



# Oregon Sentinel

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE OREGON NATIONAL GUARD

## Far from home, still a family



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

Oregon Air National Guard Staff Sgt. Tyler Birman and Chief Master Sgt. Bob Birman of the 116th Air Control Squadron stand outside some of their current mission stations during pre-deploy training at Camp Rilea, Ore., on Feb. 3. The father and son Airmen are deploying to the Middle East as part of an Air Force Central Command (CENTAF) mission, and trained on the new Battle Control Center equipment, also known as BC-3, which they will use in-theater.

## Oregon Airmen train, deploy together as friends, family

Story by Tech. Sgt. John Hughel,  
142nd Fighter Wing  
Public Affairs Office

**WARRENTON, Ore.** -- Overlooking one of the highest points at Camp Rilea, radar and communications equipment from the 116th Air Control Squadron of the Oregon Air National Guard are providing surveillance and intelligence as part of their daily mission.

There, the Airmen who are responsible for collecting the data and communicating with U.S. military aircraft prepared for their unit's largest ever deployment of personnel in March, 2011.

In total, there were more than 80 Airmen from the Oregon Air National Guard mobilizing to the Middle East in support of Air Forces Central Command (CENTAF).

They were joined by three members of the 270th Air Control Squadron, based at Kingsley Field in Klamath Falls, Ore., one Airman from the 133rd Test Squadron, Iowa Air National Guard, and two members from the 141st Air Control Squadron, Puerto Rico Air National Guard.

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Salem, OR

OFFICE OF THE STATE ADJUTANT GENERAL  
DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY AND AIR FORCE  
NATIONAL GUARD OF OREGON  
P.O. BOX 14350  
SALEM, OREGON 97309-5047  
OFFICIAL BUSINESS

## Soldiers vie for 'Best Warrior' title at Rilea

Oregon Army National Guard members compete for NCO, Soldier of the Year



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

Sgt. Benjamin Standley (left) sprints to the finish line next to Sgt. Joshua Meng during the three-mile "ruck run," at Camp Rilea, Warrenton, Ore., March 12. Soldiers were required to complete the run with a minimum of 35 pounds in their rucksacks. Standley, an infantryman with Charlie Company, 1st Battalion, 186th Infantry went on to win the title of Oregon's Noncommissioned Officer of the Year, and Meng, a medic with Charlie Company 141st Brigade Support Battalion placed third. The three-day event pitted Oregon Citizen-Soldiers against one another as they competed for the title of Oregon's Soldier and Noncommissioned Officer of the Year.

Story by Sgt. Eric Rutherford,  
115th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

**WARRENTON, Ore.** -- Oregon Citizen-Soldiers battled fatigue, foul weather and stressful conditions to compete for the title of Oregon Soldier and Noncommissioned Officer of the Year, during the Best Warrior Competition at Camp Rilea, March 11-13.

Ten Soldiers and 12 Noncommissioned Officers spent the weekend demonstrating soldiering skills vying for the opportunity to represent Oregon at the regional competition later this year.

The competition kicked off Friday night with an essay and appearance board, and the following day started early with an Army Physical Fitness Test, followed by an obstacle course, rifle zero and stress-shoot event, three-mile run with a 35-pound rucksack, and a night land navigation course.

Sunday saw an Urban Operations course where competitors completed a hand-grenade course and casualty evacuation, followed by an Army Combatives competition where

See **BEST WARRIOR** on PAGE 7

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## COMMAND

## The Oregon National Guard: Moving Toward the Future

It is hard to believe two years passed since we broke ground on a new facility to honor our heroes from World War II's famed 41st Infantry Division in Clackamas. This summer both 41 IBCT, 82 Brigade and several other units begin to move into this amazing Armed Forces Reserve Center. The project is nearly \$75 million and covers 35 acres. It will be the new home for 1,300 members of the Oregon National Guard and US Army Reserve. An official dedication is scheduled to take place in Sept., along with an expected grand opening of the Army Air Force Exchange System outlet. Both of these have been long overdue for our servicemembers.

