



## State Chair Dick Rue Notes Major ESGR Activity

To our employers, our military and our volunteers; thank you again for your continued support. As mentioned in our last newsletter, this spring and summer will continue to be a very busy time for ESGR. We recently completed the pre-deployment support for the U.S. Army Reserve 103rd ESC and are in the midst of pre-deployment support for the 2nd Brigade of the Iowa Army National Guard. Our volunteers have been very active assisting with pre-deployment processing and briefings while maintaining support with all of our regular activities, but never too busy to provide additional assistance to employers or military units when and if needed.

We recently held our annual conference and awards lunch on April 9 & 10, 2010. The attendance at our lunch by our employers and military clearly demonstrated their commitment and support to our mission and I wish to thank all that attended. A special thanks goes out to Lieutenant General (Ret.) Warren (Bud) Lawson as our keynote speaker, who so eloquently brought into focus the fiber of American patriotism that binds us all in pursuit of our mission. Additionally, I wish to thank our full-time ESGR staff for their outstanding planning and execution of this year's conference and awards ceremony. The dates for the 2011 conference are April 8 & 9.



I would also like to congratulate two outstanding Iowa employers that have made the 130 semi-finalist list of the National Freedom Awards competition. John Deere Des Moines Works of Ankeny, Iowa, and the Poweshiek County Sheriff's Office of Montezuma, Iowa, have both been designated as semi-finalists. The final 15 award winners will be announced sometime in July. Regardless of the final selections, these two Iowa employers have distinguished themselves as outstanding Guard and Reserve employers and are to be commended for their patriotism and commitment to our nation's military.

National ESGR continues to provide outstanding support to our state with advanced training opportunities, new support videos for public awareness and mailings to employers and military members to increase awareness of ESGR as a resource. We look forward to the increased support and visibility beginning this summer.

Thank you all for your support, your passion for our mission and for your commitment to the men and women serving our country.

## The Latest From the ESGR State Office . . .

### **Thank You for the Great Work You Are Doing for the Guard, Reservists and Employers!**

We are now in the middle of the largest deployments this state has seen since WWII and our total ESGR team is fully engaged with Guard and Reserve members and their employers all across the state.

Thanks to everyone who has been participating (and still is) in the events like Town Hall Meetings and the Lunch and Learns. Please continue to work with your area chairs on how you can help. Also thanks to the Military Outreach volunteers for conducting briefings with the military members during the course of this year.

Boss lifts are being worked out with the area chairs for the month of June. We will be airlifting 78 employers to Camp Ripley, MN, to see how the troops train-up for the upcoming deployment.

Annual training today is 3-4 weeks in duration, not business as usual for the reserve components. Some drill weekends are no longer weekends; some are Thursday, Friday, Saturday and Sunday. Employers are being told at our Lunch and Learns that the Guard and Reserve duty has changed tremendously since 9/11.

Volunteer Hours: Thanks to all of you who are turning in your hours to Becky. Please fill out the form so we can best account for the time we spend as volunteers. National ESGR is becoming more specific on the kind of information they are looking for. The more information you have on the form the easier it is for Becky to do her reports to National.

### **Stacy Craven Becomes New Office Manager for State ESGR**



Stacy Craven from Boone is the new Iowa ESGR office manager. She attended high school in Eagle Grove and continued her education at the University of Northern Iowa, graduating from UNI in 1997 with a BA in elementary education. She had been a substitute teacher in Boone since then.

In June, 2000, she married Jeff Craven, a CW4 in the Iowa National Guard. They have two sons: Jacob, a third grader, and Benjamin, a first grader in Boone. They also have a daughter, Jenny, who is graduating from Drake as a pharmacist, and a son, Joe, who is graduating from Illinois Institute of Technology in Chicago in the field of engineering.

Stacy enjoys spending time with her husband and children and enjoys sports and watching the boys play all of their sporting events. She and her husband are involved in coaching their baseball Little League team.

