



The Desert Chronicle

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE:

As we get ready to close out 2016, I want to say "thank you" to all those serving our State and Nation in uniform as part of the Arizona National Guard as well as our former and retired members, and your families. With a new administration coming onboard in January, the New Year is sure to hold many changes and challenges. The Enlisted Association of the National Guard of the United States (EANGUS) will be here to monitor and track those changes that matter most to our enlisted members.

If you want to keep up with those issues that matter most, I encourage you to keep your membership in EANGUS current so that you continue to receive The New Patriot, the EANGUS Minuteman Update, and our local EANGA newsletter. To keep your membership current, we are offering an end of year membership special right now. Through December 31st you can get an annual membership for just \$15. If you're not a member, sign up...if you're already a member, get a friend to sign up or sponsor one of the junior enlisted Soldiers or Airmen in your unit. Don't forget to use our discount code – enter EOY16 online at www.eanga.org

And don't forget...as a benefit of your membership in EANGUS, you, your spouse, or your dependent children are eligible to apply for the large number of cash and full-ride scholarships offered each year. Our scholarship program will be announced in January so if you know of other unit members who are attending college or have children in college, pass on this info and encourage them to JOIN now to get our discounted price. We look forward to announcing the winners of our local EANGA scholarship winners in April at the 2017 EANGA State Conference.

Speaking of the State Conference, mark your calendars and SAVE THE DATE: April 21-22, 2017. This year's joint conference with NGA AZ will be held at the Arizona Grand Resort in Phoenix. Once again, it promises to be a day filled with lots of good information, camaraderie, and election of officers for our Executive Council. Get involved, run for office, and give YOUR association direction.

One of our newly appointed EANGA Executive Board members is TSgt Andrea Romo of the 162nd Wing in Tucson. Andrea stepped up and assumed the role of Air National Guard Director when that position became vacant recently. We are happy to have her as part of our team and encourage others to consider serving with us to work on behalf of Arizona National Guard enlisted personnel. You will get a chance to meet her and the rest of our Executive Board next month when we host our Annual Membership Appreciation Night. We are planning that event for Thursday evening, January 19, 2017 at the 161st ARW Dining Facility / PANG Club. There will be great door prizes, free food and beverage, and recognition of some special members. More info to come -- hope to see you there!

EANGA would also like to recognize the 161st Air Refueling Wing as they celebrate their 70th Anniversary on the weekend of 9-10 December. In addition to a banquet dinner to celebrate this special occasion, the Sky Harbor Air National Guard base is being re-named as the "Goldwater Air National Guard Base," in honor of Barry M. Goldwater, Arizona's late U.S. Senator and founding member of the Arizona Air National Guard. Thanks to the 161st Cop-heads and the PANG Patriots for inviting EANGA to participate and "Congratulations!"

I hope you will take a few minutes to read some of the other information provided in this edition of The Desert Chronicle. Note that our 12-month Firearm Raffle has begun and the first two winners have been drawn (see page 4). There are still tickets available and because sales have been slow, your chances to win are even better – a good reason to get your ticket now!

Finally, on behalf of the entire Executive Board, we wish you a Happy Holiday Season and best wishes for the New Year! Tom Matthew, CSM (Ret), EANGA President



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MONTHLY EANGA MEETINGS:

- December 15, 2016
- January 19, 2017 ** Special Membership Appreciation Night, 161st Dining Facility / PANG Club
- February 16, 2017
- March 16, 2017

All meetings begin at 1730 hours, and generally are held at the USP&FO Conference Room at PPMR. All meetings have dial-in conference capability for those who can't attend in person. All enlisted personnel are invited to attend. Questions regarding meetings may be referred to President Matthew at tandmmatthew@cox.net

THE ELECTIONS ARE OVER, SO NOW WHAT?



The 2016 elections are over and as always, it has changed the face of our U.S. House of Representatives, U.S. Senate, and the Arizona Legislature. In the coming months, your EANGA Legislative Committee will be working to become familiar with our newest elected officials.

