



# President's Message

Maj Gen John L. France, President, NGAUS

## Be a Part of the National Guard's Future

First, I hope this message finds you and your family well, getting ready for that time when thoughts go to past memories of heart and home. On behalf of Carol and myself, we wish all of you a most joyous holiday season.

As I write this, however, the deadline I try to meet isn't wrapped in garlands and wreaths. The elections of November are still fresh in my mind, and Veterans Day looms on the horizon.

It is the latter that I would like to dwell on for a moment. Though long past by the time you read this, I hope each of you took a moment to remember with pride those who have served in the armed forces of this nation. Whether they acted in war or peace, whether they served on the front line in combat or keyed in supply data on a rear echelon computer, they all stood up to the same oath. Veterans Day is for the living. If you allowed it to pass, take a moment to honor a veteran. I can think of no better one to start with than the one you see in the mirror each day.

Having said that, my memory passes further back to the first message I sent to all of you in October. In that column, I recall asking you, through your respective state asso-

ciations, to start compiling lists of those elected officials with whom you or other Guard members have personal acquaintance. Now the elections are over. The winds of change are blowing in a new direction.

Newly elected representatives will be

traveling to our nation's and our states' capitols. While it may be the first time many of them will assume new responsibilities, it will not be the first time many of them have won an election.

What I am getting at is this: Most of these new representatives and senators started out as members of city councils, county commissioners, treasurers, district attorneys and so on. Many of our people who currently serve in the Guard knew them then. They know them now.

As these newly elected officials take their seats of power, they will be asked to make decisions that will affect the course of this great land. Decisions on our economy, health care, environment and, of course, defense. In the latter area, it is crucial that we reach out to them NOW, before they go into session, to ensure they are educated about the National Guard.

They need to know not just who we are, but why we are. They need to know how we work; how we train; how we go to war; and how and when we go to the aid of our fellow citizens in time of disaster.

The lawmakers also need to know what we need if we are going to continue to provide the service and support they've come to expect from us. They must be clear on the issues that affect us, and how, ultimately, those issues will affect them and their constituents.

We cannot reasonably expect them to support our needs, particularly, if they have

no clue as to who we are.

That is why we haven't a moment to lose. Soon, I'll be sending a letter to state associations about creating the databases I've already discussed. I use the term database because in today's day and age, the use of computers has made detailed tracking and retrieval of information relatively easy. At the core, though, is the basic information we both need. For us to have a reasonable expectation of success, the core information must be tracked. It also must be accessible and shared easily between the state and the national levels.

At the grass-roots level, the total automation of information will make your job easier, and even more effective. Easy access will facilitate even more the partnership between the NGAUS and the state associations as we work to improve the readiness of the Guard. This is the direction in which we need to go; we have a ways to go.

In the meantime, executive directors and state presidents, take a tip. DON'T WAIT! GET ON IT!

What has happened this past November is the result of political grass-roots work based in every voting precinct in this country. Turnout for this election was heavy nationwide. The message is clear. Americans want a representative form of government that reflects the will of the majority. The nation is fashioning that government exactly the way our forefathers intended, through the ballot box, one vote at a time.

Now it is our turn to grasp the moment. I urge you to act and act now. By working with your elected representatives, the changes you can effect locally will result in helping to shape the future roles and missions of the Guard in both the near- and long-term.

We can make this happen if we work in concert. As I promised you in October, I will do my part. Now, I count on you to do yours.

Good luck!

over:

161st Air Refueling Group, Arizona Air National Guard, KC-135 Stratotanker refuels a Dutch F-16 fighter during Operation DENY FLIGHT. The tankers launched from Pisa, Italy, in support of a NATO operation. Photo, TSgt Phillip L. Guerrero. Cover by Dennis and Sackett Design.

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NATIONAL GUARD, December 1994. The NATIONAL GUARD Magazine (ISSN 0163-3945) is published monthly by the National Guard Association of the United States, with editorial and advertising offices at 1000 Massachusetts Avenue, N.W., Washington, D.C. Telephone (202) 789-0031. FAX: (202) 682-2222. Second-class postage paid at Washington, D.C., and at additional mailing offices. Copyright 1993 by the National Guard Association of the U.S. All rights reserved. All members of the NGAUS receive NATIONAL GUARD Magazine. Nonmember subscriptions are \$20 per year. The bulk subscription rate for orders of 100 issues or more continues to be \$10 per issue. The editor reserves the right to accept or decline any original articles bearing on national defense, military operations, or the National Guard. Postmaster: Send Form 3579 to National GUARD, One Massachusetts Avenue, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20001.

# NATIONAL GUARD

December 1994 Volume XLVIII, Number 12

## Features

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| The Arizona Air Guard's 161st Air Refueling Group was flying missions out of Pisa, Italy, in support of Operation DENY FLIGHT, when they were requested to launch alert KC-135 tankers in support of a NATO mission. They were to refuel aircraft launched in a search-and-destroy mission against Bosnian Serb forces. Several of the aircraft were 175th Fighter Group A-10s, Maryland Air National Guard. |    |

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| Valiantly Defending Bataan, 1942  | 22 |
| In 1941, GEN Douglas MacArthur, commander of the U.S. Army Forces Far East Command, painted an optimistic picture of the situation in the Pacific. He said he just needed more men, aircraft and armor. Part of that contingent was Company A, 192d Tank Battalion, Wisconsin National Guard, which landed on Manila in November. This was the start of the 192d's defense of Bataan and journey into hell. |    |

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| Mississippi Rescues Stranded Missionaries  | 28 |
| A group of American medical missionaries were in Honduras when the truck they were riding in overturned, injuring many of the passengers. They could not get back home, so a call went out for the Mississippi National Guard. A rescue operation was quickly put together and approved. And within 24 hours, a Mississippi C-141 was on its way to Honduras to bring the injured missionaries home. |    |

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| Fighting a Fire Storm at Home   | 32 |
| Calling out the Guard, took on a special meaning for one California Guardsman when he got a firsthand helping from his fellow Guard members. Late last summer, as wild fires threatened LTC Steve Lund's home, he called his coworkers and they volunteered to help him pack up and move his belongings in what became a race against time and the fire storm bearing down on them. |    |

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| Guardsmen Bike for Tykes  | 34 |
| Three District of Columbia Air National Guardsmen took on a 3,000-mile trek across 10 states as a fund-raiser for The D.C. Hospital for Sick Children. This hospital is the only one of its kind in the Washington, D.C., area and provides transitory care for children that do not need full hospitalization. This journey not only raised funds for the hospital, but helped form a link between Guard units across the country. |    |

