



MG Ansel M. Stroud Jr., President, NGAUS

# PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

## NGAUS' GRASS ROOTS CYCLE: THE END AND THE BEGINNING

The summer months are both the end and the beginning of the grass roots cycle wherein the NGAUS spends much of its time, resources and energy. As we contemplate the 109th NGAUS General Conference that will convene September 28 in Portland, Oregon, we should remember just how much of a grass roots organization the NGAUS really is.

Unlike some of the other associations that maintain headquarters in the national capital, we make no secret of our conviction that our grass roots connection is our strongest suit. It is the single most important factor in making our legislative program successful. And that legislative program is our most important effort, as it has been for 109 years. When the NGAUS was formed in 1878, the goal was "united representation before Congress." That has remained a constant down through the years.

The arrival of summer means that the Congress is well-along in the process of enacting the authorization and appropriations bills that provide Department of Defense money for the next fiscal year. This year, we are contemplating a two-year budget process for DoD. That means the work we do between now and Congress' recess this fall is doubly important because it will establish our spending parameters for both FY88 and FY89.

The authorizing and appropriating process has many parts. Thus, as we send ACTION GRAMS to our members, we hope you will keep in mind that while the request may bear a resemblance to one that came a month before it, it probably addresses a slightly different step in the legislative process. When considering the DoD authorization, subcommittees act first; then full committees act. Then there is debate in the full Senate and House of Representatives. Then there is a House-Senate Conference Committee to resolve differences. The cycle repeats itself to produce a Defense appropriations bill.

Achieving the National Guard's requirements (whether proposed by DoD or initiated by your Association) in the context of these bills depends on... grass roots support. A major effort of our full-time staff in Washington is to organize and energize Guard officers in the states who must in turn inform and motivate their congressmen. This is the key to the reputation of the NGAUS as an effective entity on Capitol Hill.

The executive director and his staff are highly effective at pulling together all of the (to use an old G-2 term!) EEI—the essential elements of information—needed to support the effort. But more often than not, what "makes it" or "breaks it" in Congress is a letter or telephone call from a hometown member of the Guard to the senator or representative. There is simply no way to overstate the importance of a personal contact from a Congress member's home district.

Three years ago, when the NGAUS was promoting enactment of the New GI Bill, we headed into a key ballot with the information that the House Armed Services Committee was evenly divided on the question. A congressman not particularly known as an enthusiastic supporter of the Guard (or very many things military!) appeared to be the swing vote. A call from the NGAUS to the congressman's home state identified a battalion commander without any claim to political connections. He listened to the problem and said, "I'll try..." His subsequent telephone call was taken by a staffer who was sufficiently intrigued that several more calls were made to include a conversation with the congressman. The bottom line is that the congressman not only voted with us—carrying the day for the New GI Bill—but he even made an impassioned speech on behalf of the proposal and what it would do for the young people in his district. And he has since supported the National Guard in other issues of significance.

Grass roots support at the battalion/air squadron level also is important at the outset of the NGAUS legislative process. Let this serve as a reminder that July 1 is the deadline for states to submit resolutions to the NGAUS headquarters for consideration this September in Portland. Those out in the states who want to influence the direction of the NGAUS efforts in legislation, as well as other matters, should take this resolution process seriously.

There is a quality versus quantity aspect to resolutions that ought to be kept in mind, too. The Resolutions Committee that will convene in Portland on September 27 will address both. In terms of quality, we always hope that individuals and states address issues that are in some way achievable, either short-range or long-range. Many of these resolutions will be in support of various procurement initiatives, such as fighters for the Air Guard or ground equipment for the Army Guard. Those are areas that are achievable in various ways, at least in most cases.

We need to curtail resolutions that fly in the face of reality or of the prevailing sentiment in Congress. There are many low-level "personal gain" issues that mean a lot to those who might benefit from passage, but looking at it in the light of day, it is clear that in spite of possible merits the prospects for success are slim to none. So we have got to weigh the effort in terms of achievable versus unachievable goals as we prioritize the year's resolutions.

Providing united representation before Congress on the Legislative Action Plan rounds out the grass roots cycle and brings us back to summer from now.

Permit me a final word on "united." The NGAUS has found that when the Guard community is united on an issue, we usually prevail. When divided, we often lose. Remaining united on priority issues is essential.

National Guard

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## FEATURES

### AIR WARRIOR at NTC

At the National Training Center (NTC), force-on-force combat play is a common sight. And when you think NTC, you normally think Army. But don't forget the first half of the AirLand Battle is Air. The outcome of this is AIR WARRIOR: the Air Force side of the force-on-force exercise at NTC.

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### Georgia Guard in Forsyth County

The Guard had not been called upon to handle major civil disturbances since the civil rights marches of the '60s. But faced with the potential for violence at a Brotherhood March in Forsyth County, Georgia Governor Joe Frank Harris called in the Georgia Guard.

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### Florida Falcons Chase Bears

The 125th Fighter Interceptor Group, Florida Air National Guard, pulls 24-hour alert protecting the Florida Coast from Russian Bear bombers, which fly up from bases in Cuba. April 1, the unit converted from the F-106 Delta Dart to the sleek F-16 Fighting Falcon to do its mission.

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### Warriors Defined

Since the dawn of time, some humans have excelled in conflict. There are qualities that set them apart. The elite among them are called "warriors." LTC Darryl D. Eggleston, chief of the National Guard Bureau's Incentive Management Team, examines the qualities that define a true warrior.

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### Warriors as Professionals

To be a warrior and a Guardsman means more than viewing the Guard as merely a job. Being a warrior is more than a job—it is a commitment to a set of ideals and beliefs.

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## COVER:

A Georgia Guardsman protects a crowd of demonstrators in Forsyth County, Georgia. The Georgia Army Guard was called to state duty in January to assist local law enforcement during a civil rights demonstration. Photo, Chaplain (CPT) James Edmunds, GAARNG. Design, Johnson Design Group.

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