

Oregon Sentinel

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE OREGON NATIONAL GUARD

41 Infantry Brigade Combat Team • 142 Fighter Wing • 82 Brigade • 173 Fighter Wing • Joint-Force Headquarters • Combat Operations Group

Top Oregon officials visit deployed troops in Iraq



Photo by Spc. Anita VanderMolen, 41 Infantry Brigade Combat Team

Oregon Gov. Theodore Kulongoski meets Oregon soldiers with the 41 Infantry Brigade Combat Team Nov. 11 on the steps of the Ziggurat of Ur, a stepped pyramid about 210 by 150 feet in size.

Story courtesy,
13th Sustainment Command
(Expeditionary) Public Affairs

JOINT BASE BALAD, Iraq-- Governors from Georgia, Mississippi, Oregon and Wyoming visited Soldiers and Airmen Nov. 11 at the Morale, Welfare and Recreation Center east at Joint Base Balad, Iraq.

Oregon Gov. Ted Kulongoski spoke to service members about the state's unemployment rate and the new health care bill passed by the House and how it would affect the state.

Kulongoski also spoke about the state's education system. "Oregon has the most students enrolled in post-secondary schools in all of the state's his-

tory," he said.

He also said he hoped to have a baseball team in the future.

"Right now Portland is the largest media market that does not have a baseball team," said Kulongoski.

Sgt. 1st Class Christopher G. McIntosh, battalion liaison non-commissioned officer in charge with Headquarters and Head-

quarters Company, 1st Battalion, 186th Infantry Regiment, 41st Infantry Brigade Combat Team, said he appreciated meeting the governor.

"It's not often I get to see the governor in person and get to have a conversation with him," he said.

McIntosh, a Monmouth, Ore., native, said the meeting helped

shed light on two issues that were important to himself and his family.

"The highest priorities for me, deal with health care and education," he said. "To find out what the state of Oregon is doing with those issues is very important, especially when we come back

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Story by
Spc. Anita VanderMolen
41 Infantry Brigade Combat Team

TALLIL, Iraq -- Oregon's U.S. Senators Ron Wyden and Jeff Merkley traveled to Tallil, Iraq to meet soldiers of the 41 Infantry Brigade Combat Team, Nov. 25, 2009.

The Senators were treated to a quick trip to the Ziggurat of Ur, Abraham's birthplace, and the Cradle of Civilization. It is also the place known for the oldest arch built, the invention of the wheel and where writing began.

After the Ziggurat, the senators were escorted to Task Force Guardian's convoy staging lanes where the soldiers had a variety of vehicles prepared and ready for the senators to see. Soldiers gave the senators a lesson on each of the vehicles.

"Impressive," Wyden said as he reviewed the mine-resistant ambush protected vehicles.

After the tour of vehicles, the senators met with more soldiers and answered questions pertaining to their futures when they come back home. The main concern was the economy, jobs and health care.

"I always try to mention that everyone wants to come here, no wants to go there," Wyden said. "There must be something magical about the United States."

"Civil War" football honors deployed soldiers



Above: Soldiers of the 41 Infantry Brigade Combat Team cheer for the University of Oregon Ducks during the Oregon Civil War against Oregon State University viewed in Tallil, Iraq, Dec. 4, 2009. The Soldiers gathered to watch the historic game at the Task Force Jungleer Headquarters. (Photo by Spc. Anita VanderMolen)



Left: The "Sunset" patch, representing the Oregon Army National Guard's 41 Infantry Brigade Combat Team, was displayed on the helmets of both the Oregon State University Beavers and the University of Oregon Ducks for the Civil War game, Dec. 3. The game was played at Autzen Stadium in Eugene, Ore. (Photo courtesy, Oregon State University.)

Story by Oregon Sentinel Staff
Oregon Military Department
Public Affairs Office

SALEM, Ore. -- The University of Oregon Ducks and the Oregon State University Beavers paid tribute to deployed soldiers of the Oregon National Guard's 41 Infantry Brigade Combat Team during the 113th annual "Civil War" game at Autzen Stadium in Eugene, Dec. 3.

Each of the teams' players wore a small decal of the unit's "sunset patch" on their helmets as a tribute to deployed members of the Oregon National Guard's 41 IBCT. About 3,000 of Oregon's citizen-soldiers are currently serving in Iraq for a year-long deployment.

Prior to the start of the game, the athletic directors of both schools presented a game ball to Oregon's Governor, Ted Kulongoski and Maj. Gen. Raymond F. Rees, The Adjutant General. Each ball was autographed by the Beavers' and Ducks' head coaches.

Many deployed soldiers watched the game live via ESPN through the Armed Forces Network. In addition to honoring the soldiers with the helmet decals a closed-circuit camera showed a nationwide audience Oregon soldiers cheering their respective teams from Iraq.

The 41 IBCT can be traced back to 1887 when the Summers Law established the Oregon National Guard. During WWII, the unit saw some of the fiercest fighting throughout remote locations in the South Pacific, earning the brigade the nickname "Jungleers".

Members of the Oregon National Guard's Youth Challenge Program provided the official Color Guard during opening ceremonies.

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COMMAND

2009: "It's amazing to see what we accomplished together"



Maj. Gen. Raymond F. Rees,
The Adjutant General,
Oregon National Guard

What an amazing year 2009 has been. As the calendar year comes to a close, it's incredible to see all we have accomplished together. The Oregon Military Department is performing better than ever.

In the year of Oregon's 150th birthday, we were faced with multiple challenges. We have had nearly 40 percent of our force deployed this past year and were able to successfully continue domestic operations, such as search and rescue, without hesitation. We deployed all of our

UH-60 medical evacuation helicopters, had the largest deployment of the Oregon National Guard troops since World War II, directed one of our air wing's operations as they worked in another state, and managed the influx of millions of dollars in new equipment. These are just a few of the many challenges we have turned into achievements. I will admit I was concerned at times, but as always the men and women of the Oregon National Guard are truly professionals of the highest order!

To the families and communities of those deployed, I thank you for all your support this year. You are truly a part of our team. You make it possible for Oregon's citizen-soldiers and citizen-aimen to accomplish their missions. Although we are performing well, I know we can

continue to improve the services we provide to our Guard members and their families.

One way to do this is to update our facilities. We broke ground this year at Camp Withycombe to build a facility which will be the future home and headquarters of both the 41 and 82 Brigades. We completed a new Armed Forces Readiness Center in Springfield, and the new Ontario AFRC and Salem Aviation Operations Building are in sight. These new facilities set up a successful future for Oregon National Guard members, their families, and communities for many years to come.

I had the great opportunity to spend Thanksgiving in Iraq with our Guard members as they work through the holidays this year. I was reminded of how truly amazing these men and women are while deployed.

No matter what the assignment or mission our Oregon National Guard members are able to ac-

complish it. Everyone I met embodied the Oregon values of competence, confidence, courage and commitment, and was successful regardless of assignment. It was fantastic to see our Oregon Guard members and their individual and collective contributions to the overall success in Iraq. Morale was high, living conditions were good, and their equipment was the best seen to date.

As we head into 2010, we will no doubt face many challenges. However, I know whatever challenges come our way, the men and women of the Oregon National Guard will overcome, and turn challenge into achievement. The Oregon National Guard truly leads the way.

Thank you all for everything you do. Happy Holidays!
Always Ready! Always There!