Currently, the committee is working on updating your state association's lobbyist status so that we may continue to submit resolutions and attend committee meetings at the AZ State Capitol. EANGA will also be submitting a resolution to increase military retirees' income tax exemption from \$2500 to \$5000. Through our lobbying efforts, and with your help, we will achieve success.

Early in February, EANGA Representatives, CSM(Ret) Karen Craig, MSG Ben Acosta, and CMSgt(Ret) Dean Miller, will be attending the annual EANGUS Legislative Workshop in Washington DC. During this workshop, your

EANGA representatives will conduct visits to the offices of our Arizona Senators and Congress members to discuss issues that affect National Guard Soldiers, Airmen, their families, and their units. We plan to do the same on a local basis in order to improve communications and relations with our Arizona delegation.

An update of these events will be provided to you in upcoming newsletters. Please keep in mind that we will be conducting our Annual State Conference in April at which time we will accept and vote on resolutions that could be submitted to EANGUS for action at the national level. If you have an issue or idea that you believe should be a resolution or, you are interested in becoming a member of our Legislative Committee, please email Chair Miller at deanmiller1@cox.net. We are seeking new members who are willing to speak up and let their voices be heard. It is your Constitutional right, so SOUND OFF!

UPDATE ON THE NATIONAL DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION ACT

By: Leo Shane III, Military Times,
November 29, 2016

Military personnel would see a 2.1 percent pay raise starting in January and a significant manpower boost within the Army, Air Force and Marine Corps as part of Congress' annual defense spending bill unveiled Tuesday. The compromise measure also includes a massive overhaul of the military health care system, but it eliminates a controversial proposal to change troops' housing allowance, leaving the military's current stipend program largely unchanged. Totalling nearly \$619 billion, the bill represents lawmakers' final offer to the White House, omitting several problematic provisions debated in recent months.

But that's still about \$3.2 billion more than President Barack Obama's request, setting up a potential veto. Obama has said he won't accept an increase in defense spending without corresponding increases in nonmilitary programs. If the president intends to make good on that threat, he'll have to squash several measures that would benefit the military workforce at a time when many troops and their families feel their compensation and overall quality of life have slipped. That's because the extra money — tucked into overseas contingency funds, to get around defense spending caps — is used mainly to pay for additional pay and personnel costs. It pushes the 2017 military pay raise from the Pentagon-preferred rate of 1.6 percent to 2.1 percent, a mark equal to the projected rise in private sector wages.

If it stands, 2017 will be the first time in six years that the military pay raise tops 2 percent. Military budget planners had said that money would be better used to pay for training and modernization costs, but lawmakers

have argued that three consecutive years of pay raise trims have begun to hurt military families' finances.

Lawmakers also used the additional funds to reject Obama's plans to draw down Army and Marine Corps end strength, again to cut long-term personnel costs. Under the final authorization draft, Army end strength would be set at 476,000 soldiers, about 16,000 more than the White House had requested for fiscal 2017. The Marine Corps would be at 185,000 troops, an increase of about 3,000 over requested levels. The Air Force would go to 321,000 airmen, around 4,000 more than Obama wanted. The Navy would remain at 324,000 sailors.

The defense health care overhaul would transfer control of most military medical facilities to the Defense Health Agency and put in place new fees for enrollment in Tri-care. But those fees would affect only new enlistees. All current troops and retirees in the system would not see any increases.

The authorization bill also mandates a reduction in flag and general officers in years to come, trimming about 12 percent of the total now, and includes dramatic changes in defense acquisition processes. Congressional staff touted the final product as one of the most significant pieces of reform legislation in years, touching on a variety of agencies and issues.

But congressional negotiators did drop plans that would have changed even more. A Senate-led plan to award Basic Allowance for Housing stipends based on individual troops' rent costs, instead of flat-rates based on zip codes, was removed. A provision to charge military families health care enrollment fees was similarly dismissed.

