes provide public employees (state, city, county, school, etc.) 15 days of military leave (paid leave of absence) from their positions to attend "training camp or similar training" (MCA 10-1-604). Recently, the State Personnel Division of the Department of Administration published an opinion that this leave could not be used when a guard or reserve member was "ordered to active duty in the U.S. armed forces."

This opinion limits the usage of paid military leave to those specific duty statuses listed in the statutes... "attending regular encampments, training cruises, and similar training programs of the organized militia or of the military forces of the United States." The opinion amplifies the terms used in the statute to include duty of

“employees ordered to ‘pre-deployment training’ or similar training assignments, which the National Guard classifies as ADSW.”

Recommendation: That the Enlisted Association of the National Guard of Montana, request the Montana Department of Military Affairs, the Governor of Montana and the 59th Legislature to pursue legislation that updates the state military leave law to mirror the federal military leave provisions and provide for a 5-day paid leave of absence upon returning from a period of active duty in support of the Global War on Terrorism.

EANGMT RESOLUTION 04-05

Pertaining to: **MODIFY THE MONTANA NATIONAL GUARD CIVIL RELIEF ACT**

Background: The 58th Legislative Session established the Montana National Guard Civil Relief Act (10 M.C.A., Part 9) to provide limited civil action protections when a Montana National Guard member is activated on State Active Duty (SAD) or serving in a Title 32 federal military duty status. Protections are related to mortgage, lease, or rental payments and to general relief from court actions while serving on SAD or federal duty under 32 U.S.C. 101.

The Act, as passed, only protects a National Guard member while on “at least 30 consecutive days of full-time active duty ordered by the governor pursuant to Article VI, section 13, of the Montana constitution or of full-time national guard duty, as defined in 32 U.S.C. 101”. Nearly all SAD orders are for 15 days or less. The “at least 30-day” caveat effectively nullifies this benefit for National Guard members while serving on SAD. A more appropriate limitation for a minimum duty period would be “at least 10 consecutive days” of qualifying duty.

Recommendation: That the Enlisted Association of the National Guard of Montana, request the Montana Department of Military Affairs, the Governor of Montana and the 59th Legislature to pursue legislation that lowers the minimum duty period for civil protection to “at least 10 continuous days”.

EANGMT RESOLUTION 04-06

Pertaining to: **PROVIDING MONTANA CONSERVATION, HUNTING AND FISHING LICENSES AT NO CHARGE TO ALL MONTANA MILITARY MEMBERS WHO HAVE SERVED IN OPERATIONS NOBLE EAGLE (ONE), ENDURING FREEDOM (OEF) AND IRAQI FREEDOM (OIF) AND FUTURE OPERATIONS**

Background: Currently, many Montana citizens are serving the Active Component (AC), National Guard (NG) or Reserve (Res) in support of the Global War On Terrorism (GWOT). Many of these Montanans are avid hunters or fisherman who are unable to take part in the hunting or fishing season(s) due to their deployment in support of ONE, OEF, OIF and future operations. Upon their return from these deployments, Montana could give them a well deserved recognition by providing free hunting and fishing privileges for two years.

Recommendation: That the Enlisted Association of the National Guard of Montana, request the Montana Department of Military Affairs, the Governor of Montana and the 59th Legislature to pursue legislation that provides the Montana Conservation, Hunting and Fishing Licenses for two years at no charge for each Montana military member who has deployed in support of ONE, OEF, OIF and future operations.

EANGMT RESOLUTION 04-07

Pertaining to: **PROVIDING ONE SET OF FREE LICENSE PLATES TO EACH ACTIVE MONTANA NATIONAL GUARD MEMBER FOR A VEHICLE OF THEIR CHOICE**

Background: Currently, our members are eligible for the Montana National Guard license plate (not to be confused with the Montana National Guard Veteran’s license plate). This plate is available to all active National Guard members at no additional cost. Members still pay the full fees, taxes and levies that they would if they bought a numbered plate. This proposal would make one set of National Guard license plates (not the N. G. veteran plate) available to each active Montana National Guard member at no charge.

