



RETIREE RAG

June 2015



RETIREES...Not gone, Not forgotten.

NGAKS CONFERENCE IN TOPEKA APRIL 17-18, 2015! Retirees from EANGKS and NGAKS attended Friday and Saturday night hospitality rooms, Retiree Breakfast on Saturday and lunch on Saturday. We had about 35 KNG retirees participate, and had a lot of fun! We collected donations for the Kansas Funeral Honor Program and had Retire-Ritas! Thanks to everyone who participated, and know that we will work to have more of a reunion type program next year! April 22-23, 2016 will be in Manhattan, Kansas.



L: Retirees in the hospitality room catching up on old and new times!

R: COL Johnson, Joyce Hill and CW5 Delbert Hill visiting with SMSgt Mark Sweeney (all retired).



L: CSM Dale Putman, Retired, sporting a family night KSU Wildcat tattoo!

R: COL Mike Irwin and Michelle Williams having a Retire-Rita!

Elections Held at Retiree Luncheon on April 18. Major Retired Jay Gradinger was elected to the Army Retiree Board position and Major Retired Sheli Sweeney was elected to the Air Retiree Board Position. Elections operated by Col Ret Craig Beardsley. It is a pleasure to welcome Major Retired Jay Gradinger to the post of Army Retiree Representative. If you don't know Jay, here is a little about him:

Jay: I have a BS in Criminal Justice Administration from the University of Central Missouri (formerly Central Missouri State University) and graduated in 1974. I Served on Active Duty as a Field Artillery officer with the US Army from 1974 until 1987, then joined the Kansas Army National Guard from which I retired as a Major in 1997. I am currently employed as the Military Assistance to Civil Authorities Administrator for the Kansas National Guard with responsibility for budgeting, planning, training and managing the Kansas National Guard response in the event of an emergency at the Wolf Creek Nuclear Generating Station and also responsible for managing the radiological equipment calibration program for the Kansas Division of Emergency Management. I am a Kansas Certified Emergency Manager and qualified to teach various Incident Command System courses (ICS100 through ICS400 with additional supporting courses).



Jay Gradinger, Army Retiree Representative to the NGAKS Board. Welcome!



One of our presenters at the Retiree Breakfast was BG Michael Meese (Retired) who hosted an information booth at the conference for AAFMAA. They have some great products geared toward retirees from the Guard. Thank you Mike and Kevin Kincaid who shared with us. Check out their web page at www.aafmaa.org

Sponsors of Retiree Breakfast: The Retired participants were also able to learn more about TriCare (United Health) updates to coverage from the regional representative Glenn Seutter and Ray Dalton. We also got to hear about Retirement update to programs from SFC Etoi Purnell, the director of Retiree Programs for the Adjutant General's Department. Thank you all for the information and sharing your time with us! AAFMAA, United Health helped sponsor the Retiree Breakfast, thank you!

Continuity Committee: Continuity Committee will meet in June, with the EANGKS Retiree Representatives to review actions and prepare for 2016 annual conference. Will discuss membership, meetings, actions and goals. **We would like to hear from you**, on what you would like to see done for retirees. Here is the contact information for Jay Gradinger, Army Rep, and Sheli Sweeney, Air Rep.

Jay Gradinger, jaygradinger@gmail.com 785.364.7767
Sheli Sweeney, shelisweeney@hotmail.com 785.213.9053

JUNE 6, 2015, RETIREE BRIEFING IN WICHITA. The Retirement Services section cordially invites you and your spouse to our semi-annual **Gray Area** pre-retirement briefing. If you were or are currently a traditional drilling soldier and between the ages of 55 and 60 (over 60 if you have not yet applied for retired pay) you are eligible to attend.

When: June 6, 2015

Where: Wichita Readiness Center, 2808 N. New York Street, Wichita KS 67219

Time: 0830-1530

Briefings Include: Applying for Retired Pay, TRICARE, VA, Annuity & Survivor Benefits, and more.

Please register by email to etoi.d.purnell.mil@mail.mil or call 785-274-1085 to reserve a slot. ID Card Machine will be available, must have 2 forms of ID. If dependent is not in DEERS, must have a marriage license to get an ID.