The 2005 BRAC was the impetus behind this amazing AFRC. However, it was not initially funded at 100 percent. Through the dedication, leadership and teamwork of our installations division we were able to procure the remainder of the funds. This was amazing work by an amazing staff. It will pay dividends for many years to come. It is truly a 21st Century center for 21st Century Soldiers.

As you know we are about to begin our annual trainings throughout the state. I encourage each and every Soldier, Airmen and civilian to be as safe as possible as we ex-

ecute and support these trainings. Conduct after action reviews and discover areas to improve, except when it comes to safety. Safety should never be an after action thought.

We have more than 1,000 Oregon citizen-Soldiers and Airmen mobilized supporting operations throughout the world. On April 27, one of Oregon's Soldiers died in a non-combat related incident in Iraq, while supporting Operation New Dawn. Specialist Andrew E. Lara assigned to F Company, 145th Brigade Support Battalion, assigned to the 3rd Battalion, 116th Cavalry Regiment, was a driver for one of the Convoy Escort Teams. Although his death was non-combat related, it is no less tragic. As we commemorate Armed Forces Month in May, please take a moment to remember Specialist Lara and his family and their service to our state and nation.

In regards to the death of Bin Laden, we have currently increased of security to Force Condition Bravo. Although there has not been a specific threat identified, it is prudent to elevate our security awareness. Remain on your guard and remain ready to be called if needed. In addition, for all those who have worn the uniform, and for the families and



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

communities who have endured the death of loved ones- take a moment to reflect-we got him.

Armed Forces Day and Armed Forces Month are a celebration of those who serve. This month we should all be proud of our service. Thank you to all those who have served and for the sacrifices you have made to keep our nation safe. For those currently wearing the uniform, wear it proudly. It is truly an honor to serve and stand ready! We are the guardians of freedom.

Always Ready! Always There!

## Army Leadership Development Strategy is coming our way!

Last month the Army National Guard's Warrant Officer Leadership Development Strategy group met in San Antonio, Texas.

The group was divided into Life Cycle Management and Leader Development to adapt the Army's Leadership Development Strategy to fit within the constraints of the National Guard.

Based on our force structure the challenge will be to develop senior warrants as technical and tactical experts who have the strategic and global concept that comes from Division, Corps and Theater level experience.

More is being asked and is expected of a Chief Warrant Officer Four and Five. ARNG junior warrants, traditional or full time, will be able to meet all the objectives and assignments recommendations of the Army Leadership Development Strategy (ALDS) and Life Cycle Management (LCM).

One of the tasks of the ALDS group is to identify the uniqueness of the ARNG Warrant Officer Corps and how to address and overcome these challenges; keeping in mind that we are no longer a strategic reserve but an interregal part of the National Defense as an operational reserve.

At first glance this task seems daunting. However, as we listed the opportunities and taking into consideration our civilian expertise it became obvious that our senior warrants will bring to the table a broader view of the issue.

We bring to the fight both a Home Game (State Mission) and Away Game (Federal Mission) approach and perspective. The next logical step is how to incorporate that into the ALDS for the National Guard.

I will post on the CCWO website the back brief of the group.

There you will see the timelines for promotion and Professional Military Education (PME) requirements. I would encourage taking a look and give feed back to your senior warrant officer representative.

There you will also see the LCM slides that will help you better understand the changes. Right now there is a strong movement to require an Associate Degree for promotion to CW3 and Bachelors Degree for CW4. There will be a phase in process but that has not been determined yet.

One of my CCWO goals was to conduct the first ever All ORARNG Warrant Officer Professional Development Conference. That



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

will not happen this fiscal year due to budget constraints, there is an opportunity to submit a fully funded conference for FY12, which I will spearhead. Your senior warrants will be setting a draft agenda. Please contact them with any suggestions.

I would like to welcome WO1 Jeremy Andrew, AV and WO1 Rob Pence, LG to the Warrant Officer Corps. You accepted the challenge and succeeded. Congratulations! Please see the photo of WO1 Pence's pinning ceremony on the following page.

