

IN THIS ISSUE



Employer Information
Event Calendar 1



Executive Committee 2



New Members
Our Goals
Upcoming Events 3



News from Nationals
ESGR Progress
Ombudsman Closes the
Loops 4



How to
Become a
Member



USERRA Tip
Update your Information 5



"Ask and you shall receive" ...the quarterly newsletter is back! We do hope you enjoy...please remember if you have anything that you would like to be included in the newsletter in the future, email

Shannon.Pennell@il.ngb.army.mil

Employer Information

One of the ways employers are showing their support for their military employees is by hosting Statement of Support ceremonies. Companies simply need to abide by the USERRA law (for example: companies are holding the jobs of their activated military employees and are not discriminating against them). Hosting a luncheon at the company headquarters with their military employees, corporate leadership (including CEO and HR director, if available), Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve and military leadership. Benefits of the Statement of Support Ceremony: Corporate leadership demonstrates support of the military employees. Positive internal and external media coverage. A win-win for the company, its military employees and ESGR. Demonstrates the companies commitment to support the defense of the United States. POC for Statement of Support ceremonies is Shannon L. Pennell, IL ESGR Executive Director. Ph: 217-761-3642 or email Shannon.pennell@il.ngb.army.mil

EVENTS Calendar



Past Events during the Quarter

April 29 – May 1: North Central Regional Training Conference in Chicago, Union League Club signed SOS, Exceptional Public Service Award was presented to Gary Brinner and Pat Rea received the Outstanding Public Service Award

May 11 and 12: 45 Employers, ESGR members and military leadership go on Bosslift to Washington DC. "We really got to see and hear first hand how the National Guard and Reserve are vital to the protection of our country, both in the U.S. and abroad." Deanna Frautschi, Senior VP, Communications & Human Resources of Country Insurance & Financial Services.



2004 ESGR Bosslift

"Past Events" continued on page 2



Executive Committee

State Chair

John E. Scully,
312-904-8183

Executive Director

Shannon L. Pennell,
217-761-3642

Employer Outreach Chair

Michael Ayers,
217-522-5512

Ombudsman Chair

Ron Bacci,
312-904-7114

North West Area Chair

Rick Pollack,
815-226-5994

North East Area Chair

Bill Glynn,
312-288-0500

North Central Area Chair

Terry McCollom,
708-383-6450

Central West Area Chair

Roger Boyer,
309-693-9580

Central East Area Chair

Robert Gagnon,
217-442-4624

South West Area Chair

David Oates,
618-345-2200

South East Area Chair

Donald Askew,
618-564-2943

Public Affairs Chair

Mike Peck,
847-991-4700

Awards Chair

Maryann Morrison,
309-675-4464

Military Liaison Chair

Vacant



June 7: Country Statement of Support and review of military policy. Changes to the policy include extending differential pay throughout active duty and making available a support network to impacted agents, employees and their families.

“COUNTRY is the first Illinois company to meet with us to review it’s policy,” says John Scully, chair of IL ESGR. “Your plan is outstanding and very generous. We will

use it as an example for other companies to follow.”

June 24: Shannon Pennell and Roger Boyer assisted the 182nd AW with their bosslift to Volk Field. Fifty employers of 182nd Airlift Wing members got an impressive demonstration of what their employees do when not on the job. From what they learned, their employees could be flying a C-130E Hercules cargo plane, coordinating airstrikes for infantry units or eating the modern version of C-rations. Regardless, nearly all the bosses who flew to the Air National Guard base at Volk Field in Wisconsin realized they really didn’t know what their employees did in the Guard. Visit <http://www.il.ngb.army.mil/esgr/> for the full story.

July 6: Breakfast with the Boss at Union League Club in Chicago – Presented the Pro Patria Award (2003) to Bank One, now J.P Morgan Chase. Accepting was William Daly, Vice Chair and former Secretary of Commerce. Also announced that Bank One was Freedom Award recipient for 2004. Presented a letter signed by SEC Def to Commonwealth Edison for being a 2003 Freedom Award nominee. 50 civic leaders attended.

July 6: Illinois State Chair, John Scully spoke to Cicero Rotary at noon. 17 people.

July 6 and 7: SSgt Kevin Pennell and TSgt John Rosenthal from the 183rd Fighter Wing, Air National Guard unit in Springfield came to Chicago and encouraged the public to sign the ESGR banner that was displayed behind the NASCAR showcar. They received over 100,000 signatures downtown Chicago in the Federal Plaza.

July 8 : Shannon Pennell, Terry McCollom, Bill Glynn and Ron Bacci encouraged the public to sign the ESGR banner displayed with the showcar in Joliet, IL at the Fan Fare. They received another 100,000 signatures.