Honor Flight Program Participant. On June 25 if all goes according to plan, COL Paul Idol, Retired, will participate in the Honor Flight Program, going to Washington, D.C. to visit the World War II and Korean War memorials with a group of veterans from those conflicts. We wish him Godspeed! Watch for an article in the next Retiree Rag about his adventure! We have since found out that Joe Wheeler and Nick Hay have participated and/or served as escorts for other veterans on an Honor Flight. So, if you or others you know have participated in an honor flight, please drop a line to Sheli Sweeney at shelisweeney@hotmail.com. Thanks!

Korean War Veterans Day of Honor. June 20, 2015 at 10am at the Museum of the Kansas National Guard, an event hosted by several local veteran's organizations to honor those who served in the Korean War from 1950-1953. This war is sometimes called the "Forgotten War", but we will remember those who served on June 25. There will a briefing on the war itself—the political and military aspects. We will hear from those in attendance who want to share their own experiences, and have lunch and visit in the afternoon. Please make your reservations if you plan to attend with Sheli Sweeney at 785.213.9053.

TRICARE Retiree Dental Program and The Veteran Affairs Dental Insurance Program
(Reprinted from EANGUS "Minuteman")

For nearly three decades, Delta Dental Federal Government Programs has had the honor and pleasure of working with

active duty, Guard/Reserve and retired military members through our administration of the dental programs under TRICARE and Veterans Affairs. Aside from being able to serve these fine individuals, one of the greatest rewards has been our relationship with your Association and other members of The Military Coalition. Through this partnership, we have been able to help countless military families maintain and improve their dental and overall health. Because most people are now getting their information electronically, I wanted to let you know about some great new e-tools that we have available.

- The [SmileWay Wellness](#) site allows enrollees to take health risk assessments and get customized plans and other wellness information.
- The [Consumer Toolkit](#) allows enrollees to manage their accounts 24/7, at their convenience.
- Our websites <http://www.trdp.org/> and <http://www.deltadentalvadip.org/> have some terrific educational videos that provide a wealth of important information about our dental programs.
- Marketing Representative Regions map at <http://www.multibriefs.com/briefs/eangus/TRDPREPMAP2015.pdf>

Senate Passes Sen. Moran Bill to Fix 40-Mile Choice Act Eligibility

"Today, the U.S. Senate put veterans first and voted to make certain veterans are not dismissed or forgotten just because of where they live."

The U.S. Senate passed the Access to Community Care for Veterans Act (S.1463), legislation authored by U.S. Senator Jerry Moran that amends the Veterans Access, Choice, and Accountability Act of 2014 (Choice Act) to give veterans access to community health care when the nearest VA medical facility within 40 miles driving distance from a veteran's home is incapable of offering care the veteran needs. S.1463 now heads to the U.S. House of Representatives for a vote. The Congressional Budget Office (CBO)'s preliminary estimate of the mandatory effects of S.1463 gave a net zero effect over the 5-year and 10-year projection period.

"Today, the U.S. Senate put veterans first and voted to make certain veterans are not dismissed or forgotten just because of where they live," [Sen. Moran said](#). "The VA continues to use a narrow interpretation of the 40-mile rule, choosing to take into account only the distance of a VA medical facility from a veteran's home and not whether the VA facility can actually provide the services the veteran needs."

This effort to fix the 40-mile criteria in the Choice Act has previously been supported by endorsed by numerous organizations including the American Legion, Veterans of Foreign Wars, AMVETS, Vietnam Veterans of America, Concerned Veterans of America and the [National Guard Association of the United States](#). It is also supported by health care organizations including the National Rural Health Association, the National Association of Rural Mental Health, the National Council for Behavioral Health, Association of Community Mental Health Centers of Kansas, and the National Association of County Behavioral Health & Developmental Disability Directors.

As a member of the Senate Veterans' Affairs Committee, Sen. Moran has questioned VA Secretary Bob McDonald and other VA officials for months in hearings, personal meetings, phone calls and correspondence about the VA's flawed interpretation of the 40-mile rule and what can be done to fix the problem.

