



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

Job training a way of life on Oregon Coast



Senior Master Sgt. Homer Walden, 116ACS Weapons and Tactics NCOIC, providing weapons control to aircraft participating in Fleet Synthetic Training Joint exercises – a mission working with virtual and live ships from San Diego Calif., Australia and Japan. (Photo by Tech. Sgt. Chris Crooker)

Story contributed by
 116th Air Control Squadron

WARRENTON, Ore.—Over the past year, the Oregon Air National Guard’s 116th Air Control Squadron has supported multiple U.S. Navy Fleet Synthetic Training Joint exercises.

According to exercise organizers, these training simulations prepare fleet personnel, elements of the U.S. Army, and coalition allies for worldwide operations through scenario-based training.

The 116 ACS, based at Camp Rilea in Warrenton, Ore., is a Control and Reporting Center (CRC).

CRCs support theater air operations with

See **AIR GUARD** on PAGE 8

Oregon aviation unit deploys to Afghanistan

Det. 1, B-Co., 168 Aviation will spend 10 months on combat support mission



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

Members of the Oregon Army National Guard’s Detachment 1, B-Co., 168 Aviation, conducted a mobilization ceremony June 5, at the Army Aviation Support Facility #2 in Pendleton, Ore. Seventy-three Soldiers from the unit will soon depart for training at Fort Hood, Texas, before continuing on to Afghanistan for 10 months. The Soldiers will transport personnel and equipment throughout the country in support of Operation Enduring Freedom. See full story on page 4.

116 Cavalry Brigade prepares for Iraq deployment

Story by Staff Sgt. April Davis,
 116 Cavalry Brigade Combat Team

GOWEN FIELD, Boise, Idaho - The 116th Cavalry Brigade Combat Team trained and certified more than 700 gun-truck crews in preparation for convoy security and force protection missions in Iraq next year.

Battalions in the brigade began rotating through gunnery qualification tables on May 11, at Gowen Field Training Area south of Boise, Idaho, with the exception of the 1-163 Combined Arms Battalion which conducted gunnery in August at Limestone Hills Training Area west of Townsend, Mont.

The 3-116 Combined Arms Battalion, Oregon Army National Guard, rotated nearly 140 gun crews through gunnery qualification, June 8-21.

“We bring the units in on a staggered schedule so we can cover their equipment needs and limit the time they have to wait to get on the ranges,” said Master Sgt. Todd Trahan, who oversees the training as the brigade master gunner. “The units arrive, draw their equipment and ammunition, and roll through each phase of qualification in a natural progression.”

Gun-truck crews must certify on either the M-2 .50 caliber or the M240B machine gun while mounted in a vehicle. Every gunner and vehicle commander has to certify with their assigned weapon system, while the drivers only require familiarization training.



Photo by Heidi Paynter, HHC, 116 CAV, Idaho Army National Guard

Spc. Kyle Howard, of A Co., 3-116 Combined Arms Battalion, adjusts the sites on an M240B machine gun during pre-mobilization gunnery qualification at Gowen Field Training Area, south of Boise, Idaho, June 14. The battalion is scheduled to deploy to Iraq this fall with the 116th Cavalry Brigade Combat Team.

“The driver has to know the weapons system enough to survive in an emergency, but otherwise the driver just has to drive,” said Trahan.

The crews must qualify in both day and night firing, and also qualify while wearing chemical protective masks. The crews

must also become proficient in working together as a team, communicating fire commands, and sending radio reports to higher command.

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COMMAND

Kudos to Oregon Guard as we prepare for next fiscal year



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

As we approach the new training/fiscal year, we need to recognize the great service of the ORNG in the past 12 months and begin to look to the goals for the next year.

Most notable was the great success of the 41 Infantry Brigade Combat Team on its deployment to Iraq. The many accomplishments are a part of a long and important history. They have nearly completed their reintegration with family, friends, and employers. Their Yellow Ribbon events have been very, very productive. Soldiers and leaders of the 41 IBCT and COL (ret.) Scott McCrae and his reintegration team deserve a loud and resounding "Well Done!"

As in all things military, we take great pride in our past, but we are asked to execute

our mission today and to prepare for tomorrow. The best examples of immediate nature are the recent callout of our 142 FW alert aircraft. Sonic booms resounded throughout the Pacific Northwest as our F-15's raced north to intercept an intruder in restricted airspace over a Presidential event in Seattle. They had no notice, but responded confidently and professionally.

This is the Oregon National Guard at its finest.

Likewise, our Army National Guard Aviation units have successfully assisted in 10 search and rescue operations throughout Oregon, and seized a significant amount of marijuana for Oregon's CounterDrug program. Again, a loud and resounding, "Well Done!"

Looking toward the future, I have been very impressed with LTC Appleton's 3-116 Cavalry, LTC Dial's 1249 Engineers, MAJ Gillentine's 1186 Military Police Co., and CPT McCarthy's A/641 Aviation Co., as they prepare for deployment. Excellent work. Great Focus - Again, "Well Done!"

Lt. Col. Jeff "Claw" Hwang is likewise preparing for a significant extended exercise for the 123rd Fighter Squadron. Exercise Iron Falcon will be held in conjunction with forces in the United Arab Emirates dur-

ing this high-visibility training partnership. Hwang has the honor of leading the first Air National Guard F-15 squadron to participate in this prestigious event. "Well Done!"

Also, I want to thank those who deal with our infrastructure. Look around your facilities; thank your base civil engineer or your AGI reps! The quality of our facilities has never been better. Stop and see the work at St. Helens, Hood River, and Gresham, to name a few. Managers such as Roy Swafford, Ax McCuiston and Jim Willeford deserve a "Well Done!"

Finally take a moment to communicate with your fellow soldiers and friends who are currently deployed. CPT Bob Baca and his 162 Engineer Co., and CPT (John) Hoffman's B/168 Aviation are doing magnificent work in Afghanistan.

Over 50 members of the ORANG are likewise performing magnificently around the world. They are overseas but should be in everyone's prayers and thoughts. They definitely deserve our praise - "Well Done!"

Thank you to every member of our great organization for the Competence, Confidence, Courage and Commitment you have made in FY 2010 and are preparing to make in FY 2011.

New Warrant Officers the key to Oregon National Guard future

The Warrant Officer ranks in Oregon continue to grow in strength and recognition. The Warrant Heritage Wall at the Military Department is ready for display and the "Oregon Trail" Chapter of the U.S. Army Warrant Officer Association has been recognized.

Two pre approved candidates appeared at the Federal Recognition Board. They pinned on their Warrant Officer Candidate tabs and are heading off to Warrant Officer Candidate Course at Fort Rucker. If all stays on track we will send three more this month to the Board and more to follow in August.

In addition, a number of prior service aviators have joined our ranks as well. This year we will be our most productive year for recruiting warrants. It all sounds great and we are on the right track but still not at 100 percent. Almost reaching the standard is not an option.

The Officer/Warrant Officer Training Workshop is scheduled for Aug. 12-15, in Welches, Ore. Once again we will have the senior branch warrants there to help answer questions, newly-commissioned warrants to

explain what to expect at the Warrant Officer Candidate Course.

Our Warrant Officer Strength Manager and her backfill will be there to help get the packets started. We will reach 100 percent, maybe not this year, but we will reach it.

I am scheduled to attend the Region Six Meeting of the Warrant Officer Senior Advisory Council in Boise, Idaho, which includes all the Command Chief Warrant Officers from the western states and Guam.

