



MINUTES

of the South Dakota Enlisted Association
45th State Conference

15-17 April 04
Deadwood, SD

SDNGEA 45th STATE CONFERENCE "Deadwood Offers More in 2004" 15-17 April 2004

The South Dakota National Guard Enlisted Association Conference opened at 0800, 16 April 2004. Colors were advanced by the Color Guard, and the body recited the Pledge of Allegiance. The Invocation was delivered by Dan Regan. President Craig Towns welcomed everyone to the 45th SDNGEA State Conference.

The conference was called to order by President Towns.

Treasurer's Report was given by Randy Decker. The report was handed out for review of changes. Also, an account was opened in Rapid City. This was a response for ease of business transactions for a treasurer located in Rapid City. Both accounts, Air Guard Federal Credit Union and Army Guard FCU, will remain open. However, the active account will remain with the bank closest to the current treasurer. The report was accepted as given.

Area V Report was given by Ed Revell. Membership is doing well right now, and we are also financially sound. The National Conference is 22-25 August 2004 in Louisville, KY and we are looking for participants. The report was accepted as given.

Membership Report was given by Gary Kafka. We have a slight decrease in membership— currently 2750-combined life and annual members— due in large part to all the unit deployments. Of our current paid memberships, 38% are E1-E4, 36% are E5-E6, 17% are E7-E9, 8% are from the retired section. Our active Army and Air Guard total participation rate is averaged at 65% with a total of 239 combined life and annual paid retired members. And this year, we had 67 applications for the USAA sponsorship membership. Our goal for the upcoming year, however, is 3000 members. The report was accepted as given.

Junior Enlisted Report was given by Wayne Fokken on behalf of the Junior Enlisted Council (JEC). The JEC has been a bit stagnant on both the Army and the Air side of the house. This is an issue across the country. Our young members are very important to the organization as a whole, and it is important to help these group of individuals get involved. We are looking for ways to boost morale and increase participation. Some ideas included voting at least two full time AGR or Technician JECs to maintain a working council. The report was accepted as given.

State Sponsorship Report was given by Bruce Anderson. Amy DeFonce from HHB 147th FA and Josh Stroschein from the 114 MXS. We would still like to see lots of names submitted for sponsorship for next year. Eligibility is limited to E1-E4, and a letter is no longer needed to submit a name. Also, Technicians are no longer excluded from the pool of eligible soldiers and airmen for the Sponsorship program. The report was accepted as given.

Legislative Committee Report was given by Donavon List. In the year of 2004, we have received six CALLs from EANGUS as of 16 April with more calls coming in all the time. The SDNG must continue to contact our State and Legislators, Senators, and Representatives in Washington, DC regarding issues that concern the guard. The SD Legislators will listen to the concerns of the SDNG and can be contacted either in person, by e-mail, telephone or through the mail. Report accepted as given.

Distinguished Guests representing the SDNG Museum, Lt Col Reid Christopherson and Lt Col Vern Erickson gave the SDNG Museum

report. The museum facilities are constantly being enhanced along with increased storage space. Also, the museum is returning to its roots and will again be part of the SD Military Veterans Affairs. Along with this move comes a full time employer (director) that reports to the SD Military Veterans Affairs office. The Minute Man Fund will have a voted-in Board of Directors. Finally the financial health of the museum is in good condition. Report accepted as given.

Distinguished Guest, the Adjutant General MG Michael Gorman, addressed the body. The mobilizations have been going very well over the past two and a half years, and he is extremely impressed. We need to continue to take care of our soldiers/airmen and their families, and this is done in different ways like informing them about their veterans benefits. Next, he explained that some of the deployed units were scheduled to come home after spending one year, boots on ground, but it recently was extended up to 90 days. However, he knows how these individuals will continue to put forth the same outstanding effort as they have since day one. We just need to continue to give our support where we can. Then, he spoke of the value of this association and how it has been personnel-driven. He extended a big thank you to the soldiers, airmen and their families for the sacrifices they have made and the excellent job they have done.