Recommendation: That the Enlisted Association of the National Guard of Montana, request the Montana Department of Military Affairs, the Governor of Montana and the 59th Legislature to pursue legislation that provides one set of free license plates to each active Montana National Guard member for a vehicle of their choice.

EANGMT RESOLUTION 04-08

Pertaining to: PROVIDING EMPLOYERS OF MEMBERS OF THE MONTANA NATIONAL GUARD OR RESERVE AND SELF-EMPLOYED MEMBERS OF THE MONTANA NATIONAL GUARD OR RESERVE A STATE TAX INCENTIVE

Background: Employers of our active Montana National Guard or Reserve members make a great sacrifice when their employees leave their jobs to protect and defend our great state and country. Likewise, self-employed members of the Montana National Guard or Reserve suffer great financial loss when absent from their business performing military duty.

A state tax incentive in the form of a tax refund, credit or rebate for employers of National Guard or Reserve members or self-employed National Guard or Reserve members would help ease the pain of the members' absence from the workplace while activated and away from their civilian occupations.

Recommendation: That the Enlisted Association of the National Guard of Montana, request the Montana Department of Military Affairs, the Governor of Montana and the 59th Legislature to pursue legislation that establishes a tax incentive for employers or self-employed members of the Montana National Guard or Reserve.

EANGMT RESOLUTION 04-09

Pertaining to: PROVIDING MEMBERS OF THE MONTANA NATIONAL GUARD PROTECTIONS UNDER A STATE EMPLOYMENT AND REEMPLOYMENT RIGHTS ACT

Background: The Federal Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act (USERRA) provides a clear and effective enforcement mechanism that gives the military member peace of mind while absent from their civilian job. It also sends a strong signal to the employer that the federal government means business when it comes to protecting the rights of military members called to duty from civilian employment. Enforcement procedures involve the US Department of Labor and ultimately the Attorney General of the US. USERRA covers Uniformed Service members called to federal military duty under Title 10, USC and Title 32, USC but does not protect our members while on State Active Duty.

Recommendation: That the Enlisted Association of the National Guard of Montana, request the Montana Department of Military Affairs, the Governor of Montana and the 59th Legislature to pursue legislation that establishes a state version of the Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act (USERRA) to better protect members who serve our Montana Citizens while on State Active Duty (Title 10, MCA).

EANGMT RESOLUTION 04-10

Pertaining to: CLARIFYING THE PROVISION OF REGISTRATION OF MOTOR VEHICLE BY A MONTANA RESIDENT ON ACTIVE MILITARY DUTY STATIONED OUTSIDE MONTANA

Background: Montana statutes provide for the "registration of motor vehicles owned and operated by Montana resident on active military duty stationed outside Montana" (MCA 61-3-456). Eligibility criteria are... "an owner of a motor vehicle who is a Montana resident who entered active military duty from Montana and who is stationed outside Montana." Eligible applicants are not subject to motor vehicle taxes, assessments and fees. This provision was enacted "as an incentive for military service."

Recommendation: That the Enlisted Association of the National Guard of Montana, request the Montana Department of Military Affairs, the Governor of Montana and the 59th Legislature take action to clarify the eligibility of National Guard and Reserve members' vehicle registration and waiver of motor vehicle taxes, assessments and fees either through administrative remedy or legislation.

EANGMT RESOLUTION 04-11

Pertaining to: DOUBLE RETIREMENT POINTS FOR DEPLOYED GUARD AND RESERVE MEMBERS

Background: The use of stop-loss procedures has served to project an artificially high retention rate in the National Guard and Reserve. Meeting future end-strength goals in the Guard and Reserve will get more difficult as the United States continues their war on terrorism and Weapons of Mass Destruction. One unique and cost-effective option to

promote the retainability of Guard and Reserve members deployed to hazardous or hostile duty areas lies in enhanced retirement benefits.

Guard and Reserve members who serve in a deployed location that is considered a hazardous or hostile area should be granted two retirement points for each day of duty performed during such deployments. One of those two points would be “banked” in an escrow bonus retirement account. Those points would only be available to the member if they qualify for a non-regular military retirement (i.e. currently 20 years at age 60).

Recommendation: That the Enlisted Association of the National Guard of Montana, urge the Department of Defense to support double retirement point credit for deployed members of the guard and reserve.