One item on the agenda is the coordination of Command Chiefs visiting mobilized troops as they prepare for deployment. CW5 Gene Kruger, CCWO from Washington Army Guard and I visited 168 AN in Fort Hood, Texas. Over thirty warrants were represented from Oregon and Washington. The unit is in good hands and all the troops have that "can do" attitude.

Sometime this fall, Idaho, Montana's CCWOs and I will be at Camp Shelby, Miss., talking to the warrants from the 116 Cavalry Brigade Combat Team as they prepare for Iraq.



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

When you log on the Command Chief's page on the Intranet you will find both the agenda for the Region Six meeting and the slides of the State of the Corps brief.

By the time this edition is printed, WO1 Ross Rappe will have graduated from WOCS. WOC Stan Krupsky and John Dunaway will have appeared at the June Federal Recognition Board and hopefully three more packets will have been approved by their respective branches. We are making, and will continue to make great strides. Your hard work is greatly appreciated.

For the Corps!

Events showcase true nature of Oregon's Soldiers & Airmen

As a Senior NCO in the Oregon Air National Guard, I have repeatedly received word of the importance of Situational Awareness.

Recently, I attended two significant events that begin with the letters SA—namely the Safety Summit for the Air National Guard and the Satellite NCO Academy graduation.



142nd Fighter Wing Command Chief Master Sgt. Max White,
Oregon Air
National Guard

The Safety Summit emphasized two major issues, while the Satellite NCOA graduation represented the culmination of significant enlisted force development—both important to developing Situational Awareness.

The primary focus of the Safety Summit was to reduce the number of Airmen

killed or injured in motor vehicle accidents. We are not losing people at work, but rather, we are losing them off-duty.

Texting while driving, which has become an increasingly common practice, is an extremely unsafe activity. The numbers are astonishing; 18 percent of drivers admit to texting while driving, even though most of them are well aware that texting while driving makes them 23 times as likely to have an accident. Investigators have said texting impairs your driving as much as having a blood alcohol level at twice the legal limit!

Even regular cell phone use results in 1.4 million crashes a year, comprising 25 percent of all accidents. Studies show hands-free phones are not significantly safer than regular hand-held cell phones.

So I am pleading with all Airmen and Soldiers: Please do not to use your cell phones while driving! To quote from the summit: "No

phone call is worth a life!"

Another emphasis at the Safety Summit was suicide prevention. It is a fact that suicide is a leading cause of death in the Air Force, exceeded only by accidents. Moreover, in the Air National Guard suicides exceed combat deaths each year.

We listened attentively as Air Guard members recounted their loss of family members by suicide. It became painfully aware to all of us that suicide is a permanent solution to a temporary problem, and it leaves a lifelong injury in the hearts of the survivors.

For any of you who are contemplating suicide, it is not a sign of weakness to ask for help. If you suspect that someone is thinking of hurting themselves, you should not hesitate to: Ask them directly if they are considering injuring themselves; then: Care about them by not leaving them alone; and finally: Escort them a mental health provider or chaplain.

Carrying out the steps in that acronym A.C.E. can make the difference between life and death for a fellow Airman or Soldier.

Shortly after my productive experience at the Safety Summit in Fort Worth, Texas, I had the privilege of attending the graduation ceremony for the Satellite NCO Academy in Knoxville, Tenn.

For 12 weeks, nine dedicated airmen had come to class for two nights per week to sharpen their skills in such areas as leadership, management, the profession of arms, psychology, fitness, health, and communication. While at the Portland Air National Guard Base, the students obtained live instruction from Tennessee Airmen, and received noteworthy guidance from lead facilitator Master Sgt. Thomas Olson of the 142 Fighter Wing.

Tech. Sgt. Tod Surdam, of the 123 Fighter Squadron received the John L. Levitow Award—the highest honor given to the top graduate of the graduating class of about 140 students.

Losing even one of our Airmen to vehicular accident or suicide is one too many. By protecting yourselves and each other, you will have the prospect of advancing your education to the fullest extent and developing your potential as an Airman or Soldier.

COMMENTARY

You can make a difference as a family resource group volunteer

Like any non-profit organization or support group, the success of any Family Readiness Group (FRG) relies on the commitment of its volunteers.

This group is an essential part of any unit and has a direct impact on a unit's readiness and ability to accomplish its wartime mission.

To become a FRG volunteer, a person must be committed to this, and must have already taken a personal inventory of his or her life to ensure enough time exists to



accomplish personal tasks before undertaking any volunteer role.

If you want to volunteer, approach your unit commander or FRG leader and express your intentions.

The leadership will set up an interview and explain in detail their expectations. There are no specific skills needed to be a volunteer—just the willingness to follow through with the commitment.

There will be meetings to attend and training to participate in, along with some deadlines to meet. But in the end, everything you do as a volunteer is part of the puzzle that makes the unit better.

The activities performed by the FRG help maintain clear lines of communication between the families and the unit dur-

ing critical times. The benefits of becoming a volunteer often cannot be measured in tangible ways, but the fact that you find yourself playing a vital role in the unit's success is one of the biggest rewards.

There is also the fact that you are part of the people that are working to improve the organization and you have a hand in the final product. Volunteers from other non-profit organizations would state that they feel fulfilled and even healthier.

So these are some of the reasons that you should volunteer with your FRG. You are not only helping the unit achieve their goals and accomplish their mission, but you are also helping your neighbor with moral support so they can get through a challenging situation. You may be the

Luis Osorio,
State Family Program
Coordinator



reason they feel better, and that they are truly part of a new family.

To become a Family Readiness Group volunteer, contact Luis Osorio at luis.osorio@us.army.mil or via telephone at 503-983-2324.

Have you done your homework?

How many times have we heard or said the phrase “*Have you done your homework?*”

As we settle into summer, this may a good time for reflection back to the past year and look forward as to how we will approach the upcoming year in regards to our own education and homework.

It has been said there are two types of people in the world. *There are those who go through life, and those who go through life and make a difference.* As service members we are all making a difference in our communities, state, and our great nation. However, are we making the same difference in our families by setting the example and doing our homework?

When a baby is born, that baby requires **attention** at all times in order for it to exist. As the baby grows into a young child, the child then needs to be **trained** in every aspect of his or her life. As they progress from childhood into their teenage years they need to be **guided** into adulthood. Once they reach adulthood they want to be **followed**.

The question that comes to mind is, if our children saw us doing our homework would they be more willing to sit down and do their homework without being told—seeing the example of their parents and seeing the benefits their parents are reaping from going to college? Making homework a family affair would be more enjoyable and beneficial to all family members.

I want to say a huge congratulations to Capt. Samuel Hernandez, as he received his doctorate degree in June 2010. He has sent the below message to encourage and give his guidance for a better future.

Knowledge is power. The military provides opportunities to learn, grow, and achieve. Within the traditional framework, the Army provides to its service members the training to become experts in a particular field: Infantry, aviation, administrative, among others.

That training helps Soldiers become a part of the professional organization—the U.S. Army. Within that same organization Soldiers are given the ability, I would argue the responsibility, to become leaders.

As Soldiers, and thus future leaders, service members learn how to achieve the goals of the organization, and perhaps more importantly their own personal goals. Those same opportunities are augmented by the educational benefits offered to every Soldier who chooses to utilize them. I am one of those Soldiers.

