

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

Oregon Aviation unit returns from Iraq deployment

Story by

Tech. Sgt. Nick Choy,

Oregon Military Department Public Affairs

SALEM, Ore. -- The Oregon Army National Guard welcomed home members of one of its aviation units during an official demobilization ceremony July 13, in Salem, Ore.

Members of 2-641 Aviation spent about one year in Iraq providing aviation mission support.

About 20 members of the 2-641 Aviation returned July 10. They joined 35 other soldiers from the first rotation who had previously returned in August 2008. Each rotation spent six months in Iraq.

Oregon Governor Ted Kulongoski, thanked the soldiers for their service and sacrifice, but also paused to recognize the families and employers for their sacrifice as well.

"Oregon thanks you for a job well done," the governor said. "You personify the very ideal of the citizen-soldier."

Chief Warrant Officer 4 Joseph Mollah-an said the wide ranges of ages and levels of experience helped with the overall success of the mission.

"The diversity of the people in that group made the deployment a class act," he said. "The spectrum of people really allowed us to accomplish a lot more."

One of the local employers, Rogue Brewery, distributed to all the unit's soldiers free bottles of a limited edition beer called "Aviator Ale", featuring the unit's crest.

Unit commander, Lt. Col. Christian F.

See **Iraq unit** on PAGE 9



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

Oregon Governor Ted Kulongoski (left) and Maj. Gen. Raymond F. Rees, The Adjutant General, Oregon National Guard (center), welcome home soldiers from the Oregon Army National Guard's 2-641 Aviation during a demobilization ceremony in Salem, Ore., July 13, following their deployment to Iraq. Twenty soldiers from the second of two rotations returned to Oregon July 10. Another 35 soldiers, who previously returned home in August 2008, joined them at the ceremony.

Air National Guard Security Forces return from deployment

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

PORTLAND, Ore. -- Members of the Oregon Air National Guard returned home Aug. 7, following a six-month deployment to Iraq.



Twenty-nine airmen from the 142nd Security Forces Squadron arrived on four separate commercial flights at Portland International Airport, to throngs of well-wishers, family members and friends.

The airmen were tasked with base and checkpoint security, as well as checking credentials for all personnel entering Kirkuk Air Base in Iraq. They conducted almost 20,000 miles of mounted patrols in and around the base, and endured 15 rocket attacks and more than 100 incidents of small-arms fire.

During their deployment 26 individual pieces of unexploded ordnance were located and disposed of safely.

The airmen hail from the cities of Portland, Tigard, Corvallis, Florence, Camas, Vancouver Wash., Cornelius, Gresham, Warren, Beaverton, Eugene, Dallas, Salem, Lowell and Deary, Idaho.



Photo by Staff Sgt. John Hughel, 142nd Fighter Wing Public Affairs Office

Friends and family welcome home Oregon Air National Guard Staff Sgt. Devin Boise, of the 142nd Security Forces Squadron Aug. 7, at Portland International Airport. Twenty-nine members from the unit served just over six months at Kirkuk Air Base, Iraq. The 142nd Security Forces Squadron is located at the Portland Air National Guard Base.

Left: Oregon Air National Guard Tech. Sgt. Mick Gremaud holds his daughter Lucy after returning from a six-month deployment to Kirkuk Air Base, Iraq Aug. 7, 2009. The unit returned to the Portland International Airport to a throng of supporters, family members and friends.

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COMMAND

Oregon Guard 'sets the standard,' through families and readiness



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

As summer comes to a close and autumn begins I am proud to say the Oregon National Guard has continued to set the standard and lead the way in everything we set out to accomplish.

The 41st Infantry Brigade Combat Team completed training at Fort Stewart, Ga. and is now operational in Iraq.

There have been and will continue to be challenges both overseas and here at home. With leadership from the most junior non-commissioned officer to the brigade commander, along with the strength and support from our families and communities, these challenges have and will continue to be successfully overcome.

in our local communities there are more than 3,600 Oregon National Guard soldiers and airmen deployed in support of operations throughout the world.

This autumn the 162nd Engineer Company based out of Dallas will depart for Afghanistan. However, the remaining 5,000 Oregon National Guard members will continue to be ready and available for both federal and state missions when needed.

Being prepared for state and federal call up involves not only proper training but also taking steps to ensure we are prepared at home in the event of a natural disaster.

September is National Pre-

This summer we were able to celebrate the return home of both the 2nd Battalion 641st Aviation out of Salem and the 142nd Security Forces Squadron from Portland, both with successful tours in Iraq.

As we continue to provide requested support

paredness Month and we should all make the commitment to learn more and become more informed.

We need to prepare our homes and families in the event of a disaster.

At a minimum, every household should have an emergency supply kit and a family emergency plan.

Being prepared at home will ensure more rapid response and recovery efforts, should the need arise.

Since it is National Preparedness Month and the school season has begun, it is good to be aware of H1N1 and how to avoid becoming sick.

An article in this issue addresses H1N1 and how to be prepared.

Make a plan and have a back up plan in the event you do become ill. Be prepared!

The sacrifice from families and employers can not be overlooked or acknowledged enough. Without your support, citizen-soldiers and citizen airmen would not be able to move forward.

Training, state activation, and deployments are made possible with your continued effort and

support. Your sacrifices are critical to the success of the Oregon National Guard.

Spc. Taylor Marks and Sgt. Earl Werner were recently killed in action in Iraq.

We are all affected by this loss. However, the strength of these soldier's families is amazing.

Each celebrated the lives of their loved one, and honored the choice made by these men to serve.

Their personal courage helped move us through this emotional time. These soldiers, their families and their sacrifice will not be forgotten.

I want to thank them, as well as every soldier's family for the commitment to keeping the Oregon National Guard prepared and ready to serve, if and when needed.

Your unwavering support keeps our soldiers ready to answer our state and nations call.

I look forward to the upcoming autumn season and for the Oregon National Guard's continued success. Always ready! Always there!

Raymond F. Rees

State Sergeant Major answers the question 'what's in it for me?'



State Command Sgt. Maj. Brunk W. Conley,
State Command
Sergeant Major,
Oregon National
Guard

You may notice in this edition of the Sentinel that there are many articles concerning legislative victories and benefits. They include the Post 9/11 GI Bill, Sen. Ron Wyden's "Soft Landing" legislation introduced in the U.S. Senate and legislation to re-

imburse soldiers for Post Deployment and Mobilization Respite Absence (PDMRA leave) who were not properly paid, Oregon Senate Bill 700 which is designed to help soldiers with reintegration, and many other bills at both the National and state level too numerous to mention here designed to help Oregon Guard

members.

Our state representatives, congressmen, and senators are all working hard to sponsor and support various programs, bills, and laws that benefit our soldiers and airmen of the Oregon

National Guard. They truly understand all of the sacrifices, the deployments, and in short all that you do to answer your Country's call and all that you give to our citizens.

With that said, they listen to you and your concerns. The best way for us to tell them our needs is through our professional organizations. EANGUS, NGAUS, AUSA, VFW, and the American Legion for example, all express your views to our lawmakers. They are our representatives to government and have been instrumental, if not pivotal, in getting you the benefits and programs that you have earned and deserve.

Many times in my travels, when these organizations come up in conversation, the question

I field is, "What's in it for me?" My answer to you is to read this issue from cover to cover and get to understand the programs and laws that affect you. That is "What's in it for you!!!!!" Most of these programs were initiated or supported by your professional organizations.

We need to support these organizations by becoming members and paying our dues.

Most of you do not have the time to lobby, write letters to congress, or to attend town halls. That is what these organizations do for you. They have been very successful in representing your needs.

Please do your part by joining their ranks as a member, or by continuing to pay your dues and being as involved as you can.

Oregon Army Guard reaches new heights in warrant officer strength

Based on National Guard Bureaus' statistics the Oregon Army National Guard is rated number two in the nation for technical warrant officer strength, which includes an overall strength of over 100 percent for both Aviation and Technicians!

Credit for accomplishing this status goes to more soldiers than can be identified in this article.

However I would like to give some special recognition to some individuals without whom we would have never reached our goal. Without the hard work of the prior command chief warrant officers, retired Chief Warrant Officer's 5 Floyd Bared and James Powell, who laid the foundations and the Council of Chief Warrant Officer 5's who manage their perspective warrant officers and screen potential candidates, it would not have been possible.

The Warrant Officer Strength Manager, Warrant Officer Candidate Lenora Landwher who works hard to make sure all candidates crossed their "T's" and dotted their "I's". Plus the many other warrant officers and officers who have mentored and encouraged quality non-commissioned officers to take up the challenge to become one of "The Quiet Professionals."

That being said and the kudos accepted this presents a natural next step of becoming number one in the nation. Our brother and sister warrants from the great state of Wyoming need to be number two.

As strong as we are in warrant officers we need to be stronger. We have a number of newly appointed warrant officer 1's attending flight school but we still desperately need qualified aviators with experience.

Also, we still have those hard to fill technical warrant positions as well, to include: food service, ammunition and intelligence and electronic warfare technicians.

Starting in September and running through January the "Path to Honor" Campaign will begin- it is Army-wide and aimed at potential warrant officer candidates.

Soldiers need to ask themselves do they have the dedication, drive and commitment to join the exclusive ranks of the warrant officer corps. It is not an easy climb. However, if you are willing and do what it takes to earn that special bar, your first step is to contact the senior warrant in that field or for general questions on procedures and process Warrant Officer Candidate Landwher can help you get started.

Listed below are those first points of



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

contacts:

Aviation- CW5 Marco Frye
Administration - CW5 Scott O'Donnell
Logistics - CW5 Debbie Murphy
Maintenance - CW5 Vern Johnson
Intelligence/Signal and all others - CW4 Jan Martin

On a similar note, one of the reasons we maintain the quality of the warrant officers in Oregon is through a mentorship program. I have asked CW4 Jan Martin to go into more detail next month in this column on the program set up by the Logistics community. Look for her article.

In closing, the path is not easy but the rewards are worth the time and effort and we will be number one in the nation!

NEWS

Oregon Senator introduces key legislation

benefits proposed for returning military

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

PORTLAND, Ore. -- Unites States Senator Ron Wyden (D-Ore.) announced June 29 he will introduce legislation to Congress which will provide a "soft landing" for military members returning from deployment.