Raymond F. Rees

Warrant officer corps forges ahead, takes on new responsibilities

This November was the first National Guard Joint Senior Leadership Conference was held in Maryland. Over 2,500 attended from every state, territory and district.

As I walked into the massive conference room I saw three distinct sections. In the first were the all the Army National Guard State Command Sergeant Majors and Air National Guard Command Chief Master Sergeants, the center section directly in front of the stage sat all the Adjutant Generals, behind them were assistant adjutant generals, division, brigade and wing commanders. On the right side were all the command chief warrant officers.

The caliber of speakers was outstanding; Secretary of Defense Robert Gates, Secretary of Veterans Affairs Eric Shinseki, Army Chief of Staff, Gen. George W. Casey and the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Admiral Michael McMullen just to name a few.

The reason I am even writing about this is simple. The warrant officer corps was appropriately recognized at this conference and fully participated. Bottom line: we have come a long way! However, with recognition and public acknowledgment of our contributions comes more responsibility. We must educate all officers and non-commissioned officers on how to use our special talents. Our NCO Corps

is mission critical and we are not NCOs, we need to stay out of their lane. We must exceed all expectations as the subject matter experts. When we make our unit commanders successful then we are successful. When asked if something can be done our first thoughts should be how to accomplish the mission. Remember one of the defining statements in the Army is a warrant officer saying, "What do you mean it can't be done, watch this!"

In my last meeting with Maj. Gen. Raymond F. Rees, The Adjutant General, Oregon he shared how well our fellow warrants are doing in Iraq. He made a point of stating what a key role they are playing in helping the 41 IBCT complete their mission. Job well done!

All Oregon soldiers should have been notified of the Officer/Warrant Officer Training workshop in February at Newport (see details on page 4). To date we have 15 high qualify NCOs who have committed to attend. That is not enough. Fellow warrants, go through your sections and personally invite those individuals who think can live up to the warrant officer creed. Soldiers who you think will get the job done no matter what. NCOs, if you think you have what it talk to your senior warrant in your branch or give me a call.

I want to welcome into the corps, Warrant



Chief Warrant Officer 5 Michael Zagzyva,
Command Chief Warrant Officer,
Oregon National Guard

Officers 1 Mike Benniger, Lenora Landwehr and Jamie Rogers. These new warrants pinned on their bars in November. Congratulations! They will be at the Training Workshop in Newport to answer any questions potential candidates may have regarding their experiences at Fort Rucker.

Finally, this has been an exciting year. We continue to grow in numbers and responsibility. It could not have happened without the ground work of all the former Command Chief Warrant Officers, Senior Chief Warrant Officers 5 and the entire Oregon Warrant Officer Corps. Thank you and from my family to all of yours we wish you a very merry Christmas and a happy new year!

For the Corps.

Holiday Season: "Celebrate success, remember our sacrifices"



State Command Chief Master Sgt. Mark D. Russell,
Oregon Air National Guard

The holiday season is once again upon us. I truly hope this season is safe and happy for you and your loved ones as it is a time for families and friends to gather together and enjoy each other's company. It's always nice to take time to enjoy the feeling of good will that is associated with this time of year.

This past year was busy as ever for the Oregon National Guard; we deployed in record numbers and by all accounts have performed magnificently serving along side our active duty counterparts. Several of our Oregon Air National Guard members have retired and created opportunities for other members to assume new roles and responsibilities. Two new national programs are taking root for the Oregon Air National Guard; the Hometown Heroes Salute and the Yellow Ribbon Reinte-

gration Program, both will have future events for many to attend. More to come on these programs in future articles.

This year has seen a refocusing of the Air Force and Air National Guard on Force Development and I would like to take a few minutes and discuss this subject. Over the past few years, the Air Force has changed the way we develop and train our people to meet the challenges of the Expeditionary Air Force. Force Development takes a deliberate approach to providing airmen the training and experience they need to succeed in delivering ground and air power now and in the future. We must make sure airmen get the training and education required for their specialty or area of expertise. All airmen should receive some form of development to assist them in their duties in higher grades and levels of responsibility. We will provide the right development venues to meet both airmen and Air Guard needs. The Air Guard and Air Force's emphasis is on job performance and providing airmen the right opportunities for training and education when it is required. The goal is clear; we need to develop professional airmen who will collectively leverage their respective strengths to accomplish the Air Guard and Air Force missions. We owe it to our airmen to provide the skills, training and education they need to continue to excel!

The second topic is Enlisted Force Structure. Clearly defining our purpose and development as an enlisted corps is more critical today than ever before. Our airmen have been called to action in many different and sometimes non-traditional capacities. These challenges are often unfamiliar and daunting. To function effectively in this environment every airman must know and understand their role in this fight and in our Air Force, today and in the years to come. It's the enlisted force structure that defines us as airmen, rather than merely our specialties.

The Enlisted Force Structure, (which can be found in AFI and ORANGI 36-2618), lays out concise standards, expectations and opportunities for every enlisted airman. The foundation of the profession of arms has to begin with our core values: integrity, service before self, and excellence in all we do. These values, along with the roles and responsibilities of the mission, form our foundation. This instruction establishes general airmen responsibilities and refines both general and specific responsibilities for each level of the enlisted force. We have clearly defined enlisted knowledge and performance levels while incorporating the tactical, operational, and strategic levels of leadership and development. I urge all

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NEWS

Measure 66, 67 to impact Oregon Military Dept.

Story by Kim Lippert, Oregon Military Department Public Affairs Office

SALEM, Ore. -- Brig. Gen. Mike Caldwell, the deputy director of state affairs for the Oregon Military Department recently briefed department directors on the potential impact of the January vote on tax increases proposed by the Oregon Legislature.

During the 2009 Oregon State Legislative session lawmakers faced the monumental task of bridging a \$3.8 billion revenue shortfall.

Many state agencies including the Oregon Military Department took significant budget cuts. The OMD was reduced 16 percent, which has undermined the department's ability to maintain armories. In an attempt to fill the shortfall, legislators passed tax increases on those making more than \$150,000 a year or a combined household income of \$250,000 a year. In addition they voted to increase the corporate tax minimum filing fee from \$10 to \$150 which had not been adjusted since 1931 and to increase the corporate tax three-tenths of a percent for profits over \$250,000 and increase on profits over \$500,000 up to \$100 million not to exceed \$100,000 in total tax.

The tax increases would produce \$733 million to help fund state agencies. Opponents of the tax increase gathered signatures to put an initiative on the ballot that would reverse those tax hikes.

The referendum will be voted on in January. If the tax increase is rejected the Oregon Military Department would face another 10 percent cut.

"If this referendum passes there will be a significant impact to our agency," said Caldwell. "We will have to close Oregon Youth Challenge, lay off much of our state work force, and potentially close armories; there is just no more room to give."

Caldwell said the agency's previous 16 percent cut of \$4 million eliminated several state positions, cut all capital improvement funds and severely reduced services and supplies funds, which are used to light and heat armories. Voters will make a final decision on Measures 66 and 67 in a special election Jan. 26, 2010. The Legislature will meet in February to determine the cuts based on the results of the election.



OYCP program helps at-risk students



OYCP Cadet Gustavo Vega shows Lori Luchak photos of the cadets progress during a visit to bring awareness to the Bend-based program Nov. 20. Luchak is the president of Miles Fiberglass and Composites.

Story and photo by
Tech. Sgt. Jefferson Thompson,
Oregon Military Department
Public Affairs Office

BEND, Ore. -- Business and civic leaders from the greater Portland area visited the Oregon Youth Challenge Program facilities near Bend, Ore. Nov. 20.

