

# The Guard Post

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OHIO NATIONAL GUARD ASSOCIATION • 2825 WEST DUBLIN GRANVILLE RD, RM C119 • COLUMBUS, OH 43235



*147th NGAUS Conference in Milwaukee, WI... pgs 8-9*



*2026 ONGA/ONGEA Events Weekend in Lewis Center, OH... pg 12*



# The President's Corner

*LTC Patrick M. Hernandez*

Greetings, my fellow Guardsman! For those of you that attended the NGAUS conference in Milwaukee this year I hope you had even half as good a time as I did, and for those that didn't, you missed out. Wisconsin put on a great conference and it definitely helped shape what we are looking at for NGAUS in Ohio in 2029.

I know that these last few months have been a hectic time for many of you, with uncertainty about our drilling schedules, points for a good year, and unknown monetary restraints. Hang in there. Remember you are not alone, and reach out to your units and leaders if you need assistance or if you know of someone who needs help.

Looking forward, we have our state conference for ONGA coming up the first weekend in February in conjunction with the JSJC. Please come out and join us not just for the revelry, but for the great opportunities for leader discussions during the JSJC.

Lastly, as we approach this holiday season, please reach out to those people in your formation, or from your career to make sure they are ok. This can be a stressful time for everyone, and we must do everything we can to take care of one another.



# Bulletin Board

## *Board of Directors/ Trustees/ Chairpersons Meetings\**

1800 hours

6 January 2026

7 April 2026

## *Unit Representative Meetings*

1800 hours

8 January 2026

9 April 2026

## *Joint Insurance Committee Meetings*

1800 hours (Virtual)

18 December 2025

2 April 2026

## *148<sup>h</sup> NGAUS Conference*

28-31 August 2026, Indianapolis, IN

## *2026 Annual NGEDA Meeting*

26-29 January 2026

Indianapolis, IN

## *ONGA • ONGEA State Conference Winter Dinner Dance*

6-7 February 2026, Lewis Center, OH

Ohioan Hotel and Event Center

*(formerly Nationwide Hotel and Conference Center)*

## **RENEW! 2026 NGAUS/ ONGA Membership**

See pg3

*Digital Life Membership Deal  
\$500*



## 2026 Membership

Rank	NGAUS	ONGA	Totals
Company Grade Officers (01-03, W01-CW3)	\$40	\$20	\$60
Field Grade Officers (04-06, CW4, CW5)	\$80	\$25	\$105
Flag Officers (07-010)	\$130	\$30	\$160

### Other categories of membership:

**ONGA** Associate Member – \$10.00  
 Retired Annual Member – \$15.00  
 Retired Life Member – \$125.00 (one-time)  
 Active Life Member – \$250.00 (one-time)

**NGAUS** Retired Annual Member – \$45.00  
 Retired Life Member – \$125.00 (one-time)  
 Digital Life Member – \$500.00 (one-time)\*  
 Active Life Member – \$1000.00 (one-time)\*  
 (Payment plans available)  
 (Both Digital and Active Life memberships include ONGA Life Membership)

\*Digital and Active Life can be purchased directly from NGAUS website, if using payment plan contact NGAUS at membership@ngaoh.org or call 202-408-5880.

### Annual Dues

ONGA annual dues for newly appointed officers are waived until the following year. NGAUS provides a one-time, annual membership to any officer, regardless of rank, upon their initial appointment to the National Guard.



Are you interested in becoming an insurance briefer for the Ohio National Guard Association, if so please email Scott Bailey at ongaexecutivedirector@ngaoh.org



## The Guard Post

An official publication of the Ohio National Guard Association

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LTC Patrick Hernandez, *President*  
 CPT Brittany Downs, *1st Vice President*  
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Ohio National Guard Association



@OhioNGA



@o.n.g.a.17

## Moved? Moving? Retired?

Please update your information by scanning the QR code or email ongaexecutivedirector@ngaoh.org.





# ONGA Leadership

## 2026 Leadership Grant Application

The ONGA Leadership Grant Program helps defray education costs for deserving individuals who are enrolled or plan to enroll in an institution of higher learning. Leadership grants will be awarded to active ONGA members (either officers or warrant officers) or dependents of active, life, retired, or deceased members of the Ohio National Guard Association. Leadership Grant recipients are ineligible for consideration in subsequent years. Leadership Grants will be awarded during the Ohio National Guard Association Annual Conference in Lewis Center, Ohio. The Leadership Grants are administered through the Leadership Grant Committee of the Ohio National Guard Association.

