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Oregon Sentinel

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THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE OREGON NATIONAL GUARD

Northwest military leaders meet with incoming NORTHCOM deputy chief

Story by
Tech. Sgt. Nick Choy
Oregon Military Department
Public Affairs Office

PORTLAND, Ore. – The former chief of the National Guard paid a visit to the Oregon Air Guard, Dec. 10-12.

Lt. Gen. H Steven Blum, incoming Deputy Commander for United States

Northern Command, met with five states' adjutants general at the Portland Air National Guard Base in Portland, Dec. 11.

He arrived in the region a day earlier, touring facilities and meeting with leaders at the 173rd Fighter Wing at Kingsley Field in Klamath Falls.

Lt. Gen. Blum's trip to the northwest was a chance for a handful of states to

showcase and discuss emergency response capabilities of the states within the Federal Emergency Management Agency's Region 10, said Col. Donald Bond, Chief of Staff (Army) for the Oregon National Guard.

"This opportunity to have the adjutants general collectively meet with General Blum and to discuss the northwest region's abilities will significantly improve the partnership of these states," he said.

FEMA Region 10 includes Washington, Oregon, Idaho and Alaska. Major General John Walsh, The Adjutant General, Montana also attended the meeting.

The meeting was spearheaded by Oregon's Adjutant General, Maj. Gen. Raymond F. Rees, in order to give Lt. Gen. Blum a better understanding of the emergency response capabilities of the states within the northwest region, Col. Bond said.

"And as NORTHCOM moves forward with (emergency) exercises, hopefully they can look upon this region as a place to conduct these (events)," Col. Bond continued.

Col. John Kent, 142nd Fighter Wing

Commander, said the visit was also a chance to brief Lt. Gen. Blum on the proposal to bring the F-22 Raptor to the northwest region as part of the "Five Corners" initiative.

"It was a great opportunity to have him here," Col. Kent said. "We want to show him what the state of Oregon offers, and in particular, how the 142nd FW supports [North American Aerospace Defense Command] and USNORTHCOM, and our air sovereignty support mission here."

Lt. Gen. Blum saw first-hand how the Oregon Air Guard employs F-15 Eagle fighter jets to protect skies over the northwest when he visited the Air Sovereignty Alert Facilities at the Portland Air Base. There, he met with crew chiefs, pilots, and 123rd Fighter Squadron Commander, Lt. Col. Jeffrey Hwang.

"I think Lt. Gen. Blum got a real good look at how we cover all the vital areas in the northwest," Lt. Col. Hwang said. "His itinerary was pretty well packed, so we were honored to have him come out and visit us."

"And if he does have a chance to come back to Oregon, he can count on a ride in one of our F-15s, we'll show him how it's done in the Air Force," Col. Kent said.

Lt. Gen. Blum's previous assignment was Chief of National Guard Bureau in Arlington, Va., where he was responsible for developing and coordinating policies and programs affecting more than a half-million Air and Army National Guard personnel.

He is the first National Guard officer to serve in the role as Deputy Commander of USNORTHCOM.



Photo by Tech. Sgt. Greg Neulieb, 142nd Fighter Wing Public Affairs

Maj. Gen. Raymond F. Rees, The Adjutant General, Oregon National Guard, welcomes incoming Deputy Combatant Commander of United States Northern Command, Lt. Gen. H Steven Blum, to the Portland Air National Guard Base in Portland, Ore., Dec. 11. Lt. Gen. Blum toured the base as part of a meeting with National Guard leaders from Oregon, Washington, Idaho and Alaska, which comprise the members of the Federal Emergency Management Agency's Region 10.

Air Guard medics reflect on Continuing Promise 2008

Story by Naval Chief Mass
Communication Specialist
James G. Pinsky

Continuing Promise Public Affairs

USS KEARSARGE, At Sea – Nine Air National Guard medical technicians from across the United States, including an Oregon Guardsman, traded in their civilian creature comforts for the rigors of a four-month deployment aboard USS Kearsarge (LHD 3), beginning Aug. 6.

As their real work began in Nicaragua, the comforts of home seemed less and less important. "Nicaragua left the most lasting impression on me because the people needed the most help, but they also had the most grace and gratitude," said Staff Sgt. Danae Eskridge, a medical technician assigned to the 173rd Fighter Wing Medical Group at Kingsley Field, Ore.

"Being on my first ship was quite an experience," said Senior Airman Alexandra Olson, a medical technician assigned to 148th Fighter Wing Medical Group in Duluth, Minn.

"The quarters were close, and there wasn't much to do or places to go, but I think we all adjusted after a few days."

Despite the differences, the Guardsmen said they stayed focused on the mission, providing humanitarian assistance.

The Guardsmen contributed to the CP medical mission in Nicaragua, and five other Caribbean islands, through a variety of medical care, including de-worming, pharmacy, patient flow, triage, bandage



U.S. Navy photo by Petty Officer 1st Class David G. Crawford

Air Force Staff Sargent Danae Eskridge and Hospital Corpman Richard Utley, currently assigned to the USS Kearsarge (LHD 3) medical department, carry a Nicaraguan woman who was complaining of chest and arm pains in to an examining room at Juan Comenius high school in Puerto Cabazes, Nicaragua, Aug. 13.

and wound care, and other basic medical care.

"Nicaragua really set the benchmark for how things would be for us on this mission," said Eskridge. "The poverty where we were in Nicaragua was rampant, but people still showed up as well dressed as they could be. It was some of the saddest living conditions I have ever seen, but at the same time they were some of the most gracious people we met on the trip."

On the other end of the medical spectrum, the Guardsmen found Trinidad-Tobago's people to be the easiest to relate

to mostly because everyone there spoke English, but also because their health care needs seemed less dire.

In addition to Nicaragua and Trinidad and Tobago, the CP mission made scheduled visits to Colombia, the Dominican Republic, and Guyana, as well as two liberty ports in Puerto Rico and Curacao. The team also answered the call to provide disaster relief assistance to Haiti after it was devastated by Hurricane Ike and several other tropical storms.

Throughout the mission, the Guardsmen

See **Promise** on PAGE 6

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COMMAND

New Year brings challenges, opportunities



Maj. Gen. Raymond F. Rees,
Adjutant General,
Oregon Military
Department

Happy New Year! This year will see Oregon's 150th birthday celebration of statehood, Feb. 14, 1859. Our Guard has been part of Oregon history since the provisional government passed its first militia law July 5, 1843. More than 150 years of change has taken place since that time. What hasn't changed is the citizen-soldier who raises their hand willing to serve their community, state and nation. Today, we have more than 8,500 guard members who have made this commitment and who serve both here in Oregon as well as around the world. With this obligation, we as military and community leaders need to ensure that our soldiers and airmen as well as their families are ready and equipped whenever called to duty. This

includes having full and complete knowledge of all our support programs.

The 41st Infantry Brigade Combat Team will answer the call later this year. Col. Daniel Hokanson, Commander, 41st IBCT, has been holding town hall meetings at armories across the state. This is solely to inform soldiers, their families and local communities of support programs which are available, as well as what can be expected before, during and after their deployment. He has arranged to have representatives from Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve, Career Transition Assistance Program, Tricare, Family Programs, the Reintegration Team and others available to answer questions and provide early planning for Soldiers of the 41st Brigade.

Hokanson is planning to conduct these town hall meetings across the state beginning again in March to provide the most up to date information available. When soldiers feel supported by their community and families, they are able to fully focus on the task at hand. This is absolutely necessary for readiness, safety and mission accomplishment. Hokanson, along with other Guard leadership, are making this their priority in order to ensure Guard members and families are ready and equipped when called to duty.

In Oregon, we are fortunate to have many

programs which focus on both pre and post-deployment as well as programs for families while guard members are deployed. I encourage each individual both guard and civilian to inquire about the programs that are available and pass the information on to one another. Although these programs exist to help Guard members and their families, the responsibility falls to the individual to search out the specific assistance needed. If you have not done so already, please visit www.orng-vet.org/ or call 1-888-688-2264 for a preliminary guide to what is available for Oregon Soldiers and Airmen.

