

## Sometimes winning a fight means making a friend

By Staff Sgt. Russell Bassett  
115th MPAD

“You go away. No come in town,” 1st Sgt. Robert Hanks said to members of his own Oregon National Guard unit. “We no trust you. Go away.”

Those words were the only ones the Soldiers of Alpha Company, 2nd Battalion, 162nd Infantry could understand when they came upon a mock village during a patrol in the jungles of Japan’s Sekiyama Maneuver Area Monday.

Hanks and members of the battalion’s mortar section were role-playing rural villagers and, except for a few choice words, were not speaking in English. The hostile attitude, however, was easily understood by the Oregon Soldiers.

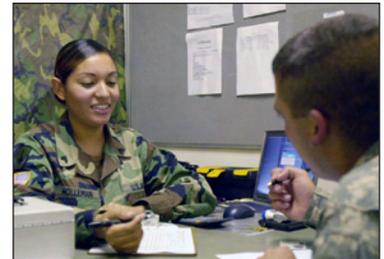
“We don’t want any trouble, but there is suspected enemy activity in this area,” Alpha Commander 1st Lt. Cory Jones replied to the villagers, offering them a Gatorade. “We are here to help you.”

About 240 Oregon citizen Soldiers deployed to Japan last week for Orient Shield 2007, an annual, bilateral training exercise with the Japanese Ground Self Defense Force.

Last week’s training was focused on individual tasks such weapons training, running a traffic control point, short range marksmanship and close quarters combat.

Sunday, the focused switched to collective training, including recon and surveillance and cordon and search operations. The training

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Photos by Staff Sgt. John Martinez

Sgt. Yazmin Holleman, pay agent with the 10th Area Support Group, cashes a check for Oregon Guardsman Pvt. John Crosby Wednesday.

## Support

*Support personnel make Orient Shield possible*

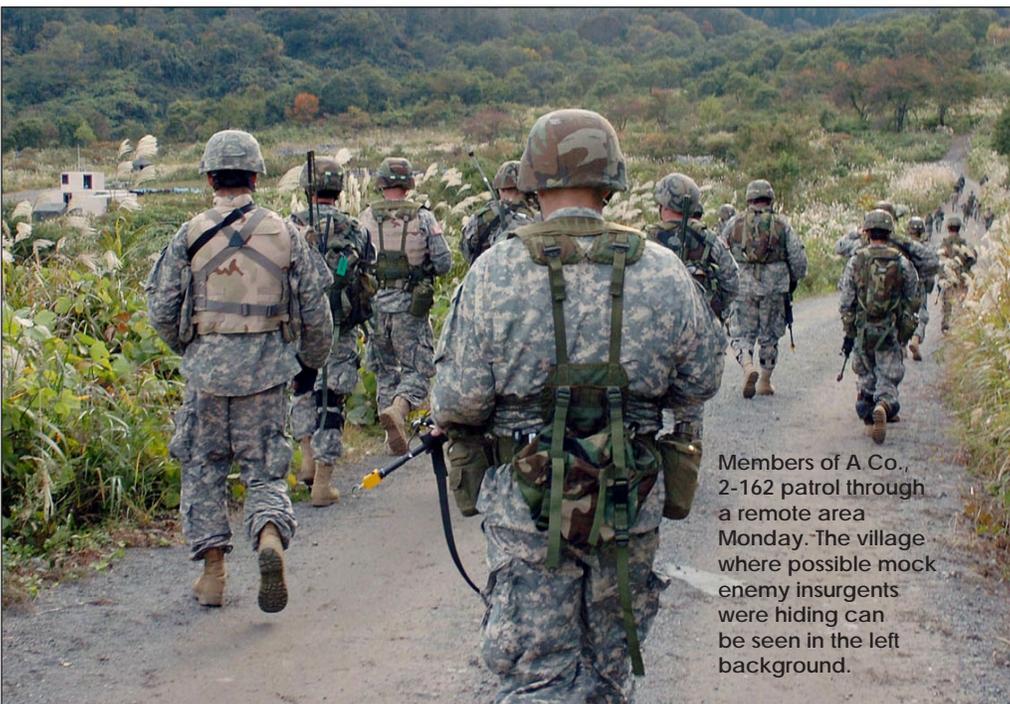
By Staff Sgt. John Martinez  
Colorado National Guard

The Oregon National Guard’s 2nd Battalion, 162nd Infantry’s support of Orient Shield 2007 would not be possible without coordination from U.S. Army Japan and logistical assistance from the 10th Area Support Group and 35th Combat Sustainment and Support Battalion.