EANGMT RESOLUTION 04-12

Pertaining to: 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 or something similar.

Recommendation: That the Enlisted Association of the National Guard of Montana, urge the National Guard Bureau, Departments of the Army and Air Force and the Department of Defense to work with Congress to pass an early or immediate retirement annuity system for Reserve Component members upon completing at least twenty years of eligible service.

EANGMT RESOLUTION 04-13

Pertaining to: PROTECTING ADEQUATE FUNDING AND OPERATIONAL SUPPORT FOR OUR STATE VETERAN’S NURSING HOMES

Background: A portion of the state cigarette tax has historically been used as the funding source for the operation and maintenance of our two state Veteran’s Nursing Homes. These homes are located in Columbia Falls and Glendive, Montana. Until 1 July 2003, the amount of the 18-cent tax that was apportioned to the nursing home account was 11.11% resulting in a 1.9998 cent per pack allocation. Prior to the 58th Legislative Session (January 2003), the Montana Department of Public Health and Human Services identified a structural imbalance in the funding mechanism. Plainly, the 1.9998 cents per pack apportionment did not generate enough revenue to adequately fund the state’s share of the operation and maintenance of both nursing homes.

Recommendation: That the Enlisted Association of the National Guard of Montana, advise the Governor of Montana and the 59th Legislature that any actions that affect the funding of the State Veteran’s Nursing Homes must preserve the existing funding levels and insure continued support of adequate nursing home facilities for our veterans.

EANGUS 2004

The 33rd Annual National Conference of the Enlisted Association of the National Guard of the United States will be held August 22-25, 2004, in Louisville, Kentucky. The host hotel and conference location is the Galt House. Registration is \$80.00 per person prior to 30 July 2004 and \$100.00 per person after 30 July 2004. Any first time attendee who is an E-5 or below can contact Chief Roger Hagan for a hotel room paid for by him and MSG Dorrie Hagan. For more information contact President Ruth Mortag at 791-0457. For a registration form, visit www.eangus.org.

EANGUS TIDBITS



Military Phone Card Donation Program Goes Public

The Defense Department has authorized the Armed Services Exchanges to sell prepaid calling cards to any individual or organization that wishes to purchase cards for troops who are deployed. The "Help Our Troops Call Home" program is designed to help servicemembers call home from Operations Iraqi Freedom and Operation Enduring Freedom.

For those wishing to donate a prepaid calling card to a military member may log on to any of the three Armed Services Exchange web sites:

The Army and Air Force Exchange Service at <http://www.aafes.com/>

The Navy Exchange Service Command <http://www.navy-nex.com/>

The Marine Corps Exchange <http://www.usmc-mccs.org/>

Click the "Help Our Troops Call Home" (or "Help Our Sailors Call Home") link. From there, a prepaid calling card may be purchased for an individual at his or her deployed address or to "any service member" deployed or hospitalized. The Armed Services Exchanges will distribute cards donated to "any service member" through the American Red Cross, Air Force Aid Society and the Fisher House Foundation.

The Armed Services Exchanges operate telephone call centers in Iraq, Kuwait, Afghanistan, and other countries and aboard ships -- anywhere servicemembers are deployed in support of Operation Enduring Freedom and Operation Iraqi Freedom. All of these locations stay busy around the clock to keep up communication between deployed troops and their loved ones. The cards available through the "Help Our Troops Call Home" program offer the best value for calls made from the call centers, never expire, and there are no added charges or connection fees.

Individuals and organizations also can show their support to deployed troops and their families with gift certificates. The "Gift of Groceries" program allows anyone to purchase commissary gift certificates at <http://www.commissaries.com> or by calling toll free 1 (877) 770-GIFT. The Armed Services Exchanges offer the "Gift From the Homefront" gift certificate for merchandise at these exchange web sites: <http://www.aafes.com> and <http://www.navy-nex.com> or by calling toll free 1 (877) 770-GIFT. Gift certificates may be purchased to be mailed to servicemembers and

family members or will be distributed to "any servicemember." Only authorized commissary and exchange patrons may redeem the gift certificates at military commissaries and exchanges, including those stores supporting deployed personnel around the globe.