Bob Woodell an entrepreneur, Lori Luchak a business owner and Joanne Truesdale the president of Clackamas Community College toured the military-style accredited high school program for youth considered *at-risk* who are between the ages of 16-18.

"The most important things we look for are high school drop-outs who are citizens of Oregon and the United States and are not on parole or probation," said Dan Radabaugh, the Oregon Youth Challenge Program Director.

The program is administered by the Oregon Military Department with assistance from the National Guard Bureau, the Bend-Lapine School District and the Oregon Department of Education. It is designed as a "last chance" for students who struggle with a traditional education setting.

"We're here to get familiar with the program and possibly see what we can do to help," said Luchak, President of Miles Fiberglass and Composites located in Portland. "These were kids that were troubled and disadvantaged and were

not suffering just a little bump in the road. I was most impressed that they made their own decision to change."

In order to be eligible for the program prospective cadets submit and application stating why they would like to attend. Out of an average 400 plus applications per year the school can handle roughly 120.

"It's hard to believe we've been doing this for 16 years and we're probably running a tighter ship now than we ever have," said Brig. Gen. Mike Caldwell, the deputy director of state affairs for the Oregon Military Department. "When you set up a program with tough conditions and tough standards and hold the students accountable it's a real accomplishment and it really makes them feel good."

Those tough conditions begin the day a cadet arrives. There are three phases to the program explained Radabaugh in a brief to the visitors. First is a two week mandatory "pre-challenge" period consisting of military indoctrination, physical development, discipline and structure. This is followed by the 20 week academic classroom instruction period. The final phase is a 12 month mentor active period when the student returns to the community to implement goals, objectives, placement and post residential activities developed while in the residential

phase. All students must have a placement and responsible plan to implement back in the community to be eligible to graduate, says the official website.

"Our biggest challenge is the post-residential phase and the key to overcoming that is through mentorship," said Caldwell. "82 percent of our kids are successful, but we do know that mentorship is the key to long-term success, there will be some rough patches because they are going to go back to their same situations," he added that the program looks to assign long-term mentors to help students preserve the changes the program fosters at the facilities.

For some cadets the road home can be rocky, during the question and answer session Cadet Davina Lucei described returning home for her break, which is part of the program. She described what sounded like a fairly benign even boring experience but began to crack as she finished speaking, as she sat tears poured down her face and several staff members moved to provide a tissue and a reassuring look.

"I was struck by the emotions that she was showing, 'is what happened here going to be enough for the environment she's going back to?'" Bob Woodell, an entrepreneur from Sisters, Ore, asked rhetorically. "I'm interested and intrigued and I told [Brig. Gen.] Caldwell that I want to go back three times to see the same class because I'd like to get a feel for the whole thing."

All the visitors remembered that moment and commented on it.

"It seemed at though she was most upset at the prospect of going home, and I think about her and how many other kids there are that are in the same boat and it can be sad," said Truesdale. She went on to describe several college programs which provide avenues to graduates of the Oregon Youth Challenge Program and others and stated that she would look to open communication channels between her college and the program.

"I thought 'she feels more comfortable here than at home,'" said Luchak. "I was so impressed with the program."

Soldier introduces education column

Sgt. 1st Class Jeffery Lopez,
82 Support Detachment
Readiness NCO



LAKE OSWEGO, Ore. -- My name is Sgt. Jeff Lopez; currently, I am a full-time readiness NCO for 82 Support Detachment (ROC) (TSC), in Lake Oswego, Ore.

I have a passion for education. This article is intended to share insight into my educational journey from homeless high school drop out to doctoral student.

It's a journey that really began with a low point in 1973 when I dropped out of high school to join the U.S. Coast Guard. Unfortunately when I completed the AS-VAB my recruiter told me it was the lowest score he had ever seen and he walked me down the hall to the Marine Corps recruiter.

I took the exam a second time and squeaked by-- and that was with some help. I became a Marine. During boot camp I was introduced to many different types of qualifying exams both hands-on and written. I found myself passing each exam, which helped me gain confidence.

When I separated from the Marine Corps I began looking for a job without a high school diploma. I spent many years moving from job to job, hoping my experience from each job would move me to the next higher pay bracket. I lived this way until the age of 30, when I realized I needed an education. I applied to Multnomah Bible College in Portland, and was rejected because I did not have a GED or high school diploma. After hearing this news, it was night and weekend classes to obtain my GED which I earned in 1988, while living in Santa Barbara, Calif.

When I arrived on the Multnomah Bible College campus I was one of the oldest freshmen there. I quickly realized, to succeed, I was going to need to apply myself like never before. Nights and weekends in the library was the norm, whereas the rest of my classmates were out enjoying college life. Upon graduation with my associate's of science degree, I was awarded with induction into, the *Book of Who's Who Among Students in Universities and Colleges*, this was a honor to receive.

At that time, I realized that the only limits I had were those I put upon myself. My days of living a defeated life, and living with a limited mindset had ended. I didn't want to live any longer with an attitude of limited thinking.

After a 19 year break in service, I joined the Oregon National Guard and the education benefits allowed me to complete my bachelor's of science degree in 2004. I went on to graduate school where I earned a distinctive master's of science degree in 2009 with no out-of-pocket money to pay for my education!

Today I am pursuing a PhD using those same benefits.

During the next few months I will write articles in the Oregon Sentinel about education. This is intended to inform and recognize servicemembers by printing information about current benefits, process, requirements and most importantly allowing you to share education success stories.

My articles will have verified information with links to follow and ways to access the education benefits earned by membership in the Oregon National Guard. I will also present different educational institutions and the benefits they give servicemembers.

We all respond differently to stimulus, some of us respond well to online institutions, while others respond more positively to a traditional classroom. By discussing and sharing learning styles, course content and the general feel of many of the programs offered, as well as benefits available to you as servicemembers I hope to aid you in the pursuit of higher education.

A blind person was asked, "What can be worse than not having sight?" The response, "What is worse than not having sight is to have sight and not have vision." We all have vision; passion will help to realize that vision. My passion for education is due to having a vision of what the future will hold by Actively Seeking Knowledge (ASK).

Recently, The Oregon Guard collected data on the civilian education of our servicemembers. That data showed that we need an additional conduit to getting an education message out.

After analyzing the data four categories became evident:

- Those that go to college.
- Those that want to go to college, but are unsure as to how the process works.
- Those who feel they can't go due to life circumstances.
- Those who are satisfied and do not have a desire to progress beyond their current circumstances.

There are so many reasons to return or attend college. Maybe you want to return because the job market is more competitive, or because you want to provide a better future for your family. Whatever your reason, it's the perfect time to earn your degree with the Oregon National Guard's assistance. With the tuition assistance program and the GI bill, college is more affordable and obtainable than ever before.

I encourage you to write and share your journey to success with our readers at: jeffery.lopez@us.army.mil

NEWS

Oregon National Guard soldiers take part in India exercise



Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Rodney Jackson, 18th Medical Command Public Affairs

The 2nd Squadron, 14th Cavalry Regiment, Strykehorse, 2nd Stryker Brigade Combat Team, 25th Infantry Division Soldiers fire the Javelin missile during a combined arms live fire exercise at media day during Exercise Yudh Abhyas in Babina, India, Oct. 26. YA09 is a bilateral exercise involving the Armies of India and the United States. The primary goal of the exercise is to develop and expand upon the relationship between the Indian and U.S. Army.

