

62nd SDNG State Enlisted Conference
Fort Meade, SD
April 16-17, 2021

The 62nd Annual State Enlisted Conference was called to order at 1300 hours on Friday, 16 April 2021. The Colors were posted by the Rushmore Squadron Civil Air Patrol and the Pledge of Allegiance was led by President Derek Jaeger. The invocation and memorial service was led by SSG (Ret) Jim Blackwell. President Jaeger welcomed all of the attendees and introduced the following guests: CSM Patrick Couser, CMSgt Brett Cownie, CMSgt Troy Erlandson, Area V Director Chuck Kasin, Past Presidents Josh Wermers and Don List, former Army CSM Bob Aiken, and State CSM (Ret) Mike Birnbaum.

Congressional Delegate: Senator Larry Zikmund, District 14 from Sioux Falls, Air Force Veteran. Provided updates on things being worked in Legislature. Spoke about the new State Veterans Cemetery which was approved back in 2018. It is expected to be dedicated this year on Memorial Day. The State endowment fund has raised over \$840,000. Senator Zikmund is a true supporter of the Veterans and their families and encouraged our members to reach out to him for bill support on our resolutions.

Award Presentations: Fred Nelson (State Commander) from the American Legion and State CSM Patrick Couser announced the award recipients for 2020 and 2021. All Soldiers, Airman, and NCOs of the Year were listed and recognized if present.

President Jaeger gave a special welcome to all of our Conference Vendors.

1st Business Session

ROLL

Roll was taken by Rorie Gregor and the following members were present: Derek Jaeger, Josh Guthmiller, Kayleigh Cihak, Jeremy Eccleston, Don Kranz, proxy for JP Hanson, Rick Vanden Hoek, Charles Fincher, Joshua Odea, Joshua Schaefer, Meagan Krahn, Helen Juelfs, Tabitha Carr proxy for Sarah Henle, Charles Butler, Joshua Wermers, Kayleigh Cihak proxy for Louis Clement, Charles Fincher proxy for Briana Grage, Bruce Anderson proxy for David Frock, and Robert Aiken. Enough were present for a quorum.

A motion was made by Don Kranz for the President to be able to deviate from the agenda as needed and it was seconded by Dallas Vallery.

MINUTES

The minutes from the council meeting in February were published in the Echo and copies were provided to the attendees to review. The only change that was noted was the date for the next council meeting under the adjournment. It should read 15 April 2021 instead of 16 April 2021. Neil Harris made a motion to make the correction and Don Kranz seconded it. Motion carried.

Area V Auxiliary Director – Edna Steinberg. SD really leads the way on legislative reports. Noted that retirees will all need to go in for new CAC cards.

Area V Report – Chuck Kasin is the EANGUS Area V chair. Noted some of the 2021 NDAA approved provisions that are priorities in legislation. Some of the benefits of being an EANGUS member:

scholarships - must be a member to apply, professional development, networking with other members in other states. They just kicked off the 2nd fitness challenge. Another benefit is financial assistance under the We Care for America program. EANGUS has worked with the American Red Cross and USAA to establish a no-interest loan. EANGUS announced the selection of SGM Matthew Krenz as the new Executive Director. He replaces Frank Yoakaum in this position. We have a new Legislative Director, Kevin Hollinger. There is a new online store so take a look. The Legislative workshop was held virtually in February. The National Conference is still scheduled to be hosted in Albuquerque, New Mexico in August. The Area V Caucus will be held in Deadwood, SD in May. EANGUS is the only professional organization that works solely for Enlisted Soldiers.

Video address from MG Marlette.

State CSM Patrick Couser addressed the conference attendees and gave a special thanks to our retirees sitting at the front table. We are here because they paved the way for us. CSM encouraged everyone to bring a friend next year in order to improve our numbers and get more members involved. We all need to share the story of the association and what it can do for our enlisted members. He also talked about the We Care for America program that helped support our Soldiers this last year during COVID. If we lose these benefits, we're not getting them back. He thanked everyone for what they do.

114th FW CMSgt Troy Erlandson gave a brief update on the FW and the changes that have been happening. He also thanked everyone for their efforts and support in the Enlisted Association.

20-year presentations – In attendance were SFC Anson Juelfs and SFC Rorie Gregor.