National Defense Authorization Act

Both the House and Senate Armed Services Committees have now completed their mark up of the FY 2005 National Defense Authorization Act.

The Senate bill contains provisions that would:

- Create a demonstration project to provide TRICARE for Guard and Reserve members who are unemployed or do not have employer-sponsored health care (based on the provision passed last year and not yet implemented). The demonstration would last for two years.
- Create a new benefit, TRICARE Reserve Select, which allows Guard and Reserve members to buy TRICARE coverage for themselves and their families. This new benefit requires 100% payment of the premium -- by the individual, or the individual and his or her employer (a 28/72 split) if the employer normally offers health care coverage. More details will follow later.
- Permanently extend TRICARE coverage to 90 days prior to mobilization and 180 days after mobilization.
- Permanently increase the rate of family separation allowance to \$250 a month.
- Permanently increase the rate of imminent danger pay to \$225 a month.
- Require a comprehensive pre-separation physical for Reserve Component members.
- Increase in Army active duty end strength of 30,000 by 2009
- Increase the cost share for the federal portion of the National Guard Youth Challenge Program
- Establish a commission to study the roles and missions of the Reserve Component, including pay and benefits
- 3.5% pay raise
- Add funding to pay for seven more WMD-Civil Support Teams
- Add funding for up-armored HMMWVs
- Increase Army National Guard full time manning by 1,003
- Repeal the requirement for military members to pay subsistence charges while hospitalized

The House bill contains provisions that would:

- Create a demonstration project to provide TRICARE for Guard and Reserve members who are unemployed or do not have employer-sponsored health care (based on

the provision passed last year and not yet implemented). The demonstration would last for three years.

- Permanently extend TRICARE coverage to 90 days prior to mobilization and 180 days after mobilization.
- Increase in Army active duty end strength of 30,000 by 2009
- 3.5% pay raise
- Add funding for up-armored HMMWVs
- Increase Army National Guard full time manning
- Provide a differential pay from \$50 to \$3,000 to those who make less in military pay than in their civilian job -- only for those who have 12 months of continuous active duty; 18 months cumulative in a 60-month period of time; or are re-mobilized within six months of returning home.
- Increase the amount of time a Reserve Component member can serve on active duty without counting against active duty end strength
- Eliminate the Social Security offset under the Survivor Benefit Plan by increasing the annuities paid to survivors of military retirees who are over age 62
- Eliminates disparity between active and reserve in certain bonus and incentive pays – reenlistment, critical skills

Tax Credits for Employers

Senator Mary Landrieu (LA) introduced an amendment to a corporate tax bill that would provide a tax credit for employers of National Guard and Reserve members who continue to pay their employees while they are serving on active duty. There is also aid to assist employers in hiring temporary workers. The amendment passed by voice vote. The Senate passed their final version of the bill on Tuesday. The House bill is currently stalled.

Savings Plan for Deployed Service Members

Defense Finance and Accounting Service (DFAS) implemented the Savings Deposit Program in 1990 for service members serving in the Persian Gulf. The program now includes Operation Iraqi Freedom service members assigned to a combat zone or in direct support of a combat zone. Deposits into these special savings accounts earn 10% annually, and the service member can contribute up to \$10,000. The savings deposit balance will be shown on the Leave and Earnings Statement. Contact your financial office to make a deposit into the fund.

Tax Free Pay from Employers

Guardsmen/Reservists who have been called to active duty and are serving in a combat zone and who are receiving full or partial pay from their employer are not required to pay tax on those earnings. Guardsmen/Reservists in this category who have paid tax on that pay must contact their employer and have them file an amended federal employment tax return (Form 941) as well as amend Forms W-2, Wage & Tax statements. Visit www.ESGR.com and find out your employment and re-employment rights, responsibilities and obligations as a guardsman/reservists.

Space A Test Extended

The one-year test to expand space-available travel privileges to family members of active duty and retired personnel traveling within CONUS was extended. The test will continue while the Office of the Secretary of Defense completes its evaluation of the test. Under the Space A test, family members of active duty and retirees are able to travel Space A aboard military flights when accompanied by their sponsors. The test does not apply to grey area retirees.

