

SDNEGEA 47th ANNUAL STATE CONFERENCE
Time to Mix in 2006

President Ben Lamp called the meeting to order at 0800 hours on 28 April 2006 at the Sioux Falls Convention Center in Sioux Falls, SD. The morning was started as a joint session with the NGASD in order to accommodate all the guest speakers.

Colors were posted by the Air and Army National Guard Color Guard.

The National Anthem was sung by the Roosevelt High School Concert Choir and the Pledge of Allegiance was conducted.

Invocation was given by Chaplain Stevens from the Air Guard.

A memorial service in honor of our fallen soldiers and airmen was conducted by John Mimmack.

Presidents Ben Lamp and LTC Comes gave their welcoming comments.

Distinguished Guest, Brooke Nicolson, from the Sheraton Hotel and Convention Center welcomed everyone to Sioux Falls and thanked us for conducting our conference with them.

Distinguished Guest, Mark Gerhart, from Congresswoman Stephanie Herseth's office was present to read a letter from Representative Herseth that addressed the current issues the Legislature is dealing with in regards to military benefits and TriCare.

Distinguished Guest Jim McEwen gave the insurance report. He reported what each of the MACOM's have for participation. He also explained that we would most likely not get a refund this year due to the increase in benefits they have had to pay out this last year. He encouraged units to invite him to their SRP's and drills in order to speak to the members about the insurance available to them.

Distinguished Guest LTC Reid Christopherson, Museum Chairperson, gave an update on the National Guard Museum in Pierre and encouraged everyone to come see it in September. The Museum Director, Robert Kusser, also was present and gave a more detailed report on the status of the museum. It is doing well with visitation up the last 2 years. It will need to expand or will need to continue to rotate its displays periodically in order to allow visitors to see everything. Mr. Kusser explained that one way to support the museum was through donations. President Ben Lamp presented Bob Kusser with a check from the Enlisted Association. Maj Gen Gorman and LTC Erickson presented museum donors with awards of appreciation for their support.

Distinguished Guest, Senator John Thune, addressed the body. He spoke of the issues facing this nation, its military members, and the continuing War on Terrorism. He re-

iterated the fact that this war will continue on and regardless of how we got their, we need to see it through to the end for the sake of our freedom and that of the Iraqi's.

Distinguished Guest, Ann Bilka, staff assistant for Senator Tim Johnson, addressed the body also. She read a letter written by Senator Johnson explaining what he was active in and working towards in order to benefit military members and veterans.

President Ben Lamp gave a Black Hills Veterans Honor March update. This past year was the 2nd annual march. We had 47 marchers and 1 runner. Next year we hope to have 350 marchers. He explained the ways to get involved with the march where through donations, volunteerism, or participation.

There was a 1 minute break in place.

Distinguished Guest, CSM of the National Guard, CSM John Gipe, addressed the body at 0925 hours.

Distinguished guest, General Gorman presented Retired State CSM Les Cummings with a plaque in recognition and appreciation of his efforts to grow and develop Operation Opening Doors designed to help injured veterans returning to their homes.

Distinguished guest, Terry Ellis, from the Sioux Falls Convention and Visitors Bureau was present to address the body.

Distinguished guest, Governor Michael Rounds, was introduced by General Gorman. Governor Rounds addressed the body at 1000 hours and then helped to present the soldier and airmen with their 20 year awards. Also assisting were CSM Gipe, CSM Bekeart, & Command Chief Handel. Lori Hoop also received an award for 20 years of Federal service.

Roll call was taken and a quorum was present in order to conduct business.

President Lamp took time to recognize all the past presidents in the room, CSM Bekeart & Command Chief Handel, and all the 1st time conference attendees.

A motion was made by John Mimmack and 2nd by Josh Wermers to deviate from the agenda.

Roger Neiderwerder gave the Audit Committee Report which met on 27 April 06. Report was accepted with no discussion.

Nancy Ausland gave the Treasurers report. She explained the miscellaneous \$45 was due to returned check charges and the \$50 was for donations to families of fallen soldiers. Nancy Ausland made a motion to accept the report as given. Don Stewart 2nd the motion and it carried without any discussion.

Gerald Arntz gave the membership report which showed that membership is up 8% from last year, but we still have a long way to go to reach 100% in SD. Total membership this year was 2862. He stated that we need to talk to our units and let them know of the benefits the association provides and fights for. There was discussion on the total number assigned. Membership numbers were determined as of 1 April 2006. Report was accepted as given. Awards were presented to the units reaching 100% membership.

MG Gorman addressed the body at 1128 hours.

Area V report was given by Wayne Fokken because Tim Wolf was unable to attend. He spoke of membership, the issues with it and ways to grow our membership. He also explained about the We Care for America program. One of the major issues for us this year is Tri Care for all soldiers and airmen.