Lawmakers did include a provision to deal with the recent California National Guard bonus recoupment scandal, shifting the burden of proof for accusations of fraud or misuse to the Defense Department instead of individual troops. A hearing is scheduled on that issue next week.

The House is expected to vote on the final defense authorization bill draft on Friday, December 1st, and the Senate is expected to take up the legislation next week. Whether Obama will veto the measure over the extra personnel funds will be among the last legislative decisions of his presidency. The authorization bill sets defense policy and spending priorities for current fiscal year, but does not actually assign the money for those initiatives. The appropriations process, which distributes the money, has been stalled on Capitol Hill for months.

Over the next few days, lawmakers will need to finalize plans for a continuing resolution to extend federal spending at fiscal 2016 levels into March. Republican leaders in both chambers have said that will allow incoming President Donald Trump to set his own budget priorities for federal programs, but Pentagon leaders have lamented the move as problematic for new purchases and program starts. Appropriations officials have already said they will adjust some budget items to provide for some increases above fiscal 2016 levels, including the military pay raise. That will go into effect on Jan. 1.

Keep up to date on the NDAA and other bills affecting the National Guard at the EANGUS website at www.eangus.org. Use the Membership Tab to get to our Resources Directory where you will find the EANGUS Minute-man Update, Newsletters, and other info.

Call today to learn
what VA loan option
works best for you.



VA PAYMENT REDUCTION PROGRAM

The Interest Rate Reduction Refinance Loan (VA IRRRL), also referred to as the VA Streamline, is a unique VA refinance program that allows you to reduce your current VA mortgage interest rate and payment. This program is a simple way to lower your interest rate and experience both short-term and long-term savings.

Benefits:

- No Income Documentation
- No Appraisal Required
- No out-of-pocket costs
- Skip 1 or 2 payments

Requirements:

- Credit score of 580 or above
- Your current loan must be categorized as a VA mortgage
- You must be current on your mortgage payments

VA 100% CASH OUT REFINANCE

The VA Cash Out loan gives veterans and Active Military Personnel, with VA eligibility, the option of refinancing as much as 100 percent of the total value of your home. This program is ideal for homeowners who would like to pay off credit cards & other debt or to make upgrades to their home.

Use Your New Funds For:

- Home improvement
- Education costs
- Consolidating debt
- Creating a personal cash cushion or for investing

Requirements:

- Credit score of 580 or above
- Only owner-occupied residences
- No late mortgage payments in the past 12 months
- Existing loan does not have to be VA



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FIREARM RAFFLE WINNERS AND... THE DRAWINGS CONTINUE

As you can see by the pictures to the right, the EANGA 12-month Firearm Raffle is underway. Drawings have already been conducted for the months of October and November — Congratulations to the winners — with another winner to be drawn each month through September 2017.

Currently, we have sold around 100 tickets, so your chances of winning are great. Additionally, each of the numbered tickets will remain in the raffle for the entire 12 months giving you multiple chances to win, even if you have already won in a previous month. Each ticket is \$100. A complete list of the remaining firearms is provided below.

- December - Mossberg 808 .22LR Rifle
- January - Glock 23 .40 Cal
- February - Choice of Chiappa 1911-22LR or Hi-Point C9
- March - Beretta PX4 Storm Sub-compact 9mm
- April - Choice of Taurus 845, 45 ACP or Hi-Point C9
- May - Taurus 24/7 9mm
- June - Taurus PT22
- July - S&W 22A
- August - Taurus PT709 Slim, 9mm
- September - Surprise! Mystery firearm to be drawn

Get your tickets NOW — the next drawing is coming up on December 15th at our monthly Executive Board meeting and everyone who purchases a raffle ticket between 1 Oct - 31 Dec also gets a free annual EANGUS membership!

Tickets can be obtained from the following EANGA members:
PPMR: MSG Ben Acosta, CSM-Ret April Schneider, SFC Haffley, SSG Espinoza.; 161st ARW: MSgt Swanson; Tucson: MSgt Mary Thompson and SFC Rigoberto Andrade.