July 9: John Scully and NASCAR event coordinator Bill Glynn had dinner with National Committee Executive Director, Bob Hollingsworth and Marketing Representative Gary Cyr.

July 10: NASCAR race in Joliet. John Scully and Bill Glynn attend to watch Ricky Cravens drive the ESGR Naval Reserve car. Visit website at <http://www.il.ngb.army.mil/esgr/> for NASCAR article. (See picture on page 3)

“Past Events” continued on page 3

Upcoming Events

August 2-4:

American Correctional Association Trade Show at Chicago Convention Center, Navy Pier

September 7:

Executive Committee Meeting Conference Call at 0900

September 21:

Secretary of Defence Employer Support Freedom Award Ceremony at Reagan International Trade Building, State Chair John Scully and Executive Director Shannon Pennell to attend

September 20-23: National Conference in Washington DC

October 5:

Executive Committee meeting in Chicago

November 5 and 6: 2004 Illinois ESGR Annual Conference, Bloomington, Illinois, – please let Shannon Pennell know if you are interested in attending; only 14 individuals have stated interest in attending this event

Visit the website to view the IL ESGR Calendar that is updated daily at <http://www.il.ngb.army.mil/esgr/>



From left to right: William Glynn, Illinois ESGR committee member; U.S. Naval Reserve Rear Admiral Dirk Debbink, Commander, Naval Reserve Readiness Command Midwest; Richard Childress, President and CEO of Richard Childress Racing; Bob Hollingsworth, executive director of ESGR; and John Scully, State Chairman, Illinois ESGR at Chicagoland NASCAR Busch race.

July 22: Shannon Pennell meets with Awards Coordinator, Maryann Morrison at CAT in Peoria to discuss process for determining award winners at Annual Conference in November.

July 22: Tracey Schmidt and staff at the Union League Club were presented with the Seven Seals award.

July 27: Shannon Pennell gave briefing to the 1644th Det in Springfield, IL.

July 27: Dave Oates and Jennifer Corradini brief the 1344th Trans unit in Collinsville, IL.

July 28: Bill Glynn presents My Boss is A Patriot Award to the Chicago PD Chief James Maurer

July 31: Shannon Pennell meets with the IL ESGR representative and Public Affairs Officer (CPT Stanley Paregien Stanley) from the 932nd Airlift Wing, Air Force Reserve Unit located at Scott AFB

WHAT'S NEW?

Welcome to our New Members!

Barry Federici, North Central Region: Military Liaison Representative

Mike Holub, North East Region: Public Affairs Representative

John Ady, Central East: Human Resources Representative

Kate Atteberry, Central West Region: Public Affairs Representative



2004 Regional Conference

Our Goals this year!

One of our goals this year is for all committee members to have a position title in which all committee members are active in positions that fit them well, and they will receive specific training that is beneficial to them and the organization. If you are a member without a specific job title, please contact your Regional Chair to choose a position that is best for you.



How to become a member of IL ESGR

If you know anyone interested in becoming an active member of IL ESGR please notify your Regional Chair or Shannon Pennell for an application. We are in need of active volunteers willing to assist us in this very noble cause for the Guard and Reserve. Military personnel acting as the ESGR POC for your unit are also highly encouraged to become a member of ESGR to receive mailings and invitations to our events, training sessions, conferences and help us help you.



News from Nationals: We now have the ESGR Challenge Card. Each of us should carry the card with our business cards and review the critical information to remind us to focus on the mission and the Top Priorities for this year. The “20 second commercial” that clearly articulates what ESGR is all about, keeps us on message. “Bravo Zulu” to Tom Bullock ESGR Public Affairs officer and the other contributors that developed the card. Dr. Robert Kaplan, from Harvard University, made a presentation at a recent government training seminar in Washington DC. The ESGR Challenge Card was circulated amongst the attendees and they expressed many positive comments, notably from Dr. Kaplan, about the card’s utility. Your card was sent with this newsletter.

ESGR has progressed greatly this year because of the aggressive and substantial work of the Committees. The USERRA misunderstandings reported by America’s employers and Reservists mobilized to fight the War on Terror decreased by 20 percent as compared to the USERRA misunderstandings reported by Desert Shield/Storm Reservists/employers in 1991. This is because you are working with America’s employers and the Guard and Reserve forces in accordance with the Strategic Plan. Keep up the great work!