Distinguished Guest representing the NAUGUS Insurance program, Jim McEwen, gave the insurance report. Participation has increased from last year. However, there are still 3,567 individuals that are still not involved.

Distinguished Guest and president of the Auxiliary, Mary Williams, addressed the group concerning the need for more members and encouraged more spouse participation.

Audit Committee Report was given by 1STSGT Edwards. The audit was accomplished that morning, and the books were complete. Report was accepted as given.

Dan Reagan conducted the Memorial Service.

Nominations Committee Report was given by Ed Revell.

President – Ben Lamp

1st Vice President – Wayne Fokken

2nd Vice President – John Mimmack, Randy Decker

Treasurer – None

Committee-Members- at-Large – Josh Wermers, Scott Schmitt, Dale Greenfield, Dan Regan

At the time of election of officers, Ed Revell will ask for any nominations from the floor. Report accepted as given.

Neil Harris discussed the importance of a couple of steps for those members who have been activated since 11 September 2001. There are basically three things that need to be accomplished in order to register yourself as a veteran. First, you need to register you DD Form 214 with our County Courthouse. Next, you need to visit the County Veterans Service Officer. And finally, it is recommended each individual with veteran status join a service organization.
Conference recessed until 0830 Saturday.

Reconvened Conference at 0830 on 17 April 2004.

President Towns called the meeting to order 0830, 17 April 2004.

Credential Report was given by Gary Kafka. Thirty-three proxy letters were reviewed and approved. All annual membership calculations and documents were reviewed for accuracy and completeness to verify individual unit level voting strength reporting. The final tally of 2750 members is submitted. Report accepted as given.

Time and Place Committee Report was given by Wayne Fokken. The conference has been held west river two years in a row and should possibly look to share the wealth a bit in the coming years. Next conferences will be held in Pierre (2005), TBA (2006), and Huron tentatively (2007). Report accepted as given.

Position Evaluation Committee report was given by Wayne Fokken. All position descriptions were evaluated with two descriptions requiring changes. 1) Committee-Members-At-Large: areas needed to be redefined. Copies of changes were distributed to the body. 2) Battalion/Squadron Representatives: item #2 which read, "Shall visit all units being represented at least once a year" will be changed to read, "Shall communicate with all units represented in each area at least quarterly." Report accepted as given.

2004 Scholarship Report was given by Wayne Fokken. There were nineteen scholarship applications received and judged for this year's competition. The combined Officer and Enlisted Associations were able to give out two \$1000 Duke Corning Scholarships (Brandon Frock of Hurley and Hayley Speirs of Rapid City), one \$500 USAA scholarship (Nikol Moyer of Sioux Falls), and one \$100 CW2 Mallow Memorial scholarship (Scott Forbes of Moberg). Report accepted as given.

Ways and Means Committee Report was given by Scott Schmitt. This year, the majority of income for the SDNGEA this past year came from membership dues, insurance offered through the Association, ECHO income, and the scholarship program. Next, the SDNGEA approved support for the Black Hills Veterans Appreciation Marathon set for September 2004, promising to be a profitable endeavor for the association. More information will be available for this event in the following months. Finally, any fundraising ideas any member may have, please direct them to the Ways and Means Committee for consideration. Report accepted as given.

State Command Chief Master Sergeant Ed Revell presented Nancy and Al Hyatt with the Distinguished Service Award for all they have done for the ECHO and the association in general.

Budget Report was given by Randy Decker. Copies of the budget were distributed to the body. The biggest concern to the bottom line is membership. We need to boost our membership numbers in order to keep the numbers in the black. Every current member is charged with getting the numbers back up where they need to be. Report accepted as given.

Resolutions Committee Report was submitted by Bruce Anderson. There were five resolutions that were discussed by the committee. Hard copies have been distributed for considerations. Committee recommends pass.

#2004-01: Eliminations of National Guard and Reserve Equipment Accounts. Resolution passed.