Stacy is pictured at left with her family.

# ESGR Training Conference Draws 60 Volunteers

More than 60 Iowa ESGR volunteers and their leaders spent the better part of two days April 9 and 10 at the annual training conference in West Des Moines. Attendance at the awards luncheon that concluded the event swelled to 155.

Friday's session began with new member training, led by Al Enright, Executive Director for Iowa. Dick Rue, State Chairman, opened the general session with an official welcome and opening comments. Rob Kelly, State Vice Chair, was active in introducing many of the training activities. Lunch time featured Diane Cibolski of the ITA Group speaking on communication skills.

In the afternoon, breakout sessions included tips on Employer Outreach, led by Tom Meyer; Military Outreach, led by Doyle Norris, and Ombudsman Refresher Training, led by Tom Smock and Tony Smithhart. Becky Coady, Deputy Director, discussed the awards program, and Rob Kelly led a review of best practices brought out in the breakouts. Informal networking among the volunteers and staff concluded the day's activities.



**Ms. Brunelli**

An ESGR volunteer awards breakfast started Saturday's activities, followed by a further discussion of ombudsman functions. Carol Bodensteiner, Public Affairs Director for the Iowa Committee, offered tips on getting the word out about ESGR's activities, and Doug Enright presented website training.

The morning session was highlighted by remarks by Polli Brunelli, National ESGR Acting Executive Director, who also participated in the awards presentations that followed the noon luncheon.

Kelly also presided at the opening ceremony for the Saturday luncheon and introduced special guests.

Featured speaker at the luncheon was Lt. Gen. (Retired) Warren (Bud) Lawson, who served as Adjutant General of the Iowa National Guard for many years. He stressed the need for the ESGR efforts in view of the marked increase in recent years of calls to active duty for National Guard and Reserve personnel.

The luncheon program concluded with presentation of awards to firms and individuals who provided essential support to the ESGR programs during 2009. (See next page for photos and listings.)



**Lt. Gen. Lawson**

## State ESGR Awards Go to 28 Recipients



*Employers and institutions from around the state received awards during the luncheon April 10 which concluded the 2010 ESGR training conference. Those who represented the winners in receiving the awards are pictured above. Awards were presented in the following categories:*

### **State Chairman's Awards**

Burdette Law Firm, PC  
Mary Greeley Medical Center  
Solar Transport  
Hampton County Sheriff's Office

### **Above and Beyond Awards**

Four Oaks-Asperger's Program  
Humboldt County REC  
Advanced Woodwork, Inc.  
Novak Electric  
Wells Fargo Card Services  
Principal Financial Group  
Black Hills Energy

### **More Above and Beyond Awards**

Pioneer Hi-Bred International  
Alpha, Iowa City  
Davenport Police Department  
Mi-T-M Corporation  
Southeast Polk School District  
Finley Hospital  
GKN Armstrong Wheels  
Florida Power and Light  
John Deere – Cedar Falls  
Cargill Corn Milling – Eddyville  
Union School District  
Winnebago Industries  
Cargill – Iowa Falls

### **Pro Patria Awards**

John Deere – Des Moines Works  
Bridgestone Bandag Tire Solutions  
Salzman International, Inc.  
Iowa State University

## ***Winners' Representatives Claim Pro Patria Awards . . .***

Recipients are posed between Polli Brunelli, ESGR National Acting Director, and Dick Rue, ESGR State Chairman.