We have come far in regard to support, but the basics of family and community remain the same just as it was in 1843. Citizen-soldiers stand ready to serve their community and nation. We as leaders stand ready to support them when called.

Let's enjoy the opportunity to celebrate Oregon's sesquicentennial, and remember our heritage as we prepare to make our largest deployment since World War II.

Let us also look forward to the challenges of the coming year and all that the Oregon Military Department will be able to accomplish. Making history every day! Always ready! Always there! Happy New Year!

State Command Chief Smith says farewell

This will be my final article for the Oregon Sentinel. It's been my honor and privilege to serve as your State Command Chief Master Sergeant. I want to thank you all for the opportunity to represent the best group of men and women to ever wear the uniform for the Air National Guard. As I bring to a close my 37-year career, I want to thank each of you for volunteering to serve our nation, for fighting the Global War on Terror, for protecting our homeland and for continuing to keep the Oregon Air Guard strong and relevant.

The State Command Chief Master Sergeant position is the best job I have ever had in the Guard. I was given this opportunity in June of 2004, it was a chance for me to step up and make a difference for our enlisted force. There were many things that I wanted to accomplish, and at this time there are still many left undone but we have come a long way and made some positive changes. As I reflect on those years I believe that the key was flexibility. I have to admit it was challenging at times but after overcoming many hurdles, it all seems totally worth while.

I want to thank all of the enlisted and officers of the Oregon National Guard for stepping up and serving your State and Country, you are indeed the best of the best. I wish it were possible for me to meet with

each of you personally today so I could look you in the eyes, shake your hands, express my heartfelt gratitude for your service, and to give you some sense of what you have given me – pride in our state and federal missions and an abiding confidence in our country.

I know you are the best enlisted force in the world. I know this because I have traveled around our state and personally seen the tremendous feats you have accomplished.

Our combat roles started years ago with Desert Storm. You've since honed your skills through Operations Northern and Southern Watch, Noble Eagle, Enduring Freedom, and Iraqi Freedom, among many other challenges. You have taken the fight to the enemy and defeated them everywhere you engaged. As we continue, you must remain resolute, strong and prepared to fight anytime and anywhere to ensure our liberties, or those of our allies. Our enemies count on us to falter and to fail, however we will not.

As I complete my tour of duty, I leave knowing that the true strength of our military lies in the hearts of you who serve: your patriotism, your professionalism, and your determination to accomplish the mission.

Perhaps in 20 years you will look back on your service (as I am doing now) and at what you have accomplished with a great sense of



Chief Master Sgt.
Rodney R. Smith,
State Command
Chief Master Ser-
geant,
Oregon Military
Department

pride. You will know that you were part of a truly proud history, and even helped make history.

Last but not least, I want to thank my wife of 36 years, Thuy. Your love and support throughout my career in the Guard is more than I could have ever asked for, I could not have done this without you. To my two sons, Richard and Christopher, thank you both for all the support you have given me throughout my career in the Oregon Air National Guard. Your love and support means more than I can say. You two are the best sons a father could ask for. And to my guard family, I salute you and will miss you all!

Command Chief Warrant Officer stresses ethics, relationships

I am currently attending the Warrant Officer Senior Staff Course (WOSSC) located at Fort Rucker, Ala.

Like all military courses there are some excellent lessons and some that are difficult to sit through.

Of all the course offerings I have enjoyed the course called Military Ethics more than any other. Discussing different views from fellow senior warrants is both interesting and thought provoking. This portion of the course did not fail to deliver.

Listening to Special Ops, Counter Intelligence, and Signal or Logistic Warrants share their perceptions on a particular ethical question was an eye opening experience.

Through these discussions I have realized that we all have the same goal, but we often take different approaches to meet the same end. These different approaches are not wrong, just different.

This course is evenly split between Active, Army Reserve and National Guard senior warrants. The career fields vary between aviation, logistics, military intelligence and food service to name a few.

One of the key benefits to in attending professional military education courses like this are the relationships you foster. They are relationships that will help you "make things happen" for your commander. For example, you may get to know a Kansas Army National Guard admin warrant or logistics warrant from the Army Reserve in California who you can call on for future help or ask for advice. The key is, knowing who they are and what they do so when the need arises you know where to turn to for help.

Another aspect of the warrant officer career path I'd like to mention, located here at Fort Rucker, is the Warrant Officer Candidate (WOC) School.

This is the basic course that all warrant officer candidates complete on the road to becoming full-fledged warrants.

One of the first things you notice is the professionalism of these men and women. They are dedicated and working diligently to join, "The Quiet Professionals." When you walk past them or when they render their salute these Soldiers come to attention and yell, "Strength and Honor, Sir!" Their enthusiasm

is contagious. They come with or without combat patches but all have in common the technical expertise that will help ensure their commanders are successful.

It reminds me that these are the young warriors that will take the warrant officer corps into the future. It is up to the current senior chief warrant officer 4s' and 5s' like me and others to pass the torch. We need to mentor them and recruit more of the same.

Finally, I know in my last article I said that I would be addressing warrant officer deployments but I decided to adjust fire and take advantage of my surroundings.

Stay tuned for more information as the Chief Warrant Officer 5s meet in the new year. I will send the minutes of that meeting to all warrants and discuss the meeting in my next column in February.



CW4 Michael Zagyva,
Command Chief
Warrant Officer,
Oregon National Guard

COMMENTARY

Air Guard commander details vision for leadership

Column by
Brig. Gen. Daniel B. O'Hollaren
*Oregon Air National Guard
 Commander*

Among the many roles of leadership in an organization, one fundamental role is paramount: direction. Setting direction, whether at the tactical or strategic level, is key to ensuring the effectiveness of the group in achieving their objective. How we translate this direction to the individuals on the team is through expectations. I want to share with you my expectations that I have laid out for each of my senior leadership team.

We are the leadership and as such we must demonstrate our Core Values, set the example.

Integrity, Service and Excellence: these are the core values we all subscribe to. For those of us in a leadership position, it becomes doubly important to know them, live them and instill them in all our Airmen.

Meet your commitments: what, when, where.

Commitment is a cornerstone of any military organization. Whether it's processing someone's pay, completing a Maintenance TCTO on time or ensuring your airplane meets an assigned TOT, commitment to the task at hand is crucial to success.

Develop your people – they are what got you to this place today; mentor them and lead them.

Each of us was hired into the Air National Guard because of our skills, abilities and potential to be successful Airmen. Successful Airmen translate into success

in the organization. Everyone deserves to be led, to be mentored and to be given the opportunity to give full measure in contributing to the success of the team as a whole.

Communicate regularly and frequently; nurture relationships locally and nationally. The dividends are HUGE.

The art of communication continues to be a challenge, even in the era of instant

to be successful and remain a top tier unit ONLY if we do this. We are no longer entitled to any mission simply because we've 'always done it'. If we focus on sustained excellence as well as process improvement, then new and ever increasing missions will beat a path to our state.

In your daily decision process: engage first and foremost, share as much as you can, "tell" only when you have to.

“Among the many roles of leadership, one fundamental role is paramount: direction.”
 — Brig. Gen. O'Hollaren



Photo courtesy Oregon Military Dept.

news, text messaging and streaming video over your cell phone. Nothing can take the place of face-to-face relationship building. Our ability to succeed – either at a local or state or national level – starts with establishing personal relationships. Relationships translate into trust. Make the effort to do this because the dividends truly are enormous.

Improve the way you work-- continuously. Focus on the process, not the event. Manage with facts and data.

