

Rhode Island National Guard Retirement Updater



A Quarterly publication of the
Rhode Island National Guard Retirees Association

Builders of the only memorial to the National Guard in R.I.

Vol. XXVI, No. 4, December 2021 issue

On the Web at <http://ringretirees.homestead.com>



RI National Guard Meets the Challenge of COVID-19 in Rhode Island

We often remember times past when we proudly served in statewide emergency situations. Today's RI National Guard members continue to serve in this tradition.

COVID-19 has presented Rhode Island with another emergency and the RING has once again stepped up to the challenge. The Covid-19 response has been and continues to be the largest, most sustained, and complex domestic support activation in our 383-year history.

RING Personnel established and operated more than twenty unique testing sites throughout the state over the course of the pandemic response. Collectively, our Soldiers and Airmen conducted over 330,000 tests. They set up the first drive-thru testing site in the Nation and assembled more than 1.5 million swab kits when faced with shortages. They also distributed over 800,000 kits to other testing channels.

From day one of the response, RING planners were embedded into RI Department of Health to help establish the Hospital Surge Plan to keep our hospitals from exceeding capacity. They were instrumental in setting up 3 Alternate Hospital Sites that increased hospital bed capacity by over 1000 hospital beds.



December Quarterly Meeting Cancelled

Due to an unforeseen scheduling conflict, we have cancelled the December 11th Quarterly Meeting at Schofield Armory. This may be for the best, however, because of the continuing threat of the Covid 19 virus. This notice will be posted on our website

(<http://ringretirees.homestead.com>) .

SEE CHALLENGE, page 3



Volume XXVI, No. 4, 2021

The RING Retirement Updater is published quarterly to precede the quarterly meetings of the:

RING Retirees Association

PresidentBob Urquhart

Vice PresidentLou Stanziale

Secretary.....Carole Angolano

TreasurerPat Curran

Web site: <http://ringretirees.homestead.com>

RING Retirement Updater

The information presented in the Updater is strictly the opinion of the Updater. It is in no way expressed or implied to be the opinion of the United States Government, the State of Rhode Island, or any of the Armed Forces of the United States of America.

Circulation: 750

Newsletter Committee

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William O'Mara438-7867

Luis A. Sousa...944-5277

Herve E. Pelland.....762-3431

Paul D. Vona.....781-6693

The President's Corner

Meeting schedule: The September 18th meeting was cancelled due to the continuing threat of the Covid 19 virus. Although the December 11th quarterly meeting is still on schedule, we will make a final decision two weeks before (Thanksgiving – posted on our website). If we hold the meeting, we will not have coffee and pastry. We may also cancel the speaker.

Highlight of the quarter: Enjoy the write-up by Romeo Blouin on the front page about how the RI National Guard played such a significant role in supporting the state's effort in fighting the Covid 19 virus.

September meeting – the vote of officers: Using email, we were able to vote for the President and Treasurer for the next term. Both Pat Curran and I decided to run a third term, but only for one year, considering we had extended/frozen our second term to three years because of the virus. If you can weed thru that explanation, then our next election will be in September, 2022, to replace both Pat and me.

One final thought: I ask that all of you consider the President and Treasurer's positions in 2022.

We have come a long way in delegating the roles and now many positions run smoother. We have stabilized our "home base" at Schofield (security issues, availability of chairs/tables/space), solved our mail delivery issues, and added display cases for future plaques, etc. We have standardized our membership process, speaker coordination, plaque updating, history files, and newsletter mailing.

Some of this is due to our use of the computer, especially email. The main objective is to make the jobs easier and standardized so we can train our replacements when the time comes.

SEE PRESIDENT, page 3

CONTACTS for RINGRA Information and Services:

- Bob UrquhartEmergency Support Fund.....884-1277
- Romeo Blouin..... Newsletter Editor 508-379-6059
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- John P. Gallo..... Rhode Island Legislation..... 728-3845
- Patrick O'ConnorsAffiliated Groups.....949-1786
- Herve E. Pelland Newsletter & Plaques.....762-3431
- David LeDuc Auditor.....568-3647
- Daniel Evangelista..... Veteran's Affairs.....474-4764
- Lee Ann Lyons.....Sunshine484-3246