*Aadne Stokka (l) and Murray Smith  
for John Deere Des Moines Works*



*Mitchell Spivey and Lynne Spengler  
for Bridgestone-Bandag Tire Solutions*



*Warren Madden  
for Iowa State University*

## Lunch and Learn Gains House Support Resolution



*At an Iowa Legislature Lunch and Learn session March 3, 28 senators and 45 representatives were either present or had someone from their offices attend. Pictured here from left to right are Representative Marci Frevert; Ted Ellis (Area 3); Mark Stanton (Area 12); Dick Rue, (State ESGR Chair); Representative Sharon Steckman; Representative Gary Worthan; Tom Smock (ESGR State Ombudsman); Carmine Boal (Area 4 Chair), Tom Manley (Area 3 Chair); Doyle Norris (State Military Outreach Director); Paul Monson (Area 3); Brett McLain (Area 4), and Mitch Arney (Area 4).*

### **House Resolution No. 115 Introduced by Sharon Steckman**

A Resolution to recognize Iowa Employer Support for the Guard and Reserve, their 150 Iowa volunteers, and the programs they provide.

WHEREAS, it is essential to gain and maintain employer support for Iowa National Guard and Military Reserve service by recognizing outstanding support by employers, increasing awareness of the law, and resolving conflicts through mediation; and

WHEREAS, the Employer Support for the Guard and Reserve (ESGR) was founded in 1972 as an agency of the United States Department of Defense and is funded by the Department; and

WHEREAS, ESGR is an invaluable resource for employers and the National Guard and Military Reserve members that work for them; and

WHEREAS, employers and members of ESGR are provided assistance by Iowa volunteers across the state, under the authority of the federal Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act (USERRA); and

WHEREAS, volunteers assist employers and members of ESGR to become familiar with the resources and services that ESGR provides and encourage them to take advantage of this information and assistance should the need ever arise; and

WHEREAS, ESGR's employer outreach volunteers provide information, education, and services for employers through programs across the state called Lunch and Learns, Boss Lifts, and the Speakers Bureau; and

WHEREAS, ESGR also has an awards program designed to acknowledge the efforts employers put forth to support their military employees; and

WHEREAS, ESGR's military outreach volunteers provide National Guard and Military Reserve members with important information about their rights and responsibilities under USERRA, and ESGR programs and services; and

WHEREAS, ESGR-trained volunteer ombudsmen provide information, confidential counseling, and neutral mediation relating to compliance with the USERRA requirements; and

WHEREAS, Iowa Employer Support for the Guard and Reserve honors our courageous guardsmen and reservists and their employers, whose continued support is vital to the success of our armed forces and to the strength of America; NOW THEREFORE,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, That the House of Representatives urges all Iowans to learn more about Iowa Employer Support for the Guard and Reserve and the resources and services that it provides, and to take advantage of this information and assistance should the need ever arise.

## Snapshots at the Legislative Lunch and Learn . . .



## Ames Chamber Hosts Lunch and Learn Session

Ames Chamber of Commerce assisted in promoting and hosting a Lunch and Learn session at Sauer-Danfoss, Inc., in Ames Wednesday, May 12.

Representatives from several Ames and Story County employers or organizations were present for lunch and discussions about Employer Support for Guard and Reserve (ESGR) and its role in clarifying and supporting the provisions of the Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act (USERRA).

Al Enright, Executive Director of ESGR in Iowa, made

introductions, outlined the role of the ESGR committee, and discussed the ESGR mission, goals and support. He is pictured at left, below.

Dennis Larson (shown at center), Deputy Director of the Department of Labor's Veterans' Employment and Training Service (VETS), provided detailed information about USERRA and how it serves both employers and their employees who are members of the Guard or Reserve forces.

Vonda Bone (right), an investigator for the Department of Labor's Wage and Hour division explained family leave entitlement of the Family and Medical Leave Act.

Brett McLain, an Area 4 ESGR volunteer from Ames, concluded the program with details about ESGR's Statement of Support program. He has arranged several SOS agreements in Ames and Story county.

Photos of three of the presenters were made available by the Ames Chamber.



## Algona Also Held Fruitful Lunch and Learn Session



*The pictures are from the Algona Lunch and Learn Feb. 17. This is one of the employer events held across the state teaching USERRA and promoting ESGR. USERRA is Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act.*

### **Tully, Long-Time ESGR Volunteer, Died April 19**

Thomas Tully, 69, of 838 Stone Ridge Place, Dubuque, died Monday, April 19, at his residence. Services were held April 22 at St. Raphael Cathedral. Tully was a 25-year volunteer with ESGR and had served for a time on the state board before his retirement a couple of years ago.