EANGUS Report was also given by Wayne Fokken. This explained the tracking of the future force structure, budgets, Tri Care, new retirement age, and changing the MGIB to fall under VA control. The EANGUS website has been reworked and everyone should go take a look at it.

The State Conference Sponsorship Report was given by Bruce Anderson. This conference did start with 5 sponsors, but due to unforeseen circumstances, we only had 2; Jai Mimmack and Hollie Dearduff. Report was accepted as given.

Cory Dreesman gave the Junior Enlisted Report. He would like to incorporate the Army Junior Council in with the Enlisted Association. They are trying to find ways to raise money in order to send junior members to State and National Conferences. Wayne Fokken discussed the need to grow the Junior Enlisted in the Association. Report was accepted as given.

Presentations by Cities for future conferences were started off with Dale Greenfield talking about 2007's conference in Huron. The dates will be 19-21 April 2007 in Huron, SD. Neil Harris discussed the plans for 2008 in Spearfish. The dates will be 17-19 April 2008 at the Holiday Inn in Spearfish.

Administrative announcements were conducted and the session was recessed at 1218 hours until the next day at 0830 hours.

Meeting was reconvened at 0833 hours on 29 April 2006.

President Lamp thanked everyone for showing up on the last day for the business meeting.

Credentials Committee met on 28 April in Ballroom A. The report was given by Dale Greenfield and the units submitting proxy letters were read off. The report was accepted as read with no discussion.

Time and Place Committee met at 1230 hours in Ballroom A on 28 April 06. It is decided that Huron will host the 2007 conference and Spearfish will host the 2008 conference. No other units have offered to host the 2009 or 2010 conference at this time. There was discussion in regards to the timeline it takes to plan a conference which is at least 2 years. This is in order to lock in a place and hotel to have it. If no unit or town steps up to host it, then it will be appointed by the executive council. The report was accepted as read.

Position Evaluation Committee met at 1300 hours on 28 April 06. It is reported that the responsibilities of the positions are written in the Constitution and Bylaws, but is not a part of it. There was discussion about the changes to make to some of the positions. There was discussion about changing the cutoff date for 100% membership to 1 April of each year. It was decided to retract that change, so the cutoff date will remain 31 December of each year. Report was accepted.

Ways and Means Committee met on 28 April 06. We are looking for the BHVHM to be the main fundraiser for the Association but not for a few years yet. Since the BHVHM needs to grow, anyone can support it one of 3 ways: 1) Participating as a marcher 2) Volunteering to help with setup and working the rest stops or 3) Sponsorship for the mile markers or for the rest stops. ECHO ads have become the main source for income for the Association since we have changed printers. Now the majority of the money for ads goes directly to the Association instead of to the printer. The report was accepted as given.

Distinguished Guest, Barb Kocer, Auxiliary President, addressed the body at 0904 hours.

Distinguished Guest, LTC Marte Comes, NGASD President, addressed the body at 0910 hours. He proposed to have another joint conference in the Rapid City in 2010.

President Lamp relinquished the gavel to 1st Vice, Wayne Fokken.

Constitution and Bylaws Committee met on 28 April 06. John Mimmack and Bruce Anderson were present. They joined their committee meeting with the Resolutions Committee meeting. No changes were submitted this year. Report was accepted as given.

Young Heroes Committee met on 28 April 06. They had only 1 nomination this year. Applications for this are in the ECHO every issue. Please let Craig Towns or Cathy Anderson know if you would like to nominate a young person for the Young Heroes Award. Report was accepted as read.

Legislative Committee report was given on the current bills and issues in the SD legislature this year. Report is available upon request. Report was accepted as given.

Budget Report had no new information to distribute from the Treasurer's Report. Report accepted as given.

Publications Committee gave their report. There was discussion about the ECHO's new publisher and how our cost has significantly decreased. Biggest change is now we receive more money from our Ads due to this change in publisher. Recommendations were that we get members to sell the Ads for the ECHO. We can design an ad for them or they can send us the information and layout they want, i.e. business card, etc. We do need to update our mailing list so that it includes our legislators, etc. We need a new editor since Kim Chase has decided to step down from that position. If anyone is interested, let Nancy Ausland know. There was discussion about getting the ECHO online, but need to make sure it is mailed as well. Report was accepted as given.

The gavel was tuned back over to President Lamp.

Resolutions Committee met at 1300 hours on 28 April 06 at the Administration Room. They reviewed the resolutions and came up with 8 that needed to be voted on and sent forward to Nationals.

2006-01 – pertains to the US Dept of VA re-evaluate their rates for Veteran's Group Life Insurance to better fit the budget of discharged or retired soldiers. Motion was made by Don List to support this resolution. It was 2nd by Josh Wermers. Craig Towns made a suggestion to change the wording to read service member instead of soldier. Motion Carried.