Ombudsman services closes the ‘loop’

Page 6 June 2004

By Lt. Col. Ralph Arnold

ESGR, Ombudsman

You may recall at the Annual Conference in New Orleans 2003, Col. Al Smith introduced a new process for Ombudsman services that would utilize a Customer Service Center as a first line of response for Ombudsman issues. This idea combines a single 800 number with a group of trained service agents to ensure that ESGR customers are promptly assisted. While a Customer Service Center (CSC) is not a new concept, this is new to ESGR. Although the concept was directed as a result of a GAO study, the idea of a fully staffed single phone number available to help our military personnel and their employers made good sense. In partnership with the US Navy Personnel Center in Millington, Tenn., ESGR has made this a reality. Customers can now call 800-336-4590 and get direct assistance or be referred to a local Ombudsman for informal mediation, if necessary. In addition, the agents in Tennessee also create service request logs and assign/track requests for assistance. We have worked with ORACLE Corporation in the development of this case management system and have been working with it exclusively since Oct 2003 in a test environment. The system, which just recently became operational, enables us to use the power of this new database to track each issue from start to finish. Accordingly, the state committee-reporting requirement is now eliminated. On the other hand, by capitalizing on this tool, state committee, Department of Defense, and service customers will now have a clearer picture of the workload distribution, service request resolution, and trend within states, employer groups, and services. We also ensure that every customer (military or employer) gets the full attention they deserve. To make this work, we need to ensure that all service requests worked by ESGR Ombudsmen are entered into the Oracle database. (The term “Service Requests” includes traditional “cases” and informational inquiries.) When a call goes through 800-336-4590, this is fairly simple. When a call comes in to the CSC, the agent enters information from the individual into the database and then attempts to ‘hot’ transfer the caller to a local ombudsman - we can then track that service request. The Ombudsman need only call the CSC with the follow-up information and ask the agent to close the service request. They can also use the Ombudsman Case Form found on www.esgr.com and fax to 901-874-2116 with attention to “ESGR”. You may also email to ESGRMailbox@navy.mil. If an

“Ombudsman” continued on page 5



UPDATE YOUR INFORMATION

If you are not receiving emails from the Executive Director, we do not have your current/correct email address in the system. If you receive the Quarterly Newsletter through email but it did not reach you through regular mail, we do not have your current/correct home or work address that you requested us to send mail to. If you need to update your mailing or email address please call Shannon Pennell.



Ombudsman gets a direct call (not referred by the CSC), the Ombudsman will have two (2) options: Option 1 (preferred) – The Ombudsman will simply call 800-336-4590 and ask the agent to open a service request. The agent will assign a service request number to the service request. This number will be helpful (but not necessary) to close the service request when complete. If the individual happens to provide the ombudsman with the service request number in what appears to be a direct call, the ombudsman will know that the individual has called the Service Center. When the ombudsman resolves the service request, they will need to call the 800 number and provide a short wrap up of the resolution and discuss assigning the proper resolution code with the operator. Again, they can also use the Ombudsman Case Form found on www.esgr.com and fax to 901-874-2116 or e-mail to ESGRMailbox@navy.mil. Option 2 (alternate) The Ombudsman works the inquiry and then completes the Ombudsman Case Form at the completion. The Ombudsman then faxes or emails the form to enter the data and open/close the service request simultaneously. Option 1 is the preferred method since DoD is interested in the time required to close service requests. The only way of measuring that time is by separately opening the service request, and then closing at a later date. This will also give ESGR HQ visibility on the amount of open service requests at any one time. More importantly, if the ombudsman does not call to close the service request within a reasonable timeframe, the service request is elevated through the system to Barbara Leonard at ESGR HQ who will then call the ombudsman to discuss the resolution. Ms. Leonard is working hard every day to ensure that no veteran or employer “falls through the crack.” Once this procedure becomes routine, few calls to the local ombudsman should be required. However, to make it easier for volunteers with busy schedules, Option 2 is acceptable. The use of this system is critical to our ability to answer inquiries from within DoD, Congress and the media. Having those answers will allow us to target our resources to problem areas and better justify budget submissions/needs. More importantly, we hope to develop a process that serves the National Guard, the Reserve, and their employers in a timely and professional manner.

Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act USERRA tip for the quarter: How much notice am I required to give to my employer, prior to a period of service? We (ESGR) recommend that reservists and National Guard members give as much advance notice as possible, but USERRA does not specify any minimum period of notice. Circumstances arise, especially in a mobilization scenario, when the individual has very little advance notice from military authorities. USERRA’s legislative history indicates that Congress intended that the lateness of the notice to the civilian employer should not defeat the right to reemployment, especially when the individual had little or not notice from the military.

The Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act (USERRA) is codified in title 38, United States Code, sections 4301-4333 (38 U.S.C. 4301-4333). The complete text of USERRA is available at <https://esgr.net/members2/thelaw.asp?c=userra.html>

CAPT Samuel F. Wright, JAGC, USNR, one of the drafters of USERRA, writes a “Law Review” column for the Reserve Officers Association. Those articles are available through the Reserve Officers Association’s Law Review Archive at http://www.roa.org/home/law_review_archive.asp