The days of status quo are gone. The time of entitlement is over. The era of 'shooting from the hip' is a thing of the past. Tomorrow's successful organizations, ones that continue to exist and in fact grow, are those that show that they not only can perform the daily mission in an outstanding manner, but can also continuously improve the way they do it. The Oregon Air National Guard will continue

The real strength of any organization lies in the intellect and diversity of its people. We must tap that powerful source of expertise at every opportunity. Avoid 'telling' people what direction we are going whenever possible. Rather, engage them in the dialogue; get their ideas; share the results and the plan. Together, we can accomplish amazing things.

Decorum, military customs, it's who we are; part of our fabric-- demand it and demonstrate it.

We are a military organization. Let's ensure we demonstrate that every day we put on the uniform. Senior leadership at a national level has and will continue to visit our state. Let's show them just how professional we are!

Use the Chain of Command; your leadership deserves it.

Leadership is in place at all levels of the organization to ensure mission ac-

complishment and to maintain good order and discipline. We're in a dynamic, lean environment; it requires a new vision and fresh thinking.

Never before has there been such consistent change of such magnitude within the Air Force and the Air National Guard. New missions, declining weapons systems, tightening budgets all point to a requirement for fresh, visionary thinking.

ORANG has a legacy of excellence, keep it going!

The Oregon Air National Guard has a proud and enviable history, punctuated by the stellar accomplishments of its people. Every day, with every decision you make, every action you take, everyone you associate with, display the level of excellence and professionalism that has been our hallmark for over 60 years.

Disaster prep not just for government, good for business

By **Jennifer Bailey**
*Public Affairs Coordinator
 Oregon Emergency Management*

Preparing for an emergency in advance makes good business sense. How quickly your company can get back to business after a terrorist attack, earthquake, flood, or fire often depends on the planning done today.

Considering that the number of declared major disasters nearly doubled in the 1990s compared to the previous decade we realize that preparedness becomes an even more critical issue.

Getting your business up and running quickly not only protects your business investment, but also helps your employees and the community. If businesses are ready to survive and recover, the nation and our economy are more secure.

Small businesses alone account for more than 99 percent of all companies with employees, employ 50 percent of all private sector workers and provide nearly 45 percent of the nation's payroll.

Now that I have your attention, here are some ways to stay in business following a disaster.

Risk Assessment – Know which kind of disasters are most common in the areas where you operate and plan for both man-made and natural disasters. Go to www.ready.gov to learn what to do during a biological, chemical, explosive, nuclear or radiological attack.

Continuity of Operations – Decide who will be in charge and who will take over if that person is not available. Determine which staff, materials, procedures and equipment are absolutely necessary to keep the business operating. Will it be possible to continue work in the event of a power outage? Do you have an alternate location available? How will you communicate with your employees?

Create a team of co-workers from all levels to write your plan. Consider a broad cross-section of people from your organization, but focus on those with expertise vital to daily business functions. These will likely include people with technical skills as well as managers and executives.

Plan for Employees – Your employees and co-workers are your business's most important and valuable asset. Educate them on disaster preparedness by including emergency information in newsletters, on the company intranet and other internal communications.

Consider setting up a telephone calling tree and designate an out of town phone number where employees can

leave an "I'm okay" message in a catastrophic disaster.

If you have employees with disabilities ask them what assistance, if any, they require. Be sure to engage these employees in emergency planning.

Emergency Supplies – When preparing for emergency situations, it's best to think first about the basics of survival: fresh water, food, clean air and warmth. Encourage everyone to have a portable kit customized to meet

“...the number of declared major disasters nearly doubled in the 1990s.”
 — Jennifer Bailey, OEM



personal needs, such as essential medications. Survivors from the Twin Towers on 9/11 told the Red Cross that they wished they had with them a dust mask, whistle, light stick or flash light and water.

Decide what supplies the company can feasibly provide and where it will be stored, etc. It is recommended that you have several flashlights, a first aid kit, a NOAA weather radio with an alert function, dust or filter masks, moist towelettes for sanitation, tools to turn off utilities, plastic sheeting and duct tape to "seal the room," in the event of a toxic chemical event, and garbage bags and plastic ties for personal sanitation.

In Oregon it is always a good idea to store important records and equipment up off the ground due to the possibility of flooding. A waterproof or fireproof portable container is a good idea and a set of records kept at an off-site location may save time and money.

Evacuation Plan – The ability to evacuate workers, customers and visitors effectively can save lives. Many people are paralyzed by fear during an emergen-

cy. When the Estonia sank in the Baltic Sea, killing 852 people, some passengers on deck simply stopped moving – a common problem in disasters. Planning your escape route can train people to override this instinct.

Fire drills, particularly if they are mandatory and unexpected, can dramatically reduce fear. Just knowing where the stairs are gives your brain an advantage. The rituals that we consider an utter waste of time actually give our brains blueprints in the event that we need them.

9/11 survivor Bill McMahon, a Morgan Stanley executive said "Knowing where to go was the most important thing. Because your brain- at least mine – just shut down. When that happens, you need to know what to do next. One thing you don't ever want to do is to have to think in a disaster."

Make a Plan, get a Kit, Be Informed and go to www.ready.gov for more information on businesses in disasters. An investment in planning today will not only help protect your business investment and your livelihood, but will also support your employees, customers and stakeholders, the community, the local economy and even the country. Get ready now.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Independence Police Chief thanks guard for support in rescue

Late in the afternoon of November 16, two young men disappeared from Riverview Park in the City of Independence while they were fishing. During that search effort it became clear that we could not search an extended stretch of the river by boat alone. We then asked for and received a search by air from your unit. I could not speak more highly of the way your agency helped in this effort.

Your helicopter was able to search the river between Independence and Salem, while the boats worked on

concentrated searches close to the park. I want to extend our appreciation for your significant help in this search operation.

Your helicopters provide a search capability that is simply not available from local police agencies. We could not have completed the search as quickly as we did, had we not had your air support. I have heard nothing but high praise for your agency throughout our community.

Again, thank you and your entire organization for your assistance.

Sincerely,

Vernon T. Wells
 Independence Chief of Police

OREGON GUARD NEWS

Oregon Guard celebrates National Guard birthday, community support agreement and Soldier homecoming



Photo by Tech. Sgt. Nick Choy, Oregon Military Department
Members of an Oregon Army National Guard Embedded Training Team, is honored at a homecoming ceremony in Salem, Dec. 16. The group deployed to Afghanistan for one year, assisting Afghan National Army members in anti-drug operations. Of the 17 members, four were not present at the ceremony, including Capt. Bruno de Solenni, who was killed outside Kandahar in September by an improvised explosive device.

Story by

Tech. Sgt. Nick Choy

*Oregon Military Department
Public Affairs Office*

SALEM, Ore. – Members of the Oregon Army National Guard's Embedded Training Team returned home from Afghanistan and were honored with a ceremony at the Anderson Readiness Center in Salem, Dec. 16.

The event coincided with the Oregon Guard's observance of the 372nd birthday of the National Guard, and the signing of the Army Community Covenant—a formal

commitment of support by state and local organizations to assist Soldiers and their families.

Oregon Governor Ted Kulongoski, signed the official document, as state, military and Oregon's community leaders watched.

The Community Covenant is a public declaration of the values and importance we place on community support of Oregon's military, Kulongoski explained.

"We will always be by your side, whether you serve at home, or are sent abroad into harm's way," the Governor said.

With many Soldiers acting as

single parents, the community covenant is an important commitment to 'neighbors helping neighbors', said Larry Deibert, Civilian Aide to the Secretary of the Army.

"(This) is a gesture designed to develop and foster effective state and community partnerships with the Army and reaffirms the Army's commitment to Soldiers," Mr. Deibert said.

Mr. Mike Hanley, Oregon/southeast Washington service area director for TriWest Healthcare Alliance, presented Maj. Gen. Raymond F. Rees, The Adjutant General, Oregon, a check for \$30,000, for the Oregon Emergency Relief Fund. The fund assists Oregon's Airmen and Soldiers, and their families during times of need.