Policy Change to Space Available Reservations Window AF Lodging

Lodging may accept and confirm reservations for Priority 2 (Space Available) guests up to 30 days in advance of the arrival date, for up to three-night accommodations, space permitting based on actual and projected occupancy. This changes the current policy of only accepting Space "A" reservations 24 hours in advance.

When projected occupancy is 86% or greater, managers may make reservations up to three days in advance; when 85% or less, up to seven days in advance; when 80% or less, up to two weeks in advance; when 65% or less, up to 30 days in advance.

Priority 1 customers will not "bump" Priority 2 customers with confirmed reservations, nor will they bump them once they are assigned quarters for a specific period of time, except in times of contingency, emergency, or when the installation commander determines higher priorities exist.

Please share this newsletter with a non-member. The only way non-members will know what we do is if they read about it, we talk it up and sell ourselves.

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ANSWER THE CALL

04-03

Subject: TRICARE for Guard and Reserve Members

Background: Contact your members of Congress regarding delay in implementation of new TRICARE benefit for Guard and Reserve members.

04-05

Subject: Elimination of National Guard and Reserve Equipment Accounts

Background: Contact your members of Congress regarding the DoD proposal to eliminate the National Guard and Reserve Equipment Account (NGREA).

04-06

Subject: H.R. 1728, Aviation Incentive Pay and Hazardous Duty Pay

Background: Legislation that would provide a full months pay for each month the duty is performed instead of the 1/30th month per day.

04-07

Subject: TRICARE for Guard and Reserve Members

Background: Support the TRICARE for Guard and Reserve portion of S. 2035.

04-08

Subject: Youth Challenge Program Funding

Background: Ask your members of Congress to co-sponsor draft legislation on the Youth Challenge Program.

04-09

Subject: Proposed Change to VA Home Loan Program

Background: Write your Congressional delegation to retain current VA Home Loan benefits.

04-10

Subject: Youth Challenge Program Funding – UPDATED

Background: Ask your members of Congress to co-sponsor draft legislation on the Youth Challenge Program. Updates call 04-08 with bill numbers.

04-11

Subject: Military Widow's Tax-Survivor Benefit Plan Enhancement

Background: Many military spouses are not aware that their benefits under the Survivor Benefit Plan (SBP) are cut when the spouse reaches 62. The surviving spouses of federal civil service retirees do not have their benefits cut at age 62.

Recommendation: Call, write, fax or email your Senator and Congressman to voice your opinion. Visit <http://www.eangus.org/legislative/call.asp> for a sample letter for your convenience. It may be duplicated and used. But we encourage you to rewrite it in your own words. Just address and sign it. Put your return address at the top. Add your member's name after "The Honorable." After "Dear," put his/her name again. Then sign _____ the _____ bottom.

STATE FAMILY PROGRAMS UPCOMING TRAINING

Billings - location TBD

June 11, 6:30 pm - 9:30 pm

Key Volunteer Notebook Training

June 12, 8 am - 5 pm

GFTB Level 1

Operation Ready FRG Leader's Handbook Training

Glasgow - location TBD

July 16, 6:30 pm - 9:30 pm

Key Volunteer Notebook Training

July 17, 8 am - 5pm

GFTB Level 1

Operation Ready FRG Leader's

Handbook Training

NEW WEB SITE

The National Guard Bureau Family Program Office has completely revised their web site. If you have not looked lately, please do so now. They have updated the links and information on their home page to reflect real world events.

Enlisted Association Membership Statistics – Montana Air/Army Guard

By: MSG James Robertson

The stats are listed by enlisted grades, percentage of members per grade, and then overall total for Air and Army as of May 17, 2004.

E9	Members	Assigned	Percentage
Air	23	23	100%
Army	7	19	37%

E8	Members	Assigned	Percentage
Air	37	52	71%
Army	19	67	28%

E7	Members	Assigned	Percentage
Air	69	172	40%
Army	32	196	16%

E6	Members	Assigned	Percentage
Air	53	225	24%
Army	37	301	12%

E1-E5	Members	Assigned	Percentage
Air	87	425	20%
Army	43	1516	3%

Air Totals

Members	Assigned	Percentage
269	897	30%

TOTAL AIR/ARMY

Members	Assigned	Percentage
407	2996	14%

Army Totals

Members	Assigned	Percentage
138	2099	7%

Associate members Air:	35
Associate members Army:	13

Please contact one of the following individuals, to renew your membership or to join the association.