I joined the Oregon National Guard in 1999, which seems like a lifetime ago. I would be remiss if I were to say that educational benefits were not part of the reason I joined. In fact, it was one of the most alluring factors.

My parents did not have money to pay for my college education; therefore, I had to find alternate funding. I had always wanted to join the military and ultimately decided to join the ORANG because it would give me the opportunities already mentioned while at the same time give me the time and flexibility to attend college.

So I did.

I started out attending Portland Community College, later Portland State University, and finally Lewis & Clark Law School. By the time May of 2010 comes around I will have attained two Associate degrees, a Bachelors of Science, and a Jurist Doctor. Yes, I will be a lawyer.

I used my GI Bill and Federal Tuition Assistance to help get me where I am today. Both of my Associate degrees are paid for as well as my Bachelors. The GI bill got me through my first two years of law school, but by the time I got to my third I had exhausted all my GI Benefits, fortunately I still have tuition assistance.

It is without a doubt that the opportunities afforded to me and the education I have received have opened doors that would have otherwise remained closed.

Because of my education, for instance, I was able to become an officer within the organization and will soon be an attorney.

Call to action—take advantage of the opportunities that are given and the education benefits that are provided because knowledge does indeed equal power.

-- Samuel Hernandez, CPT, JD

Sgt. 1st Class Jeffrey
Lopez, M.S.,
82 Support Detachment
Readiness NCO



Oregon Partnership launches Military Helpline, new website

Story by Sentinel Staff

Soldiers, Airmen, veterans and their family members can receive immediate help from mental health professionals by contacting the Oregon Partnership's new Military Helpline.

The toll-free number is 888-HLP-4-VET (888-457-4838). More information is available at www.MilitaryHelpline.org.

Available 24 hours a day, seven days a week, the Military Helpline provides compassionate and confidential advice, and crisis intervention free of charge for persons throughout the military community, including family members.

Oregon Partnership worked closely with the Oregon Military Department in establishing the Military Helpline, and forged a strong relationship with the Oregon Military Department's Family Support Program. The Helpline utilizes Oregon Partnership's longstanding intervention and referral services, which the nonprofit has provided for nearly three decades.

“This resource is important to our Soldiers and their families, given the number and scope of deployments for Oregon Guard units,” said State Command Sgt. Maj. Brunk Conley. “It's a way for us to close the loop on the deployment process.”

The Helpline is staffed by trained volunteers—many of whom have a military background. All possess a strong understanding of serious issues that impact service members and their families, including job loss, family issues, financial challenges, and post-traumatic stress disorder and other deployment related mental health issues.

“Even though Oregon's citizen-Airmen don't deploy as often, or in the same numbers as Oregon's Soldiers, they often still face the same challenges and issues,” said State Command Chief Master Sgt. Mark Russell.

Following initial contact and triage, Helpline volunteers ensure the safety of all callers with discreet follow up, with their permission, and offer additional support and resources if needed.

Golfers raise money for AUSA



Oregon State Command Sergeant Major, Brunk Conley, watches as his teammate, retired Brig. Gen. Douglas Pritt, former commander of the 41st Infantry Brigade, sinks his putt for a birdie at the end of the first hole at the Chehalem Glenn Golf Course in Newberg, Ore., July 7. The two participated in the eighth annual “For the Troops Golf Tournament,” organized by the Association of the United States Army (AUSA), which raises funds to help soldiers and their families who are in need. (U.S. Army photo by Sgt. Zach Holden, 115th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment).

NEWS

Pendleton's citizen-Soldiers head to Afghanistan

Story by Spc. Kirby Rider,
115 Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

PENDLETON, Ore.—Soldiers from the Oregon Army National Guard's Detachment 1, B-Company, 168 Aviation, participated in a mobilization ceremony, at the Army Aviation Support Facility #2, June 5.

Seventy-three Soldiers from the unit will departed for pre-mobilization training at Fort Hood, Texas, before continuing on to Afghanistan for the 10-month deployment.

They will team up with 64 Soldiers from the Washington Army National Guard, and fall under the command of the U.S. Army's 3rd Infantry Division. The unit will provide combat mission support in Afghanistan as part of Operation Enduring Freedom.

More than 200 community and family members attended the ceremony, which was followed by a free barbeque hosted by the Community Christian Church.

"We will be providing combat support in Afghanistan," said Capt. John Hoffman, Commander of Det. 1. "Our mission will alleviate a lot of pressure on the ground units to transport personnel and equipment where there are few roads."

Oregon Governor Ted Kulongoski; Maj. Gen. Raymond F. Rees, The Adjutant General, Oregon; Mayor Phillip Houk, Pendleton City Mayor; Col. Stephen Beach, Deputy Commander, 82 Brigade, Oregon Army National Guard; and Mr. Larry Deibert, Civilian Aide to the Secretary of the Army, all attended the 90-minute ceremony.

All the speakers emphasized their support of the Soldiers and their families, highlighting the financial and emotion burden each family may face during the deployment. They also reminded the group to keep their motivation high and to help each other during their tour.

"We have a young group of guys, although



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

Oregon Governor Ted Kulongoski greets each of the 73 Soldiers of the Oregon Army National Guard's Detachment 1, B-Co., 168 Aviation, following the unit's mobilization ceremony June 5, at the Army Aviation Support Facility #2 in Pendleton, Ore. The Soldiers will soon depart for Fort Hood, Texas, for pre-mobilization training, before continuing on to Afghanistan for a 10-month deployment. The Soldiers will transport personnel and equipment throughout the country in support of Operation Enduring Freedom.

they all have an encouraging and positive attitude," Hoffman said. "I am sure this deployment is scarier for the new guys, not knowing what to expect when we get over there."

This is the second deployment for many Soldiers, with some having had tours during Operation Enduring Freedom VI in January 2005.

"I've had the opportunity to do this [ceremony] and the one in 2005 and I know Soldiers and family with both deployments," said Mayor Houk. "It is very emotional for

the Soldiers to be leaving their community and loved ones."

During his speech, Houk reminded the Soldiers about the importance of family, and encouraged them to remain in close contact with loved ones. He also said the city of Pendleton is very proud of their citizen-Soldiers.

"I am very proud of the work Pendleton has done with the National Guard," he said. "We are looking forward to having them home as soon as possible."

Cross-cultural exchange enhances joint exercise

Story by Spc. John T. Dowd,
115 Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

WAIMANALO, Hawaii— In this fast paced world where technology and social networking bring people from around the world together, the U.S. Military is tapping into the same concept to drive modern warfare training.

Facebook and Twitter may be household expressions, but these same social media concepts are helping the U.S. and Singapore train together in a simulated exercise titled Tiger Balm.

"The knowledge here is really fresh and practical, very on time and updated, so there is always wonderful interacting and learning," said Col. Ang Yau Choon, Commander, 10th Singapore Infantry Brigade.

Tiger Balm is a joint training exercise between the Singapore Army and U.S. National Guard and Reserve, which has been going on for nearly 30 years. Through that time, the technology has advanced as well as the relationship between the two countries.

"Singapore is a strategic partner of the U.S. and the more we work with them, the better operating we can do in terms of a situation that may arise," said Col. Brad Kohn, 82nd Commander. "Working with the Singapore Armed Forces has been probably one of my very favorite exercises that I have ever done."

The training runs on a two year cycle alternating between Hawaii and Singapore as well as changing themes from combat operations to stability operation.