Kulongoski, joined Maj. Gen. Rees in welcoming home the members of the ETT, calling the simultaneous covenant signing, National Guard birthday, and welcome home ceremony for the Soldiers, a gift to Oregon.

"Christmas came a little early this year," Kulongoski said. "We're blessed to have you home."

Maj. Gen. Rees reminded the gathering about Capt. Bruno Giancarlo de Solenni, who was killed in September by an

improvised explosive device outside Kandahar, Afghanistan.

"The joy we feel today has come at a great price," Maj. Gen. Rees said.

"It is foolish and wrong to mourn the men who died. Rather we should thank God that such men lived," Rees said of Capt. De Solenni's sacrifice, quoting Gen. George Patton.

The group spent a year in Afghanistan advising the Afghan National Army Counter-Narcotics Infantry Battalion, also known as Kandak, on clearing, holding and protecting areas to

deny opium operations.

"You had a tough year, but you rose to the occasion," Maj. Gen. Rees said to the 13 Soldiers in the ETT.

The bulk of the ETT returned to Oregon on Dec. 12. A few members will return home within the next few months. Lt. Col. Keith Ensley commanded the unit.

As part of the 372nd birthday celebration for the National Guard, ETT member, Capt. Paul Dyer joined Governor Kulongoski and Maj. Gen. Rees in cutting the birthday cake.



Photo by Sgt. Eric Rutherford, Oregon Military Department
Oregon Governor, Ted Kulongoski, surrounded by state, local and community leaders, signs the Army Community Covenant, during a ceremony in Salem, Dec. 16. The signing of the document, which is a community commitment to support of Army Soldiers and their families, coincided with a ceremony for the Oregon Army National Guard Embedded Training Team.

Legal: providing assistance to Guard and their families

Story by

1st Lt. Michael T. Davis

*Legal Assistance Attorney
Office of the Staff Judge Advocate*

The Office of the Staff Judge Advocate (OSJA) is committed to providing legal assistance to Oregon National Guard members and their families. The OSJA provides service members with basic estate planning services that include wills, powers of attorney, and advanced directives.

A will tells the court who inherits the deceased soldier's property. A will is critical to establish important legal protections for a service member's minor children. These protections include the trusts to ensure the financial security of the service member's family and guardianships to designate who will raise the service member's children if both parents die before their children become adults.

A power of attorney allows service members to appoint a person to handle their affairs in the event that they are either unavailable or unable to do so. The designated individual is granted access

to the service member's bank accounts, credit, and can generally conduct financial transactions as if they were the service member.

An advanced directive tells the service member's doctor what kind of treatment they would like if unable to make medical decisions. An advanced directive helps avoid the financial and emotional strain that occurs when family members disagree on the course of medical treatment for a service member unable to communicate medical decisions.

Service members should review their estate planning documents every five years or in the event of significant life changes to determine whether modifications are necessary.

Basic estate planning services are extended to both service members and their spouses. An appointment with a legal assistance attorney can be scheduled by contacting our offices at (503) 584-3571.

1LT Michael T. Davis is currently serving as the Legal Assistance Attorney at the Office of the Staff Judge Advocate. He is a graduate of the University of Oregon School of Law.



Courtesy photo
Capt. Scot Caughran was awarded a National Marijuana Initiative Individual Award by John Walters, Director of the Office of National Drug Control Policy, Dec. 4, in Washington D.C. Caughran was selected ahead of his peers to receive the award for his outstanding service while working with the Oregon Army National Guard Counterdrug Support Program.

State Defense Force: Training Year 2008 in Review

**Story by
Col. Roberta Janssen,
Deputy Commander
State Defense Force**

The Oregon State Defense Force (ORSDF) augments the Oregon National Guard and provides emergency management liaison assistance and back up communication to the Oregon Military Department.

During the wind storm and floods in December 2007, the ORSDF Liaison Officers were at the Clatsop and Columbia County Emergency Operations Centers (EOC). These ORSDF members promptly reported and provided a much needed link between the Joint Operations Center (JOC) and the Office of Emergency Management in Salem and the county EOCs. In the JOC After-Action Review, Brig. Gen. Michael Caldwell highlighted the lessons learned in the TOPOFF 4 exercise that took place in October as a training ground for ORSDF members to learn and execute their mission. This real state emergency tested the operational readiness and the effectiveness of the ORSDF.

In May, several ORSDF liaisons participated as observers in a National Level Exercise called CSEPP, Chemical Stockpile Emergency Preparedness Program. These individuals were able to see the National Guard work with Army personnel and state agencies.

The Semi-Annual Training for the ORSDF took place at Camp Rilea from 16-18 May. Some 65 ORSDF members participated in this event. Training included liaison responsibilities, radio message handling and operations procedures, and ham license training. Pictures from this training can be found on the ORSDF website – www.orsdf.org.

Personnel from the ORSDF meet once a month to train in emergency operations and communication skills as shown on the Regimental Groups' Yearly Training Calendar. This enables members to become proficient as liaisons or radio operators.

ORSDF members are volunteers who give of their time to contribute to their State, especially during emergency situations. In 2008, these men and women donated some 11,000 hours of service to the State of Oregon.

Oregon National Guard in history

Biak Island, Dutch New Guinea — Elements of the 41st Infantry Division (ID, MT, OR, WA) overrun Japanese defenses based upon a series of caves and pillboxes. Second Battalion, 186th Infantry (OR), after climbing a steep hill under intense enemy fire, succeed in capturing the position, which included a naval gun. When the American forces landed in late May it was expected they secure the island and its vital airstrip in just a few days. Instead they found a deeply entrenched enemy, often fighting from caves, that dragged the combat into August and cost more than 400 American lives. *Historical information courtesy, National Guard Bureau*



Soldiers of Oregon's 186th Infantry capture a Japanese naval gun as they slowly succeed in reducing the Japanese hold on Biak Island.
Painting by Keith Rocco for the National Guard Bureau

AROUND THE GUARD

National Guard to help with security at inauguration

Story by

Army Lt. Col. Ellen Krenke

National Guard Bureau Public Affairs

ARLINGTON, Va. – More than 4,000 Citizen-Soldiers and Airmen from at least eight states will provide security, medical and other support during the Jan. 20 presidential inauguration, a National Guard official said Thursday.

“We will be there to fill the gaps and help out the first responders,” said Maj. Kenneth Napier, deputy director of the Deliberate Operations Branch for the National Guard Bureau.

About half of the 4,000 will be dedicated to security, including crowd control, civil disturbance missions, manning traffic control points and assisting with the screening process.

“The states are planning and ready to support,” Napier said. “Making sure that everyone is safe is the priority.”

Gen. Gene Renuart, the commander of U.S. Northern Command, told reporters Dec. 17 that another contingent on alert would be able to respond to a chemical attack.

In addition to marching units, bands and other ceremonial support, the National Guard will provide communication, medical evacuation and explosive ordnance disposal assets.

National Guard members and re-enactors from the 54th Massachusetts Volunteer Regiment, which represents the all-black regiment that fought in the Civil War and was memorialized in the movie “Glory,” has been invited to march in the parade.

President-elect Barack Obama said in a statement Dec. 8, “These organizations embody the best of our nation’s history, diversity and commitment to service. Vice President-elect Biden and I are proud to have them join us in the parade.”

The D.C. National Guard’s efforts will be larger this time because of the expected crowds.

“We will be involved in almost every facet of the operation,” said Officer Candidate Robert Albrecht, a spokesman for the D.C. Guard.

In addition to the missions already mentioned, the 113th Wing at Andrews Air Force Base, Md., will lead the air sovereignty effort through North American Aerospace Defense Command, known as NORAD.

The D.C. Guard participated in a media event Thursday with the Military District of Washington as well as the U.S. Park Police and other D.C. area agencies involved in planning for the inauguration.

