

NGEF Rewrites Bylaws, Alters Board to Boost Fundraising

By Ron Jensen

The National Guard Educational Foundation (NGEF) board of directors has rewritten its bylaws and will alter its makeup to better attract money and other resources needed to fulfill the foundation's mission of telling all 372 years of the Guard story.

Although the NGEF is located in the National Guard Memorial, NGAUS headquarters in Washington, D.C., it is a separate entity, charged with, among other things, operating the National Guard Museum, also located in the memorial building. The fulltime staff is one person, the NGEF director, Jonathan Bernstein.

Retired Maj. Gen. Roger Lempke, board vice chairman, said the board acted at its meeting in November with an initial goal of weaning itself from the NGAUS budget, which essentially supports the NGEF.

The current NGEF budget is \$450,000, of which \$300,000 comes from NGAUS.

"We just have not been able to meet the fundraising goals to become self-sufficient," Lempke said.

To help accomplish that, the board created a development committee that will be responsible solely for fundraising.

Its initial effort will be to approach individuals and corporations that

might be willing to give money to the foundation right away.

That would be coupled with a long-term effort to market the NGEF and its goals by using the media, producing brochures and any other idea that might increase the foundation's public profile.

Lempke said one major benefactor currently is the defense industry and for that he credited Hazell Booker, NGAUS director of industry and association liaison, who approaches corporate officials about the NGEF. The foundation receives about \$100,000 from industry each year, which goes directly into the NGEF endowment and is not directly part of the operational budget.

"It's been important, but it hasn't been significant," Lempke said.

Also, he said, a "bright spot" in the foundation's funding is an endowment from retired Brig. Gen. William Spruance.

Lempke said any fundraising effort must include a significant contribution from NGAUS members. If the NGAUS membership is not willing to support the foundation, it will be hard to convince outsiders to put up money, he said.

"It's important that NGAUS members, if they want to preserve what they've done ... we're the ones who have to do it," he said. "It's not like we

need a lot of money from everybody, but we need money from everybody."

The NGEF board also has created four at-large spots on the board that are open to anyone, but hopefully will be filled by people with the connections or deep pockets that can be helpful to the foundation's fundraising.

"We can bring captains of industry on," Lempke said, for one example. Adjutants general will be encouraged to choose people from their states who can reach into the corporate world for funds.

"Some of them may be Guard members who have done quite well in business," Lempke said. "Some of them will want to protect that rich [Guard] heritage."

The NGEF board will also limit the overlap between NGAUS and NGEF. Currently, the entire NGEF board is made up of NGAUS board members.

"The missions are totally different," Lempke said. "The kinds of individuals you elect to NGAUS aren't always the same kind you want on a foundation board."

Some positions, including treasurer, secretary and chairman, will maintain the link with the NGAUS board of directors. The NGEF chairman is currently Maj. Gen. Tod Bunting, NGAUS chairman.

It will take about a year, Lempke said, to have all the changes in place.

Guard Museum Refreshes Artifacts

Jonathan Bernstein, National Guard Educational Foundation director, wants people to come back again and again to visit the National Guard Museum. And when they do, he wants them to see new things.

So Bernstein has started swapping items on display for artifacts from the facility's archives, a practice rarely done in previous years at the museum in the National Guard Memorial.

"If you've seen the museum within the last five years, the next time you come, things will be different," Bernstein says.

For example, a uniform worn in the 1820s by an officer in the Connecticut militia has been put on display. Bernstein found it while doing an inventory of the museum archives.

Also, he has added the uniform worn by 1st Lt. Frederic

Coudert of the New York Cavalry while serving in Cuba in 1898.

The Coudert clothing is one of 27 uniforms Bernstein brought back this summer from the Museum of the City of New York, which donated some of its collection to various museums.

Bernstein already has put on display one item from New York—the uniform jacket worn by Gen. George C. Marshall when he was a brigadier general and in charge of training the troops of the Illinois Guard prior to World War II.

He has other swaps planned, utilizing both the uniforms brought from New York and items stored in the museum's archives. It's all done with one purpose in mind.

"It keeps people coming back," Bernstein says.