This year's exercise, set at the Regional Training Institute near Waimanalo, Hawaii, focused on stability and the steps it would take to help a war-torn country rebuild.

To help the training come to life, organizers tap into the experience and knowledge of more than 260 Soldiers and airmen from Hawaii, Oregon, Washington, Arizona, California, Guam, and Singapore all while utilizing computer simulation programs and role players. Nearly all positions are shared



Photo by Sgt. Zach Holden, 115 Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

Col. Ang Yau Choon, 10th Singapore Infantry Brigade Commander, participates in a traditional Chinese lion dance during a welcome ceremony at the Regional Training Institute in Waimanalo, Hawaii. Choon, and members of the Singapore Army joined members of the Oregon Army National Guard for the annual training exercise, Tiger Balm.

between a U.S. military and Singapore counterpart.

"When the Soldiers are done with this exercise, they will be able to leave here and apply the most current tactics, techniques, and procedures on how to do stability operations," said Lt. Col. Mark Shull, 82nd Support Detachment Operations Officer, Oregon Army National Guard, Lake Oswego, Ore.

While the main emphasis was on stability operations, cultural exchange was another major benefit to U.S. and Singapore Forces being able to work so closely together.

"Being culturally adept is absolutely important because it shows that we are not just one army anymore," said Maj. Joe Lontai, 82nd Plans Officer. "So I think this exercise just really brings that home and it shows that we have a lot more in common than we do apart."

Although Tiger Balm only lasts five days, the first full week is dedicated to briefings and preparation for the fast paced exercise.

It also gives both sides a chance to get to know each other.

As well as on a professional level, both Singaporeans and Americans are encouraged to interact with each other socially to foster lasting friendships.

"I am sensing a lot of positive energy and I am looking forward to the synergy building up and culminating on a high point at the end of the exercise," said Lt. Col. Johnny Lee, Deputy Operations Officer, Headquarters 9th Singapore Division/ Infantry.

The exercise concluded with a luau and a gift exchange between U.S. and Singapore counterparts.

Participants like Ang said the experience allows everyone involved to take away more than just knowledge. They gain lasting friendships as well.

"It's always been wonderful working with friends and Americans are special because the friendship goes beyond social interaction," said Ang.

Yellow Ribbon event helps with soldiers, families transition



Photo by Spc. Anita VanderMollen, 41 IBCT

U.S. Senator Ron Wyden (D-Oregon) listens to the concerns of Corporal Daniel Arnott of Vancouver, Wash. during the Yellow Ribbon Career and Benefit Fair held at Clackamas Community College on June 26. The event was to give returning veterans of the Oregon National Guard's 41st Infantry Brigade Combat Team the opportunity to meet with potential employers, military service benefits providers, and education representatives.

Story by Kimberly Lippert,
Oregon Military Department
Public Affairs

PORTLAND, Ore.—More than 200 employers from Oregon and Southwest Washington gathered at the Portland Air National Guard Base for an event aimed to help returning Oregon veterans find jobs.

The June 4 event served as a "call to action," said Jim Linkous, Regional Vice President of ViaWest, who organized the event as a way to honor all those who serve in uniform.

"I'm passionate about helping the men and women that serve. This event builds awareness and gets the need out there so people are educated and realize it is our responsibility to give back," said Linkous.

More than 2,700 Oregon Army National Guard Soldiers from the 41 Infantry Brigade Combat Team returned from a one-year deployment to Iraq in April. According to the Oregon National Guard Reintegration team, half of them are currently unemployed.

Oregon Governor Ted Kulongoski, a keynote speaker at the event, spoke to the importance of helping Oregon troops make the transition back into civilian life.

"These Soldiers come back from combat and are back in their community in 15 days, I can't tell you how difficult that is," the governor said. "Nothing is more important to them than having a job."

Oregon lacks a full time military base, and because Soldiers return to their hometowns very quickly after returning from deployment, a number of challenges arise—one of them being a support network which helps returning citizen-Soldiers find full-time jobs.

Maj. Gen. Raymond F. Rees, The Adjutant General, Oregon, encouraged employers to hire veterans.

"Getting our Soldiers and airmen back to work; that is truly successful reintegration," Rees said.

Harvey Platt, President of Platt Electric, has long been leading the charge to hire Oregon veterans. Out of more than 800 employees, 100 have served, or are currently serving in the military.

"We say you need two things to work at Platt Electric—a great attitude and a willingness to learn," Platt said. "Our veterans bring us that and much more every day."

NEWS

Citizen-soldiers rise to the challenge of 'Best Warrior' competition

Story by Spc. John Dowd,
115 Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

WARRENTON, Ore.—Approximately 100 Soldiers and airmen arrived at Camp Rilea to compete in the 2010 Oregon National Guard's Best Warrior Challenge, May 21-23.

This year's challenge consisted of four different events, the Best Warrior Challenge, The Adjutant General's Match, an Army Combatives tournament, and the Squad Challenge for the Recruit Sustainment Program.

"I am very excited because the Soldiers and airmen are super motivated," said Command Sgt. Maj. Brunk Conley, State Command Sgt. Maj., Oregon Army National Guard.

"Even though they are competing against each other, I have noticed a real camaraderie amongst the Soldiers and competitors. They want to win, but not at the expense of someone else. They want to win because of their great performance."

The Best Warrior Competition is a grueling competition between the best Oregon Army National Guard Soldiers, consisting of seven different events ranging from land navigation to combatives, to win the prestigious honor of Oregon Soldier and Non-Commissioned Officer of the Year.

"Everything that is done here this weekend is a soldier skill," said Master Sgt. Manuel Martinez, Competitive Sports Coordinator from Joint Force Headquarters, Salem, Ore. "We are just honing that blade and sharpening those skills."

Sgt. Donald Snyder, from Recruiting and Retention Command, LaGrande, Ore., winner of last year's Soldier of the Year and recently promoted, said "I am going up against a lot of motivated people who want to win, and this year's competition is more physically demanding."

"I have a lot of respect for these Soldiers because for the most part they are traditional guardsmen who have to study on their own time," said 1st Sgt. Seven Richmond, from 249 Regional Training Institute, Monmouth, Ore. "It just shows a lot of dedication."

Winners of the Best Warrior Challenge will compete in the regional Soldier and NCO of the Year in Alaska, early June.

The Adjutant General's Match, an annual marksmanship match of the best shooters in the Oregon National Guard, is comprised of both individual and team matches. Competitors get to use a variety of weapons ranging from an M9 pistol to an M-240B machine gun at different ranges to test their shooting abilities.

"It's pretty awesome because I am get-



Photo by Sgt. Eric Rutherford, 115 Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

Pfc. Shawn May coaches Pfc. Nate Ariel on the firing range, as he zeroes his M-4 rifle for competition in The Adjutant General's Match at Camp Rilea, Warrenton, Ore., May 21. May and Ariel are gunners with 1186th Military Police Company, 82 Brigade, Oregon Army National Guard, who are first-year participants in the annual shooting competition open to Oregon Army and Air National Guard Members.

ting paid to shoot," said Sgt. John McCully with Charlie Company, 7th Battalion 158 Aviation, Salem, Ore., "There is a lot of knowledge here and I have learned many techniques that I can bring back with me to my unit."

The Combatives tournament, another event in the challenge, is a hand to hand combat competition with four different weight classes for Soldiers to fight in ranging from Lightweight to Welterweight.