# Iowa ESGR Inks 2 Strategic Partnerships



*Associated General Contractors of Iowa President Tony Manatt (left) is pictured here with Iowa ESGR Chairman Dick Rue.*



*Rob Kelly, Iowa ESGR State Vice Chair (left) is pictured with Karla Thompson, President of Iowa Chamber of Commerce Executives, and Dick Rue, Iowa ESGR State Chair.*

Recently, Iowa ESGR has formed strategic partnerships with two other Iowa organizations: the Associated General Contractors of Iowa and the Iowa Chamber of Commerce Executives.

These two partnerships will assist ESGR in reaching out to employers to educate them about what ESGR is and does, and the federal USERRA law.

Both organizations have also agreed to assist Iowa ESGR in reaching out to their members to sign Statements of Support. Both will be great additions to the other strategic partners that we have and help achieve our mission of education.

With their agreements, both organizations have shown tremendous support for ESGR and were both presented with the Seven Seals award.



## Statements of Support Signed In Two Communities



**ABOVE:** Cornerstone Pub in Emmetsburg, Iowa, signed an ESGR Statement of Support on Tuesday, April 13. Left to right are Tom Manley (ESGR Area 3 Chair), co-owners Linn Curry and Shannon Iverson, and Ted Ellis (ESGR).

**RIGHT:** City of Spencer Mayor Reynold Peterson, seated, signed a Statement of Support March 29. Pictured with him are ESGR committee members Steve Waller, left, and Tom Manley.



## ESGR Volunteer Is Recognized as NCO of the Year

Kevin Taylor attended the Enlisted Association of the National Guard of Iowa (EANGI) conference in late April in Fort Dodge where he was recognized as the Non-Commissioned Officer (NCO) of the year for the entire Iowa Air National Guard. The Air National Guard in Iowa is fairly large with more than 2,000 airmen across three bases. Prior to winning this award, he was recognized by the 133rd Test Squadron (his old guard unit) as the NCO of the Year.

Kevin said: "I ended up winning the NCO of the year award for the entire Iowa Air Guard. Though my hard work in the guard was a contributing factor to my selection, I truly feel I won this award because of my work for the ESGR. As such, I think this really validates how strongly our National Guard Leadership feels about the ESGR.

"Thanks to each of you for keeping me engaged with the ESGR. Our work is truly important and impactful to our Iowa communities!"

He is pictured with his wife, Lacey, who also is an ESGR volunteer.



## Recent Statewide Patriotic Employer Awards



*A Patriot Award presentation was made to Wells Dairy, Inc., in Area 1 on March 24. Jack Guenthner (ESGR volunteer) is on the left; Christi Calhoun of Wells Dairy is center, and the nominator. Thomas Pottabaum, at right.*



*Des Moines Fire Department District Chief Dale Bunting (center) received a Patriotic Employer Award Feb. 25 from ESGR. Justin Stover (right), a Des Moines Fire Department employee and staff sergeant with the Air National Guard, nominated Bunting for the recognition. Ted Hall, left, representing ESGR, made the presentation.*



*Deerfield Retirement Community Director Brenda Ballard (second from left) received a Patriotic Employer Award recently from Iowa Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve (ESGR). Ballard was nominated for the recognition by Alicia Bollie (second from right), a Deerfield employee and a Staff Sergeant with the Air National Guard, for the support Ballard and Deerfield provided to her while she was deployed. At left is Major Kyle Kovarik. At right is Ted Hall, a volunteer with Iowa ESGR.*



*Mercy Hospital Medical Center Interim Director of the OR, left, received a Patriotic Employer award recently. Hoffman was nominated for the award by Sally Hardy, third from left, a Mercy Hospital nurse and a major with the Air National Guard. Also pictured are Ted Hall, a volunteer with ESGR, second from left, and Dan Varnum, Mercy Hospital assistant director.*