MSG James Robertson – Membership Chairman Ext. 2270 or 791-0270

MSG Lisa Smith – Executive Member Air (Red Horse, MS Group) Ext. 2284 or 791-0284

TSG Jeff Mortag – Executive Member Air (HQ, OPS, Maintenance) Ext. 2407 or 791-0407

The following are your Air Guard representatives:

Maintenance: CMS Roger Jones / TSG Jeff Mortag
 HQS/Personnel: CCM Steve Lyczewski / CMS Larry Seibel
 LRS: MSG Dorrie Hagan / MSG Ruth Mortag
 Communications: TSG Blue Manzanares
 Security: SMS George Mumm
 Civil Engineer: MSG Matt Mitchell
 Medical: TSG Mary Mortag / SSG Christine Bringard
 Red Horse: CMS Jeff Tarman
 OPS: TSG Dave Robbin

The following are your Army Guard representatives:

MSG Denny Eickert
 SFC Jim Gustafson
 MSG John Bagley
 SFC Monte Herrin
 MSG Neil Young
 SGM Jim Lantz
 CW2 Wade VanGilder

The #1 Reason for belonging to the Enlisted Association:

You owe it to the people coming in behind you to help retain/increase the current benefits!!!



*Support Our Troops
and
The Enlisted Association of the
National Guard of
Montana*



*by purchasing a car
magnet
for only \$5*



Yellow or Red, White & Blue!

*~Please contact CMS Steve Lyczewski, 791-0273, MSG Ruth
Mortag, 791-0457 or MSG Steve Hagan, 791-0138~*

**ENLISTED ASSOCIATION OF NATIONAL GUARD OF MONTANA
USAA \$250.00 SCHOLARSHIP
2004 – 2005 ACADEMIC YEAR**

Date: _____

Name: _____

Mailing Address: _____

City: _____ **State:** _____ **Zip Code:** _____

Sponsor's Full Name and Rank: _____

Relationship to Sponsor: _____

College or post secondary school you are planning to attend or are currently attending

(i.e. Vo-Tech, College, Etc.): _____

You **MUST** BE A CURRENT MEMBER OF THE Enlisted Association of the National Guard of Montana or a dependent of a current member.

The following items **MUST** be included with your scholarship application:

1. You **MUST** full out this application.
2. Attach a current transcript of your grades to the application (copies are acceptable).
3. Attach a copy of your/your sponsor's EANGUS membership card to the application.
4. Write one or two short paragraphs on your goals in life and attach to the application.
5. Attach a letter of recommendation from an adult not related to you.

STUDENT'S SIGNATURE: _____

APPLICATIONS MUST BE POSTMARKED NO LATER THAN 30 SEPTEMBER 2004

MAIL COMPLETED APPLICATIONS TO:

MSgt Jeff Wheeler, Scholarship Chairman
PO Box 503
Boulder MT 59632-0503
e-mail: jeffrey.wheeler@mtgrea.ang.af.mil

Montana Guard Youth Camp

“Around the World in a Week”

July 11-15, 2004
Camp Rotary, Neihart, Mt



Who May Attend? Children ages 9-13, who have family members currently serving in any branch of the military. Priority will be given to a child whose family member is, was or will be deployed in 2004. Priority will also be given to the children of adult camp leaders. We hope to be able to accommodate all who are interested.

Teens (ages 13-17) who are willing to take a leadership role. Teen leaders need to contact Susan Fairhurst ASAP.

Arrival Time & Check in: All youth will check at 10:00 am July 11, 2004. Check in will take place in the Headquarters building of the Montana Air National Guard. Directions will be included in the confirmation letter.

COST: A camp fee has not yet been established. A nominal fee (\$35 or less) **may** be requested. Information about camp fees will be included in the confirmation letter.