Renuart told reporters that it is “prudent” for the military to plan for the possibility



Photo by Tech. Sgt. Alan Port

Military District of Washington Commander Maj. Gen. Richard J. Rowe Jr. briefs at a large-scale map exercise at the D.C. National Guard Armory Dec. 18. The Armed Forces Inaugural Committee exercise involved the National Guard and a variety of local, state and federal agencies plotting out details for the Inaugural celebration.

of someone trying to interrupt the inauguration.

“And how well we respond will be defined by how well we trained,” Napier said.

Earlier this year, the National Guard provided similar support to the Democratic and Republican national

conventions, but only about 1,500 troops were involved in each of those missions.

The size and scope of this mission is much bigger.

“I can’t think of anything that we’ve done other than natural disasters that would be comparable to this operation,” Napier said.

Guard families eligible for child care subsidy

Story by

Army Staff Sgt. Jon Soucy

National Guard Bureau Public Affairs

ARLINGTON, Va. - For National Guard members about to deploy there is help to assist spouses and family members with the costs of child care during deployment through the Guard’s Child Care Subsidy Program.

The program, which has been around for about five years, grew out of a program initially designed for deploying active-duty personnel, said Mike Conner, chief of program services for the National Guard Bureau’s Family Program office.

“There was an increased need for child care on the (military) installation,” said Conner. “When the deployments occurred, the daycare centers on the installations were already at the peak. This made it even higher and the stress just increased.”

As a result, changes were made to allow those on active duty to receive a subsidy to use off-post child care, added Conner. Guard and Reserve

members were later made eligible as long as they were in Title 10 status.

“If you are deployed in Title 10 status and your spouse is either working or in school full time you are eligible for a child care subsidy,” said Conner.

Recently, those on Title 32 active Guard/Reserve orders were also added to the eligibility list.

The subsidy program is coordinated through the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, which approves applications and determines the amount paid as part of the subsidy.

Though Guardmembers of all ranks may take part in the program, the amount of the subsidy is based on a variety of factors, rank not being one of them.

“[There are] a number of things taken into consideration,” said Dr. Kathryn Goedde, the

program manager. “They look at total family income, they look at the number of children, they look at the type of child care needed. For instance, full-time care for an infant is going to be way more expensive than after-school care

care provider must be licensed by the state, which may create problems in states that don’t license them.

In that case, an “exception to policy” letter is needed. “We also write a lot of exception to policy letters, because only about 40 percent of the states use the term ‘licensed’ in their legislation for child care,” said Goedde.

A call center has been set up to help Guardmembers navigate the paperwork process required to receive the subsidy.

“There are 15 folks there, and we train them so when a family member calls they have the right answer,” said Goedde. “And if they don’t have the right answer, there is somebody sitting right next to them that does.”

The call center has been set up to make it easier for Guardmembers to apply. Previously, Guardmembers had to contact NACRA and navigate the system on their own.

“Now when you call, you either get a live person or somebody calls you back within about two hours,” said Conner. “Some of them are Guardsmen, some of them are Guard spouses, so they know what you’re going through.”

Once the call center is contacted, those at the call center fill out the application and all the paperwork for the Guardmember and submit it to NACRA for approval.

“We do the application for (the Guardmember), so they’re not required to figure anything out,” said Goedde. “We take them through step-by-step. We then follow up with their provider and we fill out the provider application as well.”

To date, more than 1,100 Guardmembers have taken advantage of the program, said Conner.

For more information on the program visit the National Guard Family Program’s Web site at www.guardfamily.org/ or call 1-888-642-2799.

Story courtesy Army News Service, Dec. 1, 2008

“So even if you can’t provide all your information, they’re going to issue \$100 per month per child. Once you provide all your information then that may go up.”
— Dr. Kathryn Goedde

for an elementary-aged child.”

Though no matter what, the minimum amount paid out is \$100 per child per month, said Goedde.

“So even if you can’t provide all your information, they’re going to issue \$100 per month per child,” said Goedde. “Once you provide all your information then that may go up.”

There are, however, stipulations as to which child care providers are eligible to be used as part of the subsidy.

One stipulation is that the child

**OREGON NATIONAL GUARD
POST DEPLOYMENT ASSISTANCE
(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: 1-800-560-5535
- 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
- ESGR: 1-800-452-7500 / 503-584-2837
- Family Readiness Program: 1-877-881-5181
- CTAP Employment Assistance: 1-888-688-2264

NEWS

Incoming NORTHCOM deputy chief continues visit at Kingsley Field

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

Klamath Falls, Ore. – Lieutenant General H Steven Blum who transitioned from the Chief of the National Guard Bureau to the Deputy Commander at U.S. Northern Command toured the 173rd Fighter Wing and met with base and city leadership during a visit Dec. 10 - 11, 2008.

“It’s not often we have the first National Guard officer to serve as a Deputy Combatant Commander at United States Northern Command out here to Kingsley Field, so we are very fortunate,” said Maj. Gen. Raymond F. Rees, The Adjutant General, Oregon. “He’s been instrumental in bringing the Guard new recognition and status and that’s one reason why he was chosen for the [NORTHCOM] position.”

It’s an appointment that charts new ground for a National Guard officer.

“In January, Steve [Blum] will become the first Guard officer to become a deputy combatant commander when he assumes his new post at Northern Command – an organization he knows well, having previously served as NORTHCOM’s chief of staff,” Secretary of Defense Robert M. Gates said in an award ceremony for Blum, Nov. 17,

2008. “I should note that one of my motivations in recommending his nomination was to position a senior Guard officer to potentially head a combatant command.”

Colonel James Miller, 173rd Fighter Wing Commander, and other senior leadership gave Blum a tour of Kingsley Field and detailed the primary mission of training fighter pilots.

“It is important for leadership to experience first-hand the level of professionalism and exacting standards this unit maintains in order to produce the best trained F-15C fighter pilots for the combat air force,” Miller said. “Our nation demands the best and that is exactly what we provide here at Kingsley.”

Blum responded by communicating his observations of the wing and its mission in a letter following his departure.

“I appreciate your hospitality but more importantly the mission that your Airmen execute everyday,” said Blum. “You command a professional group and have built a great team. Keep up the good work and continue to hold your students to a high, exacting standard. Our nation needs their best.”



Photo by Tech. Sgt. Jennifer Shirar, 173rd Fighter Wing Public Affairs
Deputy Combatant Commander of United States Northern Command, Lt. Gen. H Steven Blum, and Maj. Gen. Raymond F. Rees, The Adjutant General, Oregon National Guard are welcomed by members of the 173rd Fighter Wing, Oregon Air National Guard to Kingsley Field, Klamath Falls, Ore., Dec. 10.

During an informal dinner hosted by the 173rd FW the evening of Dec. 10, Blum met local officials including Commissioners Al Switzer, John Elliot, and Bill Brown and the Klamath Falls Chief of Police Jim Hunter.

Blum toasted Oregon National Guard senior leadership and the local officials saying that it is important to visit the states because we are a country of united but independent states.

“I appreciate being exposed to the local area, its leadership, and the beauty of Klamath County,”

Blum said later.

Blum transitioned from the position of Chief, National Guard Bureau where he managed the formulation, development and coordination of all policies, and plans affecting more than half a million Army and Air National Guard members.

At U.S. Northern Command Blum’s broad mission is to monitor all land, sea and air approaches within the continental United States, Alaska, Canada, Mexico and the surrounding waters to about 500 miles offshore.

PROMISE from front page

worked with a variety of medical professionals from the United States Public Health Service, PROJECT Hope, Operation SMILE, host country medical personnel, international military medical services from France, Netherlands, Canada and Brazil.

“All of the Air Force people I dealt with had great attitudes,” said Hospital Corpsman 2nd Class Marta Weatherly. “People like Senior Airman Olson jumped right in with medical surgery screenings, and Tech. Sgt. Rankin was always helping us out medical or not”

For some of the Guardsmen it was their first opportunity to gauge the differences between the Navy and the Air Force.