IN MEMORIAM

July 2021

Anthony Vessella – RIANG

August 2021

Joseph Marcotte – RIARNG

John Jesse - RIANG

Louis DiManni—RIARNG



“Humility must always be the position of any man who receives acclaim earned in the blood of his followers and the sacrifices of his friends.” Dwight D. Eisenhower

FROM THE ADJUTANT GENERAL

As we approach the last few months of 2021, I wanted to take a moment to share some of the amazing work that is being undertaken by the talented Soldiers, Airmen, NCOs and Officers of the Rhode Island National Guard (RING). At this time, the team is finishing the last of our COVID-19 pandemic response missions. What your Rhode Island National Guard accomplished in service to our state was nothing short of incredible and I hope you are as proud of them as I am.

Most of you are likely aware of the current funding issues affecting the National Guard at large. We remain committed to ensuring each member of the RING has the ability to complete a good training year and are prioritizing funding for required military educational schools and training.

In January, Rhode Island, along with National Guards across the 54, sent over 100 members of our A/1/182d IN and 143d Security Forces Squadron (SFS) to support the Capitol Response. These men and women served admirably helping secure the National Capital Region and maintain peace.

Globally, the RING remains a well-respected professional force and relationship building partner. Currently, over 50 members of A/2/19th SFG are deployed throughout Southwest Asia as are members of the 143d SFS. Additionally, members of the 282d Combat Communications Squadron will deploy to AFRICOM and CENTCOM before the end of the year. In February 2020, we became the State Partnership Program partner to the nation of Timor Leste. This year has seen a reinvigoration of our long-standing partnership with the Commonwealth of The Bahamas where our C12 unit helped deliver the COVID-19 vaccine.

On the home front, the RING remains mission focused. Our Army and Air recruiting teams continue to do outstanding work growing our team. Several new programs to include a GT Enhancement Course and the Civilian Police Officer Pathway Program offer new ways to help our Service Members excel in their Guard and civilian professions. This summer, our own SFC Ryan Corcoran won Region 1 NCO Best Warrior Competition and represented the RING at the national ARNG NCO and Soldier Best Warrior Competition. The 143d AW is now home to a new C130J flight simulator as they continue to be leaders in the airframe.

We look forward to what the next year brings. A/1/182d IN is preparing to mobilize and deploy in 2022 with their battalion in the Massachusetts Army National Guard. We expect to hold the Military Ball, the Open House Air Show, and LeapFest which were postponed due to the pandemic. Planning is underway to begin the reconstruction of the runway at Quonset Air Base as well as additional infrastructure projects that will enhance and improve overall readiness. As always, our team could not do what they do without those who paved the way. Thank you for your continued support and service.

MAJOR GENERAL CHRISTOPHER P. CALLAHAN

PRESIDENT, from page 2

Hate to admit it, but we are all getting old, and as much as we have enjoyed the camaraderie and the accomplishments, we must focus on the future. I hope you can be part of that future.

Need your help! We need a "used" digital projector (connects to a computer). Got one? Your company wants to toss one? Please let me know (email is fine).

Sincerely,

Bob Urquhart, President



CHALLENGE from Page 1

The RING opened and operated the 3 Mass Vaccination Sites and provided support to Municipal Vax Ops, administering over 362,000 vaccinations

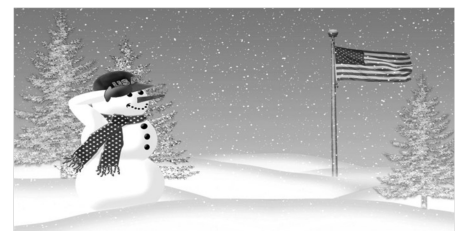
Joint RING teams provided on-the-ground support to our hardest hit high density communities, operating 73 testing sites and 44 vaccination sites.

In addition to supporting all RING missions, logisticians supported the RIEMA Warehouse providing Personal Protection Equipment and Supplies to Healthcare Workers and First Responders

RING created the Education Ops Center, a multi-agency team that conducted more than 500 school visits and responded to 2,168 requests for information or assistance

Medical Professionals from Army and Air brought their expertise to 134 TAA Missions in Congregate Care Settings

Over 100 RING Service Members conducted Voluntary COVID mapping and Case Investigation/Management helping connect Rhode Islanders to resources.



Wellness Checks – Important to you?