The Colorado Tech Representative talked about their scholarship opportunities. Every year they award 50 full scholarships.

Auxiliary President, Kayleen Meyers, announced their recipient for a \$250 scholarship. The scholarship was awarded to Alexis. Going to really push membership this next year. The Enlisted Association presented the Auxiliary with a \$600 donation since they were unable to make their annual donation in 2020.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Life Insurance Report - Josh Schaefer serves as President of the life insurance board, and updated the association on our current numbers. Enrollment as of 1 January 2021 was 497, and since then we have gained an additional 293 which brings our total to 790. This year we paid out \$15,500 to each association. Our current trust balance is \$52,102. One change this last year is that AFBA is sending a representative to brief the units on the benefits, and our main point of contact is Brad Howell. We no longer have the civilian administrator position that Dave Burr was sitting in. We've gained several enrollments just by having AFBA go out to the units. Filed as presented.

Treasurers Report – Kayleigh Cihak – As of 16 April 2021 the association has \$79,569.07 in the business checking account and \$50,516.41 in the business market rate savings account at Wells Fargo. There is also a CD worth \$7,704.74 at Dakota Bank in Watertown. The treasurer, Kayleigh Cihak, will meet with Bob Aiken and Bruce Anderson at a later date following the State Conference in order to produce a full detailed report of the Enlisted Associations finances. The itemized report will be published in the next ECHO. Kayleigh Cihak made a motion to accept this report as presented and Chad Hartley seconded the motion. Motion carried

Budget Committee Report – Kayleigh Cihak – After the Special Conference last year and due to COVID, business was not conducted as normal and therefore no budget was ever submitted on behalf of the President. Since last year’s report we spent \$32,496.33, earned \$35,772.83, and currently have \$79,569.07 in checking and \$50,516.41 in savings. Kayleigh made a motion to accept this report as presented. Filed as presented.

Audit Committee – Bob Aiken – After reviewing all accounts there were no discrepancies found. All balances on the business checking, market share savings, and the CD have been verified. The committee plans to meet again within the next month to get a more in-depth audit accomplished prior to our 2021 taxes being submitted. Bob Aiken made a motion to accept the report as presented. Filed as presented.

Scholarship Report – Josh Guthmiller – We had 19 very competitive applications made up of Soldiers, Airman, and dependents. The board was made up of three professionals from within the community; one field grade officer with a Master’s Degree, one BDE Staff NCO, and a senior NCO. The applications were reviewed and assessed based on completion, letters of recommendation, and grade point averages. There were four scholarship recipients for 2021. The two Major General Duane L. “Duke” Corning Memorial Scholarships for \$1000 each go to: Cade Jacobson who is the son of COL Joseph Jacobson of JFHQ. Cade will be attending SD School of Mines & Technology in the fall and majoring in Computer Science. Jenna Jacobson who is the daughter of COL (Ret) Scott Jacobson. Jenna will be attending Dickinson State University and majoring in Bachelor of Science in Nursing. The USAA Scholarship for \$1000 goes to Elisabeth Ortiz. Elisabeth is the daughter of 1SG Kristi Ortiz of HQ, 196th RTI. She will be attending Dakota Wesleyan University and majoring in Nursing. The CW2 Darren Mallow Memorial Scholarship for \$100 goes to Alyssa Juelfs. Alyssa is an enlisted member in the 109th Engineer Bn as a Forward Signal Specialist. Alyssa is attending Dakota State University and majoring in Secondary Math Education with a Computer Technology minor. There are a lot of scholarship opportunities that are available to our members and their families. Motion was made to accept this report as presented. Filed as presented.

State Conference Sponsorship Report – Bruce Anderson – The sponsorship program solicits members who have never attended a conference in order to give them an idea of what goes on at the conference and to gain their support. The sponsorship committee is flexible and will accept names up until the day of the conference. This year we recognized SGT David Kelley out of the 147th FSC. Motion was made to accept this report as presented. Filed as presented.

Investment Committee Report – Bruce Anderson – The action item that was passed in 2019 was not completed. We were to reinvest the CD from Wells Fargo of \$31,731 into American Funds with Modern Woodman of America. After discussing this with Modern Woodman and the IRS, the committee opted to disregard the motion on the grounds of “best for the organization”. Perm MW comments on investing money with a c19, non-profit, is very paper intensive and the IRS keeps a close eye on such investments. The Wells Fargo CD was closed and deposited into our checking in the full amount of \$31,731.00. The committee recommended investing into another CD with better interest rates. Motion was made to accept this report as presented. Filed as presented.