If you or you have a NCO that has the special qualities and ability to become a Warrant Officer, have them contact CW3 Rob Karnes, WOSM at 503-584-2886.

For the Corps!

## Suicide a problem for Oregon Guard and communities

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



The suicide rate in the Army National Guard reached all-time high last year. There were approximately 120 suicides across the National Guard (some still pending investigation). That number is staggering and unacceptable.

In the previous four years, the average number of suicides was 60. Oregon's suicide rate is historically higher than the national average. Again, this is unacceptable. No one has an explanation for the dramatic increase, however; it did prompt immediate action at the State and National Level.

The Army National Guard has put together a campaign plan to attack this issue, keep our Soldiers safe and give them better tools for dealing with adversity. One program being implemented is a Risk Reduction, Resiliency, and Suicide Prevention Program (R3SP).

JFHQ has formed an advisory council and as part of this program each unit, down to the Battalion level, will be expected to form their own council. The make-up of each council will be determined by the Commander.

JFHQ's council is chaired by retired Col. Don Bond, co-chaired by myself, and has representative from all the major staff sections. We meet monthly to ensure the Adjutant General's guidance is implemented across our formations and we provide guidance on how to solve this issue.

That being said, guidance is good, but implementation is better. Everything we do in this organization must happen at the company level if it is to be successful. Our Company Commanders and First Sergeants are the key to making the Oregon Army National Guard run. So the Adjutant General and I came up with a very simple game plan to help our Company leadership get this information out to our Soldiers.

**1. We are a Problem-Solving Organization!** Everything we are asked to do by our State and Nation starts with a problem that must be solved.

When we deploy to Iraq, Afghanistan, and other places around the globe, there is a problem that needs our specific skills. That is what makes the Guard special, our civilian skills paired with our military training and that is what is needed to solve this issue.

When we get called out to floods, fires, and other state emergencies, we need to have the best possible problem-solving skills in order to meet each unique set of circumstances. No two situations will ever be the same and we must think quickly and be mentally agile in order to help the great citizens of Oregon.

We must teach our Soldiers to solve problems in their personal, professional and military lives so that they can be ready when our State and Nation call. We must use the statement above to reinforce to our Soldiers that we cannot use a permanent solution (Suicide) for a temporary problem, our Soldiers are much too valuable.

**2. Suicide is NOT Part of our Culture.** When Soldiers join this organization they become part of us, with all their skills and issues.

When they raise their right hand and swear to defend the Constitution, they immediately become an Oregon Guardsman. Being an Oregonian in the Guard has a special meaning and strong culture that must be shared at every opportunity. We stand on the shoulders of those who came before us.

We owe it to them and the ones that will follow us, to strengthen and make known our culture to every Soldier and community across Oregon. This can only be accomplished at the company level and through our Recruit Sustainment Programs.

In my mind, RSP is the key. That is the best opportunity to ingrain our problem-solving culture to our newest Soldiers. If at every opportunity our RSP cadre shares these three points, then the Soldiers will understand our philosophy. Once at their companies, they hear and see it, that is when it

See RECRUIT on NEXT PAGE

## OPINION

## April is Sexual Assault Awareness Month, discussing the history of SAAM

By Judith Watson,  
JFHQ Sexual Assault  
Resource Coordinator

Oregon National Guard is proud to be a part of this annual time of recognition for the survivors of sexual assault.

The National Guard, through its Sexual Assault Prevention & Response program, planned a number of activities to highlight awareness of this issue that affects all citizens, military and non-military, affluent and poor, male and female and young and old

On April 5, we brought Dr. Suzanne Holroyd from the DoD SAPRO program.

She spoke at the Military Department on "DoD SAPRO's Strategic Approach". It is unusual to be able to access a speaker from the national SAPRO.

Representatives from the Chaplain's office, HRO, command, and Victim Advocates were present at the talk.

We collaborated with the Portland VA Military Sexual Trauma staff to sponsor The Clothesline Project.

This is an opportunity for male and female survivors of sexual trauma to design a t-shirt which was displayed in the sky-bridge between buildings 101 and 104 at the Portland VA, April 5-7. ORNG SAPR

program staffed a table at the event.