After getting to know each other and figuring out everyone’s strengths, the Air Force and Navy medical personnel soon combined to become one unified team.

“If you took the uniform off of them on this mission, you would have never known they came from a different service. They treated everyone and every task equally,” said Lt. Cmdr. Kathleen Sikes, a medical augmentee from Camp Lejeune, N.C.

Regardless of the service, all of the medical personnel aboard Kearsarge knew that the need for quality health care for the patients was universal.

But the Guardsmen admit they prefer the Air Force way of life to that of a Sailor. “Living on the ship was ridiculous compared to what I was used to in the Air Force,” said Eskridge. “On a ship there are no days off. You learn to adapt though, and we did.”

Eskridge, like many people in the Air National Guard, live

a full-time life away from their voluntary military service. The 24 year-old Oregonian is a full-time college student at Sacramento State University in the midst of a four-year nursing program.

“I joined the Air National Guard so I could pay for college,

not in the military then maybe in the Peace Corps or something where you’re giving humanitarian aid.”

Eskridge said her experiences have also made her more patriotic. “I’ve grown to love America a lot more since I joined the service because of what I’ve seen. I mean here we are fighting a war and we still find time to do this humanitarian mission, impressive.”

Olson echoes her sentiments. “I joined the Guard to pay for school at first,” she said. “But I became

a lot more patriotic as I served – more emotionally attached to my country. I don’t know if I was just ignorant before, but I know I’m a totally different person now.”

While medical care was one aspect of the Airmen’s mission it wasn’t the only one. In August and September, Mother Nature lashed out at the population of Haiti with two tropical storms including two hurricanes.

Continuing Promise, with its nine Air National Guardsmen in tow, was at the tail end of its mission in Colombia when the call for help was heard.

Haiti’s mission centered more on direct humanitarian assistance by delivering hundreds of tons of food and water.

“We did a lot of working parties when we helped out in Haiti,” said Olson. “It was a lot of physical labor, and I didn’t have to go to the gym for those weeks we were in Haiti. But there’s absolutely no doubt in my mind that I am glad we went, that we were able to get there in time to help, and that I was a part of it.”

“I’ve grown to love America a lot more since I joined the service because of what I’ve seen. I mean here we are fighting a war and we still find time to do this humanitarian mission.”

— Staff Sgt. Danae Eskridge

go to college and get the technical training I knew I needed to pursue the career field I was interested in,” said Eskridge.

Thanks to her time in the military Eskridge has a wealth of experience and wisdom that the average college student doesn’t. “I’m prior service so I understand the benefits of serving in the military,” she said. “And missions like this are exactly why I serve; it’s an experience that can’t be duplicated anywhere else.”

Eskridge is a combat veteran who served in the Air Force at Camp Victory, Iraq in 2004 and then again in the Middle East in Qatar early in 2008.

Citing the Air Force value of service before self, Eskridge makes a point to always show her college friends back at Sacramento State a slide show of her travels.

“What I do and what I go through is such a life-changing experience,” said Eskridge, “that I want to share it with people and try to get them to join because what I learn is something that can only come from service if



Photo courtesy, U.S. Navy

Air Force Staff Sgt. Danae Eskridge gives a Nicaraguan girl medicine at Juan Comenius High School in Puerto Cabazes, Nicaragua, Aug. 13. Eskridge supported Continuing Promise 2008, an equal-partnership mission between the United States, Canada, the Netherlands, Brazil, Nicaragua, Panama, Colombia, Dominican Republic, Trinidad and Tobago and Guyana.

NOMINATION SEASON CONTINUES FOR 2009 ESGR

Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve, a Department of Defense agency, is continuing the nomination season for the 2009 Secretary of Defense Employer Support Freedom Award. National Guard and Reserve members and their families are eligible and encouraged to nominate employers who have gone above and beyond in their support of military employees. Nominations will be accepted at www.FreedomAward.mil until Jan. 19, 2009. The Secretary of Defense Employer Support Freedom Award is the highest recognition given by the U.S. Government to employers for their outstanding support of their employees who serve in the National Guard and Reserve.

The 2009 recipients will be announced in the spring and honored in Washington, D.C. at the 14th annual Secretary of Defense Employer Support Freedom Award ceremony Sept. 17, 2009. Recipients of the 2008 Freedom Award met with President George W. Bush and Deputy Secretary of Defense Gordon England. Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness, Dr. David Chu presented the awards at a ceremony attended by members of Congress and senior government and military officials.

Almost one-half of the U.S. military is comprised of the National Guard and Reserve. The Department of Defense shares these citizen warriors with their civilian employers, many of whom provide significant support to their employees who serve in the National Guard and Reserve.

The Freedom Award was instituted in 1996 under the auspices of the National Committee for Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve (ESGR) to recognize exceptional support from the employer community.

ESGR is a Department of Defense agency established in 1972. Its mission is to gain and maintain employer support for Guard and Reserve service by recognizing outstanding support, increasing awareness of the law and resolving conflicts through mediation.

For questions regarding the Freedom Award nomination process, please visit www.FreedomAward.mil or contact Beth Sherman, ESGR Public Affairs, at 703-380-9717.

NEWS

TSGLI expands benefits for traumatically injured

Army News Service

WASHINGTON – More troops may now qualify for benefits under Traumatic Servicemembers' Group Life Insurance because of newly expanded coverage following a review by the Department of Veterans Affairs. The purpose of the review was to find whether additional injuries/losses should be covered, whether the program was operating effectively, and whether other improvements could be made that would allow more servicemembers to benefit from TSGLI, officials said. Through the review's findings, the TSGLI Schedule of Losses was simplified, making it more usable for each branch of service and allowing for easier interpretation by the general public, according to officials at the Army's Human Resources Command. Existing TSGLI qualifying loss definitions on the schedule, such as those for sight, burns and amputations were expanded and additional qualifying losses were added, including uniplegia, limb salvage, facial reconstruction, and a 15-day hospital stay. "The TSGLI benefit expansion helps us further the mission and spirit of the program - help traumatically injured servicemembers at their greatest time of need," said Col. John F. Sackett, chief of the Army's TSGLI Branch at HRC. "As stated by our prior vice chief of staff, we need to 'do what is right for the Soldier'. With these changes we can offer assistance to even more men

and women who have so bravely served our country." Servicemembers that have already submitted a claim in the past do not need to resubmit, Sackett said. He said the VA and TSGLI offices for each service will conduct a reachback of previously denied claims to see if they qualify for payment under the new guidance. Notifications will be sent to the servicemember if an additional award is due. TSGLI is a Congressionally-mandated program that applies to members of all branches of service and all components - Active, Guard, and Reserve, who incur a traumatic, physical injury based on an external force of violence. TSGLI provides tax-free payments between \$25,000 and \$100,000 per traumatic event, which can be used to help with unseen expenses or provide a financial start on life after recovery. The TSGLI program began on Dec. 1, 2005, as a non-option selection attached to Servicemembers' Group Life Insurance, known as SGLI. All servicemembers from that point forward who elected SGLI benefits paid \$1 toward this coverage each month. In addition, servicemembers who incurred a qualifying traumatic injury from Oct. 7, 2001 through Nov. 30, 2005 while on orders outside the United States in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom and Operation Enduring Freedom, or serving in a Combat Zone Tax Exclusion area, were covered by TSGLI, regardless of whether they elected SGLI coverage or not.