Letter by
Capt. Charles Patzner,
ORNG Team Logistics Officer

BABINA, India -- The Oregon National Guard participated in a bilateral exercise with a battalion sized Active U.S. Army unit and an Indian Army unit, 2nd Squadron, 14th Cavalry Regiment "Strykehorse," 2nd Stryker Brigade Combat Team, 25th Infantry Division, from Schofield Barracks, Hawaii; and Indian Army 7th Armored Mechanized Battalion, 94th Armored Brigade, 31st Armored Division.

Exercise Yudh Abhyas 09 in Babina, India, is a bilateral exercise

involving the Armies of India and the United States. The primary goal of the exercise is to develop and expand upon the relationship between the Indian and U.S. Army.

Yudh Abhyas roughly translates to "training for war" under the premise of a Joint U.S. Army and Indian Army Theater Security Cooperation Program (TSCP) live fire exercise based on a United Nations Peace Keeping Operations (UNPKO) scenario.

Members of the Oregon Army and Air National Guard with members of USARPAC conducted key support tasks during the exercise;

- Established joint US-IA opera-

tions center (OPSCENTER) at Camp Bundela.

- Conducted initial Joint Reception, Staging, Onward Movement, and Integration (JRSOI) with transition to Steady State Operations.

- Coordinated logistics, contracts, and non-tactical movements of personnel within the BABINA Cantonment area, and to the US Embassy in New Delhi.
- Assist 2-25 SBCT in part-time operation of TAC (Joint Battalion Maneuver Live-Fire & Javelin Training) in order to track range operations.

The Oregon team gained valuable insight and experience with professional military and cultural exchanges with Indian soldiers.

The exercise was a great success and each Oregon member

received a certificate of appreciation from Lt. Col. James Isenhower the 2nd Squadron, 14th Cavalry Regiment Squadron Commander as he expressed his gratitude for the exception support his squadron received.

The Team Members from Oregon were: Lt. Col. Robert Klohr, Team OIC; Maj. Pete Aguilar, Operations Officer; Maj. Oliver Hall, Battle Captain; Capt. Charles Patzner, Logistics Officer, 1st Sgt. Donna Adams, Logistics NCOIC; Master Sgt. Rudy Hernandez, Personnel NCOIC; Senior Master Sgt. Greg Bosin, Battle NCO, Tech. Sgt. Greg Barnett, Radio Operator.

Workshops help spouses forge 'Strong Bonds'

Story by Kim L. Lippert,
Oregon Military Department
Public Affairs Office

SALEM, Ore. -- Whether it is an eight-week training mission or a year-long deployment, military families carry a significant burden when a loved one is gone.

"As an Oregon Air National Guard spouse, I know how tough it is when your husband is away," said Michelle Kochosky, Family Programs Director for the Oregon National Guard. "We have many

workshops geared toward keeping Oregon National Guard families connected."

One of the programs offered by the Oregon Guard is called, P.R.E.P a well known marriage enrichment program, another called Strong Bonds is also aimed at strengthening the bonds of marriage and family.

"It's completely free paid weekend," said Kochosky. "We are trying to provide families with resources that they can use

to improve their family life."

Kochosky said soldiers and their spouses will learn life skills that can help their family stay connected. Next year, Kochosky said she is hoping to have dozens of workshops available for Oregon National Guard soldiers and airmen to attend. These workshops will be targeted at both single and married soldiers. Information about the upcoming workshops will be disseminated through soldier's chain of command and family

programs.

"We encourage everyone to take advantage of these worthwhile workshops, we hope they make a difference in the lives of our soldiers," said Kochosky.

For more information on the Strong Bonds program visit: www.strongbonds.org/skins/strongbonds/display.aspx

Sen. Jeff Merkley says "thank you"

Sen. Jeff Merkley
United States Senate
(D-Ore.)



To the men and women of the Oregon National Guard.

Thank you for your service, and thank you for providing the most inspiring memory from my first year as your U.S. Senator.

On Monday, Nov. 23, my Senate colleagues and I touched down at the Baghdad International Airport in our C-130, looking forward to meeting top U.S. and Iraqi officials and the dedicated soldiers of the Oregon National Guard.

Talking with Gen. Ray Odierno, Ambassador Christopher Hill, Ministers of the Iraqi government, and civilian development workers provided valuable insights on the mission, progress and outlook.

But the high point of our trip was the opportunity to spend time talking directly with members of the 41 Infantry Brigade Combat Team about your service in Iraq. Many of you have served more than one deployment to the theater, and your frontline service has displayed your bravery and created a more stable Iraq.

Our conversations about providing security to convoys carrying supplies across Iraq, the increased protection offered by MRAP vehicles, and your understandable concerns about finding jobs when you return home to a very weak economy will stay with me in Washington.

Your courage and sacrifice as a member of the Oregon National Guard is part of a grand tradition of service.

Nothing means more to me than the opportunity to stand beside you in Baghdad and at Camp Adder, and fight for you in Washington, DC.

I know it is my responsibility as a U.S. Senator to make sure servicemembers and their loved ones are given the best support and care possible and that they have other career opportunities available to them once their service is over. It's also critical to recognize the family members who serve and sacrifice for our country. Families are the true backbone of our armed services. When a soldier goes to war, their whole family goes with them.

I'm fighting in Washington for you and your families, to improve your health care treatment and bolster your benefits. I will work closely with my colleagues to improve the tools our soldiers have to transition from life in the combat zone to life back at home. That's what you deserve. That's what we'll fight for.

Thank you for letting me join you last month, and thank you for protecting our country year-round.

I wish you happy holidays and, for those overseas, a safe and speedy return to your families.

OFFICER / WARRANT OFFICER
TRAINING WORKSHOP

FEBRUARY 18-21, 2010
HALLMARK RESORT, NEWPORT

The Recruiting and Retention Command is hosting an informative workshop for those enlisted soldiers and their spouses who are interested in becoming an officer or warrant officer. Presentations include: Avenues to Commissioning, Benefits, Civilian Education, Leadership 101, Life as an Officer/WO Candidate, and Life Cycle Management. Training will also include Area of Concentration (AOC), Military Occupation Specialty (MOS), Specific Career Opportunities and Potential Assignments. In addition, spouses will receive an introduction to the National Guard and training on pay, benefits, and Family Readiness Groups. Application packet processing will occur daily.

All interested applicants are asked to contact their respective Units/Battalion S1 for more information.

STEP FORWARD



Oregon Guard in 90th Vet's Day Parade



Photo by Tech. Sgt. Jefferson Thompson, Oregon Military Dept. Public Affairs

ALBANY, Ore. -- Members of the 234th Army Band followed by soldiers from the 41 Infantry Brigade Combat Team, parade through the streets of downtown Albany in support of the 90th annual Veteran's Day Parade, which the city bills as the largest of its kind, west of the Mississippi River.

NEWS

Deployed soldier brings "magic" talents to Iraq

Story by Spc. Beth Gorenc,
Task Force 38 Public Affairs

JOINT BASE BALAD, Iraq — Often National Guard soldiers apply their civilian training to enhance their military deployments. A soldier in Task Force 38's medevac unit, Company C, 7th Battalion, 158th Aviation Regiment did just that during his mobilization here.