A concerted effort has been made to travel to numerous armories and bases that have been visited include Prineville, Bend, Redmond, Rilea, Grants Pass, Medford, Ashland, Klamath Falls, Salem, and Roseburg.

This effort will continue over the next several months until all sites have been visited. Informational tables will be set up at various sites in the Willamette Valley and Portland through April.

Why is there SAAM? Women began protesting against violence in the late 1970s in England with Take Back the Night marches.

In 1978 the first marches were held in the US in NYC and San Francisco. 'Over time, sexual assault awareness activities expanded to include the issue of sexual violence against men and men's participation in ending sexual violence' (National Sexual Violence Resource Center website).

In the late 1980s April was selected as the month to highlight awareness about this issue but SAAM was not observed nationally until April 2001.

Over the last few years more atten-



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

Dr. Suzanne Holroyd, Communications and Program Director for the Department of Defense's Sexual Assault Prevention & Response Office, speaks to a group at the Oregon Military Department in Salem, Ore., April 5. Holroyd discussed DoD efforts to address sexual assault awareness and training throughout the DoD.

tion has been focused on the prevention of sexual violence. This coincides with the military's emphasis on Bystander Intervention which promotes the idea that sexual assaults can be prevented in many

situations.

We encourage you to join one of the activities listed above or stop by an informational table during the month of April.

## Remember My Service Project needs your historical input

By Capt. Timothy Merritt, Historical Outreach Project Officer

The Remember My Service (RMS) Project is an interactive, historical record that documents the command and unit history. This DVD-ROM in a hardbound journal includes video, text, documents, photos and web links – up to 1,000 pages and six hours of video.

Since September 11, 2001, the Oregon National Guard has deployed over 25 units to various theaters along with dozens of individual Soldier mobilizations. Due to the large numbers, the criteria for documenting deployments with an RMS project are combat deployments of units with more than 500 personnel.

Based on the criteria, we are currently in the process of creating a historical record for the following four deployments:

- Project 1: The 2/162 IN BN's deployment to OIF from 2003-2005
- Project 2: The 3-116 CAV's deployment to OIF from 2004-2006
- Project 3: The 41 IBCT / 141 SPT BN deployments to Hurricanes Katrina, Rita and OEF from 2005 – 2007
- Project 4: The 41 IBCT's deployment to OIF from 2009-2010

These projects are extensive and each includes a Soldier Gallery displaying the names and associated bios of all the current Soldiers of these units. We want you to be included in this gallery. If you participated in any of the deployments listed above, please create your own bio via an online submission wizard located at: [www.RMSRollCall.org](http://www.RMSRollCall.org).

The submission process is simple and takes about 10 minutes to select from pre-defined options—if you don't see the exact unit that you deployed with, help update the record by using the "suggest" button in each category.

Please complete your RMS Roll Call Profile as soon as possible. We thank you for your support and participation in this significant and meaningful project.

## Recruit Sustainment Program key to suicide awareness, education

CONTINUED FROM PREVIOUS PAGE

will really take hold. This will only be successful if implemented at the grass-roots level.

**3. The Warrior Ethos.** I will always place the mission first. I will never accept defeat. I will never quit. I will never leave a fallen comrade.

Every Soldier learns this Ethos. What does it really mean? And how do we use it to reinforce the above information.

I will always place the mission first. This sentence means that we put service above self. We place great emphasis solving problems in order to accomplish the mission. We leave our families, employers, and communities when our State and Nation call, and we must be ready.

I will never accept defeat. We are a nation of competitors and winners. We do not like to lose and it is unacceptable. Choosing Suicide is accepting defeat.

I will NEVER quit. I will NEVER quit. I will NEVER quit. I will NEVER quit.

I will never leave a fallen comrade. This is a battle buddy and leader phrase. We must know everything possible about a Soldier in our formation. We must communicate and make sure that if a Soldier is having issues that we leave no stone unturned in help. We owe that to them because they are us.