*AT LEFT: Cork Peterson, of Peterson Construction, was awarded the Patriotic Employers Award at his employee event on Saturday, Feb. 27. Pictured from left to right are Dave Grimm, military liaison and ombudsman for Area 5 ESGR; Peterson, and Craig White, ESGR member and Blackhawk County Supervisor.*

# IOWA EMPLOYER SUPPORT OF THE GUARD AND RESERVE



*Arcadia Farmers Cooperative Elevator Company received a Patriot Award recently. Pictured from left to right are Paul Francis, Daryll Henkenius, Chris Greving (nominator), and Andy Stangl.*



*Keystone Automotive General Manager Kory Stevens (second from left) received a Patriotic Employer Award last January from ESGR. Stevens was nominated by Thomas Kennedy, (second from right), a Keystone Automotive employee and a specialist with the Army National Guard. Pictured with them are two ESGR volunteers, Carmine Boal (left) and Kevin Taylor (right).*



*Chief Doug Phillips of the Polk County Sheriff's Office (center) received a Patriotic Employer Award March 25 from ESGR. Chief Phillips was nominated for the recognition by Timothy Schuster (right), a deputy in the patrol division and a master sergeant with the Air National Guard. Also pictured is Ted Hall, a volunteer with ESGR (left).*



*Per Mar Security Services Supervisor Cory Harstadt (center) received a Patriotic Employer Award recently from ESGR. Harstadt was nominated by Ben Jantz (right), a Per Mar employee and a specialist with the Army Reserve. ESGR volunteer Kevin Taylor (left) made the presentation.*



*Jeff Heidi of Pella in Sioux Center (center) received a Patriot Award recently. Ed Ness (right) was nominator. Jack Guenther (left) is an ESGR volunteer.*



*Michael Sodak of Nutri-Tech Feeds, LLC., Oskaloosa (left), received a Patriot Award from Steve Haigh, ESGR representative. Jerry Vanderpol (right) was the nominator.*

# IOWA EMPLOYER SUPPORT OF THE GUARD AND RESERVE



*Southeast Polk Junior High Principal Glenn Dietzenbach received a Patriotic Employer Award Jan. 18 from Iowa Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve (ESGR). Dietzenbach was nominated to receive the Patriot Award by Brett Comegys, a special education teacher at Southeast Polk Junior High who also serves as a sergeant in the Army National Guard. Pictured from left to right are Carol Bodensteiner, Comegys, Dietzenbach, Kevin Taylor, and Mike Hamilton. Bodensteiner, Taylor and Hamilton are volunteers with ESGR.*



*Lacey Taylor, right, presented a Patriot Award to Steve Daniels of Radio Shack March 30.*



*(Above) PFGBEST's CEO, Russell Wasendorf, received an ESGR Patriot Award from Susan Dawson, Area 5 Chair, recently. Jimmy Williamson is the ESGR volunteer on the left.*

*(Right) Susan Dawson, Area 5 Chair, presented an ESGR Patriot Award to Phil Paladino of the Nestle Company in Waverly May 6. Capt. Michael Western of the 128th Air Control Squadron was the nominator. Nestle also signed a Statement of Support.*



## Helpful information to accompany photos

1. Provide the file name of the photo (numbers, letters or a combination).
2. Tell the nature of the event pictured (award ceremony, lunch and learn, etc.).
3. Tell when and where it occurred (date of event, city or town, ESGR area).
4. Identify those in photo left to right (including name, title and organization as appropriate).

### Here is an example:

ESGR-2-2010.JPG

ESGR's Patriotic Employer Award went to Lisa Krausman (left) of the University of Northern Iowa for exceptional support of Clint C. Holtz, who is currently deployed and works for UNI. Susan Dawson, ESGR Area 5 Chair, made the presentation Feb.17 in Cedar Falls.