He made the announcement at a roundtable meeting attended by members of the Oregon Department of Veterans Affairs and Oregon National Guard leadership at Portland State University.

"We need a transition from the trauma of combat to the serenity of home in Oregon," Wyden said. "And this is part of the promise our state made to take care of our troops."

The Senator said he plans to introduce the bills to Congress following the July 4 recess.

The five separate bills include provisions which will help servicemembers wounded in combat to find employment within their particular service; expand on key components of the Military Family Leave Act; enhance mental health counseling and treatment for returning servicemembers; and help veterans make informed healthcare decisions about their local VA hospital by providing patients with a semi-annual 'report card' of the facility.

The key legislation of the group is the Soft Landing Reintegration Act of 2009, which allows servicemembers deployed in a homeland defense mission for more than 180 days to remain on active duty for up to 90 days following their return. The legislation allows for the continuation of entitlements and pay, as well as access to reintegration services.

Maj. Gen. Raymond F. Rees, The Adjutant General, Oregon National Guard, said these separate pieces of legislation are important to returning soldiers because deployed troops need time to transition back to their jobs and families.

"It can't be 'we're back and everything is perfect'," Rees said about troops who return home from a deployment. "This legislation certainly will help."

Sgt. 1st Class Jeremiah Washburn, a member of the Oregon National Guard



U.S. Senator Ron Wyden met with members of the Oregon National Guard leadership, Oregon Department of Veterans Affairs and Family Support Groups at Portland State University June 29 to review legislation he later introduced to Congress July 5, which will provide a "soft landing" for military members returning from deployment.

Reintegration Team, said between Oregon's reintegration programs and the proposed legislation Wyden will bring before Congress, Oregon has the best care in the nation for returning veterans.

"The programs we have now are significantly better, and are more care-intensive," he said.

Washburn's most recent deployment was with the Oregon Army National Guard's 41st Brigade Combat Team to Afghanistan in 2005. He said the strain of the deployment cost him his marriage.

"That three month period which allows soldiers to readjust is critical," he said.

Jim Willis, Director of Oregon Department of Veterans Affairs, who is himself a veteran of the Vietnam War, said servicemembers of his generation were not properly looked after upon their return. He said the public not only hated the war, but they hated the individuals fighting the war.

"I think people have learned to love the warrior even though they hate the war," he said.

With nearly 3,000 Oregon citizen-soldiers serving in Iraq for a year, Willis said the introduction of this legislation on a federal level is important.

"We'll be able to decompress, reintegrate, and help our warriors move on at exactly the time they need it," Willis said.

Former Oregon Army National Guardsman, Luke Wilson, said he wished the Wounded Warrior Retention Act was in place when he returned from Iraq in 2004. Wilson, who was hit by a rocket-propelled

grenade while deployed to Iraq with the Oregon Army National Guard's 2nd Infantry, 162nd Brigade, spent a year of grueling physical therapy at Walter Reed Army Medical Hospital after he lost a leg.

What then followed added insult to injury, he said, when the Army refused to allow him to stay in, but also refused to allow him to rejoin his unit for their homecoming. He said it seemed that story changed almost daily while he was recuperating from his wounds.

"When I was at Walter Reed, one guy was telling me one thing and another guy was telling me something else," Wilson said. "It was so confusing."

He said the legislation will put in place a clear set of standards and practices for all services. Wilson said if the Army had allowed him to stay in the military, he would have done so in a 'heartbeat'.

"I might not be able to run two miles like I used to," Wilson said. "But I can sit behind a desk and calculate someone's pay as well as the next guy."

Donna Herr, who represents one of the Oregon National Guard Family Support Groups, said because Oregon lacks a full-time, active duty base, a lot of the built-in support network that comes with it is not available. She added that proposed changes to the Military Family Leave Act of 2009 would allow individuals up to two weeks of unpaid leave to help ease the transition of their deploying spouse. *For more information on the legislation Wyden proposes, visit: <http://wyden.senate.gov/newsroom/record.cfm?id=315180&>*

Overview of Sen. Wyden legislation

The Guard and Reserve "soft-landing" bill – The bill would allow returning vets to stay on active duty for up to 90 days after returning from a deployment, meaning they could continue to collect base pay, housing and other allowances as they transition back into 'normal' life.

The idea is to build enough of a cushion for soldiers and families who take some time to readjust to civilian life, whether because of underemployment, emotional issues or financial hardship.

Conversely, active-duty soldiers can re-enter life on a military base, surrounded by support systems. Guard soldiers and reservists on the other hand, find themselves in their hometowns within days of being 'in country'.

The Wounded Warrior Retention Act – This bill would help servicemembers who want to stay in the military after suffering wounds but encounter insurmountable bureaucratic hurdles. Wyden argues that letting the services keep people who want to stay will ultimately save the country money by avoiding retraining costs.

The Military Family Leave Act – This bill will guarantee family members two weeks of employment leave to allow family members to spend time together, such as during a soldier's two weeks of mid-deployment leave. This leave would be without any penalties to the employee, and applies to part-time as well as full-time positions.

The Servicemembers' Mental Health Commission Act – This law would establish a commission to study and help implement effective methods of treating the mental and emotional wounds of deployed servicemembers. It also strives to remove the stigma and barriers that servicemembers face while trying to seek assistance.

The Hospital Quality Report Card Initiative – This law would provide semi-annual VA hospital quality and equity reports to better inform patients and to provide information to agencies such as the Department of Veterans Affairs.

State Legislative Session Closes, cuts Oregon Military Dept budget

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

SALEM, Ore. -- The 2009 Oregon State Legislative session drew to a close in June after paring back many state agencies including the Oregon Military Department.

The final budget for the 2009-11 biennium reflects a 16.7 percent reduction in state general fund dollars, which means a variety of programs were cut within the Oregon Military Department.

Those cutbacks resulted in the elimination of capital improvement projects in armories totaling over \$1.4 million; and a reduction of six positions in the installations division totaling over \$600,000.

Following the reduction the Oregon State Legislature added \$200,000 to ensure continued funding for the Oregon National Guard Reintegration team and \$500,000 in emergency financial assistance for guard members.

In another significant development, Oregon Governor Theodore R. Kulongoski signed a series of bills that will, in part, provide outreach to veterans on college campuses and help with veteran reintegration.

A summary of those bills is as follows:

House Bill 2178 - Creates the Campus Veterans' Service Officer Program in the Department of Veterans Affairs, and assigns federally accredited VSO's to the Oregon University System and community college campuses to provide benefits outreach to student veterans and is effective on passage.

Senate Bill 700 - Creates a nine-member Task Force on

Veterans' Reintegration to develop and design continuing regional programs to help returning soldiers adjust to civilian life.

House Bill 2165 - Allows certain members of the Oregon National Guard to administer health care services in an emergency.

House Bill 2510 - Deletes 15 year limit on veteran's use of preference in public employment.

House Bill 2303 - Allows awards of damages and attorney fees to service member bringing action to enforce right or remedy under Service members Civil Relief Act.

House Bill 2718 - Creates Task Force on Women Veterans' Health Care. Directs task force to study health care needs of women veterans.

House Bill 2744 - Requires employer to provide leave to certain employees who are spouses of members of military forces that are on active duty during periods of military conflict. Makes failure to grant leave or discrimination against spouse exercising right to military family leave unlawful practice.

House Bill 2762 - Designates May 8 of each year as Military Appreciation Day.

House Bill 3020 - Makes knowingly taking advantage of disabled veteran, service member or spouse unconscionable tactic and unlawful trade practice.

House Bill 3256 - Makes it against the law to discriminate against a person because of a person's military service.

House Bill 3396 - Directs district attorney to consider servicemember's traumatic brain injury or mental disorder as factor in determining eligibility for diversion.

Senate Bill 5 - Allows appointment of Adjutant General in grade of lieutenant general. Limits promotion of Adjutant General to grade not exceeding lieutenant general.

Senate Bill 381 - Requires health benefit plan to provide coverage of medically necessary treatment for traumatic brain injury. Adds orthotic and prosthetic devices to lists of required coverage for health care service contractors and multiple employer welfare arrangements.

Senate Bill 400 - Authorizes State Fish and Wildlife Commission to issue at no charge resident disabled war veteran shellfish license to person who files with commission written proof that last official certification of record by United States Department of Veterans Affairs or by any branch of armed Forces of United States shows person to be at least 25 percent disabled.

Senate Bill 595 - Deletes certain tuition waiver eligibility requirements for servicemembers.

Senate Bill 618 - Exempts military discharge records from public records disclosure.

Senate Bill 98 - Creates Task Force on Veterans Transportation. Directs task force to study methods to create transportation for veterans to access health care. Sunsets task force on date of convening of next regular biennial legislative session.

Senate Bill 449 - Provides that U.S. Highway 97 in Oregon shall be known as World War II veterans Historic Highway.

For a more detailed description of each bill and how it may impact service members go to the Oregon State Legislative website: www.leg.state.or.us

NEWS

Pilot details Mount Hood rescue

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

MOUNT HOOD, Ore. -- On June 28 a Seattle, Wash. hiker was rescued after a climbing accident on Mount Hood. From his hospital bed, Kristopher Haskins praised his rescuers, including the Oregon Army National Guard aviation crew who airlifted him off the mountain.

Oregon Army National Guard copilot, Maj. Jerry Brennan shared with us his perspective of the rescue mission, in addition to several spectacular photos taken by Portland Mountain Rescue members on the mountain that day.

Here is a quick recap of the mission in his words:

One lone climber with a broken femur stranded at 8,000' after taking a direct hit with a boulder. Unlike the last mission we flew on Hood, this one was quite a bit higher on the challenge meter.

This mission consisted of offloading four Portland Mountain Rescue guys above the patient at 9,000' -- nice slope off-load landing with one main [landing gear]. We tandem hoisted an AMR RAT Team member off a ridgeline at 5,000' to follow on with the PMR guys, Sgts. Edwards and Merrick found out what a fifty degree slope hoist operation (with tag line) is all about.

Total 4.2 hours of flying time, six hoist iterations and one of the tightest LZ's [Landing Zone] at SAR Base 1 have ever landed in. We were on the more remote (and technical) west side of the mountain above the Sandy Glacier at the bottom of Cathedral Rock. I particularly enjoyed the photos from PMR through the binoculars and how it gives a sense of the sheer magnitude of Mount Hood.