Maybe an obvious question, but are you living alone and have a plan in place for someone checking on you? I would guess not, and you are not alone (no pun intended). This is not an age issue; some of our fellow Guardsmen and women that lived alone were not even retired yet! Of the 10 members of our Executive Board, 5 live alone (young and old). Over the years, we have lost four members that I know of from our RING retirement community; their bodies were not found for days. It's upsetting – and it's wrong.

After the most recent death, Leo Fox (RIANG, Col, ret) shared his concern with me that maybe “we” could make aware to our members about wellness checks and propose a program that would help. Normally I would ask the person suggesting such action that they take it upon themselves – and then usually the “suggestion” disappears! However, Leo has contributed so much help to many organizations, I decided to dig into this service myself and this is what I found:

1. Wellness checks (sometimes called a suspicious behavior check or police welfare check) are done by the local police. They establish the legitimacy of the call and then follow thru either immediately or same day as appropriate.
2. Contact with the police should be done via the local station phone. 911 calls are only in a real emergency but can be used as a last resort. Realize that the 911 operator would need the full address, including the city/town.
3. Even though they do not have a court order to enter the house, they can enter the house if no one responds to their knocking, a doorbell ring, or yelling. Obviously, if they see anything “amiss” thru a window, they will enter immediately. Once inside, they can render emergency aid if necessary.
4. If you live in the same town/city, you can join the authorities when they check on the person you are concerned about.
5. Keep in mind that you cannot simply ask for a wellness check if you do not have a serious reason to believe the individual is in danger and needs help. Also, prank phone calls are illegal and face serious consequences.

Now how do we fold that into a self-initiated plan of action? Yup, it's up to you, as a single member of the household, to create your own plan. Of course, you could just ignore this “issue”, but is that what you really want? Maybe have a neighbor/friend/relative help you thru it, using this article as a guide.

1. Determine at least one person that would agree to help: neighbor, relative, friend, or apartment landlord.
2. Contact your local police department to confirm the correct phone number and ask about their wellness check procedure (they may have a special number to use – **see reference below**)
3. Provide your full name, address, phone number, and the phone number of YOUR police department for your contact. Also, list the relative/phone number you would want contacted, if necessary. A 3x5 card would be great – and great for their refrigerator!
4. If you have a friendly neighbor who is willing to help, you may want to give them a house key also. That neighbor could also see if you have picked up your paper off the driveway, a sure sign you may be in distress.
5. Discuss your POC about frequency: daily? Every other day? During/after a storm?

SEE CHECKS, PAGE 6

CHECKS, from page 4

The North Kingstown police department receives several requests for wellness checks *a week*, especially after a storm (relatives calling in from out of state, checking on elderly parents). Mental health issues are playing a bigger role, including threats of suicide. The town requires an initial eight hours of mental health training and an annual refresher to cope with those issues. This is a much different challenge than routine police work; gaining the confidence of the individual is critical to resolving the issue.

Even if you are not living alone, you may want to consider helping a close neighbor or friend thru this process. They may be too intimidated or embarrassed to do it on their own. As you can see, it is not difficult, but does require some homework to plan it.

References: WWW.rielderinfo.com (RI local police (listings and other information))

WWW.HHS.GOV/aging/state-resources (by state)

So, get to it! It's not difficult; just take the first step!

Bob Urquhart, President

Remember when?



1985 - Air Guardsmen Arthur, Peter and Mark Jannitto wish everyone a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!

"I'm going to lie down under the tree to remind my family that I am a gift." Anonymous

Sponsor a Veteran's Wreath This Holiday Season

Wreaths Across America (WAA) coordinates wreath laying ceremonies every December to "Remember, Honor and Teach" about the sacrifices made by our veterans and families. Wreaths will be laid at the **R.I. Veterans Cemetery in Exeter at noon on Saturday, December 18th, 2021.**

Goff Middle School in Pawtucket is a leader in this effort. As the school website proclaims, "REMEMBER the Fallen. . . HONOR those who Serve. . . TEACH our children the value of Freedom." Goff students, along with other organizations will be helping Rhode Island Veterans Cemetery by laying wreaths on the graves of our country's fallen heroes.