Awards Report – Derek Jaeger – The SD National Guard Enlisted Association Standing Proud Awards program was established to recognize individuals and units who, by their superior performance or service of a meritorious nature make major contributions to the well-being of this association and its membership.

This year we were proud to present the Outstanding Service Award to Kim Chase. Throughout her years as the Webmaster for the SDNGEA website, Kim has always ensured the site was up to date, accessible, and that members were properly trained on making updates. She has shown initiative and willingness to step-up when needed and has contributed new ideas and dedicated her time and efforts to the betterment of the association. The 2020 and 2021 Airman and Soldier of the Year recipients were recognized. Award recipients for 2020 - Soldier of the Year: SPC Dominick Schoeberl, 200th Engineer Company. NCO of the Year: SFC Brian Voight, 881st Troop Command. Airman of the Year: SrA Tate Scotting, 114th FW Munitions. NCO of the Year: TSgt Derek Jaeger, 114th FW Electronic Countermeasures. SNCO of the Year: SMSgt Chad Weinacht, 114th Mx Group. First Sergeant of the Year: MSgt Jonathan Leffring, 114th FW AMXS. Award recipients for 2021 - Soldier of the Year: SGT Gregory Mehlbrech, 147th Field Artillery. NCO of the Year: SGT Mackenzie Harvey, 152nd CSSB. Airman of the Year: SSgt Tyler Thill, 114th FW Security Forces. NCO of the Year: SSgt Kirsten Ahlschlager, 114th FW Weapons. SNCO of the Year: CMSgt Jessica Meyers, 114th FW Munitions Superintendent. First Sergeant of the Year: SMSgt Nichole Gruber, 114th FW Civil Engineering. Congratulations to all award winners! Motion was made to accept this report as presented. Filed as presented.

Nominations Preliminary Report – Josh Wermers – Received 1 nomination for the following position: Don Kranz (2nd Vice). Motion to accept this report. Filed as presented.

Legislative Report – Josh Wermers – Keep a look out for “The Call” from the National Association on your email. Sign up at EANGUS.org. Our calls and emails assist in getting legislation passed. Share your ideas and the ideas of your Soldiers and Airman. See handouts for further details. Motion was made to accept this report as presented. Filed as presented.

Black Hills Veterans March – Josh Wermers – We had a great event this last September with over 260 people registered. The committee is off to a good start already for this year. Currently rebuilding the website and had registration open, but hit a setback due to the registration provider closing their doors. Nancy Ausland is working on a new registration form with RunReg and should be completed soon. Looking to fill our Advertising/Marketing Chair and requesting help with the Finish Line. The committee donated to four different organizations this last year: The Veterans Helping Hands Project, The SD Veterans Cemeteries Support Council, Black Hills Health Care System, and Mission 22. Giving back to the Enlisted Association by becoming a Platinum Corporate Partner. Motion was made to accept this report as presented. Filed as presented.

2022 State Conference Update – Neil Harris – Next year’s conference will be co-located with the Officers in Rapid City. Currently contracted with the Ramkota hotel. The conference will take place 21-23 April 2022. Please email harris@rap.midco.net if interested in helping or have ideas for next year’s State Conference.

A point of order was made to move the start time for Saturday, 17 April 2021 from 0800 to 0900. Business session was put into recess at 1540 hours until Saturday morning at 0900 hours.

2nd Business Session – 17 April 2021

President Derek Jaeger called the 62nd Annual State Enlisted Conference back into session at 0900 hours on Saturday, 17 April 2021.

Scholarship Award Presentation – Josh Guthmiller and Marty Baker from USAA recognized this year’s scholarship winners and had them come forward.