USARJ, a major subordinate of U.S. Army Pacific, is stationed at Camp Zama, 25 miles southwest of Tokyo. Their distinct mission is to conduct bilateral relations, stewardship of resources, defense of Japan and to provide regional logistics.

Logistics Task Force 35 is highly involved with many aspects of the Orient Shield mission. Not only are they here to provide

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Members of A Co., 2-162 patrol through a remote area Monday. The village where possible mock enemy insurgents were hiding can be seen in the left background.

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is conducted bilaterally with Japan's 2nd Infantry Battalion, 1st Airborne Brigade.

The mortar section, playing not only civilians on the battlefield but also an insurgent enemy force, added a combat-realistic touch to the training. Like the Oregon unit faced when it deployed to Iraq in 2004, the enemy does not wear a uniform, and the same person that shakes your hand one day could be the one who places an improvised explosive device on your main supply route the next.

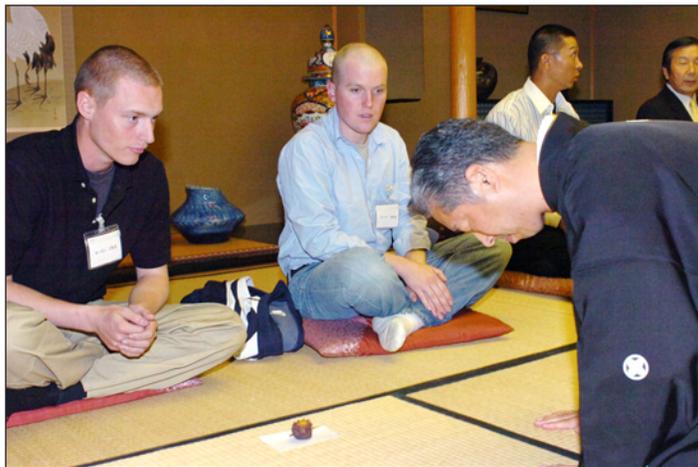
"The training's been phenomenal, amazing," Jones, a Corvallis resident, said after returning back to base Monday. "This is by far the best training we have done in the last year. It's very realistic."

### Strengthening a Bond

To promote good will and mutual understanding between the two countries, the Oregon Soldiers are encouraged to not only train with their Japanese counterparts but also bond with them, which they have done with vigor and aplomb.

Before the first day of training, the Guardsmen were treated to a party with traditional Japanese food and drink, and during the first week of training, soldiers from both countries shared stories and laughs at the "friendship tent."

During a break in the exercise Saturday, many of the Americans were treated to a tour of Ka-



Photos by Staff Sgt. Russell Bassett

Vancouver resident Pvt. Dustin Morgan (left) and Eugene resident Spc. Brandon Garner enjoy a traditional Japanese tea party during the home visit Saturday evening.

suyagama Castle, former home of Lord Uesugi Kenshin, The Soldiers also toured a rice and sake factory, where they were able to see both the traditional and modern ways of making sake and buy gifts for the relatives back home.

A highlight of the Japanese deployment for many of the Oregon troops was Saturday night's home visit. Families and organizations from the area invited many of the troops into the homes to experience Japanese culture and hospitality.

The Takata and Takata East Rotary clubs sponsored four Oregon Guardsmen, treating them to a traditional tea party and meal, complete with geishas.

"That was probably the most amazing experience of my life," Gresham resident Pvt. Brain Davis said after the visit. "I love Japan."

Based on the results of a recent poll of Japanese conducted by the U.S. Embassy in Japan,

the Japanese return that love.

According to the poll, 80 percent of Japanese favor the alliance with the United States, and 73 percent said a U.S. military presence is needed in the area to maintain peace and stability.

"The relationships that are being built down at the junior Soldier level are a significant part of this exercise," 2-162 commander Lt. Col. Edward Tanguy said. "Obviously what we do at the higher levels with the bilateral coordination is important, but what is really important is when you see the young Japanese soldiers and the young American Soldiers -- even though they can't speak each other's language -- sitting down sharing a lunch, laughing together, sharing their experiences, trading (uniform) patches and things like that. That's where we are really making our money and that's the real benefit."

Orient Shield concludes Thursday morning with the closing ceremony, and Oregon's soldiers deploy home in three bodies on Thursday, Friday and Saturday.



1st Sgt. Robert Hanks with the Oregon National Guard's 2nd Battalion, 162nd Infantry role-plays a civilian on the battlefield, as Alpha Company commander 1st Lt. Cory Jones and others try and figure out how to best handle the situation Monday during cordon and search training at Sekiyama Maneuver Area, Japan.