When the Canby, Ore., resident was not using his military skills as a medevac pilot for Company C to help people receive medical attention during Operation Iraqi Freedom, Chief Warrant Officer William S. "Scott" Anderson applied his civilian skills as a magician to help people in a different way.

Anderson used illusions mixed with comedy to provide an escape from deployment life and entertain fellow servicemembers, civilian contractors and local Iraqis.

"He's professional when he needs to be, but he can lighten the mood when it's needed," added Sgt. John McCully, a medevac crew chief and Camas, Ore., resident.

In his free time, Anderson performed frequent shows at the medevac company's coffee shop, during holidays and at unit events. He also participated in, and won, Joint Base Balad's October talent show.

"He has helped the morale of the company," said McCully. "Whenever we have events, at work, pretty much whenever he's around, the guy has a gimmick up his sleeve. He loves entertaining people."

Anderson's illusions ranged anywhere from impromptu card tricks for friends, pulling a participant's previously signed dollar out of an uncut lemon randomly chosen by that participant, to transforming handkerchiefs into candy for Iraqi children.

Anderson also used his magic and comedy as a way of breaking the ice with new people around JBB and forming relationships with Iraqis.

"He is good at building relationships with people," said Sgt. Candice Westlund, a Corvallis, Ore. resident.

Anderson worked through translators to perform shows for groups of Iraqi children during base-hosted events and completed illusions for the Iraqi special weapons and tactics officers. He also worked with parents to entertain children under care of the



Photo courtesy Chief Warrant Officer Scott Anderson

With the help of a translator, Chief Warrant Officer William "Scott" Anderson, a Canby, Ore., resident and medevac pilot for 7th Battalion, 158th Aviation Regiment, entertains Iraqi children October 10, at Joint Base Balad during a fire safety awareness program here. Anderson provided magic shows, mixing illusions and comedy for units and events here.

hospital here.

"His tricks make kids smile and forget that they are in pain or injured," said Westlund.

While entertaining others and helping them through the deployment, Anderson said his magic provided an outlet for him.

"It's a piece of home I got to bring with me," he said. "It's something I can do that's fun, and it is good for stress."

Anderson has been a performance magician since 1999. He started entertaining elementary kids at Fort Lewis, Wash., during drug abuse resistance education he taught by using illusions he learned from a friend. From there, he expanded his audience to birthday parties, state fairs and stage acts including large scale illusions.

"The better I got, the more shows I could get," Anderson said. "I was doing side jobs at night and on weekends."

When he deployed to Afghanistan, Anderson continued his magic shows to entertain Soldiers and Afghans. He continued to develop his shows by incorporating personal experiences from his deployment, and then used those experiences to once again

entertain Soldiers and Iraqis during his latest deployment.

While magic proved beneficial during times overseas, it was those same deployments and experiences that proved beneficial to Anderson's magic career.

"After being here and performing for Iraqi kids, I came up with a kids' show to do back home," said Anderson. "It teaches kids lessons in patriotism: what it means, freedom, taking pride in your country, celebrating diversity and patriotic symbols."

Working under the name of "Sgt. Stripes," Anderson is scheduled to perform his show, "The Magic of Patriotism," when he returns home for Oregon students enrolled in reading programs.

He also plans to continue performing as a magician for larger audiences after the OIF deployment. In his free time, Anderson worked on his newest show, "The Magician Expeditions," a biographical theater magic show based on his deployment interactions and experiences.

For more information about Anderson and his shows visit: www.illusionsofanderson.com.

Oregon Governor visits deployed soldiers in Iraq



Photo by Spc. Anita VanderMolen, 41 Infantry Brigade Combat Team, Public Affairs

Oregon Governor Theodore Kulongoski talks with 41 Infantry Brigade Combat Team Commander, Col. Dan Hokanson in Tallil, Iraq during a visit including governors from four states.

CONTINUED FROM FRONT PAGE

home and have to get our feet wet again."

McIntosh said he could have discussed Oregon's issues with the governor all day.

"When you get a chance to talk to the person that runs the state, a person that really has a finger on the pulse of what's going on, you come away more educated," he said.

Wyoming Gov. David D. Freudenthal said this trip was organized by the U.S. government.

"This gives us a chance to meet with military personnel of our states, with a primary emphasis on meeting with the National Guard troops from our state," he said.

Freudenthal said he was here once before, in 2005.

"This is the largest deployment of soldiers we have had from Wyoming since the onset of the war," he said.

"This is a chance to see people that are important to us at home. We want to make sure they know that on behalf of the citizens of my state," he added.

People back home are concerned for them and their well being, said Freudenthal.

"Wyoming is a small state, it is more like a community," he said.

"I want to relay the fact that people back home care about them," he said.

After a meet and greet, the governors held a town-hall style meeting with the servicemembers of their state.

Soldiers from Oregon bring school supplies to Iraqis

Story and photo by
Spc. Cory Grogan

41 Infantry Brigade Combat Team Public Affairs

SCANIA, Iraq — Oregon National Guard members, deployed in Iraq, partook in a unique mission where they were able to make a positive impact on the hearts and minds of local national children from a small village in southern Iraq.

As the soldiers brought supplies, gifts, and other resources for their school, Oct. 27, loving looks and thankfulness filled the area.

Members of Alpha Company, 2nd Battalion, 162 Infantry Regiment, based out of Springfield, Ore., from the 41 Infantry Brigade Combat Team have worked with people that surround a forward operating base called Scania, to ensure local national children there are provided with an education.

The supplies that were donated for the most recent mission came from the Tom Dearling Foundation, which provided 500 school kits with notebooks, crayons, pencils, sharpeners, pens, color markers, glue sticks and scissors.

Scania has also donated building materials for a new school that is being built to consolidate four schools in the area into one larger school that is scheduled to be completed in spring of 2010.

"This support package provides an entire community the possibility to begin the process of providing their own self independence and education for the next generation," said Lt. Mark Major, a Eugene, Ore., native, who is the executive officer for alpha company.

Major said that he believes the kindness and support of the Tom Dearling Foundation will be multiplied ten-fold on the ground.

The children at the school have been visited by soldiers on numerous Civil Military Operations said Sgt. Julie Cavinee of Creswell, Ore., an Administrative Specialist with Alpha Company.

Civil Military Operations have made a difference around Scania



Members of the Iraqi national army and the 41 Infantry Brigade Combat Team of the Oregon National Guard work together to give gifts and school supplies to children from a school near Forward Operating Base Scania, Oct. 27.

where the perception of children in nearby villages has changed quite a bit since Alpha Company first visited the school said Jesse Haggart, a Vancouver, Wash. Native, who is a team leader with Alpha Company. Haggart said that when Alpha Company arrived they did the SWEAT - M assessment missions to find out the village's needs were for security, water, electricity, academics and trash.

Haggart said when they first started going on the missions the children were skeptical about the soldiers intentions, but that they had a need for school supplies and a new school among other things.

"We made it a point to let them know we are still here working with them, and now they know us and we have bonded," Haggart said.

"It's great to see all the classrooms filled and the kids that remember us; it has really progressed here," Cavinee said.

NEWS

Program for soldiers suffering combat injuries held quarterly muster at Kliever Memorial Auditorium

“Wounded Warriors”

Story and photos by
Tech. Sgt. Jefferson Thompson
Oregon Military Department
Public Affairs Office

PORTLAND, Ore. -- The Army's Wounded Warrior Program held a muster for regional injured soldiers at Kliever Memorial Armory in Portland, Ore. Nov. 17.