Sgt. 1st Class Dave Hagen, State Combatives Instructor with 249 Regional Training Institute, Monmouth, Ore., said combatives is as much a part of warrior training as shooting a weapon.

"Ultimately the potential of getting into hand-to-hand combat is fairly great," Hagen said.

"Most Soldiers have never been punched in the face, and the Army Combative System gives them the ability (and confidence) to say that they confident in what I have been taught to be able to aggress the enemy."

The winners for the combative tournament will represent Oregon in the National Combatives tournament at Fort Benning, Ga., next year.

Newest to the Army were the RSP Soldiers competing in the Squad Challenge. The RSP is designed to train Soldiers before going to basic training, so the competition contained events ranging from Drill and Ceremony, to running the obstacle course and to help build Army core values.

"When Soldiers compete, they can't help

but become a better Soldier in the end," said Conley.

The winners for the Oregon Soldier and NCO of the Year were Sgt. Jared Burkham and Sgt. Robert Krause, respectively.

Winners for TAG Match were: Senior Master Sgt. Mike Shepherd for the individual section. Winner and runner up for open class were Tech Sgt. Jeffrey Jones and Tech Sgt. Daniel Silva, and for novice were: Cpl. Daryl Hager and Spc. Lee Sweet.

For teams, the winners were: the Kingsley Eagles with team captain Senior Master Sgt. Mike Shepherd and shooters, Tech Sgt. Jeffrey Jones, Staff Sgt. Buck Dugger, and Senior Airman Daniel Gardner. Runner up for teams were: the Kingsley Phantoms with the team captain Tech Sgt. Daniel Silva and shooters Tech Sgt. Michael Krouse, Master Sgt. Michael Loomis, and Tech Sgt. Isaac Nunn.

The team challenge cup winner was the Kingsley Phantoms. The winner of the Brent McTaggart Unit Achievement award was 173rd Fighter Wing, Kingsley Field.

For combatives, the winner of the Lightweight class was Sgt. Trevor Wesley, Cruiserweight was Sgt. 1st Class Tommy Grajo, Middleweight was Staff Sgt. Jeremy Caver, and Welterweight was Pvt. 1st Class Adam Jordan.

The RSP Squad Challenge winners were squad Southern Comfort consisting of Pvt. 1st Class Livingston, Pvt. 1st Class Bartlett, Pvt. 1st Class Greer, Pvt. Rahimian, and Pvt. Huna.

162 Engineer Company continues with mission in Afghanistan



Photo by Shamil Zhumatov, Reuters News Agency

Soldiers of Oregon Army National Guard's 162 Engineer Company, attached with 2nd Combat Engineer Battalion of U.S. Marine Corps pray next to their Mine Resistant Ambush Protected (MRAP) armored vehicles before going for a route clearance mission from the Forward Operating Base (FOB) Cafferata in Helmand province, southern Afghanistan, March 8, 2010.

Oregon's 'top shot' humble, in spite of national recognition, accolades

Story and photo
by Spc. John Dowd,
115 Mobile Public Affairs
Detachment

CAMP RILEA, Ore. - Some may say genetics play a role in the skills we acquire throughout our lives. Others may say that with hard work and dedication any skill can be learned.

With regard to Staff Sgt. Allen Spiker, of Joint Force Headquarters in Salem, Ore., his shooting skills may be a product of both.

Spiker has been in the Army National Guard for almost 20 years and has been shooting competitively since 1984.

His first competition was the Adjutant General's Match, a competition held annually at Camp Rilea, where the best shooters in the Oregon National Guard compete.

In 2002, he was placed in charge of range operations for TAG

Match and has been in charge ever since.

Spiker has won many competitions, but he says three awards stand out.

In 1997, Spiker reached the goal of earning a Distinguished Pistol Shot Badge and in 2000 went on to win a Distinguished Rifleman Badge.

The Distinguished Rifleman and Distinguished Pistol Shot Badges are the highest honor that most military and civilian rifle and pistol shooters can aspire to earn.

"He has never struck me as the kind of person that goes to a match with the thought in his mind that he was going to beat someone or was going to be number one," said Sgt. 1st Class Kevin Maries, JFHQ, a member of the Small Arms Readiness Team. "It's all about improving himself."

In 2001 Spiker received the President's Hundred Tab. The tab is awarded to Soldiers for shooting

exceptionally well with either the service pistol or rifle during the President's Hundred Match, an event that is held annually at Camp Perry, Ohio.

The event is open to all Service members, as well as civilians and law enforcement personnel.

Approximately 1,600 people compete and only the top 100 win the tab and a signed letter from the President of the United States.

Anybody can learn to shoot really well if they are willing to learn, give it time for training, and understanding what they have to do to correct any bad habits, said Spiker.

"I can take poor shooters that want to learn and within a few hours can make a fairly big difference in the way they shoot," said Spiker.

Spiker is very approachable and his relaxed mannerisms allow people to open up making them more likely to come to him with



Oregon Army National Guard Staff Sgt. Allen Spiker, instructs other shooters on the range at Camp Rilea.

questions until they completely understand, Maries said.

"He is a walking encyclopedia of shooting, and I don't think that

there's a single question that you could ask him that he wouldn't have an answer for," said Maries.

NEWS

'Heroes' read books in local area schools



Soldiers from the 1249 Engineer Battalion meet with students at Houck Elementary School for Literacy Night with other local heroes. Photo courtesy of 1249 EN BN.

Story by Stacey Barchenger,
Salem Statesman Journal

Hammond Elementary School librarian Ellen Susee knows the thousands of books in the school library.

But even those weren't enough for a literacy event held at the northeast Salem school Thursday, and Susee had to borrow books from other libraries to pair them with guest readers.

Reading is "tremendously important" she said. "Anything the schools can do to make reading important is the best."

Hundreds of Hammond students and their parents attended the annual event and played games, ate free hot dogs, watched a helicopter buzz overhead, exchanged books and listened to local "heroes" read.

Susee picked out books that related to the heroes' careers. For example, Steve Westberg, a flight instructor with Corvallis Aero Service, read "The Little Airplane" by Lois Lenski.

Some readers read their own books. Hammond fifth-grader Skyla Ziglinski read her own book "The Star Story" written during her writing class. It took three weeks to write the story of a golden retriever that learns an ultimate lesson of listening to others.

"I like writing," Ziglinski said. "It lets my imagination flow through it."

It takes 170 volunteers to pull off the annual event, organizer Sarah Hayden said.

"The purpose is to promote literacy throughout not only our school but the community," she said. "We in Salem-Keizer School District are committed to literacy."

Community heroes were invited to read to groups of children to show the importance of literacy. They represented Salem Fire Department, Marion County Sheriff's Office, high school athletes, the Oregon National Guard and local government officials and authors.

Another hero was gubernatorial candidate and former Portland Trail-blazer Chris Dudley who read his own book "Chris Dreams Big" which he self-published with his wife in the past year.

"Reading is so important with children," he said. "I think this is a great idea to encourage that."

Former Hammond students Tony Phong, 12, Mario Plater, 13, and Demeris Bailey, 12, volunteered at the event, although they now attend Stephens Middle School.

They volunteered because it's important to help younger children to learn to read, Plater said, "If you couldn't read, how could you do anything?" Plater said.

Oregon, Idaho citizen-soldiers prep for deployment

CONTINUED FROM FRONT PAGE

Trahan said the 116 Cavalry Brigade Combat Team is breaking new ground for mobilizing National Guard units with this gunnery certification training.