When we arrived on scene, the climber was on a small ledge tucked behind a rock so



A UH-60 Blackhawk helicopter piloted by Maj. Mark Ulvin and Maj. Jerry Brennan hovers over the western slopes of Mount Hood, Ore. as crew members lower a litter using the onboard hoist. The delicate operation rescued injured climber Kristopher Haskins of Seattle, Wash. **Right:** The injured climber was hoisted from an extremely steep 50 degree slope. Flight Medic Sgt. James Merrick holds the tag line which helps stabilize the litter in windy conditions. Crew Chief Sgt. Jonathan Edwards operated the hoist from the door of the hovering helicopter. (Photos courtesy, Portland Mountain Rescue)



as to not get taken out by another avalanche. He had been up there since 3 a.m. His buddy left him to climb down the mountain in order to get help. Other bit of luck (okay, a lot) for this climber was the 50th Anniversary Na-

tional Search and Rescue Conference going on at Timberline Lodge that weekend, so we had plenty of folks there to help.

-- Maj. Jerry Brennan,
Copilot, Charlie Co. 7-158 Aviation

Wyden praises back-pay initiative for soldiers

Story courtesy,
Oregon Department of
Veterans' Affairs

PORTLAND, Ore. -- Affirming support for the brave men and women of the U.S. military, Oregon Sen. Ron Wyden expressed gratitude and appreciation in July to the members of the Senate Armed Services Committee for including a Wyden-authored provision to retroactively pay soldiers for leave earned under the Post Deployment and Mobilization Respite Absence (PDMRA) in the 2010 Defense Authorization bill.

More than 20,000 service members – at least 864 from Oregon – have not received their earned leave due to a delay between the announcement of the leave program by the Department of Defense and the establishment of the program by the individual military services.

Wyden's legislation reimburses soldiers who were left out during that period. It's unknown when it will be voted on by the full-Senate.

"This is welcome news for the men and women who served this country bravely but were denied their paid leave because of a bureaucratic delay," Wyden said. "This legislation honors their service and makes sure that they receive the compensation they deserve. I thank the committee for recognizing this important legislation and including it in the upcoming bill."

PDMRA leave was designed to provide service members who were deployed beyond established rotation cycles to Iraq and Afghanistan (and in specific instances to Kuwait, Qatar, United Arab Emirates



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

Oregon Governor Ted Kulongoski, U.S. Secretary of Veterans' Affairs Eric Shinseki, U.S. Senator Ron Wyden and Maj. Gen. Raymond F. Rees, Adjutant General, Oregon discuss the Post-9/11 GI Bill during a round table session at Portland State University in Portland, Aug. 19. The round table was held for Oregon veterans to provide input regarding veteran's educational benefits to the panel.

and Kyrgyzstan) additional time to reintegrate back into civilian life, as well as to help with retention of service members who had experienced long tours.

The delay in implementation varied from service to service.

The Department of the Army didn't issue its corresponding policy for implementing PDMRA until more than six months after DoD's Jan. 19, 2007 issuance

date.

During this gap, thousands of soldiers from the National Guard and Army Reserve alone separated from the service, and did not receive proper compensation for their PDMRA leave.

Under the bill, DoD's Personnel Office would have the legal authority to pay retroactively each service member a \$200 per day benefit.

Post 9/11 GI Bill Benefits Offered

SALEM, Ore. -- The Post-9/11 GI Bill went into effect Aug. 1, 2009, providing servicemembers who served at least 90 aggregate days on active duty after Sept. 11, 2001 a new set of education benefits. Oregon National Guardsmen who meet the criteria do qualify for the new benefits.

This is a separate educational benefit package from the existing Montgomery GI Bill. The Post-9/11 GI Bill expands the number of people who qualify for education support from the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, by allowing service members to transfer benefits to a spouse or children.

Those who served at least 90 days of active duty on or after September 11, 2001 must still be on active duty or meet the following qualifications:

- discharged from active duty; or
- released from active duty and placed on the retired list; or
- released from active duty and transferred to the Fleet Reserve or Fleet Marine Corps Reserve; or
- released from the active duty for further service in a reserve component of the Armed Forces

You may also be eligible if you were honorably discharged from active duty for a service-connected disability and you served 30 continuous days after September 10, 2001.

The program covers the cost of tuition and fees, not to exceed the most expensive in-state undergraduate tuition at a public institution. The percentage of benefit is based on length of active duty service; 40 percent after 90 days of service up to 100 percent after three years of active service.

Those service members not on active duty (including spouses of non-Active Duty service members and all children) may also receive a living stipend equal to the basic allowance for housing rate for an E-5 with dependents, and an annual \$1,000 books stipend.

For details relating to service time and eligible benefits please see below:

- At least 36 months- 100%
- Discharged due to service connected disability after 30 days continuous service- 100%
- At least 30 months to no more than 36 months- 90%
- At least 24 months to no more than 30 months- 80%
- At least 18 months to no more than 24 months- 70%
- At least 12 months to no more than 18 months- 60%
- At least 6 months to no more than 12 months- 50%
- At least 90 days to no more than 6 months- 40%

If you choose to take advantage of the Post-9/11 GI Bill you are no longer eligible to receive benefits under the Montgomery GI Bill, Montgomery GI Bill-Selected Reserve or the Reserve Educational Assistance Program.

The Department of Defense is in the final stages of finalizing its transferability policy. At this time those National Guardsmen who have served in Title 32 status are not eligible for the Post 9/11 GI Bill, although the Department of Defense is expected to request a change in the 2011 defense budget.

For more information on the Post 9/11 GI Bill visit: www.gibill.va.gov/ and follow the prompts for frequently asked questions.

NEWS

Fallen soldiers make the final trip home

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

MONMOUTH, Ore.-- It was a sea of red, white, and blue as more than sixty motorcycle riders took part in

a procession through Salem for the return of Spc. Taylor Marks to his hometown of Monmouth, Ore., Sept. 3. Riding in front, Marks step-father Don Mack.

"It's overwhelming... most of these people have jobs and they are giving that up today just to honor my son," said Mack. "How can you beat that?"

Marks was killed in Iraq on Aug. 28, while deployed with the 41st Infantry Brigade Combat Team.

He was 19 years old.

The Patriot Guard, a group of motorcycle riders who take part in funeral processions for fallen servicemembers, is made up of regular people with a personal cause to make sure all soldiers are honored for their sacrifice.

"Everyone of our soldiers are heroes and they need to be treated as such and when they give their life for us we need as many people as possible to be there for them," said Bryan Loun, Captain of Patriot Guard Riders.

Loun said the Patriot Guard was formed four years ago. He said he was drawn to join after seeing all of the war protesters on televi-

Right: Police cars lead a procession on Highway 22 returning Spc. Taylor Marks to his hometown of Monmouth. 80 Patriot Guard Riders escorted the procession. (Photo by Sgt. Eric Rutherford)

Below: A U.S. Flag flies as the airplane carrying Spc. Marks taxis into the Oregon National Guard Army Aviation Facility in Salem, Ore., Sept. 3. (Photo by Sgt. Eric Rutherford)



Above: More than 80 Patriot Guard Riders escort Sgt. Earl Werner from Portland Air National Guard Base to his final resting place at Willamette National Cemetery. (photo by Staff Sgt. John Hughel)

Right: Members of the Oregon Army National Guard Funeral Honors Team paid military respects to Spc. Taylor Marks at his interment ceremony Sept. 4 at Willamette National Cemetery. (Photo by Spc. John T. Dowd)



sion.

"When the protesters were coming out it made me sick to my stomach so when I signed up for the Patriot Guard riders and it become a part of me," he added.

The riders attend funerals for fallen heroes as invited guests of the family. For Lori VanDusseldorp this particular mission is intensely personal.

"This hits home because I work with Taylor's mother," said VanDusseldorp. "It means a lot for me to be here to let her know how much his service to our country means," she added.

Staff Sgt. Harold Cox of the Oregon National Guard's recruiting and retention unit, rode at the front of the group. He helped recruit Marks into the Oregon National Guard and said he was struck by his character and focus.

"He had a vision at his age," said Cox. "At 18 years old he knew what he wanted and most kids his age especially boys don't have that at all."

Most members of the Patriot Guard riding in the procession for Marks didn't know him, yet still felt ties to the fallen soldier.

"A lot of guys may have served in Vietnam and weren't treated fairly--they underwent a whole lot of issues and now is there chance to do it the right way, it's a passion," said Loun.

Marks step-father said the impact of the Patriot Guard on the family of a fallen soldier is difficult to put into words, but said he's certain his step-son would be proud.

"He'd be jazzed," said Mack.

Oregon Community pays last respects to two ORNG soldiers



Sgt. Earl D. Werner

The Oregon National Guard is saddened by the death of Sgt. Earl Werner and Spc. Taylor Marks.

Werner was killed when his convoy was attacked Aug. 28, 2009 in Rashid, Iraq. Werner was assigned to 41st Special Troops Battalion, 41st Infantry Brigade Combat Team. He was serving on his third deployment as a member of 1-82 Calvary, Task Force Stetson in Iraq.

Werner joined the Oregon Army National Guard on September 12th 2001. His goal after joining was to serve his country. He was promoted to the rank of Sergeant on September 27th 2005 and was on his third deployment with the National Guard. He previously served with the 2nd Battalion, 162nd Infantry in 2004 and with the 234th Engineer Company in 2007 in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom.

He is survived by his wife, Casey, and son, Justin, 19, of Amboy, Wash.



Spc. Taylor D. Marks

Spc. Taylor D. Marks was killed when his convoy was attacked Aug. 28, 2009 in Rashid, Iraq.

Marks was assigned to Bravo Company, 41st Special Troops Battalion, 41st Infantry Brigade Combat Team. Marks joined the Oregon Army National Guard after attending a weekend training session with a friend. His goal after joining the Oregon Guard was to continue his education.

Marks was a recent graduate of the 35M Human Intelligence Collector school. He was selected and contracted to attend the prestigious Defense Language Institute at the Presidio of Monterey, Calif., but elected to defer his schooling in order to deploy with his unit.

Marks was born Nov. 9, 1989 in Salem, Ore. He was raised in the Monmouth, Ore. area and graduated from Central High School in 2008.