Soldiers from around Oregon, Washington, California, and Nevada participated in a day of “hands-on” training hosted by Oregon Disability Sports, whose mission is to promote recreation and fitness for people with physical disabilities.

The soldiers played a variety of sports designed for paraplegics including wheelchair rugby, wheelchair basketball and cycling. Although none of the participating soldiers were paralyzed many stepped out of the provided wheelchairs with sweat staining dark rings on their Army-issue “pt” gear.

“You’ve got to remember that in stand-up ball you run with your legs and shoot with your arms,” said Bill Loyd, a basketball player with Oregon Disability Sports. “For us, we run with our arms and shoot with our arms.”

“They took us to school,” said a wide-eyed Spc. Michelle Siebold, a 41 Infantry Brigade Combat Team soldier who returned from Iraq for thyroid surgery.

“This is a gathering of soldiers who are healed enough to return to their communities and continue healing,” said Spc. Ben Walters of the Nevada Army Reserve. “These warriors have faced tremendous challenges and they are able to do great things still,” he said.

“Everyone in the Army Wounded Warrior Program understands what a huge price our soldiers and families have paid in support of their Nation and now we are here to support them for as long as it takes,” said Col. Jim Rice, the program director.

In 2007 the U.S. Army expanded the program allowing more National Guard and Reserve soldiers to recover in their hometowns using community-based Warrior Training Units.



ence that they are going through now—you can help them,” he said. “It helps you mentally because you are with your brethren in arms.”

The program employs three key elements for soldiers, including a squad leader, nurse case

manager and primary care physician. The squad leader leads the soldiers, and the nurse case manager coordi-

“They took us to school!”

— Spc. Michelle Siebold, 41st IBCT

For the soldiers gathered at Kliever Memorial Armory it means a return to the esprit de corps and camaraderie unique to the armed services said Sgt. 1st Class Matthew Lamb, an Oregon soldier who suffered a neck injury while deployed to Afghanistan which cost him the use of his right arm for a time.

“We’re with our fellow soldiers, we’re here to rub shoulders, to support a soldier who is having a particular hard time—maybe you’ve had an experi-

ates their care. The primary care physician oversees care, which can be complex, given the multiple issues experienced by some soldiers.

The three elements referred to as the “triad of care” creates the familiar environment of a military unit and surrounds the soldier and family with comprehensive care and support, all focused on the wounded warrior’s sole mission—to heal. These professionals put the soldier first, cut through red tape, and mind



Above: Spc. Michelle Siebold took part in the program and learned how to ride a bike specially set up for paraplegic riders after returning from Iraq pending thyroid removal surgery scheduled for the next day Nov. 18. She deployed with the 41st Infantry Brigade Combat Team and spent six months in-country prior to coming back pending surgery.

Left: Bill Loyd takes a shot during a scrimmage showcasing wheelchair basketball for members of the Community Based Warrior Transition Unit.

the details, states the Army Warrior Transition Unit’s website.

“This is our opportunity to get together so that we can keep these soldiers informed of their benefits like TRICARE, hear from ESGR and VFW and they can talk to their case managers, first sergeants and any other members of the command regarding their care,” said 1st Sgt. Lynn Hoyt, Warrior Unit First Sergeant.

Many of the warriors in transition will not only have the benefit of recovering at home, they’ll also be able to use local civilian health care facilities, while remaining under the direct supervision of Army unit leaders and medical case managers said Hoyt.

“You realize real quickly you’re gonna have to rely on your team to get this done,” said Walters.

Local race car driver rallies for Oregon National Guard troops



Story by Kim L. Lippert
Oregon Military Department
Public Affairs Office

SALEM, Ore. -- Instead of rallying around the Oregon National Guard, 38-year old racecar driver, Mark Fox is rallying for them.

He finished the 2009 Rally America racing season as rookie of the year, driving his #54 Subaru, dedicated to the National Guard.

“It brings a lot of camaraderie with people that are in the Guard and definitely draws a lot of attention,” said Fox, a resident of Salem, Ore.

Fox is not in the military, but said he has great respect for what soldiers do. His grandmother retired from the Oregon National Guard, and several of his friends are in the National Guard.

But it wasn’t until he watched the independent documentary, “This is War”—a video diary about the experiences of soldiers from the 2nd Battalion 162 Infantry, who were deployed to Iraq for a year in 2004—that he felt compelled to do something more.

“It was so powerful and emotional that after I watched the documentary I decided I wanted to do my part,” Fox said.

He wrapped his Subaru completely in National Guard digital camouflage graphics and logos.

“I think it’s a great patriotic way to support us,” said Col. Alaine Encabo, the Recruiting and Retention Commander with the Oregon National Guard.

Fox said he and his co-driver Jake Blattner took several top spots through-

out the 2009 racing season.

“It was a great honor to get Rookie of the Year and we did it with a rookie co-driver,” Fox said.

Fox said he relies on his co-driver for directions, much like soldiers rely on their “battle buddy” in combat, he said.

“It builds a bond between us because you trust each other so much,” said Fox.

A bond Oregon National Guard soldiers can relate to.

“The sport is gaining momentum and is extremely popular among our recruiting pool,” Encabo said. “We are grateful for the support Fox is giving us.”

Rally races take place on all surfaces and in all conditions including asphalt, gravel, snow, and even ice, said Fox, who is a self-professed ‘adrenaline junkie’.

“Rally racing is fast cars on real roads,” he continued.

“We have multiple stages over the course of two or three days, generally about 350 stage miles,” he added.

The season took Fox and Blattner all over the country, often driving a truck to haul the race car and supplies from Oregon to the east coast and back again. The pair completed the race season entirely as “privateers”, which translates into racing without any outside funding.

“It’s very expensive,” said Fox.

Fox said he hopes to improve on his wins this season by doing even better next year. “I’d like to continue competing and have a properly funded season and go to battle for the championship.”

Above: Rally America car number 54, adorned in digital camouflage and wearing National Guard logos, is driven by local driver Mark Fox, was built in honor of all citizen soldiers, after Fox watched the documentary “This Is War,” which followed Oregon’s 2nd Battalion, 162nd Infantry during their deployment to Iraq in 2003. Fox was named rookie of the year in last year’s championship. (Photo courtesy, Mark Fox)

Left: Mark Fox, driver of the #54 Rally America National Guard racecar, and winner of the 2009 “Rookie of the Year” title, poses with his race car after meeting with Oregon National Guard members at Joint Force Headquarters in Salem, Ore., Oct. 29. Fox and his co-driver Jake Blattner ran the entire season as “privateers”, which means no outside funding or sponsorships. Fox said he promotes the National Guard due to the service and sacrifice of Guard members around the world. (Photo by Tech. Sgt. Nick Choy, Oregon Military Department Public Affairs Office)

NEWS

AZUWUR

OREGON NATIONAL GUARD

Operation Holiday Airlift funds troop return



Photo by Sgt. Eric A. Rutherford, Oregon Military Department Public Affairs

Oregon Army National Guard Lt. Col. Kevin Dial, 1249 Engineer Battalion Commander, thanks Charissa Riddle and Don Webber for volunteering during the "Operation Holiday Airlift" telethon fund raiser in Portland, Ore., Dec. 10. Sponsored by the Oregon War Veterans Association and KATU Channel 2, the telethon raised money to help soldiers with the 162 Engineer Company return home for the holidays from pre-deployment training at Fort McCoy, Wis. The Oregon War Veterans Association teamed up with KATU Television to orchestrate the telethon on behalf of the Oregon Guard. Riddle, of Salem, was manning phones to help her husband, Sgt. James Riddle return home. Webber is the reintegration area manager for Portland Metro and the North Coast.