"We are the first unit to attempt gunnery qualification using our own facilities at home," said Trahan. "Deploying units usually do their gunnery qualification at the [mobilization] station."

Trahan said the brigade wanted to use the ranges at Gowen Field Training Area for gunnery qualification in order to assess the manpower and resources it would take to host pre-mobilization qualification for other units deploying in the future.

"There is a lot of moving pieces involved, but overall I think it has been very well orchestrated," he said. "The most important piece is inputting all the scorecards into the

TORTS tracking system so our training can be validated."

When the gunnery tables were completed on June 25, nearly 2,100 Soldiers went through the training, expelling more than three million rounds of ammunition.

In addition to certifying gun crews, every Soldier in the brigade also completed Individual Weapons Qualification with the M-4 carbine rifle or the M-9 pistol they will carry while in-theater. Individual Weapons Qualification will take place at Gowen Field Training Area during the brigade's Annual Training in August. The brigade also conducted other pre-mob training validation during their annual training, such as reacting to improvised explosive devices, convoy operations, and other Army Battle Drills.

Following AT, the brigade departed for Camp Shelby, Miss., for more training before heading to Iraq in the fall.



Photo by Heidi Paynter, HHC, 116 CAV, Idaho Army National Guard

A Soldier from 3-116 Combined Arms Battalion fires at targets with a mounted M240B machine gun during pre-mobilization gunnery qualification at Gowen Field Training Area, south of Boise, Idaho, June 14. The battalion is scheduled to deploy to Iraq this fall with the 116th Cavalry Brigade Combat Team.

Hermiston High School math teacher prepares for Iraq duty

Story by Kim Lippert,
Oregon Military Department Public Affairs

TIGARD, Ore. -- Spc. Curtis Gatlin, of Aurora, Ore., was disappointed when he learned he couldn't deploy to Iraq with the 41 Brigade Combat Team last year because of an injury.

Yet, it didn't take long for him to find a way to make an impact here at home.

"When I was little my dad always used the term, 'give of yourself', and I've always remembered that," Gatlin said.

As a 40-year-old father of two, Gatlin said he could sympathize with the difficulties children and spouses encounter when a loved one leaves home for an overseas deployment. The lawn needs to be mowed, pipes can break, and general projects around the house often pile up. That's where Gatlin—an employee of the Home Depot store in Tigard—decided he could make a difference.

Gatlin's program for spouses of deployed soldiers teaches them home repair skills and addresses a variety of 'fix-it' questions. His employer would offer the classes for free.

"We walk them through (the process) and empower spouses, and teach them how easy this stuff is to do," Gatlin said.

Gatlin worked with people on everything from installing shower heads to fixing electrical problems.

"I try to give them basic knowledge, that they can take with them and do at home on their own," he added.

Jay Mello, a Home Depot store manager said Gatlin's example follows Home Depot's corporate values.

"Being prior military myself, I can say it really gives us a chance to bond with and support fellow service members on a level of understanding and camaraderie," he said.

For things people couldn't do on their own, Gatlin enlisted the help of veterans' organizations.

He got together with veterans groups to link subject matter experts and spouses in order to complete home repairs beyond the scope of Home Depot's staff.

"We coordinate with them to go out to people's houses and help them out," said Gatlin.

Gatlin also started clinics for kids at the Tigard Home Depot store and the Elks Lodge in Portland. Each interaction became a small deposit in the lives of soldiers overseas, he said.

"The last thing someone across the wire wants to deal with is an e-mail from home about something breaking down," Gatlin said.

"My store manager, district manager, and CEO backed me up 100 percent," he added.

These programs and events help us to give back to those who have given up so much for us to continue and operate in this great country of ours," Mello said.

Now that the 41 Brigade Combat Team has returned from their deployment, Gat-



Photo courtesy of Home Depot

Oregon Army National Guard Spc. Curtis Gatlin conducts a kids workshop during the Clackamas Community College Yellow Ribbon Career Fair, July 17. Gatlin started a program at the Home Depot Tigard store—where he is employed—which helps spouses of deployed soldiers learn home repair skills. He also spearheaded a project which will assist soldiers with job placement at Home Depot.

lin is focused on helping fellow soldiers find jobs. He's developed a pilot program designed to help place qualified veterans in jobs at Home Depot.

"Last week we hired our first person, it's

great to know we can make a difference," he said.

Mello said that Home Depot ranks fifth in the nation in the number of veterans the company employees.

Oregon Air Guard general inspires 5th graders at Tyndall elementary school



Photo courtesy of Golf Troop, Oregon Army National Guard

During a speech to Tyndall Elementary students, Maj. Gen Garry C. Dean, Commander of First Air Force, recently recalled his days as a student at Fort Bliss Elementary School in El Paso, Texas, where his father was stationed as an Army warrant officer.

The First Air Force commander was the guest speaker at Tyndall Elementary School's 5th Grade Recognition Ceremony and told the students to look around the room at their teachers, because "you will never forget them."

"I can name every single one of my elementary school teachers," said General Dean. "They had such a powerful impact on me and played a crucial role in my formative years."

NEWS

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OREGON NATIONAL GUARD

Change in TRICARE early eligibility

TRICARE early eligibility has doubled, from 90 to 180 days. Soldiers now have twice as long to take advantage of benefits before their active duty tours.

To qualify, soldiers must have a date of activation or date of notification after October 28, 2009, for their issued active duty orders.

For more information, call Chief Warrant Officer 3 Doug Finstad, at 703-601-6910 or via email at doug.finstad@us.army.mil.

Free Health Fair set for October 6

The Oregon Military Department is hosting a Health/Wellness and Safety Fair at the Salem Auditorium on Oct. 6, 2010, from 11:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. The address for the event is 2310 17th St NE, Salem. The event will run from. This event is free and open to the public.

More to come on this event in the near future. If you have questions or comments, please contact Robin Webb at 503-584-3581 or by email at robin.m.webb@mil.state.or.us.

Changes set for Warrior Transition

Changes are coming in the widely acclaimed community-based warrior transition units program, which allows members to convalesce at home under the supervision of a regional CBWTU.

According to the National Guard Bureau, these units will be renamed remote care companies and supervision will shift to the Warrior Transition Units.

Remote care companies will provide care management for our members who will continue to be placed in their states for treatment provided the remote care company with regional jurisdiction has the capacity.

Wounded members unable to be assigned to remote care companies over capacity will be assigned to the regional WTUs. WTUs, however, have been the subject of criticism for allowing members to languish away from home in a disciplinary environment without attentive care management.

Senators support non-dual status

Led by Sen. Joe Lieberman, I-Conn., and Sen. Scott Brown, R-Mass., 51 senators signed a letter to Defense Secretary Robert M. Gates expressing their support for the president's request to increase the cap on Army National Guard nondual-status technicians, or fulltime civilian employees.

Sen. Patrick Leahy, D-Vt., and Sen. Kit Bond, R-Mo., co-chairmen of the Senate Guard Caucus, were among the first senators to sign the letter.

The president's budget request for fiscal 2011 included a much needed increase in the authorized number of nondual-status technicians for the Army Guard. The request sent to Congress would raise the cap from 1,600 to 2,520 personnel.

The House version of the fiscal 2011 defense authorization bill increased the limit to 2,520, however, the Senate Armed Services Committee did not take similar action when marking up the Senate version of the bill.

To read the senators' letter, visit: <http://images.magnetmail.net/images/template/NGAUS/newsletter/divider.png>.