See full article at <http://www.moran.senate.gov/public/index.cfm/news-releases?ID=1a83195b-14e3-4ad6-9640-b0874901593e>

How to Report the Death of a Retired Soldier

From: Army ECHOES: Feb-May 2015

Contact the Department of the Army Casualty and Mortuary Affairs Operations Center anytime by calling (800) 626-3317. You will be immediately referred to a local *Casualty Assistance Center*, who will report the death to the Defense Finance and Accounting Service to stop retired pay and then initiate the survivor benefits process. When reporting the death, please provide as much of the information below as you have: • Full name • Disability rating • Social security number and/or service number • Circumstances surrounding the death •

Date and place of birth • Next of kin information • Retired rank • Copy of the Statement of Service (Last DD Form 214) • Retirement date • Copy of the death certificate

For Information about the Military Funeral Honors Program, Contact:

Kansas National Guard Military Funeral Honors Program

2722 SW Topeka Blvd, Topeka, Kan 66611

Phone: 785.274.1520 Fax: 785-274-1687

Survivor Outreach Services

Point of Contact: Lacey Jones

Phone: 785.274.1065 Cell: 785-845-0960

Email: lacey.e.kohlman.ctr@mail.mil



Military Compensation and Retirement Modernization Commission (MCRMC) has taken military pay and retirement under review and has not published their recommendations. Many of these would impact National Guard members. EANGKS has a great article on these recommendations, check it out at <http://eangus.org/2015/04/22/eangus-press-release-fy16-ndaa/> .

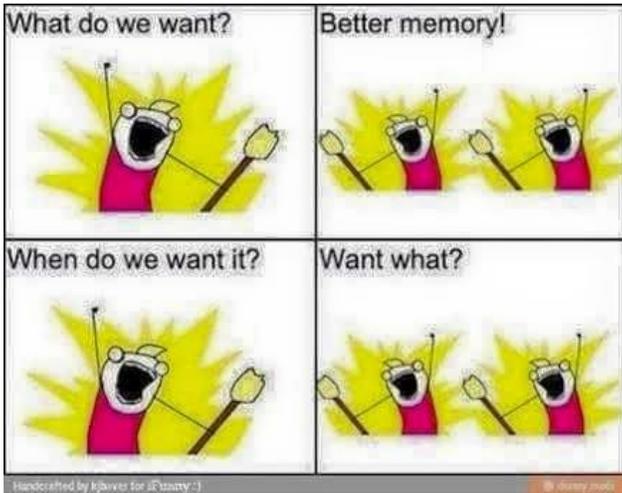
Here is a portion of the letter that EANGUS sent to the House and Senate Armed Forces Committee Chairs:

The undersigned organizations, with over 3 million members, believe there is merit to many of the recommendations by the Military Compensation and Retirement Modernization Commission, especially Recommendation 1: Help more service members save for retirement earlier in their career, leverage the retention power of the traditional Uniformed Services retirement, and give the Services greater flexibility to retain quality people in demanding career fields by implementing a modernized retirement system. The commission's legislative proposal would establish a matching Thrift Savings Plan (TSP) contribution for servicemembers which helps the 83 percent of servicemembers who separate before qualifying for a 20-year military retirement. It would also allow retiring members of the National Guard and Reserve to receive a portion of their retirement pay after 20 years of service. We urge you to support both proposals in the recommendation along with various sections of Titles 5 and 10, United States Code. In conjunction with recommendation 1, we also ask you to consider Recommendation 3: Promote Service Members' Financial Literacy by Implementing a More Robust Financial and Health Benefit Training program.

By not establishing a retirement plan when they begin working, servicemembers are several years, if not a decade, behind financial planning for retirement guidelines. We urge the committee to support legislation expanding TSP, along with financial literacy training to all military members. We believe that the recommendation enhances the current retirement system and is a valuable recruiting tool for a new generation of warfighters. We also believe whatever Congress passes should maintain the overall value of the retirement system, should not adversely affect retention, and the TSP match should continue throughout an individual's career.

Fifteen Major changes are recommended in the MCRMC report. **They will be implemented by legislation or executive order.** These proposals for legislative action are listed at <http://mldc.whs.mil/public/docs/report/MCRMC-Legislative-Proposals-FINAL-LO.pdf> . Watch for opportunities to advocate as NGAKS retirees, when warranted. More to

come.....You can view the report at <http://mldc.whs.mil/index.php/reports> . Note that the NGAKS and EANGKS Retiree Committees submitted joint recommendations in November to the MCRMC.



June 14, 2015