PORTLAND, Ore. -- More than 100 Oregon National Guard soldiers received a welcome Christmas gift when the Oregon War Veterans Association teamed up with KATU Television and took up the cause of funding their last-minute trip home.

When soldiers who were in the midst of pre-deployment training were told last minute they would be given Christmas leave to return from Wisconsin, they were ecstatic, but for many there was a significant problem, they couldn't afford the last minute airfare.

In stepped Greg Warnock the executive director for OWVA who went to the public with the help of radio and television stations in Oregon and raised \$11,000 of the estimated \$40,000 needed. Then KATU Television upped the ante and on Dec. 9 they hosted a telethon which raised more than \$60,000- fully funding the trip home for all 105 soldiers.

"We are very excited to have the opportunity to help the troops in this way, and have enjoyed sharing this project

with the general public," reported Warnock to a local radio station. He continued by saying, "Oregonians are very generous, no matter how they feel about the war, and always find a way to help, even if it with a \$5.00 donation. What better way to say 'thank you' than by bringing families together for the holidays?"

The servicemembers were mobilized to Wisconsin for training, and eventual service in Afghanistan, but the deployment was delayed until after Christmas. Originally they were supposed to be overseas already, but due to problems receiving them at their forward base the 105 remained in the states.

"I mean a lot of these people that are donating, they don't realize what kind of joy they're bringing to these people," said Amanda Cushman in a KATU news report.

She was braced to spend Christmas and the new year without her husband before "Operation Holiday Airlift" raised enough to bring him home.

Updated: 1st Home buyer tax credit law

WASHINGTON -- A new law that went into effect Nov. 6 extends the first-time homebuyer credit five months and expands the eligibility requirements for purchasers.

The Worker, Homeownership, and Business Assistance Act of 2009 extends the deadline for qualifying home purchases from Nov. 30, 2009, to April 30, 2010. Additionally, if a buyer enters into a binding contract by April 30, 2010, the buyer has until June 30, 2010, to settle on the purchase.

The maximum credit amount remains at \$8,000 for a first-time homebuyer — that is, a buyer who has not owned a primary residence during the three years up to the date of purchase.

But the new law also provides a "long-time resident" credit of up to \$6,500 to others who do not qualify as "first-time homebuyers." To qualify this way, a buyer must have owned and used the same home as a principal or primary residence for at least five consecutive years of the eight-year period ending on the date of purchase of a new home as a primary residence.

For all qualifying purchases in 2010, taxpayers have the option of claiming the credit on either their 2009 or 2010 tax returns.

Income Limits Rise

The new law raises the income limits for people who purchase homes after Nov. 6. The full credit will be available to taxpayers with modified adjusted gross incomes (MAGI) up to \$125,000, or \$225,000 for joint filers.

For Members of the Military

Members of the Armed Forces and certain federal employees serving outside the U.S. have an extra year to buy a principal residence in the U.S. and still qualify for the credit. An eligible taxpayer must buy or enter into a binding contract to buy a home by April 30, 2011, and settle on the purchase by June 30, 2011.

For more details on the credit, visit the First-Time Homebuyer Credit page on IRS.gov.

U.S. Senate youth program seeks military mentors

WASHINGTON -- The National Guard Bureau is looking for military officers in the grades O-1 through O-4 to be mentors for the 2010 Senate Youth Program. The program, instituted in 1962 by U.S. Senate Resolution and held annually in Washington, DC, is designed to give the nation's top-rated high school seniors a working knowledge of American politics through personal interaction with high-level government agencies and officials. Military Mentors serve as counselors, facilitators and role models for the 104 students (two from each state and territory), giving them

a better understanding of defense missions, personnel and lifestyle.

Nomination packages must be submitted electronically to margaret.moffett@us.army.mil no later than Wednesday, Jan. 6, 2010.

If you have any questions, please contact Moffett for further information via e-mail or at DSN 327-2614 or commercial at 703-607-2614 or visit the U.S. Senate Youth Program website at: www.ussenateyouth.org

Vets: authorized to salute during National anthem

WASHINGTON -- Veterans and active-duty military not in uniform can now render the military-style hand salute during the playing of the national anthem, thanks to changes in federal law that took effect recently.

"The military salute is a unique gesture of respect that marks those who have served in our nation's armed forces," said then-Secretary of Veterans Affairs, Dr. James B. Peake. "This provision allows the application of that honor in all events involving our nation's flag."

The new provision improves upon a little known change in federal law last year that authorized veterans to render the military-style hand salute during the raising, lowering or passing of the flag, but it did not address salutes during the national anthem. Last year's provision also applied to members of the armed forces while not in uniform. New Law Authorizes Veterans' Salute During Playing of National Anthem.

Traditionally, members of the nation's veterans service organizations have rendered the hand-salute during the national anthem and at events involving the national flag while wearing their organization's official head-gear.

Sen. Jim Inhofe of Oklahoma, an Army veteran, sponsored the most recent change, authorizing hand-salutes during the national anthem by veterans and out-of-uniform military personnel. It was included in the Defense Authorization Act of 2009.

The earlier provision authorizing hand-salutes during the raising, lowering or passing of the flag, was contained in the National Defense Authorization Act of 2008, which took effect January, 2008.

Retiree Service Office

Open Tuesdays, 10 am to 2 p.m.

(503) 584-2891 or
1-800-452-7500, ext. 2891

E-mail/ Web:
ORRSO@or.ngb.army.mil
www.orngretirees.info/

US Mail:
Retiree Service Office
PO Box 14350 Salem, OR 97309

**OREGON NATIONAL GUARD
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(Reintegration Program)**

The Oregon National Guard wants to see you succeed, and is ready to help with employment, health care, college, or other matters.
Call toll-free: 1-888-688-2264, 24-hours, 7-days per week
visit our website at: www.orng-vet.org

OTHER CONTACTS FOR ASSISTANCE

- Suicide Prevention Hotline: 1-800-273-TALK (8255)
- Oregon Military Department: 1-800-452-7500
- VA Hospital, Portland, Ore.: 1-800-949-1004
- VA Hospital, Walla Walla, WA: 1-888-687-8863
- VA Hospital, Boise, ID: 208-422-1000
- VA Hospital, Roseburg, Ore.: 541-440-1000
- Oregon Department of Veterans Affairs: 1-800-828-8801
- Veterans Administration: www.va.gov
- Military One Source: www.militaryonesource.com
or: 1-800-342-9647

NEWS

Kingsley airman named to Circuit Court

Story by
Tech. Sgt. Nick Choy,
Oregon Military Dept.
Public Affairs

SALEM, Ore.—A member of the Oregon Air National Guard was appointed to fill the vacancy created by the retirement of Klamath County Circuit Court Judge Richard B. Rambo.

Oregon Governor Ted Kulongoski, made the announcement Dec. 4, appointing Lt. Col. Dan Bunch, of the 173rd Fighter Wing in Klamath Falls to the position.

Maj. Gen. Raymond F. Rees, The Adjutant General, Oregon National Guard, said Bunch's appointment is a win

for the citizen-soldiers and citizen-airmen of the Oregon National Guard, and for the citizens of Klamath County.