#2004-02: VA Home Loan Program. Resolution passed.

#2004-03: Tri-Care Dental Insurance. Resolution passed.

#2004-04: Title 32 Veteran Status. Resolution passed.

#2004-05: Recognition of Host Units. Resolution passed.

Report accepted as given.

Young Hero's Committee Report was given by President Towns. There were 120 recipients up to the age of 19 years in the state of South Dakota that received the Young Hero Medal since the program originated in May 1991. Diane Valland has volunteered to become the West River Coordinator for this program. If you would like the opportunity to be part of a presentation or if you have somebody to recognize for their courage, please submit your information to Chief Towns (605) 988-5719. Report accepted as given.

Athletic Committee Report was given by Josh Wermers. The athletic tournaments are as follows:

Softball Tournament - TBA

Motorcycle Rally - Randy Decker, 1085th MED CO

Snowmobile Rally - TBA

Pool Tournament - TBA

ATV Rally - TBA

Report accepted as given.

Publications Report was given by Ed Revell (Kim Chase was unable to attend). There was a show of hands for members of the body that would be interested in receiving their copy of the ECHO via email and forego receiving the traditional hardcopy. The majority of the body was interested in this option and will be looked into more. Deadline to submit materials for the upcoming ECHO is 15 May 2004. Report accepted as given.

Constitution and By-Laws Committee Report was given by John Mimmack. There were a total of five changes submitted and will take action on three.

1) Add a new Section to the Constitution, Article 1, Section 2, motion to be TABLED.

2) Add to end of existing paragraph in Constitution, Article 2, Section 1 as printed in the ECHO. ADOPTED.

3) Add to end of paragraph of the By-Laws Article 1, Section 1 as printed in the ECHO

NOTE: It has been motioned and seconded to suspend the rules of notification on Changes to the Constitution and By-Laws. PASSED.

Distinguished Guest Senator Tom Daschle addressed the body.

A motion has been made that Change 3, Article 1, Section 1 should be changed to read: The Executive Council shall have the power to elect and fill vacancy of officers that may be caused due to death, resignation or disqualification of such officer. In the event an officer of this Association violates any article of our Constitution and By-Laws, the Executive Council may remove such individual by 2/3^{rds} vote of the full council (voting members) by presence or proxy at any regular or special Council meeting. PASSED.

Distinguished Guest Col Spencer Hawley addressed the body. He commended the association for all its hard work resulting in wonderful benefits for the military members of the SDNG. Col Hawley also thanked the association for allowing the Officer to share the location during this year's Annual Conference.

Old Business:

New Business:

A motioned was made to move the last section of Change 2 to Constitution, Article 2, Section 5 and add to it to read, "Members will not endorse, support or oppose any political candidate or political campaign in the name of (SDNGEA) South Dakota National Guard Enlisted Association. Endorsement or support will be determined at the discretion of the Executive Council." PASSED.

Mark Thomas spoke to the body about the Council-approved fundraiser, the *Veterans Memorial March* scheduled for September 2004. This year will be relatively small, but it's a stepping stone to hopefully a very lucrative endeavor for the Association.

President's Report was given by Craig Towns. He began by thanking the Association and its members for a great term. He talked about the great strides on Capitol Hill with bills such as permanent TRI-CARE, Early Retirement, Concurrent Receipt, and Survivor Benefit Plans and how we need to continue the outstanding efforts of the Association as a whole.

Nomination and election of officers:

New officers for the upcoming year are: President - Ben Lamp, 1st Vice President - Wayne Fokken, 2nd Vice President - Randy Decker, Treasurer - Nancy Ausland, Committee-Members-At-Large - Josh Wermers, Scott Schmitt, Dale Greenfield, and Dan Regan. Passed.

Benediction by Dan Regan. Colors were retired by the Color Guard. Adjournment of the 45th Annual Conference of the South Dakota National Guard Enlisted Association 1230, 17 April 2004.