- Cade Jacobson – Major General Duane L. “Duke” Corning Memorial Scholarship for \$1000
- Jenna Jacobson – Major General Duane L. “Duke” Corning Memorial Scholarship for \$1000
- Elisabeth Ortiz – USAA Scholarship for \$1000

Membership Report – Tabitha Carr – Paid membership at all levels is 1652. In 2019 the paid membership was 2297 so we’ve dropped by 645. There were four units that reached 100% membership: 211th Eng Co, the 115th Signal Co, FSC 153rd Eng Bn, and Det 48 OSA Cmd. This past year the executive council voted to do a 25% online coupon for memberships. The Association also decided to donate \$1 for every Soldier that signed up online to their respective unit morale fund. Online membership seemed to increase from past years, but overall numbers are at the lowest they have been in many years. Made a motion to accept this report as presented. Filed as presented.

Credentials Report – Tabitha Carr read off all of the voting numbers for the units and the Executive Council members that were present. Filed as presented.

Ways & Means Committee Report – Kayleigh Cihak – The committee discussed reaching out to local Veteran Supporting and Veteran Owned businesses to place a direct link for their business on the resource page. A \$500 rate for a direct link on the website was discussed. As businesses agree and send in payment, they will be placed on our webpage at <https://sdngea.com/resources>. We will also reference www.veteranownedbusiness.com. Other income generating ideas include different types of raffles to include: gun raffles, coolers, lodging, and atv rentals. Resource Page Businesses: VA Home Loan Lenders, T Mobile-Mobile Hot Spot Contract, Swift Trucking Companies, Grantham University, Cabela’s/Bass Pro Shop, PenFed, NavyFed, Hilton, Jack’s Campers/Camping World, RING home alarms, Big Ass Fans, and Game Fish and Parks. Made a motion to accept this report as presented. Filed as presented.

Time and Place Report – Josh Guthmiller - The committee decided to reconvene at a later time to discuss future locations at a later time so more members would be present. Motion to accept this report as presented. Filed as presented.

Position Evaluation Committee Report – Josh Guthmiller – The committee meet Friday evening and reviewed the verbiage of the Constitution and By-Laws and noted a few minor changes and some suggestions to update positions. Encouraged further discussion on the Bn/Squadron Rep positions and the Committee Members at Large or Area Reps. Made a motion to accept this report as presented. Tabitha Carr expressed her experience as an Area Rep and that in recent years the people appointed in these positions have not been active in reaching out to their units. The question was brought up whether this position should stay a valid position or whether we remove it from our roster and By-Laws. Maybe more education and mentorship for the people assigned in these positions will help them understand their role better. Josh Wermers explained that the biggest perk to keeping both positions is that if the position is done correctly it pays your way to the meetings and conferences. It gives more voting purpose on the council.

Constitution and By Laws Committee Report – Bruce Anderson – He will make any necessary pen and ink changes as mentioned from the meeting. Bruce talked on the position changes and noted that we need to recruit or identify the right individuals that will be able to facilitate communication across the whole battalion. Open to discussion on how we can conduct business more efficiently. Made a motion to accept as presented. Filed as presented.

Young Heroes Committee Report – Kelsey Lambert – The Young Hero Program saw an influx of nominations and ceremonies during 2019 from previous years. A ceremony was conducted during the Harlem Globetrotters game in Rapid City. Unfortunately, with COVID we had to stop all ceremonies. Contact has been made with families that are pending ceremonies and the interest is still there. WE just need to find more ways to hold these ceremonies safely. Currently have six Young Heroes around the state waiting to schedule their ceremonies. We would like to see this program continue to grow so please submit your nominations and reach out if interested in helping. It was mentioned last year during the Special Conference that it would be beneficial to have two teams put together, one East River and one West River. This would allow for more ceremony availability and member involvement. Motion to accept this report as presented. Filed as presented.

Publications Committee Report – Sarah Callies – The deadline for submission to the summer ECHO is 15 May 2021. The Facebook page has been a great way to deliver information to our members. If anyone has any creative ideas to reach a broader audience please send them to Sarah. Also, working towards an online storage method for ECHO drafts to better assist publishers in the future. Motion to accept this report as presented. Filed as presented.

Resolutions Report – Courtney Tyrrell – The committee reviewed the 2018 and 2019 EANGUS and SDNGEA resolutions, in addition to discussing new ideas. The committee proposed eight new resolutions and reaffirmed one from 2019. Motion to accept this report as presented. Filed as presented.