"Lieutenant Colonel Bunch is a great example of the citizen-soldier concept," Rees said. "He is a dedicated public servant in the Oregon National Guard. Likewise, he will be a dedicated and effective member of the Circuit Court."

Bunch received his Bachelor of Arts Degree from Hampden-Sydney College and his Doctor of Jurisprudence from the University of Virginia. During his legal career, Bunch has served as a Special Assistant United States Attorney in Guam and

Alaska and as a prosecutor for the Criminal Division of the Alaska Department of Law.

He has also engaged in private practice with the Klamath Falls firm of Brandsness, Brandsness, Rudd & Bunch. Since 2006 Bunch has served as Klamath County Counsel. Bunch served in the United States Navy from 1990 to 1994, and the United States Air Force from 1994 to 1998.

Since 2000, he has served as a Staff Judge Advocate for the Oregon Air National Guard's 173rd Fighter Wing at Kingsley Field. During 2007 he deployed to Iraq in support of General Petraeus' Law and Order Task Force.



Lt. Col. Dan Bunch, 173rd Fighter Wing Judge Advocate Group was named to the Klamath County Circuit Court Dec. 4, by Governor Ted Kulongoski.

Command Chief Russell

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 2

airmen to read and understand the Enlisted Force Structure. This is your blueprint for success in the guard. Embrace your role and responsibility as an airman – junior airman, NCO or senior-NCO, and we'll continue to be the outstanding enlisted force our state and nation values.

In closing, I ask that each of you take time to remember those that have made the ultimate sacrifice. Please take the time during this holiday season to pray for and remember our fallen comrades and those serving away from home that will once again be separated from family and loved ones this holiday season. To all our deployed servicemembers, I say thank you very much for your service.

To all the Oregon Guard, have a safe and joyous holiday season!

142nd SFS trains for combat at Camp Rilea

Story and photo by
Staff Sgt. John Hughel,
142nd Fighter Wing
Public Affairs

CAMP RILEA, Ore.—Under a cloud of green smoke four Oregon Air National Guard members run from building-to-building at Camp Rilea's training village during ground combat skills training for the 142nd Fighter Wing Security Forces Squadron.

As they rally inside one building, Tech. Sgt. Mick Gremaud, the squad leader for the team, conducts a quick head count to account for all his troops. They peered out from defensive positions as small-arms fire in the form of paintballs splattered the door and window frames.

The airmen were put through several situations in a mock village, sometimes under fire and often with specific objectives for each part of the training.

"We try and tailor the training to meet the situation," said Gremaud. "The intensity during each phase of the training is constant and the success of each exercise comes when good communication is maintained."

Many of the airmen leading this training recently returned from tours in Iraq. These more experienced leaders are here to teach less experi-



Oregon National Guard airmen of the 142nd Security Forces Squadron work in a simulated training environment at Camp Rilea, Ore. during ground combat skills training.

enced airmen what they need to know in real-world situations.

"My squad has 14 members and we need to train this way to take it to the next level," said Gremaud.

During the week-long training members went over key objectives again and again to ensure that all participants understood their roles under the watchful eye of Senior Master Sgt. Christopher Roper of the 142nd Security Forces Squadron.

"The emphasis we want them to get is military operations in urban environments, mounted convey and combat skills training," said Roper.

He is quick to point out how pleased he has been

with this training. A group of 35 to 50 airmen undergo this type of smaller team instruction every 16 months. The intensity of the training is constant, regardless of the group's size.

"There are advantages in working with smaller numbers at times, as the individual one-on-one feedback is more immediate," said Roper.

For squad leaders like Gremaud who have just completed a six-month tour in Iraq, the learning never stops.

"We've got a really good group of airmen here and we want them to get the experience from our vets who just came back," said Roper.

Airman graduates top of NCO Academy



Photo by Master Sgt. Kurt Skoglund

Tech. Sgt. Rebekah L. Birt, right, a personnel specialist with the 125th Special Tactics Squadron, Oregon Air National Guard, receives the John L. Levitow Honor Award for NCO Academy Class 10-1 from Lt. Col. Stan Giles, left, at The I.G. Brown Air National Guard Training and Education Center here, Nov. 19, 2009. The John L. Levitow Award is the highest honor awarded a graduate of any Air Force enlisted professional military education course.

Story by
Master Sgt. Mavi Smith,
I.G. Brown Air National Guard
Training and Education Center

McGHEE TYSON AIR NATIONAL GUARD BASE, Tenn. -- A member of the Oregon Air National Guard was presented the John L. Levitow award for her accomplishments at the Noncommissioned Officer (NCO) Academy during the class graduation ceremony at The I.G. Brown Air National Guard Training and Education Center here, Nov. 19.

Tech. Sgt. Rebekah L. Birt, a personnel specialist with the 125th Special Tactics Squadron in Portland, Ore. was the top graduate of 87 NCOs from the Air Force, Air Force Reserve, Air National Guard and Coast Guard who attended Class 10-1.

The John L. Levitow Award is the highest honor awarded a graduate of any Air Force enlisted professional military education course. It is named for Medal of Honor recipient Sgt. John L. Levitow for his actions during the Vietnam War. It is presented to the one student who not only demonstrates academic excellence, but also the outstanding attributes of leadership, enthusiasm, military bearing, and dedication to the spirit and mission of the total Air Force. It is based on objective testing, performance evaluations, demonstrated leadership, and student and instructor points.

"It means a lot to me to receive this award," said Birt. "It was a really great feeling to know that my peers and instructors voted for me. The credit goes to them because without them I definitely wouldn't have been this successful."

"Tech. Sgt. Birt was a very positive influence on the class," said Tech. Sgt. A. Ramey Stokes, the E-Flight

instructor. "She was a great teammate and academic and she went above and beyond throughout the course. She's a really valuable asset."

The NCO Academy is a six-week in-residence course. It prepares technical sergeants to be professional, war-fighting airmen who can manage and lead their units in the employment of air, space and cyberspace power. Students learn and study curriculum in the areas of the profession of arms, leadership and communication to build the skills they need for their current rank and to prepare for future responsibilities.

"It's been an incredible experience," said Birt. "Coming here I just thought I would gain basic Air Force knowledge...improve my writing skills, improve my public speaking skills but really what I came away with was more of an identity of who I am as a tech. sergeant. and a renewed sense of what it means to be a leader in the Air Force."

The John L. Levitow award is named in honor of Sgt. John L. Levitow, one of only two Air Force enlisted to receive the Medal of Honor during the Vietnam War.

Levitow received the Medal of Honor for heroic actions Feb. 24, 1969. Serving as a loadmaster on an AC-47 gunship over Long Binh, South Vietnam, his aircraft was severely damaged by mortar fire. Suffering from over 40 shrapnel wounds to his back and legs, he saw a smoking magnesium flare amid a pile of spilled ammunition canisters. Despite loss of blood and partial loss of feeling in his right leg, he threw himself on the flare, hugged it close, dragged himself to an open cargo door and hurled the flare out. Almost immediately, the flare ignited harmlessly. Levitow's actions saved the aircraft and the lives of seven crew members.

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NMMI is one of five military junior colleges that offer the Early Commissioning Programs (ECP). ECP allows graduates to become commissioned officers in the Army National Guard in two years, instead of the usual four. Qualifications for admission include being under 22 years of age, never married and have no dependent children.

For more information on GRFD opportunities, please contact LTC Cary

Miller at 503.584.3808 or cary.miller@us.army.mil.