He is survived by his father, Morey Marks of Salem, Ore; mother Michelle Mack and stepfather Don Mack, of Monmouth, Ore.; step-sister Alexandria, age 19; and sister Courtney, age 15.

Deployed OR Guard members take on new role

Story and photo by
Spc. Anita VanderMolen,
41st Infantry Brigade Combat Team

SCANIA, Iraq -- Alpha Company 2nd Battalion, 162nd Infantry Regiment, Oregon National Guard, set out on their first, and last, convoy mission to Scania, July 31.

The company, driving 29 vehicles, brought personnel and their gear to Scania, a small base known as a truck stop, along Route Tampa. Alpha Co.'s mission was changed from convoy security to base security for Scania.

"We will operate the Base Defense Operations Center and Tactical Operations Center, provide base defense, the quick recovery force and the immediate reactionary force for Scania," said 1st Sgt. Geoffrey A. Mitokke, A Co., 2-162 Inf.

The company's QRF will supply wreckers if military and military-related vehicles associated with the convoys breakdown on the route. The base can see up to 24 convoys daily with as many as 30 rigs in each convoy. Route Tampa is a major north/south road from Kuwait to Mosul. The IRF is prepared to deal with base security issues in the case of indirect fire. The change made a positive difference for soldiers stationed there.

"There is more variety and we are better trained for that than sitting in vehicles all day," said Sgt. Jason Schimoniz, a truck commander for Alpha Co. "I'm okay without having to do convoy security."



Soldiers of A Company, 2nd Battalion, 162nd Infantry, 41st Infantry Brigade Combat Team, Oregon National Guard get staged for their first and last convoy mission. Their new mission includes providing base defense for Scania, Iraq, a quick recovery force, immediate reaction force and operating a base defense operations center and a tactical operations center.

Previously, units have passed through Scania staying only 90 days then moving on. Only the departing unit has stayed longer. A Co. is prepared to stay in Scania for the duration of their deployment.

"We are ready to start our duty," said Sgt. Moises Becerra, a team leader for the company. "We are no longer waiting for training or transportation. We are here on the ground ready to do our job. We can accomplish something."

NEWS

Camp Rosenbaum welcomes NORTHCOM Commander, Gen. Renuart



Photo by Tech. Sgt. Jefferson Thompson, Oregon Military Department

During a visit to the State of Oregon Gen. Victor E. Renuart, Commander North American Aerospace Defense Command and United States Northern Command, and retired Assistant Adjutant General, Oregon, Brig. Gen. Fred Rosenbaum share a lighthearted moment when they were introduced during Camp Rosenbaum July 22.

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

WARRENTON, Ore. -- During a visit to the State of Oregon, Gen. Victor E. Renuart, Commander of the North American Aerospace Defense Command and United States Northern Command, shares a lighthearted moment with retired Assistant Adjutant General of Oregon, Brig. Gen. Fred M. Rosenbaum after they were introduced during Camp Rosenbaum, July 22.

The introduction was made possible while Renuart visited the state as part of his duties to oversee homeland security operations, July 21-22. The trip marked his second official visit to Oregon in the last two years--the first being for TOPOFF-4, an anti-terrorism exercise held in October 2007.

Renuart toured Oregon Air National Guard units in Portland as well as the

116th Air Control Squadron at Camp Rilea in Warrenton, Ore., and discussed with Oregon's leadership the 142nd Fighter Wing's role in the overall Air Sovereignty mission.

His visit happened to coincide with a dedication of The Garden of Gratitude at Camp Rilea in honor of Rosenbaum, 83, who started the camp 39 years ago.

Rosenbaum served as Chairman of the Housing Authority of Portland, and during the conversation with Renuart he recounted how he brought his own children to the Army post in the late 60s, and how the visits were the genesis to hold an annual camp there, which would provide a positive, formative experience for disadvantaged Portland-area youth.

Volunteers from the Portland Police, Oregon National Guard and nine housing authorities throughout Oregon and Washington participate in the annual event.

Roughly 6,500 children have attended the camp to date.

Columbia River hosts Nationally recognized bass tourney

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

UMATILLA, Ore. -- 170 Professional anglers came from around the country to participate in the National Guard Western Divisional Bass Fishing Tournament held in Umatilla, June 24-27.

In addition to sponsoring the tournament the National Guard sponsors a team of professional anglers to help recruiters reach fishing enthusiasts.

"The National Guard is a perfect fit for fishermen and outdoorsmen, they are good people for the Guard because they are able to take care of themselves and when something needs to be done they make it happen," said Clifford Pirch, a National Guard pro angler.

Lt. Gen. Clyde Vaughn, director of the Army National Guard, has previously agreed with that sentiment saying, "We're all about service, what we like about fishing is the discipline, the drug-free environment and service to the nation-- that's the same thing we ask of our soldiers."

Each tournament day began with the posting of the colors by an Oregon Army National Guard honor guard and ended with a weigh-in ceremony held in a "Fun Zone,"

a large Wal Mart parking lot resembling a carnival. The Oregon Guard provided entertainment including live music from Almost Friday, an obstacle course, a booth featuring live fishing, and a temporary amphitheater where the televised weigh-in occurred each day. The entire tournament was set to air Sunday, Sept. 13 at 9:30 a.m. on Verses Country channel.

"It provides great exposure for our fighting force and puts members of our target market in front of our recruiters," said Oregon National Guard Marketing Manager, Guy Britnell.

It also gave the professional anglers a chance to interact with Oregon National Guard soldiers. Eight soldiers hopped into four different National Guard pro bass boats and enjoyed a morning of very productive fishing.

"That was the fish of a lifetime," exclaimed medically retired Staff Sgt. Luke Wilson who now works for the Oregon National Guard Reintegration Team after catch-



National Guard Fishing Team professional angler Justin Lucas of Folsom, Calif., casts for small mouth bass on the Columbia River in Oregon after launching from the Umatilla, Ore. marina at 6:30 a.m., June 26, 2009. The team traveled from the State of Kentucky to the Pacific Northwest to compete against other professional anglers in the National Guard Western Division event which began June 24 and ended June 28.

ing a sizeable small-mouth bass while fishing off Pirch's professional bass boat Saturday morning.

"They are serving our country putting their lives in the line of fire, the least I can do is take them out for some fishing to say thanks," said Pirch.

Pfc. Beau Jones from Hermiston with 3rd Battalion, 116th Cavalry also fished from the boat and caught several nice small-mouth bass.

"Usually I don't have this much luck fishing," he said with a grin.

The National Guard Team consists of 15 anglers who will compete in upcoming events in Appling, Ga. Sept. 16-19 at Clarks Hill Lake and following that in Oakley, Calif. at California Delta Sept. 23-26.

"Being able to just be associated with the honor and integrity is a personal honor for me," said Pirch. "To represent the men and women who serve our country and preserve the freedoms we enjoy--how could you have a better sponsor than that?" The tournament champion, one Neil Russell of Nampa, Idaho,

hoisted an oversized check for \$105,000 after the final weigh-in of the tournament where he racked up a take of nearly 45 pounds of small mouth bass over the four day tournament.

For more information on the National Guard pro fishing schedule, tournament results and more, visit: www.nationalguard.com/guardevents/fishing.php



Medically retired Staff Sgt. Luke Wilson shows off what he later said was "the fish of a lifetime" during a "fish with a pro" event during the last day of the National Guard Western Division event on the Columbia River in Oregon, June 27, 2009. Wilson sustained an injury which took his entire left leg in a rocket propelled grenade attack while deployed to Iraq in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom in 2004.



Left: The champion angler, Neil Russell, caught nearly 45 pounds of small mouth bass over the four day tournament and netted a check for \$105,000.

Below: National Guard Fishing Team professional angler Clifford Pirch takes two Oregon National Guard soldiers onto the Columbia River in Oregon at speeds up to 70 miles-per-hour. The soldiers were selected for an opportunity to "fish with a pro" during the final day of the final day of the National Guard Western Division event on the Columbia River in Oregon, June 27.



NEWS

CDC advises employers on flu protocol

Story and photo courtesy,
U.S. Department of
Health and Human Services

WASHINGTON -- Department of Commerce (DOC) Secretary Gary Locke, Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) Secretary Kathleen Sebelius, and Homeland Security (DHS) Secretary Janet Napolitano today announced new guidance for businesses to plan for and respond to the upcoming flu season.

The guidance, released by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), is designed to help employers prepare now for the impact that seasonal and 2009 H1N1 influenza could have this fall and winter on their employees and operations.

Employers' plans should address such points as encouraging employees with flu-like symptoms or illness to stay home, operating with reduced staffing, and possibly having employees who are at higher risk of serious medical complications from infection work from home, according to the CDC guidance.