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115th MPAD:

Commander -  
Maj. Don Troxell

Executive Officer -  
1st Lt. Stephen Bomar

Observation Post October 2006 Editorial staff - Staff  
Sgt. Russell Bassett

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supplies but also offer Soldiers amenities including a Soldiers' lounge, Internet café, laundry service, finance office, Military Police support, postal services and Post Exchange.

The 88th Military Police detachment has been tasked from Camp Zama to conduct law and order operations for Orient Shield.

"This is my first exercise," said Staff Sgt. Joel Kaye, MP investigator and NCOIC. "I have been here three years, and I love the Japanese. They are outstanding people."

There are five MP's supporting the exercise, conducting 24-hour operations throughout the base and walking patrols with police from the Japan Ground Self Defense Force.

"It is good to have exercises like this where American and Japanese can have that bond and build relationships," Kaye said.

Laundry is coordinated through LTF 35 to be cleaned by civilian personnel, and it usually had a two-day turnaround.

"The local civilians who do the work were contracted a year ago" said Sgt Geoffrey Smith of Indianapolis, Ind. "Laundry is an important job, and it is one Soldiers appreciate."

The finance office is headed by Pay Agent Sgt. Yazmin J. Holleman, a native of Panama City, Panama, currently stationed in Okinawa with the 10th ASG.



A Soldier utilizes the Soldiers' lounge Wednesday. The lounge has allowed the troops to relax and unwind by providing Internet, movies and games.

The purpose of financial services for this mission is primarily dollar conversion to yen and check cashing.

When speaking of the usefulness of the finance office, Sgt. Holleman said it's "useful that Soldiers are able to buy civilian stuff."

MWR services such as the Internet café and Soldiers lounge include a number of computers with Internet access, three gaming systems, a library, free popcorn and up to three movies shown each day.

Unlike Soldier amenities, which are designed for the comfort of the Soldiers, other support is coordinated for mission success.

A Department of the Army civilian is

on hand to oversee ammunition supply and transport, along with two U.S. Navy chief petty officers who were called in for explosive ordinance disposal support.

Chief Petty Officers Ron Condrey and Rich James have a combined 30 years of military service. Stationed out of Yokosuka Naval Base, the EOD personnel are on hand to oversee the destruction of any defective ammunition or explosive devices.

"It is a very unique experience that I would not trade," James said of his experience in Japan.

Just like the Oregon troops, most of the support personnel are returning to their home stations this weekend.

## What do you think? *What has been your favorite part of Orient Shield so far and why?*



*"Meeting all the Japanese soldiers. ... Once you get to know them they are kind of just like us: grunts doing a job."*

--Staff Sgt. Bo Vidan, C Co. squad leader, Portland



*"Interacting with the (JGSDF) and Japanese citizens. ... As different as our cultures are, we have still made very strong friendships."*

--Capt. Peter Aguilar, battalion projects officer, Eugene



*"Getting to meet and socialize with our Japanese partners. It was fun to come over here and see how they treat us, which is really nice."*

--Spc. Geoff Rose, B. Co. armorer, Corvallis



*"The added difficulty of not being able to directly communicate with our counterparts. ... It adds to the complexity and challenge of the exercise."*

--Command Sgt. Major Paul Warnock, Albany

# Bushwhacked



Left: Charlie Company Soldiers conduct a recon and surveillance mission through heavy brush Sunday evening. Top: Beaverton resident David Glasscock of Alpha Company searches for signs of the enemy Monday. Right: Charlie Company Spc. Barry Prescott of Portland moves into position Sunday. Wednesday the exercise concludes with a battalion-size mission.

## FUN IN THE LAND OF THE RISING SUN



A geisha performs a traditional Chinese dance during the home visit Saturday.



2-162 Soldiers enjoy sake samples at the Rice and Sake Factory Saturday during a break in the exercise.



Spc. Alvaro Castaneda (left) of Springfield shares a Tootsie Roll with a member of the Japanese Ground Self Defense Force (right) as Spc. Orlo Flock of Eugene (second from left) and Sgt. James Cutshall of Elmira watch.



Spc. Clinton Stayon of St. Helens enjoy a good-natured round of arm wrestling with a member of JGSDF Friday.



Springfield resident Staff Sgt. Michael Creech (left) and another Soldier share a laugh with a Japanese Soldier at the opening party. The closing party is Wednesday evening.