**Instructions for Applicants:** To complete the ONGA Leadership Grant Application, use the following checklist to complete your application packet:

- Current grade transcripts and class standing
- A copy of your SAT/ACT scores (optional) with local and national ranking (percentile) included
- A photograph suitable for publication
- A paper explaining why you should be selected for a grant. Be sure to address the first five items listed below. Your paper should be a maximum of two pages in length
- (Optional) A single, one-page recommendation from a teacher, counselor, employer, etc.

**Applications will be evaluated on the following criteria:**

- Grades
- Future plans
- Need
- Membership and leadership
- Honors and Awards
- Overall impression

**Please note that your application must be postmarked no later than 31 December 2025.**

Send to the following address by first class mail:

ONGA Executive Director  
2825 W. Dublin Granville Rd., Suite C119  
Columbus, OH 43235

You may call 614-486-4186 ext. 3 with questions or e-mail [ongaexecutivedirector@ngaoh.org](mailto:ongaexecutivedirector@ngaoh.org).

## ONGA Leadership

<i>President</i> . . . . .	LTC Patrick Hernandez
<i>First Vice President</i> . . . . .	CPT Brittany Downs
<i>Second Vice President</i> . . . . .	MAJ Tim Gribble
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<i>Trustee - ATAG Air</i> . . . . .	MAJ GEN David Johnson
<i>Trustee - ATAG Army</i> . . . . .	COL Jon Stewart
<i>Trustee - Field Grade Air</i> . . . . .	LT COL Alan "AK" Kline
<i>Trustee - Field Grade Army</i> . . . . .	MAJ Chris Lautner
<i>Trustee - Company Grade Air</i> . . . . .	1ST LT Jerry Tulga
<i>Trustee - Company Grade Army</i> . . . . .	2LT Steve Woytek
<i>Trustee - Warrant Officer</i> . . . . .	cw4 Steve Ahrens
<i>Trustee - Retired Air</i> . . . . .	LT COL Tom Calhoun (Ret)
<i>Trustee - Retired Army</i> . . . . .	MAJ Kathy Vannatta (Ret)
<i>Executive Director</i> . . . . .	LT COL Scott Bailey (Ret)
<i>Chair - Nominating Committee</i> . . . . .	Field Grade Trustees
<i>Chair - Insurance Committee</i> . . . . .	MAJ TONIA McCURDY (RET) cw3 Paul Pitzer (Ret)
<i>Chair - Finance Committee</i> . . . . .	VACANT
<i>Chair - Resolutions Committee</i> . . . . .	COL Andy Powers LTC Bryan Escbach
<i>Chair - Awards Committee</i> . . . . .	Field Grade Trustees
<i>Chair - Membership Committee</i> . . . . .	Company Grade Officers
<i>Chair - Strategic Planning</i> . . . . .	COL Andy Powers
<i>Chair - Corporate Relations</i> . . . . .	LT COL Tom Calhoun (Ret) CAPT Richard Green
<i>Chair - Legislative Committee</i> . . . . .	CAPT Richard Green 2LT Steve Woytek



# Spring Capitol Summit



Attending the 2025 Spring Capitol Summit with the National Guard Association of the United States was an extraordinary professional milestone and a deeply memorable personal experience. As soon as I arrived, it became clear that I was surrounded by officers with decades of service and leadership in the Guard. Standing among them as a 2LT— with less than a year as an officer—was both humbling and energizing. Rather than feeling out of place, I quickly realized that NGAUS creates an environment where every rank has a voice and every perspective is valued.

One of the most impactful moments of the summit was meeting General Nordhaus. Having the opportunity to speak with him personally was something I never expected, especially at this early point in my career. I was able to ask him a direct question regarding National Guard unit realignment, and his thoughtful response demonstrated both his depth of knowledge and his willingness to engage with junior officers. That brief conversation reinforced my understanding of how accessible and forward-thinking National Guard leadership can be when it comes to shaping the future of the organization.

The summit also offered a unique opportunity to step into the world of federal advocacy by going up to Capitol Hill to promote NGAUS policy objectives. For the first time in my life, I found myself advocating to political staffers rather than listening to advocates speak, which is typically my role as a legislative aide in the Ohio House of Representatives. It was a profound shift in perspective. Instead of analyzing others' requests, I was the one presenting the needs of Guardsmen and explaining why certain legislative actions matter. Speaking directly with congressional offices added a new layer of appreciation for the policy process I regularly witness on the state level.