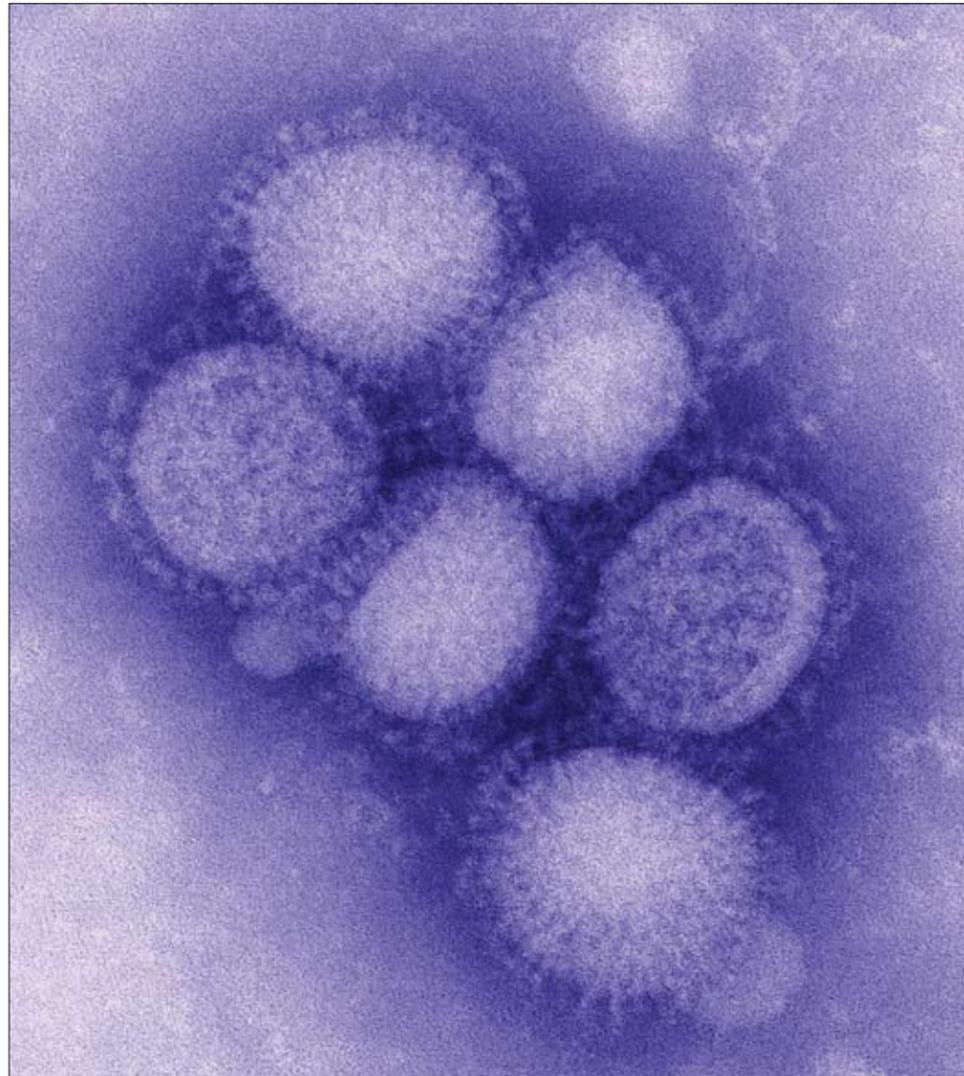
It is not known whether the 2009 H1N1 influenza virus will cause more illness or more severe illness in the coming months, but the CDC recommends that everyone be prepared for influenza. Because seasonal and 2009 H1N1 influenza pose serious health threats, employers should work with employees to develop and implement plans that can reduce the spread of flu, and to encourage seasonal flu vaccination as well as H1N1 vaccination when that vaccine becomes available.

Secretary Locke suggested businesses set the right tone in the workplace. That means implementing common sense measures to reduce the risk of spreading the flu and encouraging workers who are sick to stay home.

"The President has mobilized the federal government to get America prepared," DOC Secretary Locke said. "But government can't do it alone. For this effort to be successful, we need the business community to do its part." Making the right decisions will not only improve public health, it also has the potential to protect economic productivity: Employees who are sick and stay home will not spread the flu in the workplace.

"This new guidance will help our private sector partners continue to prepare for the upcoming flu season to keep our economy functioning and our critical infrastructure secure," said DHS Secretary Napolitano. "Ensuring business continuity is important to our cooperative efforts to keep Americans safe."

There are many actions that can be taken to help reduce the spread of flu. The guidance



A photo taken through a microscope of the newly identified H1N1 influenza virus in the CDC Influenza Laboratory.

notes the importance of using these actions, including regular and frequent hand washing and routine cleaning of commonly touched surfaces.

"One of the most important things that employers can do is to make sure their human resources and leave policies are flexible and follow public health guidance," said HHS Secretary Kathleen Sebelius. "If employees are sick, they need to be encouraged to stay home. If people begin to experience flu-like symptoms at work, they should be sent home and possibly encouraged to seek medical treatment."

Employers should review sick leave policies and ensure employees understand them, according to the guidance. Employers should try to make sick leave policies flexible for workers who may have to stay home with ill family members or if a child's school is

closed, the CDC says.

Employers should consider offering vaccine against seasonal flu, and encourage employees to be vaccinated against seasonal and H1N1 flu, the guidance says.

Employers also might cancel non-essential face-to-face meetings and travel, and space employees farther apart, the report says. And employees who are at higher risk for flu complications might be allowed to work from home or stay home if the flu is severe, it says.

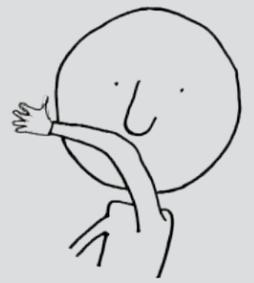
"Keeping our nation's workers safe is a top priority," said Deputy Secretary of Labor Seth Harris, who participated in the announcement. "Faced with a renewed H1N1 challenge during the coming flu season, we are developing tools that will help ensure America's workers stay healthy and our businesses remain viable."

For more information, visit: www.flu.gov

'Swine Flu' prep a 'must' for Oregon



Jennifer Bailey,
Public Affairs
Coordinator
Oregon Emergency
Management



SALEM, Ore. -- H1N1 or what some call Swine Flu is very serious. It can be unpredictable in nature, but we can help prevent the spread if we work at it.

Oregon Emergency Management takes this flu seriously, however we don't want people to live in fear. Since knowledge is power, here is some knowledge to help you get through this season safely.

Get your regular seasonal flu shot. This is not for H1N1 but will cover you for three other strains that may show up this winter and it is possible to get H1N1 and a different flu at the same time.

If you are identified as at risk for H1N1, you will need to get 2 shots a few weeks apart. Information can be found at <http://www.flu.oregon.gov/> concerning those who are the priority groups for those shots.

The flu is a set of symptoms: respiratory, fever, headache, cough, sore throat, muscle aches. It can put you in bed for 7 - 10 days and the cough and fatigue can last for a month or more.

The flu is spread by droplets (coughing/sneezing). H1N1 has heavy droplets that fall to the ground within 3 feet. So - keep your distance, COVER your cough with your sleeve, or as my mom taught me - cough and sneeze down into your shirt.

Wash hands regularly, keep them out of our mouth, nose, and eyes, and use antibacterial waterless hand cleanser. If you don't feel well, stay home!

We can stay healthy if we are considerate of others and work together.

Oregon Military Museum receives conservation books

Story by Tracy Thoennes,
Oregon Military Museum
Curator

CLACKAMAS, Ore. -- Objects and artifacts held by the Oregon Military Museum will be preserved for future generations with help from a set of conservation books and resources.

The series, "Connecting to Collections Bookshelf", is a core set of conservation books and resources, donated by the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS).

Over the past year and a half, IMLS has awarded nearly 2,800 free sets of the Conservation Bookshelf, in cooperation with the American Association for State and Local History (AASLH).

The Oregon Military Museum is set to receive their set, following a

competitive application in which they described the needs and plans for the care of its collections.

The set comprises resources for collections typically found in art or history museums and in libraries' special collections.

The IMLS Bookshelf is a crucial component of Connecting to Collections: A Call to Action, a conservation initiative that the Institute launched in 2006.

IMLS began the initiative in response to a 2005 study released in partnership with Heritage Preservation, A Public Trust at Risk: The Heritage Health Index Report on the State of America's Collections.

"When IMLS launched this initiative to improve the dire state of our nation's collections, we understood that the materials gathered for the Bookshelf



Stock Photo by Spc. BZ Zeller, 115th MPAD

A U.S. Army L-19 Birddog aircraft sits along with other property of the Oregon Military Museum with its wings removed in preparation for the move to the new location at Camp Withycombe.

would serve as important tools for museums, libraries, and archives nationwide," said Anne-Imelda Radice, the Director of IMLS.

In the last and final

round of awards, 907 museums, libraries, and archives were selected to receive the Bookshelf. The Bookshelf program distributed a total of 2,751 sets of books, online resources,

and a user's guide to institutions in every part of the country.

To learn more about the IMLS, please visit: www.imls.gov

FEATURES

Oregon Army National Guard soldier and her companion help servicemembers overseas and at home

Stress is for the dogs

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

SALEM, Ore. -- During her deployment to Afghanistan, Oregon Army National Guard Warrant Officer 1 Alicia Fuller said she noticed that when a dog was around everyone's spirits lifted.

"There is something about having a dog around that seems to make everything better," said Fuller.

That observation of "dog therapy" has morphed into a program which benefits Oregon's citizen-soldiers by helping ease battlefield stress. VetDogs, a subsidiary of the Guide Dog Foundation for the Blind, was originally created to provide wounded military veterans with specialized service dogs to help them maintain their independence

and mobility. Now these trained dogs are being sent over to Iraq and Afghanistan to help soldiers deal with combat stress.

"Studies show that having dogs in theatre reduces stress by about 50 percent," said Fuller.

For Fuller, it was her personal love of dogs and seeing the impact they could have on soldiers

which prompted her to investigate how she could help in that process.

After returning from Afghanistan, she researched and acquired a personal protection dog, but when her dog arrived Fuller said her personality was more of what she described as a "flower child" than a trained bodyguard.

Still, Fuller named her Khaos. "I started pushing her toward therapy because it seemed like where her personality was going," said Fuller.

Fuller said Khaos has an amazing ability to pick out people who need her the most.

"She's basically a stress dog," Fuller said. "If you are under



bright white letters, Khaos is all business. She even has her own official identification badge.

Fuller began intensive training with Khaos, achieving full certification in only 14 months. As part of the 41st Brigade Combat Team, she also taught Khaos the finer points of being around Army weapons and the sounds of battle.

"I've had her around field artillery weapons and every kind of pistol rifle you can imagine," said Fuller.

But her plans to take her on deployment changed in January of 2009, when brigade leadership said she would be going to work at Joint Force Headquarters in



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

Left: Oregon Army National Guard Warrant Officer Alicia Fuller gets a "high-five" from her dog Khaos, who is a certified therapy dog, in front of Joint-Force Headquarters in Salem, Ore. Fuller, who works with the Recruit and Sustainment Program, will soon deploy with Khaos to National Guard Bureau where the dog will be able to work with injured soldiers at Walter Reed Medical Center.

Salem instead. Fuller settled in as part of the Recruit and Sustainment Program with Khaos in tow.

Fuller is now on a tour at National Guard Bureau, and hopes Khaos will be able to assist with injured soldiers recovering at Walter Reed Medical Center in

Washington, D.C. Even though Khaos will be working as a full-time stress therapy dog, she adds that the dog is not a "one-trick pony."

"My biggest hope is to get her national certification and start cross training her as a search (and rescue) dog," added Fuller.

“My biggest hope is to get her national certification and start training her as a search dog.”