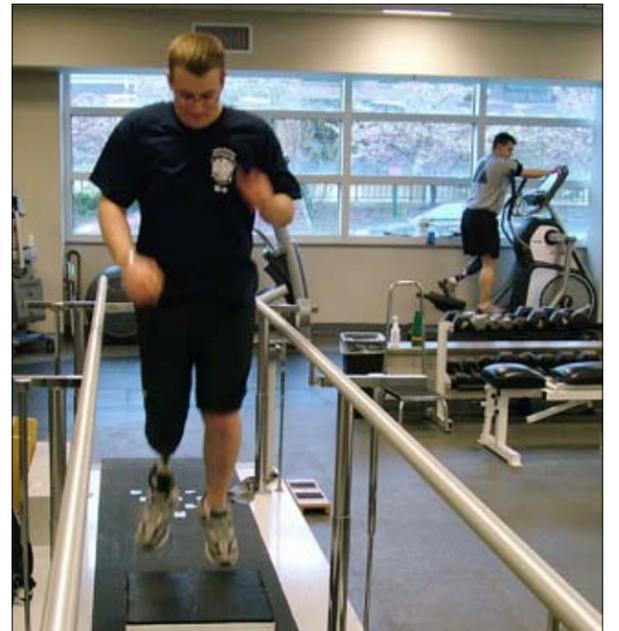


Photo by Heike Hasenauer
Spc. Nicholas Williams, who was wounded in Iraq in July 2007, works out with his new prosthetic leg at Walter Reed Army Medical Center's Military Advanced Training Center, which opened in September 2007.

National Guard pioneers long-term tracking of blast exposures

Story by Army Staff Sgt. Jim Greenhill

National Guard Bureau

CAMP VICTORY, Iraq - A new National Guard tool could improve long-term medical treatment for all servicemembers and boost research into traumatic brain injury and other health issues.

Lt. Gen. Clyde Vaughn, director of the Army National Guard, sent Lt. Col. Maureen Weigl here to improve how Guardmembers' exposure to blasts from improvised explosive devices, indirect or mortar fire and other events is tracked, she said last month.

Weigl's research uncovered no long-term blast or contaminant tracking.

"We hadn't been linking personnel to blast events," Weigl said. "I was asked to come over and review the personnel operating and medical systems currently in theater that could potentially track and link servicemembers to a blast exposure."

If nothing was available, Vaughn wanted something created, she said.

"A lot of Soldiers don't show

symptoms right away," said Weigl, project officer with the Army National Guard office for the personnel blast/contaminant tracker. "And, a lot of times, there is nothing wrong with the servicemember."

"However, in the event there is something wrong five years down the road - they develop symptoms such as headaches, ringing in the ear, vertigo - something has to be captured so we can link the servicemembers, especially National Guard and reserve component servicemembers."

That's because demobilized National Guardmembers back in their communities might not have the same easy local access as their active duty counterparts to military medical facilities where care providers are familiar with blast-related issues.

"Documenting this information ensures quality of care if they develop symptoms," Weigl said. "Having the documentation available to providers will give them the opportunity to treat the issues. Many Soldiers don't remember how many times they were exposed."

The database also could help

with future line of duty (LOD) investigations, Weigl said.

According to Army Regulation, an LOD investigation can occur after a Soldier suffers from a disease or injury. It helps determine pay and allowance entitlements; accrual of service and leave time; and disability retirement. A Soldier may be due benefits if the final determination is LOD and not their own misconduct.

"Developing a tracking system will allow us to create a line of duty down the road, if we need to," Weigl said.

Long-term tool

Currently, servicemembers involved in an IED detonation or similar event are required to receive a mild acute concussive evaluation, or MACE.

"This tool is not meant to dilute the requirements for Soldiers to go and get a MACE," Weigl said. "Soldiers need to be treated and evaluated after incidents."

The database might actually help improve MACEs by ensuring everyone completes one, Weigl said. "This tool allows the medics to say, 'Hey, I'm looking at the report: 15

people were in the impact area; only five servicemembers showed up for evaluation."

The new database developed by the National Guard adheres to privacy rules and does not include classified information. That means it can be widely accessed, open to unit commanders, medical personnel, researchers or historians. Units and individuals can receive reports, and previously deployed units can add past exposure information.

The database offers historical data that might help traumatic brain injury and other research, such as on long-term impacts to servicemembers of exposure to blasts and contaminants, offering information such as who was in an impact area and how close, Weigl said.

Simple, accessible

The new blast-tracker was designed to be simple.

"We're not trying to put an extra burden on a unit administrator that's already burdened," Weigl said.

The administrator types in social security and significant activity, or SIGACT, numbers and all the other database fields

auto-populate, Weigl said.

The database is intended to be transparent to servicemembers, creating neither stigma nor an expectation of benefits, Weigl said.

Being included in the database doesn't mean that anything is wrong with a servicemember or ever will be. "It doesn't mean anything other than these individuals were in an impact area," she said. "It merely just links you to a significant activity."

The new system debuted in October.

"Right now, we're in the research and development phase," Weigl said.

The database - currently being briefed to surgeons and sergeant majors - is being included in the MODS or Medical Operational Data System that can be accessed by all services and the Department of Veterans Affairs, Weigl said.

"It is a Guard initiative, but it is not a Guard system," she said. "We made it for Army, Navy, Air Force, the Marines - for all servicemembers that are exposed to incidents and events. It is a multi-service tool."

Guardsmen hone in on successful missile defense test

Story by Air Force Master Sgt. Mike R. Smith
National Guard Bureau

FORT GREELY, Alaska - Alaska Army National Guard warfighters from the 49th Missile Defense Battalion, launched and directed a ground-based interceptor (GBI) missile that destroyed a target ballistic missile in space, miles above the Pacific Ocean, Dec. 10.

The thirteenth live test of the nation's ground-based midcourse defense (GMD) system that is designed to protect the United States from a ballistic missile attack, provided a plethora of data for future system development. It was also hailed as a success by National Guard officials here and Department of Defense officials at the Pentagon.

"This is an operational system that is guarding America. It's part of the first line of defense for America, and you have Guardsmen doing that," said Army Brig. Gen. Randy Banez, Alaska's assistant adjutant general for space and missile defense.

Army Lt. Gen. Patrick J. O'Reilly, director of the Missile Defense Agency, briefed reporters at the Pentagon the day of the test and was "extremely pleased."

For the Fire Direction Center at Fort Greely's missile defense complex 350 miles northeast of Anchorage, the multi-million dollar test came down to five Guardmembers, tracking a ballistic missile target lunched from Kodiak, Alaska. The crew helped assess the threat as they would a real enemy missile and then coordinated the launch of a GBI from Vandenberg Air Force Base, Calif. They then monitored the GBI as it speedily crossed a vast distance to hit the target in space off California's coast.

"It shows that the fire direction center (FDC), which is the primary executor of the tactical mission, launches the GBI and negates a threat," said Army 1st Lt. Ronald Bailey, Guard FDC battle analyst. "This is the first time that's been done here, and it showed that the overall architecture and the human element of the system works."

Bailey and two other officers and two NCOs that make up an FDC crew said endless training sessions on the Ground-based Midcourse Defense Systems Trainer had prepared them well for the live event.

"We train for many more complicated factors and scenarios," said Army Maj. Kenneth Weiss, senior tactical director for the crew. "We went through a lot of training over the last few months, and it culminated today with the shot of a live interceptor. We had a successful engagement, proving the system works." It was his first live test, he said.

In the news, reports said that the nation's leaders as well as its allies and enemies watched Friday's test closely. More than 400 news stories on the test were filed worldwide, according to Army Lt. Col. Hunt Kerrigan, Alaska Guard spokesman.

"We host reporters and distinguished visitors here from all over the world ... including Russian and Israeli media ... all of them want to see our mission," said Kerrigan. "The eyes of the world are on



Photo courtesy Missile Defense Agency
A ground-based interceptor missile lifts off from Vandenberg Air Force Base, Calif., Dec. 5, during a live test of the nation's ground-based midcourse defense system.

the 49th Missile Defense Battalion."

Kerrigan explained that the post opens its gates to show the world that the "cutting-edge technology" of missile interception is defensive in nature and under the "capable and skilled hands of National Guard Soldiers."