Registration form Deadline: JUNE 30, 2004. All registration forms and fees must be received by this date. Late registrations will only be considered if space is available.

Transportation: Parents will need to arrange transportation to MTANG on July 11th and from Camp Rotary on July 15th. Please indicate if you are interested in forming car pools, and efforts will be made to assist.

Confirmation letter: A confirmation letter will be sent as registrations are approved, but NLT July 5th. This letter will include additional information.

ACTIVITIES: The Youth will participate in crafts, team sports /activities, hiking, art and community projects. Many of the activities, speakers and crafts will representative of other cultures in support of our International theme.

MEALS: Three meals a day and snacks are included. If children choose to bring food items, they will be kept in the main lodge and distributed as best fits into the camp agenda.

CAMP NURSE: A qualified Nurse will be on site at all times. She will need to review all registrations, and obtain additional health information if deemed necessary.

Registration: Completed Registration forms must be returned to Susan Fairhurst NLT June 30, 2004.

Questions? Please contact
Susan Fairhurst @ 791-0867 or 788-8967
susan.fairhurst@mtgre.ang.af.mil

MONTANA NATIONAL GUARD YOUTH CAMP

"Around the World in a Week" July 11 - 15, 2004,

Registration fees and forms due NLT June 30, 2004.

Although all completed registration forms will be considered for acceptance, priority will be given to youth who have had or will have a family member deployed in 2004. Also, priority will be given to the children of adult camp leaders. We hope to be able to accommodate all interested campers. Please complete one form per camper.

PLEASE PRINT LEGIBLY.

_____ Did you attend this camp before? Yes No
CHILD'S NAME, LAST, FIRST MI SEX AGE BIRTH DATE

_____ Shirt size (Adult) S M L XL _____
ADDRESS, STREET, CITY STATE, ZIP

PARENT/GUARDIAN (PLEASE PRINT) LAST, FIRST MI NAME:

_____ HOME PHONE: _____ WORK PHONE _____ CELL PHONE, OR WHERE YOU CAN BE REACHED _____

Status of Military Family member: Air / Army / Retired / Other _____ Deployed or scheduled for deployment in 2004 Yes/No

CAMP FEE: A nominal fee may be charged at the time acceptance (\$35 or less). The confirmation letter will include information on fees.

HEALTH HISTORY: To be completed by parent/guardian. All questions MUST BE ANSWERED

- Yes no Is the child in good health?
 Yes no Does the child suffers from any allergies? If yes please describe allergies and if medication is needed.
 Yes no Does the child have a current Tetanus shot (within 10 years)? Date? _____
 Yes no Is your child on medication? If so, list the medicine, dosage, and items/care needed:

Medicine: _____ **Dosage:** _____ **Times:** _____ **Care:** _____

Please bring with you all required medication and written direction for medication administration upon registration. If you do not bring required medication, the camper will not be allowed to attend.

Does your child require any special assistance? If yes, please list and explain on the back of this form.

Are there any activities that you prefer your child not to participate in? If yes, please list and explain on the back of this form.

Name of Physician, Address, and Telephone # _____

Insurance Company: _____ **Policy number:** _____

RETURN ALL COMPLETED FORMS AND FEES TO: Susan Fairhurst
(NLT June 30, 2004) 2800 Airport Ave B
Great Falls, MT 59404

A letter of confirmation with additional information will be sent to you, once your registration is accepted. Feel free to call Susan Fairhurst at 791-0867 or 788-8967. Or e-mail at susan.fairhurst@mtgrea.ang.af.mil

Parent or Guardian Please read this release, then sign and date:

I agree to hold harmless the State of Montana, Montana National Guard, and employees and volunteers thereof as it pertains to the administration and operation of the youth camp. In signing this application, I agree to attend the training sessions, if required. I further agree to abide by the decisions of the volunteer leadership of the Youth Camp and understand that the leadership is not based on military rank or position. I affirm that all the information I have provided is true and correct to the best of my knowledge.

Signature/date:

Office Use Only: Date application received: _____ Fee: _____ Check #: _____

Cash: _____ Special Needs: _____

Medication: _____ Cabin Assignment: _____

EANGMT NEWS

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