— Warrant Officer 1 Alicia Fuller, Oregon soldier

stress, she can pick people up. She'll go up to you and give you hugs or kisses or whatever you need," Fuller added.

Small for her breed, Khaos exudes all the attributes of puppyhood. But once Fuller fastens on the specially-designed vest, emblazoned with the words "Certified Therapy Dog" in

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Joint Task Force commander thanks soldiers

Dear General Rees,
I would like to take this opportunity to personally thank you for the honor of having your soldiers be a part of my Task Force. The Combined Joint Task Force Phoenix year-long deployment in support of Operation Enduring Freedom is quickly ending. Our Warriors have been working throughout Afghanistan participating in a mission like none of us have ever experienced before. Both challenging and rewarding, each of us will carry home life long memories of a job well done.

Our Warriors have performed in an extraordinary manner, and as we begin preparing to deploy back home, I would like to thank you for your support. Your commitment as The Adjutant General of deployed Oregon National Guardsmen is sincerely appreciated. I have no doubt that the deployment of your soldiers has created additional hardship within your organization. It is my hope that as your soldiers return, a semblance of normalcy will soon return. Please know that your support and commitment to our Warriors is sincerely appreciated.

Thank you and God Bless

America.

Sincerely,
Steven P. Huber
Brigadier General
Office of the Commanding
General Combined Joint Task
Force Phoenix Kabul, Afghanistan

The deployed soldiers were Col. Clifford D. McCabe, Lt. Col. Anthony G. Offutt, Lt. Col. Meloni R. Beauchamp, Staff Sgt. Jeffery G. Stivason, and Staff Sgt. Donald E. Fichtner. ~Ed.

Lebanon city engineer thanks 224 EN Commander

Capt Bessman:
Please pass on the City's sincere thanks for a job well done to the members of your unit that worked so hard on the building demolition and site preparation at two sites for the City of Lebanon. Your unit's outstanding efforts have facilitated the completion of a long planned project that was in jeopardy of even starting because of economic conditions.

One of the sites will become an expanded storage yard for Lebanon's Public Works Operations crews and will also serve as temporary parking for the Alpha Co., 1st Battalion, 82 Cavalry Lebanon Army National Guard unit during their normal duty weekends. The second site

will serve as overflow parking for the Guard. These should help resolve on-going neighborhood issues and parking conflicts for the local Guard unit and provide much needed operational space during drill weekends.

While the projects provided valuable equipment operator and project management training for your unit members, the City appreciates the collaborative environment and willingness to work with City Public Works staff that your members demonstrated throughout their time on site. In spite of a few logistical and coordination Issues with the waste hauling contractor, a majority of project task items were completed within the allotted time.

The City appreciates the on-going relationship with the 224th Engineer Company and the numerous community projects that you have been involved with over the years. Your commitment to both community and country has definitely enhanced the livability of the local area, our state and the USA.

Again, thank you for your service.

Respectfully:
Daniel J Grassick, PE
City Engineer,
City of Lebanon
Public Works

COMMENTARY

STARBASE Program develops future OR scientists, engineers

Editorial by
Lt. Col. Steven Deptula,
Counterdrug Support Program
Commander

SALEM, Ore. -- The Department of Defense STARBASE program is filling a vital need by encouraging Oregon youngsters to consider careers in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM).

"Why is this so important?" Consider this: the primary contributions to economic and national security often come from physical scientists, engineers, and mathematicians.

In the past 50 years, these professions have created more than half of our nation's economic growth. These are the people who create, manage, and generate new methods and ideas. Their work leads to innovation, strength and progress.

Unfortunately, despite an increasing demand for STEM professionals in both private and public industry, the number of American students preparing for these careers remains stagnant. As a vivid example of the looming crisis, DoD laboratories expect to lose 13,000 scientists and engineers by 2015.

At the same time, demand for scientists is projected to increase by 17 percent, and for engineers 22 percent. In short, as a nation we are not producing enough STEM professionals to meet the demand. This has serious economic and national security implications.

The DoD STARBASE program was developed to capture the interest

of students and empower them to consider STEM careers. It encourages them to reach beyond their current circumstances and envision themselves in careers they otherwise might not have considered. Over the years, it has become known as one of the nation's leading STEM education programs, with 60 "academies" located in 34 states, the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico.

Oregon has two STARBASE academies. One is located at Kingsley Field in Klamath Falls the other at Portland Air National Guard Base. During the school year, each site hosts students from local schools for the five-day program. During this time, students participate in exciting "hands-on, mind-on" experiments and activities designed to stimulate their interest in STEM.

They explore aerodynamics and learn about aircraft flight principles; design, build and launch model rockets using propellants made from soda and other common household substances; use computers to design a space station; and in Portland they design and manufacture a working flashlight using computers and 3-dimensional manufacturing equipment.

During the 2008 school year, the Oregon STARBASE program hosted a total of 1,885 students from four school districts, as well as several private schools. In addition, 76 teachers from these schools also participated in the week-long curriculum with their students.

If you would like know more about DoD STARBASE program, or are interested in volunteering, please contact Lt. Col. Steve Deptula, Counterdrug Support Program commander, at (503) 584-3281.

NEWS

Metals firm provides scholarships to soldiers, families



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

Oregon Governor Ted Kulongoski presents Calbag Metals President, Warren Rosenfeld with a plaque during a ceremony commemorating Armed Forces Day at the Capitol Mall in Salem, Ore., May 13. Employees of the Portland based company donated a portion of their profits to form the Calbag Metals Company Endowment Scholarship, a self-sustaining fund which awarded six scholarships to Oregon Guard members and their families.

**Commentary by
Col. Roberta Janssen,
Oregon State Defense Force**

SALEM, Ore. -- Calbag Metals of Portland made the largest single donation to an Oregon National Guard endowment fund that provides soldiers and their families education scholarships. The metals firm headed by Warren Rosenfeld recently made a \$70,000 to the fund.

The purpose of Calbag Metals Company Endowment Scholarship fund is to raise money for college scholarships for active Oregon National Guard members, their families, and life members of the Oregon National Guard Association. Additionally it serves to raise funds to educate the public on the mission of the Oregon National Guard as allowed by law and approved by bylaws, articles of incorporation and/or directed by the Board of Directors.

This became a separate fund in 2006 with the establishment of a tax deductible 501(c)3.

The Oregon National Guard Association has been providing scholarships since 1995 and began with several \$500 scholarships.

In 2008 and 2009, the scholarship fund provided 12 scholarships (six each year) of \$1500 each. Calbag Metals Company contributions have enabled the increase in the number and amount of our scholarships. Calbag's endowment will allow the Oregon National Guard Association to continue providing scholarships in the future.

To date Calbag has donated \$180,171 toward the Scholarship Endowment, with \$88,043 in 2009. Because of their generosity, the Oregon National Guard has named the scholarship the Calbag Metals Company Endowment Scholarship effective Feb. 14, 2009.

New GI Bill Transfer rule



Story courtesy ODVA

WASHINGTON -- members nearing the end of their careers will find it easier than first thought to transfer new Post 9/11 GI Bill education benefits to their spouse or children, under Department of Defense regulations.

Servicemembers who elect to transfer GI Bill benefits will be allowed to modify or revoke that decision at any time, thus keeping control of a benefit with an average start value estimated at \$75,000 to \$90,000.

Bob Clark, assistant director of accession policy in the Office of the Secretary of Defense, said the transferability feature of the new GI Bill should comfort many long-serving careerists – including enlisted members facing high-year tenure rules or officers facing mandatory retirement – who worried about being denied transferability because they might not meet a requirement in law to serve four additional years.

Clark said the four-year requirement will be relaxed, and for some waived entirely, for individuals near to retirement. The regulation on transferability isn't final yet because it hasn't been signed.

"We're awaiting a general counsel opinion on the [need for] publishing them in the Federal Register," Clark said.

The Department of Veterans Affairs administers all veterans' education benefits. Defense officials are only responsible for transferability policy because of the potential impact on recruiting and retention. The VA began accepting Post 9/11 GI Bill applications on May 1.

The transferability details are extensive and can be reviewed in detail online at: www.military.com/features/0,15240,190065,00.html

ELIGIBILITY – Only members on active duty or in the Selected Reserve on or after Aug. 1, 2009, can transfer new GI Bill benefits, and only spouse or to children or to any combination thereof. Immediate family status will be confirmed through the Defense Eligibility Enrollment Reporting System (DEERS). Unused benefits, up to the full 36 months, can be transferred.

Iraq unit welcomed home with 'Aviator Ale'

CONTINUED FROM FRONT PAGE

Rees, said in addition to theater aviation operations, the unit took part in moving about 10 tons of cargo over the course of their deployment, as well as assisting with real-world medical evacuation missions with the Oregon MEDEVAC company, Charlie 7-158 Aviation.

"Morale and motivation was high," he said. "I was very impressed by the unit's soldiers and their work ethic."

The unit conducted flight missions, transported equipment and personnel, and supported other units' missions during their combined year-long deployment.



Rogue Brewery bottled a limited run of "Aviator Ale" to commemorate the return of Oregon Army National Guard's 2-641 Aviation, from a deployment to Iraq. The unit was honored during a demobilization ceremony held July 13 in Salem, Ore. The unit conducted flight missions, transported equipment and personnel, and supported other units' missions over the course of one year. (Photo by Tech. Sgt. Nick Choy, Oregon Military Dept. Public Affairs)

SSLIP donates to ORNG Association



Photo by Tech. Sgt. Jefferson Thompson

On July 8, 2009 Brig. Gen. Charles L. Yriarte presented Maj. Gen. Raymond F. Rees, The Adjutant General, Oregon a check for \$15,191.71 for the Oregon National Guard Association from Oregon National Guard Benefits Inc. This is the Officer Association's portion of \$30,383.43 that was received from the ING/ReliaStar Insurance Company as a rate credit for outstanding participation of Guard Members and the efforts of Art Liss, the benefits coordinator, through the State Sponsored Life Insurance Program. The other half will go to the Enlisted Association.