Commissary sale dates set

The upcoming Commissary Sale dates and times are set for the Deschutes Fair & Expo Center, in Redmond, Ore.; Oct. 1-3, from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.

The sale is open to all military card holders and their dependents.

Corrections

In the May/June 2010 issue of the Oregon Sentinel (*Governor honored with Order of the Minuteman*), we incorrectly reported that Governor Ted Kulongoski is the first recipient of the Order of the Minuteman who was not himself a member of the Oregon National Guard.

In fact, Kulongoski is the second non-Oregon National Guard member to receive the award. Former Oregon Senator Mark O. Hatfield received the award in 1996. Hatfield also served as a two-term governor of Oregon from 1959-1967.

Army: Soldier Resiliency starts early

Story by Sgt. 1st Class Jon Soucy, National Guard Bureau Public Affairs

ARLINGTON, Va., Building resiliency among Army National Guard members starts even before a new recruit is sent to basic training.

About a decade ago, the Army Guard established the Recruit Sustainment Program as a way to better prepare new enlistees for the rigors of basic training. The program focuses on introducing recruits to physical training, map reading, drill and ceremony, the rank structure and other activities they would be exposed to in basic training.

Now, that program also focuses on building coping mechanisms and resiliency skills among new recruits.

"The Army National Guard, I think, is at the forefront as far as trying to (work) with Soldiers and make sure they have a good quality of life while they serve and beyond that," said Army Maj. Reginald Barnes, chief of the Resiliency and Risk Reduction Branch here at the ARNG Readiness Center.

The goal, said Barnes, is to give recruits the skills needed to bounce back from stressful or traumatic situations.

"Some Soldiers come to us with all those skills and dimensions already taken care of," he said. "But then, you have the few that don't have that kind of support or skills already in place. Those who have it already, it enhances what they already have, and those who are coming to us who don't already have it ... develop this and are ready, not only for basic training, but also for life in general."

Though the program hasn't been fully implemented in each state yet, Barnes

said that in the states where the program is being run the response has been "very positive."

He added that plans are in place to set up the program in each state and territory later this year.

"Not only are we trying to make them proficient and prepared for basic training and Advanced Individual Training, but also to have the life skills and the coping skills to do better," said Barnes. "Part of that package is resilience. Resiliency is the ability to bounce back from different stressors, life events and traumas when they come into our lives."

Barnes said he sees this program as a holistic approach to training and readiness.

"For so long, we focused on the physical part, the APFT (Army Physical Fitness Test). We focused on someone being proficient in whatever weapon or equipment they operate. Now, we get to focus on the individual a little bit more," he said.

"Now, we have the complete package of mind, body and soul – for lack of a better word. Now, we have a complete Soldier, and a more holistic approach, as far as how we address Soldiers and how we take care of them."

The focus on building resiliency starts with new recruits, but soon it will be incorporated into leadership courses and other training.

"It's a lifecycle," said Barnes. "It's not only for our new recruits, but eventually it's going to be in the officer education system, the noncommissioned officer education system – any kind of training we get."

Former OYCP graduate laid to rest



Photo by Sgt. Jason Van Mourik, Oregon Military Department Public Affairs

Brig. Gen. Clarence Chinn, Deputy Commanding General, 82nd Airborne, (right) presents the the American Flag to Shawna Rehder, during her son's funeral at Wilamette National Cemetery, July 9. Pvt. 1st Class Tony Justesen graduated the Oregon Youth Challenge Program in 2005, and went on to serve with the U.S. Army's 82nd Airborne. Justesen was killed in Afghanistan on June 23, 2010.

National Guard soldiers may be eligible for back pay via PDMRA compensation

Story courtesy of
National Guard Bureau

The Army National Guard has been very successful in tracking down the thousands of Soldiers, including those who have retired or separated, who were eligible to apply for Post Deployment Mobilization Respite Absence (PDMRA) compensation for serving long, overseas deployments.

More than 10,000 of the 14,000 eligible Soldiers have submitted packets to the Defense Finance and Accounting Service, but "there's more work to do," said Army Maj. Gen. Raymond Carpenter, the acting director of the Army National Guard.

The Department of Defense developed PDMRA for service members who were deployed longer than established dwell ratios. For reserve component service members that dwell ratio is one year deployed for

every five years at home station.

"If you have a tour ending today, you look back 72 months and if you were (mobilized) for more than 12 months out of that 72 months, you may be eligible for PDMRA days," said Army Col. Dennis Chapman, the chief of the Army Guard's Personnel Policy and Readiness Division.

Initially, PDMRA allowed Soldiers to earn additional administrative leave days for the additional time spent deployed.

However, Soldiers must be in a Title 10 status to use those leave days. That meant that once Army Guard Soldiers returned to Title 32 status, they were ineligible to use those days, said Chapman.

As a stop gap measure the policy was revised and allowed eligible Soldiers to apply those leave days to their next deployment. But for those who left the service or don't deploy again, that effectively meant they

couldn't take advantage of the benefit, said Chapman.

"Congress passed a law in the most recent National Defense Authorization Act, authorizing the services to pay Soldiers at a rate of up to \$200 a day for any PDMRA days they earned ... but were not able to take," said Chapman.

Primarily, those who may have earned days under the program, but were not able to use them, are those Guard Soldiers serving on active duty between the signing of the initial policy on Jan. 19, 2007, and when implementation guidelines were published by the Army on Aug. 18, 2007, said Chapman.

However, other laws and policies may affect a Soldier's eligibility.

Typically, a Guard Soldier who serves longer than 12 months during the most recent 72 months gets one PDMRA day

for each additional month or fraction of a month

The number of PDMRA days awarded increases after 18 months and again after 24 months served.

On average, those who are eligible receive credit for about 28 days, which translates to more than \$5,000, said Chapman. And those who feel they may be eligible are urged to contact their unit leadership or their state military pay officer.

"A Soldier cannot figure this out themselves," he said. "All they can figure out is that they might be due. So, if you fall under the parameters, it may be good to check with the military pay officer in your state."

For more information, the remaining 4,000 Soldiers are also encouraged to contact ArmyNationalGuardPDMRA@ng.army.mil

NEWS

Oregon's State Partnership Program team visits Bangladesh

Port of Portland, Oregon Air Guard leaders meet with counterparts in Dhaka City

Story and photo by Tech. Sgt. Nick Choy,
Oregon Military Department Public Affairs

DHAKA, Bangladesh — The new director of Oregon's State Partnership Program called his team's recent trip to Bangladesh, Aug. 8-10, "hugely successful."

Oregon Air National Guard Lt. Col. Mark Crosby, who is also the Chief of Public Safety and Security for the Portland International Airport, witnessed first-hand the changes and improvements at Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport in Dhaka — Bangladesh's largest airport.

"We not only saw changes to the airport in the general appearance, which seemed more pleasant for the passengers, but we also observed enhanced security," Crosby said.

The group toured the airport, noting changes and improvements to security procedures, passenger screening and airport infrastructure, based on a 12-point work plan developed during an April 2010 workshop in Portland.

Enhancing security and safety at the airport is a priority for the Bangladeshi government in order to secure direct flights between their country and the United States, utilizing their national airline, Biman Airlines, Crosby said.

Changes there were a direct result of a visit to Portland International Airport earlier this year by the Civil Aviation Authority of Bangladesh (CAAB) officials in April, Crosby added.