2021 Resolution Voting – Courtney Tyrrell

Resolution 2021-01 – Retiree continued contributions to the Thrift Savings Plan. Allow retirees the opportunity to contribute retired pay to their existing TSP. Josh Guthmiller made a motion to approve; seconded by Kayleigh Cihak. Motion carried.

Resolution 2021-02 – 100% tuition assistance at State Sponsored Schools. Work together with NGAUS and the SD Military Affairs Department to come up with a plan to get a Governors Bill to support 100% Tuition Assistance. Kayleigh Cihak made a motion to approve; seconded by Dallas Vallery. Motion carried.

Resolution 2021-03 - Military Occupation compatibility with Civilian certificates. Find a way to connect the two skill sets to provide a certificate for the service member. Kayleigh Cihak made a motion to approve; seconded by Josh Wermers. Motion carried.

Resolution 2021-04 – Tricare for Grey Area Retirees – Provide a solution to bridge the gap and provide gray area retirees affordable Tricare coverage. Josh Guthmiller made a motion to approve; seconded by Dallas Vallery. Motion carried.

Resolution 2021-05 – Allow AGR's with USERRA rights to use T32 Military Leave. The SDNGEA urges state legislature to reinstate military leave for members covered under USERRA rights. Bruce Anderson made a motion to approve; seconded by Gordy Kotab. Motion carried.

Resolution 2021-06 – Automatic re-enrollment in Tricare Reserve Select (TRS) and current dental carrier after Active Duty time in which Tricare Prime automatically kicked in. We would like Tricare and dental carriers to auto-enroll you back into Tricare Reserve Select and dental coverage if you were enrolled before the long tour Active Duty orders. Tabitha Carr made a motion to approve; seconded by Neil Harris. Motion carried.

Resolution 2021-07 – Ensure Reserve Component health care benefits eligibility for all RC personnel regardless of employment or employer, and to take effect prior to January 1, 2030. The Enlisted Association of the National Guard of the United States urges Congress to consider moving the start date in Section 701 of the FY2020 NDAA that removed the statutory prohibition for TRS eligibility to take effect prior to January 1, 2030. Don Kranz made a motion to approve; seconded by Charles Butler. Motion carried.

There were no 2020 resolutions due to the by-laws voting restrictions in regards to having a virtual conference.

Reaffirmation 2019-01 – Increase the FSGLI coverage for dependent children. The Enlisted Association of the National Guard urges Congress to review the current FSGLI amount for dependent children and consider increasing the amount. Josh Odea made a motion to approve; seconded by Sam Harkin. Motion carried.

Resolution 2021-08 – Thank you to the hosts of the 62nd Annual Conference. The conference delegates give a round of applause to the people responsible for such an outstanding conference. Bob Aiken made a motion to approve; seconded by Charles Butler. Motion carried.

President Derek Jaeger called the meeting back to order at 1030 hours and welcomed Past President Cathy Anderson. The USAA drawing for a \$100 gift card went to Chuck Kasin.

CSM Patrick Couser came forward and presented CSM Marcus Frey with the Saint Christopher award/medallion.

President's Report – Derek Jaeger – Took over as acting President a few months ago, but has learned so much in such a short period of time. Derek thanked everyone that has helped him in this role, especially Josh Wermers and Bruce Anderson. He has a greater respect for what the organization does for our Soldiers, Airman, and their Families. This organization is strong and has the right people in place to continue to be strong voices and advocates for our fellow servicemembers. 2020 was a challenging year, but 2021 and beyond will prove how we can adapt to challenges as individuals and as an organization. Made a motion to accept this report as presented; seconded by Josh Odea. Motion carried.

Final Nominations Report – Josh Wermers – Derek Jaeger for President. Josh Guthmiller for 1st Vice. Tabitha Carr for 2nd Vice. Don Kranz for 2nd Vice and Area 3. Kayleigh Cihak for Treasurer. Derrick Kinloch for Area 2. Rick Vanden Hoek for Area 5. Made a motion to accept this report as presented. Filed as presented.

Nominations conducted by Josh Wermers:

President - Derek Jaeger: Neil Harris made a motion to cease nominations and cast a unanimous ballot; seconded by Bob Aiken. Motion carried.

First Vice - Josh Guthmiller: Neil Harris made a motion to cease nominations and cast a unanimous ballot; seconded by Dallas Vallery. Motion carried.