Oregon National Guard Benefits Inc. is a non-profit organization created for the specific purpose of providing benefits to members of the Oregon National Guard; members of the Oregon National Guard Officers' Association, the Enlisted Association, Retirees and in some cases family members. This year, over \$46,000 in life insurance benefits were paid to beneficiaries of 13 members of the Oregon National Guard. The State Sponsored Life Insurance Program provides all members of the Oregon National Guard with a \$1,000 Life Insurance Policy at no cost. Oregon National Guard Benefits Inc. works closely with the National Guard's professional associations to search for new benefits for members of the Oregon Guard.

CST exercises with civil authorities



Photo by Staff Sgt. Kevin Hartman, Oregon Military Department Public Affairs

Sgt. Stephen Freeland and Staff Sgt. Robert McCree with the 102 Civil Support Team, Oregon Army National Guard, scan for hazardous material in the old Hynex building in West Eugene during a joint exercise with the Eugene Fire and Police Departments 22 July, 2009. The exercise scenario was designed to enhance agency abilities to react to hazardous materiel incidents.

NEWS

Oregon soldiers fight for Army-wide berth

State hosts the first official Army combatives tournament

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

SALEM, Ore.— Soldiers of the Oregon National Guard took to the mat in the first combatives competition held in the state, July 25 in Salem, Ore.

The Oregon soldiers participated in what is rapidly becoming a staple of Army training.

In 2004 then Chief of Staff of the Army, Gen. Peter J. Schoomaker approved the Modern Army Combatives Program or MACP which directed “that every soldier will experience hands-on combatives training prior to deploying.”

At its most basic level the program aims, in the words of its governing regulation, “to equip the soldier mentally to engage and kill the enemies of the United States in close combat.”

One soldier explained his reasons for showing up on a Saturday and taking on younger combatants with reflections from a recent deployment.

“When I was a commander over in the Middle East I realized that the fight wasn’t at 300 meters, it was at 30 meters,” said Maj. Ed Winkler, the oldest contestant at 43 years of age. “We need to be able to fight at very close range, and it was obvious to me that the hand-to-hand skills are so beneficial.”

And so he choose to engage opponents half his age at the Anderson Readiness Center, taking fourth place overall for his weight class.

His statement is perhaps the most comprehensive and pressing argument for a program that has potential dangers. Certainly allowing soldiers to strike, choke, and use submission techniques that place extreme and sudden stress on a joint, may produce injuries. However, the tournament’s organizer Sgt. 1st Class David Hagen states that soldiering requires the courage to engage the enemy, “well a lot of people aren’t willing to engage the enemy because they don’t feel comfortable—this program establishes the ability to say ‘yeah, I’m ok to get in there and if I can’t shoot them I will attack them and I will end this fight on my feet.’”

Another soldier who is heavily involved in the Oregon National Guard combatives program credits the training with a sense of self-assurance.

“I keep referring to it as a newfound confidence even to a greater degree than being a runner-up at nationals as a collegiate wrestler, now I have a confidence that will carry over to a war zone,”



Sgt. 1st Class David Hagen designed the Oregon National Guard Combatives Program at the request of Oregon Command Sergeant Major, Brunk Conley, following a deployment to Afghanistan. Several months of planning brought this tournament, the first of its kind for the state, to fruition.



Maj. Ed Winkler and Sgt. Joe Seeger struggle for dominance during the competition. Winkler went on to win this match and came in fourth overall in his weight class. He was motivated to get involved in the tournament following a deployment to the Middle East where he said he realized “that the fight wasn’t at 300 meters it was at 30 meters.” He added that combatives represent some of the best preparation available for the battlefield.

Right: 2nd Lt. Chris Wahlstrom strikes his opponent on the back and shoulders, head strikes with a closed fist were prohibited.

said Spc. Rick Story. “You know what to do in certain situations, you have body awareness, if somebody grabs you from behind you know how to react.”

With his interest sparked by the Army program, Story has chosen to move far beyond the basic qualifications and after 10 months of intensive training has been awarded a four-fight contract with the UFC or Ultimate Fighting Championship. But he says professional fighting has a slightly different focus than Army combatives.

“We are training for war, not to have a competition,” adds Sgt. Joe Seeger.

The impetus for this first of what is planned to be an annual event came from the State Command Sergeant Major’s office when Command Sgt. Maj. Brunk Conley attended the Best Warrior Competition.

“I went down to Fort Benning, Ga. for the competition and they were also having the combatives tournament and we didn’t have any representation and I knew that was an injustice because we have some of the best fighters in the world up here in Oregon,” said Conley. “So that was one of my goals—to start this tournament and reward some of the participants with a trip to the national tournament.”

The competition identified five soldiers who will make the trip to the Army-wide combatives tournament scheduled for September 18-20: 2nd Lt. Chris Wahlstrom, Sgt. Trevor Wesley, Staff Sgt. Jeremy Carver, Pfc. Kyle



Stimpson, and Staff Sgt. Michael Sixel.

The results of the first Oregon National Guard Tournament were as follows: Wahlstrom won the heavy weight division, Wesley won the light heavy weight division, Carver took the middle weight division, and Stimpson took the welterweight division.

Each of the winners was presented coins and engraved knives as well as a check for \$100.

Every contestant was presented with a coin by the sergeant major, Conley, who congratulated them and thanked them for their participation.



Photo illustration by Sgt. Eric Rutherford, Oregon Military Department

OR Soldiers head to Singapore for Tiger Balm

CAMP PASIR LABA, Singapore — Headquarters and Headquarters Detachment, 82nd Brigade intelligence non-commissioned officer Sgt. 1st Class Clayton Owenson, and administrative non-commissioned officer Staff Sgt. James Mayes, Oregon Army National Guard, inspect a Singaporean SAR-21 battle rifle in Singapore, July 11. Owenson, of Tigard, and Mayes of Portland are members of Operation Tiger Balm 09, a coalition training exercise between the Singapore Army, and citizen-soldiers and citizen-airmen from Ore., Hawaii, Utah and Ariz. Security badges have been altered for security purposes.

Air Assault School takes place in Warrenton



Photo by Spc. John T. Dowd, 115th MPAD

First Sgt Dan D. Swearingen and 2nd Lt. Patrick Mortell cautiously move forward to become the anchors for the soldiers who are going to repel from the UH-60 Black Hawk helicopter at the Air Assault School at Camp Rilea Armed Forces Training Facility in Warrenton, Ore. on June 24.

NEWS



“Oregon’s Own” 234th Band tours Eastern Oregon

Story by Lt. Col. Alisha Hamel,
ORNG Heritage Outreach Program

SALEM, Ore. — “Oregon’s Own” 234th Army Band is touring Eastern and Central Oregon this week and next to celebrate Oregon’s 150th Birthday.

The Oregon National Guard is also strengthening its ties to Eastern and Central Oregon through the armories and the soldiers that live there.

Band leader, Warrant Officer 2 Ashley Alexander, said the mission of the band is to be the liaison between the community and the National Guard.

“We are Governor Kulongoski’s and Maj. Gen. Rees’ gift back to the citizens and communities of the state,” Alexander said.

Alexander said the band’s tours of eastern Oregon are two-fold; to get in touch with communities that they normally don’t perform in front of, and as a tribute for Oregon’s sesquicentennial celebration.

Large crowds turned out for the band’s first stop in Hermiston. Irving Borchert, a WWII veteran and past superintendent of the Umatilla schools said it was a great idea to have the band come to Hermiston.

“The people in Portland think eastern Oregon is only Pendleton,” he said. “This is a good chance to hear the Oregon National Guard band. It is also a great chance to showcase the Guard in another way besides just hearing about them being sent off to war.”

Dean Brickley, a reporter for the East Oregonian and past bugler, knows the band well and enjoys their music.

“I’ve heard “Oregon’s Own” before so we are excited that they are here tonight,” Brickley said. “We are both music lovers, and I was in a drum and bugle corps so this kind of music is who I am.”

When the 234th Army Band played at the Hermiston High School auditorium, high school band teacher, Kim Walker, was able to conduct one of the songs. Following her set, the audience exploded with applause and calls of “We love you Ms. Walker!”

Hermiston High School sophomore and clarinet player Brittany Woods, said Walker was very excited to be able to conduct a band of this caliber.

“I thought it was really cool that she got to conduct,” Woods said. “We play some of this type of music for graduation.”

“I came tonight because I really wanted to see this concert,” Woods added. “I didn’t know the Oregon National Guard had a band.”

The band continued to play celebratory music of Oregon’s 150th birthday, including a multimedia show featuring imagery and music with the theme of, “Land of Empire Builders,” and recorded comments from Governor Kulongoski and Maj. Gen. Rees.

Sgt. 1st Class John Skelton, a long-time member of the band and one of the band’s conductors said the band typically celebrates Oregon in its performances, but because of the 150th birthday celebration, the concerts took on a very special feel—especially being able to work with the Portland band, Pink Martini on the show

“Oregon! Oregon!”

“Hopefully people connect and find something that we have in common to celebrate,” Skelton said. “These concerts are joyful.”

Skelton said most soldiers in the band stay on as members for many years. Many leave only due to requirements for retirement age.

“We are the public image of the Oregon Guard,” Skelton added.

The band is scheduled to perform with Pink Martini in “Oregon! Oregon!” at the Oregon State Fair in Salem, at 8:00 p.m. on August 28. They will also perform on Aug. 29 at the Les Schwab Theater in Bend, Aug. 30 at The Britt in Jacksonville, and on Sept. 5 at the Oregon Zoo in

Lower home loan rates from Oregon Veterans Affairs

SALEM, Ore. — The Oregon Department of Veterans’ Affairs (ODVA) has announced their ORVETS home loan program is currently offering loan interest rates approaching 30 year lows.

Qualified veterans may now get a fixed rate mortgage for as low as 4.75 percent with a 1.5 percent loan origination fee, or a 4.875 percent rate with a 1 percent origination fee.

The ORVET home loan program is a state of Oregon veteran benefit and is separate from the federal VA home loan guaranty program. Even if a veteran has purchased a home using the federal VA program, they may still be eligible for an ORVET home loan.

“Our veterans always deserve the very best we can offer them. They have served our country with distinction,” said Jim Willis, Director of the Oregon Department of Veterans’ Affairs. “Our agency’s new reduced rates may allow some of them to take advantage of a great opportunity for home ownership.”

A requirement for the ORVET program is that veterans must apply before they reach the 30-year anniversary of their military discharge date.