"It's a tribute to the civilian aviation's leadership that these changes were implemented," Crosby said.

These visits build upon the relationship created between Oregon and Bangladesh as part of the State Partnership Program (SPP). Oregon's partnership with Bangladesh came from a 2008 meeting involving commanders from U.S. Pacific Command, National

Guard Bureau, and Maj. Gen. Raymond F. Rees, Adjutant General, Oregon.

Launched by the National Guard Bureau and the State Department in 1993, the SPP is intended to support U.S. security cooperation objectives.

The partnership between Oregon and Bangladesh has three goals; to further the program's objectives of promoting developing democracies, improve security and stability in the partner nation, and finally, to develop stronger personal relationships between both partners' militaries.

During the August trip, former SPP Director and Oregon Air National Guard Maj. Dan Schilling, highlighted the Oregon National Guard's unique position in both the military and civilian sectors, as the strength behind the program.

"The men and women of our organization have really extensive experience in a lot of areas that are relevant to what we're trying to do here," Schilling said.

Another area of concern for Oregon and Bangladeshi officials is both regions' proximity to earthquake and flood zones. Both governments can benefit from knowledge sharing in emergency management and disaster response, given Bangladesh's bi-annual flooding during its monsoon seasons, Schilling said.

"A stronger bridge (between our two countries) is necessary," he added.

One of the program's focus areas in the future is to exchange and discuss best practices for military assistance to civilian authorities, especially in the area of earthquakes and flooding, Crosby said.

Crosby cited an upcoming National Guard Bureau and Northern Command exercise in Oregon in 2012, as another opportunity to exchange ideas.

"Bangladesh is very interested in learning from us in some areas so they can enhance



Maj. Dan Schilling, Director of the Oregon National Guard's State Partnership Program, meets with Lt. Gen. Mohammed Abdul Wadud, Principle Staff Officer, Armed Forces Division, Bangladesh, in Dhaka, Aug. 9.

their emergency response in earthquakes," Crosby said.

Lt. Col. Mohammed Towhid-Ul-Islam, Joint Operations Officer for the Armed Forces Division, said he is particularly interested in training emergency personnel in his country.

"Our key responders need the information and technical expertise in order to successfully carry out emergency response," Towhid-Ul-Islam said.

During the August meetings in Dhaka, Towhid-Ul-Islam and his team said that if a disaster ever hits the Pacific Northwest, he hopes Bangladesh can come to the aid of Oregonians.

"That was very gratifying (to hear),"

Crosby said. "Our hope is that if Bangladesh ever requests assistance from the United States, their first call will be to Oregon."

Due to the developing relationships between Oregon and Bangladesh, both Crosby and Schilling said key leadership in Oregon and Bangladesh have started trusting each other, and are becoming very comfortable with the partnership.

"In the long run it's about relationships," Schilling said. "The values that come out of those relationships are confidence and friendship, and it will allow us to circumvent any problems that arise."

For more information on the State Partnership Program visit: <http://www.ng.mil/media/factsheets/SPP.pdf>

116 ACS: Joint exercises leads to 'great partnerships' with other services

CONTINUED FROM FRONT PAGE

tracking, identification of aircraft, radar control for tactical aircraft, data link management, and forward command and control responsibilities for the Joint Forces Air Component Commander.

The main focus of each FST-J is to create a joint environment that is as realistic – and complex – as real world operations in order to certify U.S. Navy carrier task force pre-deployment readiness.

So far, the "Fighting Longracks" of the Oregon Air National Guard's 116 ACS have worked with U.S.S. Dwight D. Eisenhower, based in Norfolk Va.; U.S.S. Theodore Roosevelt from Newport News Va.; the U.S.S. George Washington, stationed in Yokosuka Japan; and the U.S.S. Ronald Reagan, based in San Diego Calif.

FST-J exercises are sponsored by Tactical Training Group, Atlantic (TACTRAGRULANT) based at Dam Neck Va., and Tactical Training Group Pacific (TACTRAGRUPAC) based at San Diego Calif.

The 116 ACS has emerged as the first choice for U.S. Navy trainers because of the professionalism and proven

expertise of unit members, said Chief Master Sergeant Bob Birman (116 ACS FST-J project manager).

"We have developed a great partnership with the Navy," Birman said. "We have developed a real team approach and the results have paid off."

Although FST-Js are primarily to support fleet training requirements, additional participants have included U.S. Air Force Airborne Warning and Control Systems (AWACS) crews, 108 Air Defense Artillery Brigade, based at Fort Bragg, N.C., in addition to coalition ships from the Australian, German, and Japanese militaries. Future plans include a larger role for U.S. Army, U.S. Marines, and other coalition partners.

The exercises have significantly improved the overall readiness of all participants. In order to maximize training, the 116 ACS has reached beyond state borders to Air National Guard units across the nation, sharing the wealth of training opportunities, said Lt. Col. Gregor Leist, 116 ACS Commander.

Over the past 15 months, the 116 ACS has strengthened relationships with Airmen from Connecticut, Ohio, Missouri, and active duty units worldwide.



Maj. Bryan Habas, 116ACS Senior Director (right), coordinates air defense of the eastern coast of Australia during simulated war games conducted with the USS Ronald Regan Carrier Battle Group. (Photo by Tech. Sgt. Chris Crooker)

"This joint opportunity is a win-win for all of us," Leist said. "You simply cannot find this kind of training anywhere else."

Klamath Falls Airmen foster international partnership in Guatemala

Story by Tech. Sgt. Jennfier Shirar,
173 Fighter Wing Public Affairs

PUERTO BARRIOS, Guatemala—Twenty-three personnel from the 173rd Medical Group deployed to Puerto Barrios, Guatemala in support of "Beyond the Horizons" (BTH) Guatemala April 10 – 24, 2010.

According to U.S. Southern command, BTH is a joint service, interagency Combined Field Training Exercise, which began in 2008. It allows troops specializing in engineering, construction, and health care to provide vital services to communities in need while receiving valuable deployment training and building important relationships with partner nations.

"It was a very rewarding experience," said Master Sgt. Neil Neisner, 173rd Medical Group Independent Duty Medical Technician. "The people were very hospitable and grateful for the work that we were doing."

Klamath Falls Airmen were able to provide medical, dental and optometry care to more than 3,000 Guatemalan people, and more than 700 pairs of glasses, 800 dental

extractions, and over 4,000 prescriptions to patients who would not be able to afford this care.

This was also an excellent opportunity for the medical personnel to experience firsthand the local culture and heritage, the participants said.

"One of the sites that we went to was a rural Mayan village," Neisner said. "This village has remained unchanged for quite some time... there we had the opportunity to treat a 107 year old lady. It was an amazing experience."

One of the main goals of BTH is to help improve the quality of life for the people living in rural areas while at the same time improving the partner nation's capability and providing opportunities for U.S. personnel to refine engineering, medical, mobilization, and deployment skills.

"I have never worked such a joint operation like this," said Lt. Col. Ed Tuhy, 173 MDG optometrist. "It was a good mission—a very eye-opening experience."

According to 173 Medical Group leadership, the unit may participate in a similar mission next year.



Photo courtesy of 173rd Medical Group
Maj. Ben Mitchell, 173 Medical Group Flight Doctor, examines a patient in Puerto Barrios, Guatemala, during the Beyond Horizon exercise April 12, 2010. Twenty three personnel from the 173 MDG deployed to Guatemala in support of the exercise.