AIR GUARD NEWS

Oregon Air Guard receives accolades during promotion of deputy IG to rank of major general

Story by
Tech. Sgt. Nick Choy
Oregon Military Department
Public Affairs Office

WASHINGTON—A 13-year member of the Oregon Air National Guard was promoted to major general during a ceremony at the Pentagon's Hall of Heroes, Dec. 8, 2008.

Maj. Gen. Garry C. Dean, who works with the Air Force Inspector General's office at the Pentagon since February 2008, drew accolades from his colleagues and supervisors during the morning ceremony.

"He defines total force," said Lt. Gen. Ronald F. Sams, Inspector General of the Air Force. "Garry Dean is a highly-experienced commander who served in numerous positions throughout the Oregon Guard and the Air Force, all of which accents his leadership resume."

Maj. Gen. Dean has held several high profile positions

during his tenure in the Oregon Air National Guard, including wing commander, deputy of operations and assistant adjutant general at Joint Forces Headquarters-Oregon. Before coming to the Air Force Inspector General's office, Maj. Gen. Dean also served as assistant to the commander at 1st Air Force.

"He is my most trusted advisor," Lt. Gen. Sams added. "We're keeping him forever."

Col. Ronald Kessinger, Chief of Staff for Air, Oregon National Guard, said Maj. Gen. Dean's promotion is well-deserved.

"He's one of those guys that comes along once in a while," Col. Kessinger said. "He's a strategic visionary, and a great example to follow."

Maj. Gen. Dean thanked his coworkers, mentors and supervisors in Oregon as well as at the Pentagon for the chance to serve as a major general.

"This is an awesome honor to be considered for this rank," he said. "But I'm especially proud of my Air Guard heritage, and it's very humbling to see my Oregon Air Guard brothers here supporting me."

Maj. Gen. Dean said he often thinks about the Oregon Guard, and his fellow guardsmen there.

"As I work with my active duty brothers, I'm so proud of the job we do back there," he said. "I think about you all the time while I'm out here serving at the Pentagon."

Maj. Gen. Dean invited other Guardsmen to consider what they can do to help out with the total force concept.

"Come and join us out here," Maj. Gen. Dean said. "The work we do here is very important, and I'm proud of everyone who is willing to serve here with us and support the total force concept."

Maj. Gen. Dean is Oregon's first African-American two-star.



Photo by Tech. Sgt. Nick Choy, Oregon Military Department

Deputy Inspector General for the United States Air Force, Maj. Gen. Garry C. Dean, receives his second star from his family members during his promotion ceremony, Dec. 8, 2008, at the Pentagon's Hall of Heroes in Washington, D.C.

He also was the first African-American Guardsmen in Oregon to attain the rank of colonel and brigadier general. His 30 year career spans various command

positions in the active duty Air Force as well as the Air National Guard, with 13 years as a member of the Oregon Air Guard.

Guard chief: *Time for our people to stand out*

Chief of the National Guard Bureau Gen. Craig McKinley (center) receives a briefing on mobile communications systems from Sgt. Bernard Fuller of the Florida Army National Guard during a visit to the Robert Ensslin Armory in St. Augustine, Fla., Dec. 2.

Story and photo by
Tech. Sgt. Thomas Kielbasa
Florida National Guard

ST. AUGUSTINE, Fla. — the National Guard is relevant and will continue to be relevant under the new administration, said the Guard's senior officer, Dec. 2.

During a visit to Florida, Air Force Gen. Craig McKinley, newly promoted chief of the National Guard Bureau, spoke to a reporter from the Florida Times-Union about the future relevance of the National Guard and whether ongoing overseas missions have strained the Guard's capabilities.

McKinley, the first four-star general to hold the National Guard's top position, credited the nearly 468,000 members of the National Guard with keeping the force relevant, especially over the past eight years of increased operations.

"You have to give credit to the men and women of the National Guard at a significant point in our history where the National Guard has been used so effectively and efficiently by our services," McKinley said.

"We're a nation at war. Our National Guard - both Army and Air - are heavily involved in our overseas operations, but

because of Sept. 11, 2001, defense of our homeland became very important for us. That is our main reason for being; we protect our homeland, we protect our communities, we work for our governors and our nation needs us."

The general said that although the Guard has experienced an exceptional number of diverse missions over the past eight years - including overseas deployments and disaster relief at home - he does not feel the organization is over-extended.

"My experience tells me Soldiers and Airmen like to be busy, they like to use the skills and the hardware that we've been given by the taxpayer and we like to be fully utilized," he explained. "Do I see a situation developing where we are overusing the Guard? I don't."

Gen. McKinley again credited the Guardsmen with making the National Guard a "highly efficient, community-based defense force."

"It's always been that way, but when you have the conditions that this

world-situation presents us with, it's a time for our people to really stand out and do what they've been taught to do, what they are equipped to do, what they're motivated to do," he continued. "As chief of the National Guard Bureau, I will say that the Soldiers and Airmen of the National Guard exemplify what true patriots are."

McKinley was in Florida for the Region III Adjutants General conference, and during his visit he stopped here at the Florida National Guard's Joint Operations Center on Dec. 2 for a briefing on the state's emergency operations capabilities.

A Florida National Guard member, McKinley has previously served as director of the Air National Guard, and was sworn in by Secretary of Defense Robert Gates as the 26th chief of the National Guard in November.

New gate, memorial honors Kingsley's namesake

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

Klamath Falls, Ore. — In a ceremony Dec. 16, 2008, the 173rd Fighter Wing at Kingsley Field, opened a new main gate and dedicated a memorial to the Medal of Honor recipient man the base is named after.

Oregon's senior United States Senator Ron Wyden, and Col. James Miller, 173rd Fighter Wing Commander unveiled the new entrance marker which signaled the completion of the entire project.

During the ceremony, Wyden honored the sacrifices of Medal of Honor recipient, Lt. David R. Kingsley.

"I think it is especially fitting that we honor David Kingsley today, he is a native son of Oregon who made the ultimate sacrifice," Wyden said.

Wyden also said he supports expanding the mission of the 173rd Fighter Wing.

"I want you to know on my watch as long as I have the honor to represent you in the United States Senate we are going to expand the mission here at Kingsley. We are looking

forward to the future."

The 173rd Civil Engineers designed the memorial, which displays a section of Lt. Kingsley's B-17 bomber which was recovered in Bulgaria, where the plane was shot down during World War II.

In 2006, Bulgarian officials returned a piece of the aircraft to Kingsley Field and today that piece is the central focus of the memorial. As Guardsmen and visitors enter and exit the base they will see the memorial, which sits just inside the new main gate.

The memorial features benches and bronze plaques commemorating the history of Kingsley Field, and serves as a sister memorial to one constructed in Bulgaria in 2005.

This one-year project provides the base with a new road, Kingsley Way, a guard house, a new motorized front gate, lighting, traffic control bollards, sidewalks, landscaping, and state-of-the-art security system.

"This shift will alleviate congestion on Airport Way during our peak traffic hours, which can cause backed up traffic on to Joe Wright Road," said Miller. "Additionally the gate adds heightened security for



U.S. Air Force Photo by Master Sgt. Jerry Bynum, 173rd Fighter Wing Public Affairs

Senator Ron Wyden (D-OR) speaks during a dedication ceremony for the new main gate and memorial at Kingsley Field. Kingsley is the namesake for Kingsley Field, home of the 173d Fighter Wing. The memorial was built in conjunction with a new main gate at Kingsley Field and both were dedicated in a ceremony Dec. 16, 2008 at Kingsley Field, Klamath Falls, Ore.

our base personnel."

The new gate is open 24 hours daily and it is located at the far west side of the base off Airport Way.

The gate previously used is now closed.

The new entrance is the first phase of a three phase project. Phase two and three will include the construction of an \$18 million joint Armed Forces Readiness Center. This facility will house the Air

National Guard, 173rd Fighter Wing Security Forces Squadron, and the Army National Guard, C Troop, 1st Squadron, 82nd Cavalry. Phases two and three are yet to be funded and scheduled.