The current maximum loan amount for veterans using the ORVETS home loan program is \$417,000. Federal rules prohibit ODVA from refinancing most existing mortgages.

For more information about ORVET home loans, contact a local mortgage lender, or ODVA at 1-888-673-8387 or 503-373-2051.

New State ESGR Chair sought

The Oregon Committee of the Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve (ESGR) is seeking nominations of qualified volunteers to become the organization’s new state chairman. The former commander of the Oregon Air National Guard, Brig. Gen. (ret.) Bill Doctor, will be stepping down in October 2010 after completing two three-year terms as the state’s ESGR chair.

The mission of ESGR is to gain and maintain employer support for Guard and Reserve service by recognizing outstanding support, increasing awareness of federal law, and resolving conflicts through mediation. Educating both employers and employees about the Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act (USERRA) of 1994 helps to guarantee that

returning military members are not discriminated against, disadvantaged and are promptly reemployed in their civilian jobs upon their return from duty.

Doctor has led the volunteer organization with executive director Col. (ret.) Bob Elliott since Oct. 2004. He stressed that ESGR’s mission has dramatically changed since its beginning in 1972.

“The involvement of the Guard and Reserve has increased more than 60 times since before 9-11, which means that more than any time in history, employers are feeling this overwhelming impact of their employees being away from work to serve in the military,” Doctor said.

“ESGR’s outreach has also increased dramatically; from focusing primarily on Guard and Reserve members to additionally increasing our focus on their employers,” he said. “After 2010, I foresee that the new operational Guard and Reserve will be called in increasing numbers.”

Doctor said the ideal candidate to become Oregon’s ESGR chair could be a former CEO with experience in the private sector and have some knowledge of the military. Military veterans with private sector backgrounds are also a bonus to serve in this volunteer leadership position.

This chair will continue developing a volunteer team and will supervise three paid professional contracted employees who assist in obtaining goals set by national ESGR office. They will report to the ESGR’s national chair and the Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Reserve Affairs. Nominations or questions can be directed to Doctor by calling 503-584-2841.

Tribes announce Paralympic Games veteran donation

GRAND RONDE, Ore. — The Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde have announced a donation of \$20,000 in support of an effort to bring a delegation of Oregon disabled veterans to the 2010 Paralympic Games in Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada.

The effort was initiated by Gov. Ted Kulongoski, himself a former U.S. Marine, who was seeking a way to connect Oregon veterans to the Paralympic Games, which will kick-off two weeks

after the closing ceremonies of the Winter Olympics in March 2010.

“This is an opportunity for our wounded service men and women to experience firsthand that through sports you can help yourself physically, mentally, and emotionally, and continue to show pride for your country,” Kulongoski said.

Tribal Council Chair Cheryl A. Kennedy will present the check

for \$20,000 to Oregon Department of Veterans Affairs’ Director Jim Willis on August 13 at 3:30 p.m. at the Afghan/Iraqi Freedom Memorial on the grounds of the Oregon Department of Veterans Affairs’ in Salem.

“I will always be grateful for the sacrifices veterans make,” Kennedy said. “As one of Oregon’s Treaty Tribes, we know many native people are veterans of our armed forces. We can’t overestimate their contributions.”

She described the Paralympics as a way to show disabled veterans “there is life to be lived yet.”

The “Get in the Game” Committee, which is organizing the trip, is planning to bring between 50 and 100 disabled veterans to Vancouver, each with a family member, to provide assistance. The delegation will attend the Opening Ceremonies of the Paralympic Games on March 12, 2010, stay overnight, and will attend the sledge hockey competition the following day. Sledge hockey is a sport that was designed to allow participants who have a physical disability to play the game of ice hockey.

Willis has been actively working to improve veterans’ services to Oregon’s tribes.

“Native Americans are disproportionately represented in our armed forces,” Willis said. “They are always the first to volunteer to serve our country, and we should all be grateful for their devotion. The Grand Ronde’s financial contribution to this Paralympics effort is just another example of their ongoing support of veterans.”

The “Get in the Game” Committee hopes to raise \$75,000 for the Paralympics trip. Contributions have already been received from TransCanada, Disabled American Veterans Chapter 1, and individual donations.

Retiree luncheon scheduled for Sept.

SALEM, Ore. — Twice each year, in April and September, the Oregon National Guard Retiree Council sponsors a retiree luncheon at the Salem Eagles lodge.

This year the luncheon is scheduled for Sept. 25, 2009.

All retired members of the Oregon National Guard, both Army and Air Guard, and former civilian employees of the Oregon Military Department are invited to attend.

The luncheon will begin with a “get acquainted time” starting at 11:30 a.m. and the meal is scheduled to be served at noon.

The Salem Eagles Lodge is located at 2771 Pence Loop in Salem, Ore.

A small fee is charged for the meal which includes both lunch and dessert.

If you would like to be added to the invitation list please contact retired Chief Warrant Officer 5 Lee Ashwill at (503) 393-9320 or leebarbiashwill@comcast.net.

Retiree Service Office

Open Tuesdays,
10 am to 2 pm

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

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

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

NEWS

Air Force plans to merge active-duty program with Oregon's 173rd Fighter Wing Air Guard Mission at Kingsley Field

173rd Carries the Load

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

KLAMATH FALLS, Ore. -- The Air Force has decided to merge its active-duty F-15c training with the Oregon Air National Guard. The merger comes as Air Education and Training Command adjusts to the drawdown of F-15 fighter aircraft following Defense Secretary Robert Gates recommended phasing out 112 of the service's 405 in current use, said Col. Jeff Kendall, deputy director for flying training at AETC Headquarters, in a recent interview with Air Force Times.

The 173rd Fighter Wing currently shares the training mission with the 325th Fighter Wing at Tyndall Air Force Base, Fla. however the planned merger would leave the Klamath Falls base as the sole provider.

"As a wing, we are prepared to accept all of the F-15c training for the Air Force and Air National Guard if or when the Air Force makes that decision," said Col. James Miller, the 173rd Fighter Wing commander.

Currently AETC has not said what they

plan to do with the crew chief apprentice course, which provides the final step for student crew chiefs as they move join the operational Air Force, but Kendall says Kingsley Field is one option.

"Recently, we received correspondence that AETC had done two site visits to determine which locale would assume the crew chief apprentice course and apparently, AETC has opted to continue that training mission at Seymour Johnson AFB, N.C.," said Miller. "It has gone forward for formal coordination although a final decision has not been made yet."

Until now Tyndall AFB has trained 60-80 pilots in a given year and the 173rd 40-45. According to Kendall that is approximately the number the Air Force will need following the draw down.

"Being the sole F-15 training base would not increase our flying hour program too dramatically," said Miller. "We currently fly between 4,800 and 5,200 hours and we would be able to accomplish the F-15 training mission within those hours and are postured to fly more."

Perhaps the most obvious sign of the merger for Klamath Falls residents will be four additional F-15 D-models which will



Photo by Master Sgt. Jerry Bynum, 173rd Fighter Wing Public Affairs

A 173rd Fighter Wing F-15 Eagle takes off from the Kingsley Field runway in Klamath Falls. Four miles southeast of Klamath Falls, Oregon, Kingsley Field has a long history in the Klamath Basin. Once a Naval Air Station and active duty Air Force Base, Kingsley Field is now the home of the 173rd Fighter Wing of the Oregon Air National Guard. Kingsley Field is named for an Oregon World War II hero who was killed in action.

increase the wing's aircraft count to about 25, said Kendall.

Another piece of the shared training mission is air battle manager training.

"In the last two years, the 173rd Fighter Wing has hosted approximately 80 air

battle manager students and instructors in support of the air battle manager syllabus and we continue to work with AETC to maintain this support," said Miller.

Tyndall AFB currently runs the new F-22 Raptor student pilot training course.

Four airmen reach to top enlisted grade



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

Chief Master Sergeants of the Oregon Air National Guard stand behind newly-promoted chiefs (from left to right); John M. Crawford, Jimmie L. Samuels, Timothy L. Gilbert, and Monte D. Page, as Brig. Gen. Bruce W. Prunk (far right), addresses the audience following the official promotion ceremony at the Portland Air National Guard Base, Aug. 2.

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

PORTLAND, Ore. -- The Oregon Air National Guard promoted four individuals to the rank of Chief Master Sergeant during their training weekend at the Portland Air National Guard Base, Aug. 2.

Promoted to the rank of E-9 were; Senior Master Sgts. John M. Crawford, Jimmie L. Samuels, Timothy L. Gilbert, and Monte D. Page. The afternoon ceremony

was attended by about 120 fellow airmen and family members.

Brig. Gen. Bruce W. Prunk, Commander of the Oregon Air National Guard, highlighted their collective contributions to the unit, and to the state of Oregon. He said the four embody the core values of the United States Air Force and the Oregon National Guard. Of the four airmen, three will remain at the Portland Air National Guard Base. Page will depart for a four-year tour at the National Guard Bureau starting Sept. 1.

Oregon crew chief deployed with WA Guard



Photo by Sgt. David Isaac, 1-161 INF Public Affairs

Spc. Adam Rieker, a medic from Yakima, Wash. with the Washington Army National Guard's HHC, 1-161 Infantry, on the top litter, and Spc. Andrew Phipps, a medic from Spokane, Wash. with C Co, 1-161 Infantry, act as patients while Sgt. Brandon Names, a crew chief from Albany, Ore. with the Oregon Army National Guard's Charlie Co. 7-158 Aviation observes during MEDEVAC training at Joint Base Balad, Iraq.

Commissary Returns to Roseburg

On-Site Case Lot Sale

Sponsored by the Travis AFB Commissary

Sept. 18 & 19, 9 a.m.- 5 p.m.

Douglas County Fairgrounds

Roseburg, Ore.

Sale open to all military ID cardholders
both active and retired

In an effort to bring the commissary benefit to Guard and Reserve units who do not have commissary facilities nearby, DeCA is bringing the benefit to you. The sale is scheduled for September 18-19 and will feature a variety of staples and dry goods including meat and vegetables. The sale is open to all veterans, active, Guard, Reservists, and retirees.

Adjutant General Select Honor Guard

If you are a responsible, sharp
individual who likes performing
in the public arena,
we NEED you!

First meeting:
1700 on 15 OCT 09, on the drill floor at the Military Department

For more information, contact:
MSG Jerry Glesmann, 503-449-2134