You can help by going to their website <https://www.wreathscrossamerica.org/pages/161411/Overview/?relatedId=17129t> to sponsor remembrance wreaths, volunteer on Wreaths Day, or by inviting your family and friends to join you at the ceremony.

DAV Van Service Operational Again

The DAV hospital van service is operational again to pick up Veterans for appointments and bring them home afterward. To schedule this service, call Brandon, the dispatcher, between 5:30 and 8:00 in the morning for rides that day or to make an appointment for a future date. Tel # 401-457-3387. Spouses are welcome to accompany the Veteran as necessary.

Photos Wanted

We continue to look for photos from your time in the Army or Air Guard to publish in the *Updater*. You can send them attached to an email to romeoblouin@comcast.net. If you prefer, we can borrow your photos for scanning. You could also mail them to me: R. Blouin, 11 Palmer River Road, Swansea, MA 02777. We promise to return them. Please do your best to date the photos, identify people and locations, and supply any other information of interest. Make sure you give us your name and return address.

We've had some great contributions to this effort and want to thank those who have generously shared their photos.

RING RETIREES ASSOCIATION MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION (PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY)

The purpose and objective of the RING Retirees Association is to provide benefit information to military retirees, to maintain the camaraderie of the military, and to offer services to fellow members as the need arises.

NEW MEMBER (dues free first year) **RENEWAL** (dues – see below)

Name _____ Rank (optional) _____

Address _____ D.O.B. _____

City _____ State _____ Zip + Four _____

E-mail address: _____ Telephone _____

Number of Years in the RI National Guard _____

No. of years in other branch (Army, USAF, etc.) _____ Total Years Service _____ Retirement Date _____

Unit Assigned to at Retirement _____

Second Address for December & March issues OR June & September issues (Check One):

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip + Four _____

MEMBERSHIP TYPE (Check One)

Active

Any individual who has served at least 6 years in the RING and has completed 20 years total service and retired with an honorable discharge is eligible for membership with voting rights. The privilege of voting is extended to members who are currently paid annual members. The first year membership is FREE.

Associate

Anyone who is a current member of the RING and has received a 20 year retirement letter; or any member of the military with less than 6 years National Guard Service who has received a 20 year retirement letter; and the spouse of a deceased military retiree (who has served at least 6 years in the RING) is eligible to become an Associate Member. The privilege of voting is not extended to these individuals. They may participate on committees and activities of the organization, provided their dues are paid through the current membership year: **1 October through 30 September**).

Annual Dues: \$5 - 1 yr. \$10—2 yrs. \$15—3 yrs. \$20—4 yrs. \$25—5 yrs.

Please make checks payable to:

RING Retirees Association

Mail to:

**RING Retirees Association/Membership
c/o SSG (Ret.) Luis A. Sousa
32 Pomham Street
Cranston, RI 02910-1433**

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY	
Amount Received _____	Date _____
Check Number _____	Check Date _____
Member ID Number _____	
Received By _____	
Database Processed _____	Card Sent _____

R.I.N.G. Retirees Association

705 New London Avenue
Cranston, RI 02920-3003

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

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MEETING CALENDAR

All meetings are at the Schofield Armory
705 New London Avenue, Cranston, RI

Quarterly Meetings 0900 hours

Saturday, 11 December 2021 cancelled
Saturday, 12 March 2022
Saturday, 11 June 2022

Executive Board Meetings 1830 hours

Wednesday, 12 January 2022
Wednesday, 9 February 2022
Wednesday, 6 April 2022
Wednesday, 11 May 2022

THIS COULD BE YOUR LAST ISSUE!

If the last two numbers on your mailing label are 21 (or lower), then this WILL be your last issue. It means your membership has expired. Renew with this form and mail it with your check by December 2021

In the example below, the first set of numbers (937) is the membership number; the letter (P) is the type of membership (P = Active and A = Associate); and the last two numbers (21) indicate the year your dues are up for renewal.

If you have not joined or you are due for renewal, please fill in the form on page 7 and mail it with your check. Your membership card will be mailed to you. If you have already joined, thanks for your support and pass the application form on to someone else who has not yet joined. **If you move, PLEASE LET US KNOW.** Because this newsletter is mailed Fourth Class, the Post Office will not forward it to your new address.

(937 P21)
CPT (RET) JAMES T. KIRK
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ENTERPRISE, RI 12345-6789