This experience illuminated the interconnectedness of the National Guard Bureau with the state and territorial National Guards and, in turn, with NGAUS. Observing senior leaders, state-level representatives, and enlisted and officer advocates working together made it clear that the Guard is supported by a broad, collaborative network. Each level—federal, state, and organizational—brings its own priorities and challenges, but the summit demonstrated how effectively these elements align when unified around shared goals. That interconnected structure ensures the Guard remains both community-focused and responsive to national defense needs.

Overall, attending the 2025 Spring Capitol Summit was far more than a professional development opportunity—it was a moment of growth, perspective, and connection. I left with a deeper understanding of the Guard's strategic direction, a renewed appreciation for advocacy, and a stronger sense of belonging within the broader National Guard community. Given the depth of insight it provides, I would recommend the Capitol Summit to any company grade officer, even those who have little or no interest in politics. The experience goes far beyond legislative discussions—it offers exposure to strategic-level decision-making, professional networking, and a clearer understanding of how policy directly affects training, readiness, and quality of life for Guardsmen. Whether someone hopes to advance within the Guard or simply wants to better understand how the organization operates at higher echelons, attending this summit is a valuable and eye-opening opportunity.

2LT Stephen Woytek  
1485th TC  
Platoon Leader



# 2025 TAG Golf Outing

*6 October at Westchester Golf Course, Canal Winchester, OH*

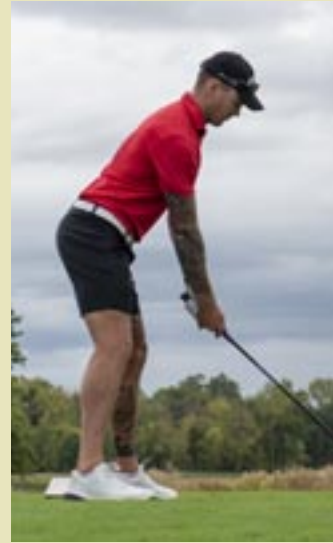
Special Thanks to CW4 Steve Ahrens and Lt Col (Ret) Tom Calhoun for their time and efforts on the outing!! Shout out to our volunteers for the event! They are BG (Ret) Maria Kelly, CPT Alex Rozanski, LTC Mike Antonas, Lt Col (Ret) Doug Green.

*Congratulations to the winning team of MSG Christopher David, MSG Dennis Capel, MSG Adam Dick, SFC Justin Ward from Army Recruiting Battalion!*





# 2025 TAG Golf Outing





# NGAUS 147th General Conference & Exhibition





# NGAUS 147th General Conference & Exhibition





# OSU BE KIND Food Packing Event

*11 September at OSU Recreation and Physical Activity Center, Columbus, OH*

Hundreds of volunteers gathered to help pack over 300,000 meals during the BE KIND food packing event through **OSU and Pack Shack**. Selecting different areas of Ohio every year, this September, the event focused on serving Hancock, Wood, and Lucas counties in Northwest Ohio.

Thank you to all our volunteers!



*Ohio Veterans Hall of Fame Foundations Event, Columbus, OH*

Five OHNG veterans were inducted into the Ohio Veterans Hall of Fame Foundation Class of 2025 at The Ohio State University's Fawcett Center, November 6, 2025.

Congratulations to Charles O. Dillard, Steve Stivers, Teresa M. Swank, Robert P. Meyer Jr. and Stephen E. Markovich, and thank you for your continued service to Ohio communities after military duty!





# 2025 Corporate Partnerships

## PLATINUM:



## GOLD:



## SILVER:

ESS, Oshkosh Aerotech, Phantom Products,  
Trellisware

## BRONZE:

ADS, Anthem, Austin Lighthouse,  
Buddy Covers, Bull-IT Box, EnerSys, Helmets to Hardhats,  
MilSpin, MYHY, PTS Inc, Purdue Global, RCTAA,  
R-n-R Promotions, Roger Bank, WGU



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Columbus, Ohio 432356-2789

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## 2026 ONGA/ONGEA Conference / Winter Dinner Dance 6-7 February 2026 • Lewis Center OH



***SAVE THE DATE!*** Registration is now open!!

Register and reserve your hotel room here:

<https://buytickets.at/ohionationalguardassociation/1597048>