Second Vice - Tabitha Carr and Don Kranz – Call for the vote. Tabitha Carr is our new Second Vice. Motion carried.

Treasurer - Kayleigh Cihak: Neil Harris made a motion to cease nominations and cast a unanimous ballot; seconded by Bob Aiken. Motion carried.

Area 1 - Austin Pierce: Don List made a motion to cease nominations and cast a unanimous ballot; seconded by Gordy Kotab. Motion carried.

Area 2 – Derrick Kinloch: Neil Harris made a motion to cease nominations and cast a unanimous ballot; seconded by Bob Aiken. Motion carried.

Area 3 - Don Kranz: Ken Rausch made a motion to cease nominations and cast a unanimous ballot; seconded by Charles Butler. Motion carried.

Area 4 - JP Hanson: Ken Rausch made a motion to cease nominations and cast a unanimous ballot; seconded by Don Kranz. Motion carried.

Area 5 - Rick Vanden Hoek: Cathy Anderson made a motion to cease nominations and cast a unanimous ballot; seconded by Gordy Kotab. Motion carried

2021 State Conference Report – Kayleigh Cihak – We welcomed 68 registered attendees with 10 vendors. The SD National Guard Enlisted Association kicked off the 62nd Annual State Conference with business as usual. Committee reports were given and business discussion took place. Friday evening’s dinner was a 1920’s theme with gangster suits and flapper dresses. The 147th Army Band rocked the night. The 2nd business session reconvened on Saturday where we honored our scholarship winners. Following the business meetings, attendees had the opportunity to participate in a fishing outing or a Poker Run. Kayleigh presented Josh Wermers with a hand-crafted flag as a small token of our appreciation from the council for all of his hard work and dedication to this organization. Made a motion to accept this report as presented. Filed as presented.

OLD BUSINESS

The App was approved during the Special Conference last year, but we have not finished it. We will continue to follow up on this.

During the Special Conference we had talked about setting aside \$1000 for marketing to help promote the Association. There was no budget for last year.

Need to lock in a date for the 2024 State Conference. Tabitha Carr brought up in discussion about coordinating more co-located conferences to get more attendance. Josh Wermers expressed keeping our conferences a little more separate from the officers. The question was asked if the officers would be on board with more co-located? Huron or Chamberlain were suggested for 2024. Chuck Kasin made an outside observation about co-locating every year, and he noted that he has seen other states lose a lot of their retiree attendees.

NEW BUSINESS

Josh Wermers made a motion to donate \$500 to the following three organizations: the flags for the Black Hills National Cemetery, the Hospice Program, and the new State Cemetery in Sioux Falls. Bruce Anderson seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Josh Wermers made a motion to look into spending up to \$10,000 to purchase a van for the association to take and use for State and National conferences; seconded by Bob Aiken. Further discussion - Charles Butler asked about rentals. The cost for a decent vehicle with low mileage and the maintenance upkeep were taken into consideration. Bob Aiken said he could check with rental companies. Nate Hedin expressed his thoughts that at this time it may not be a good investment. Motion defeated at this time. Will pursue more information and come back to this topic at a later time. Kayleigh brought up the idea of getting 2 mini vans; 1 for each side of the state. **Table this discussion.**

Derek Jaeger made a motion to donate \$300 to our National Guard Museum in Pierre; seconded by Josh Guthmiller. Motion carried.

Josh Wermers made a motion to take \$1000 to purchase swag for membership purposes; seconded by Cathy Anderson. Our organization will buy items and then distribute them to the units as necessary. Motion carried.

Installation of Officers conducted by Past President Josh Wermers. All newly elected officers and appointed positions took their oath.

Future State Conferences

- 2022 – 21-23 April - Rapid City Co-Located with NGAUS
- 2023 – Brookings – Barb Boyer
- 2024 -

Future National Conferences

- 2021 – 8-11 Aug - Albuquerque, New Mexico
- 2022 – Little Rock, AR
- 2023 – Rochester, MN

Date and Time of next Executive Council Meeting

- 17 Sep 2021 at 1600 hours, Deadwood, SD

ADJOURNMENT of the 62nd State Annual Conference

With nothing further to discuss, President Derek Jaeger officially adjourned the meeting at 1140 hours.