You've heard of #Black Friday, #Cyber Monday, and there's also #GivingTuesday which is a global day of giving fueled by the power of social media and collaboration. #GivingTuesday occurred on November 29th and that day kicked off the charitable season when many people focus on giving to others during the holidays and making their end-of-year tax deductible charitable donations. Please consider generously donating to the **EANGUS We Care for America's Soldiers and Airmen Emergency Relief Fund** when you consider charitable donations to close out the 2016 tax year. Your caring donation goes directly to provide grants to National Guard members in need. The *We Care for America* Soldiers and Airmen Emergency Relief Fund is an IRS 501(c)(3) designated charity and donations are completely tax deductible. Go to <https://eangus.org/wcfa/> to contribute online with a credit card. Thank you!



**OCTOBER WINNER:
Hannah Whitney
Bersa Thunder .380**



**NOVEMBER WINNER:
Douglas LaRussa
Kahr CW9**



**Drawing December 15th:
The winner could be you!
Mossberg 808, 22LR Rifle**

OUR MISSION:

The Enlisted Association National Guard of the United States (EANGUS) and the Enlisted Association National Guard of Arizona (EANGA), exist to “promote the status, welfare, and professionalism of the enlisted members of the National Guard” and to “promote adequate National Security”. The Association lobbies to provide adequate full-time staffing, adequate pay and allowances, adequate health, medical, family and death entitlements, incentive benefits, first line equipment, resources, and weapons systems, and military construction.

www.eangus.org



WHY MEMBERSHIP MATTERS

We all want to belong. The desire to belong motivated many of us to enlist in the military, and it's that same sense of belonging that makes the Arizona National Guard a good choice. For our forefathers, belonging to a group meant strength and was a means of survival. The same is true today. Membership in a group means strength in numbers and gives us a sense of community.

Just like in the civilian sector, we have many professional organizations we can join as military members. These organizations consist of members who work for a common goal. In these groups we can make a difference. There are professional organizations for officers, and others for enlisted. There are other organizations you can join like the Veterans of Foreign Wars, the Association of the United States Army, and the Air Force Sergeants Association. It is up to you to decide where you want to devote your time and which organization is the best fit for you. Simon Sinek, author of *Start with Why* says “what we do is proof of what we believe”. Find the professional organization you believe in. Vote with your name; vote with your membership.

One professional organization that works specifically for enlisted members of the National Guard is the Enlisted Association of the National Guard of the United States. Regardless of whether you are a current member, former member or retiree, EANGUS has a long history of taking care of the Soldiers and Airmen of the National Guard. EANGUS provides its members with a sense of belonging, camaraderie, and teamwork, as well as many member benefits. It also provides its members with an opportunity to network with other military members who share similar interests.

Most importantly, EANGUS speaks for all of us on Capitol Hill. They remind our elected officials of the sacrifices that our Soldiers and Airmen make every day, protect the benefits we have, and fight for new benefits. EANGUS also has legislative representatives who educate Congress about the National Guard and fight on our behalf. They lead our fight for improved pay and allowances, increased retirement, tuition assistance, and Post 9-11 GI Bill benefits. EANGUS representatives are working hard on our behalf but the voice of EANGUS is only as strong as its membership.

The professional organization you join is up to you - your membership matters. Contact your supervisor or First Sergeant and find out about the professional organizations available to you. If you're interested in getting more information about EANGUS, contact one of our Executive Board members listed below. Your membership matters to us!

End of Year Membership Special:

Annual membership is just \$15 thru the 31 Dec. Join or renew now, by going to www.eanga.org and using discount code:

EOY16

You can also get a free membership if you buy a Firearm Raffle Ticket before 31 Dec.

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Wishing you and your family a Happy Holiday Season from the Executive Board of the Arizona Enlisted Association!

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**LEGISLATIVE FIRST...
MEMBERSHIP ALWAYS!**