2006-02 – pertains to relief for National Guard members to be eligible for relief through the Service member's Civil Relief Act in order to not have to repay for courses that they were pulled out of for a deployment. Dean Flegge made a motion to accept this resolution and Don Stewart 2nd this motion. Motion Carried.

2006-03 – pertains to Congress authorizing and appropriating funds which would allow all members of the National Guard to access TRICARE coverage on an affordable cost-share basis, without any restrictions. Motion was carried by Craig Towns to accept resolution and 2nd by Pat Jones. Motion carried.

2006-04 – pertains to tax credit for employers of National Guard members and for self employed members. Motion made by Siedslaw to accept resolution and it was 2nd by Jim Blackwell. Motion carried.

2006-05 – pertains to the National Guard AGR and Technicians should receive the same incentives as their Active and Reserve components. Pat Jones made a motion to accept resolution as presented and 2nd by Bjorn Henstein. Motion carried.

2006-06 – pertains to the SGLI insurance amount for dependent children to be raised from \$10,000 to \$25,000 at no additional cost. Dallas Vallery made a motion to accept the resolution and John Mimmack 2nd the motion. Motion carried.

2006-07 – pertains to reducing the age at which a member of the National Guard receives their pension. Don List made a motion to accept the resolution and Roger Hansen 2nd it. Motion carried.

2006-08 – pertains to recognition of host unit. Motion carried unanimously for acceptance.

Insurance committee report had no new information from the report given on the 28th.

Athletics Committee met on 28 April 06. They discussed the past years events and the coming years events. Snow mobile rally did occur. There will be a bowling tournament in Huron in May and an ATV rally in Rapid City this summer. Snow mobile rally will be held in January and a Softball tournament in July or August. Volunteers are needed for any other athletic event. Report was accepted as given.

The gavel was relinquished to 1st Vice, Wayne Fokken.

President's Report was given by Ben Lamp. He discussed our membership increase and that we are at #3 nationally for our percentage of membership, but we need to keep pushing. Tri Care became available to airmen and soldiers, but we need to keep the price down. The Associations financial health at the state and national is great right now. We need to continue to have joint conferences periodically in order to keep current on one another's issues. The BHVHM was discussed and President Lamp challenged each unit to have at least 1 team participate or work at the march. There will be a committee added for the march. We need to remember that our association is here to fight for the benefits of our member, not to deal with moral issues, etc. President Lamp closed with addressing each member to make a difference for our units. Need to talk about the association and let people know what it is about. Report was accepted and the gavel was returned to President Lamp.

Nominations Committee report was given by Craig Towns. Nominations that were received were: Wayne Fokken for President, Randy Decker and Gary Kafka for 1st Vice President, and Scott Schmitt for 2nd Vice President. There was no discussion and report was accepted as given.

CSM Bekeart and CCM Handel addressed the body at 1044 hours in regards to changes in the force and budget with the National Guard.

There was no Old Business.

New Business

Tashie Moore presented the idea of investing extra money in savings into some type of account in order to help make money for the Association. We used to hold a CD and recently we have had about \$10,000 above our budget. A motion was made by Tashie Moore to invest our savings in a short term CD or something similar. Don List 2nd that motion. There was discussion about the new president establishing an investment committee. Motion carried.

President Lamp discussed the Bill Homan Award. He then made a motion to establish 2 new awards given by the Enlisted Association. The first would be the Bob Spencer Award which would be given to an outstanding retired Airman. The second would be the John Ball Award which would be given to an outstanding retired Soldier. The motion was 2nd by Don List. Motion carried.

Craig Towns, who represented the entire body, thanked Ben Lamp for his service as President the last 2 years.

Pat Jones brought up the discussion on attire for the conference. Attire is the decision of the President and the council and doesn't need to be voted on. Do need to put attire on the registration form.

Bruce Anderson addressed the body in regards to shortening the conference to a two day conference in order to entice higher attendance. This would be either a Thursday – Friday or a Friday – Saturday conference. Ben Lamp discussed having the council meeting on Thursday and starting business at 1300 hrs on Friday to allow the M-day soldiers to only take 1 day off work. There would be a social on Friday night, with business meeting continuing on Saturday morning. There will be only 1 day of activities, and the banquet on Saturday night. Next year might not work because of contracts, but look beyond that.

SGM Birnbaum addressed the uniform issue for the banquet and it was decided that the new President would decide what the uniform will be for future conferences.

Nominations for Elected offices: New officers for the next year will be: President – Wayne Fokken, 1st Vice – Gary Kafka, 2nd Vice – John Mimmack, Treasurer – Nancy Ausland, Committee Members at Large – Josh Wermers, Tashie Moore, Michael Schwans, and Bjorn Henstein.

New officers were installed and administrative announcements were made.

Meeting was adjourned at 1245 hours on 29 April 2006, bringing the 47th Annual Enlisted Association State Conference, to an end.