In summary, I want to paraphrase Col. Eric Bush, 41st Brigade Commander, and Prineville Police Chief, who I believe said it best:

"We not only have a Suicide issue in the Guard, we have a Suicide issue in Oregon and our communities. We owe it to our State to solve this problem internally, and then export that solution to our cities, employers, families, schools, community organizations and anywhere else that needs it. That is what our Culture is all about."

## Father pins son as new Warrant Officer after CWO graduation



CW3 Patrick Pence, Property Book Officer for 82 Brigade Troop Command and wife Beverly, pin the Warrant Officer rank on their son, WO1 Robert Pence, following the Warrant Officer graduation ceremony at Fort Rucker, Ala., March 23. Pence, of the JFHQ Property Book Office, was one of 40 students who graduated with class 11-10. Photo courtesy of CW5 Michael Zagyva.

## Oregon Army Guard graduates first ever Army Resiliency class



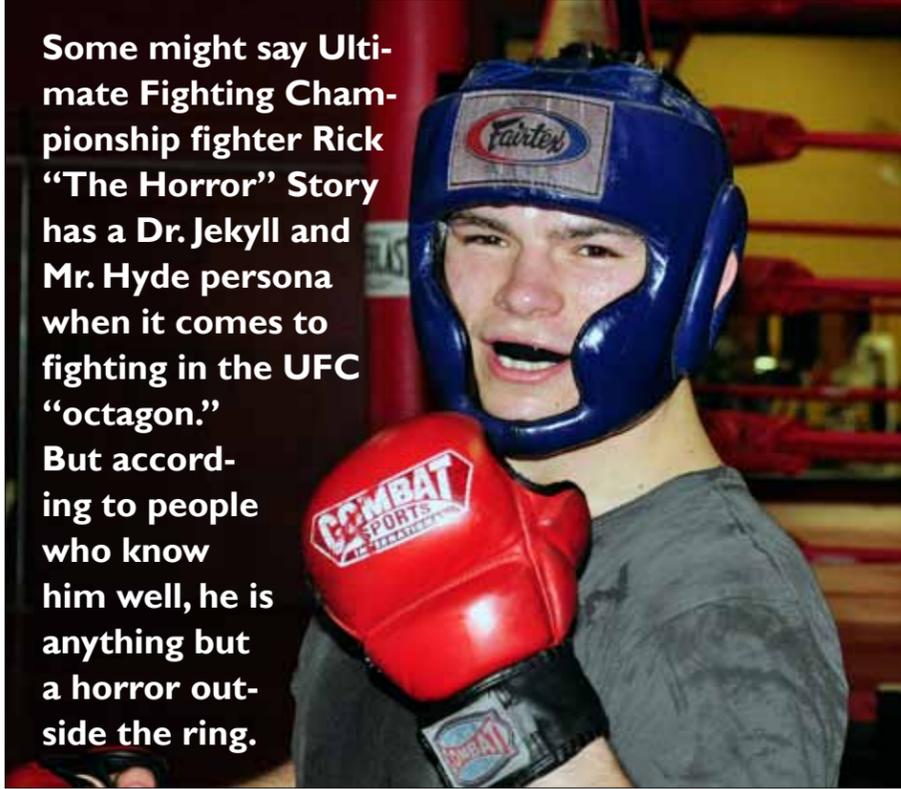
Photo by Cory Grogan, Oregon Military Department Public Affairs

Members of the Oregon Army National Guard in front of the Oregon Military Academy in Monmouth, Ore., March 16, after graduating from the Resilience Training Assistant Course. The two-day course was taught by Master Resiliency Trainers from the Soldier and Family Support Division of the Army National Guard, March 14-16. The course—the first of its kind anywhere in the nation—is sanctioned by the National Guard Bureau, and strives to increase awareness about Army resiliency. Oregon was the first to request, and receive, the training.

## FEATURES

**Mixed Martial Arts fighter leaves Oregon National Guard to pursue championship dream**

Some might say Ultimate Fighting Championship fighter Rick "The Horror" Story has a Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde persona when it comes to fighting in the UFC "octagon." But according to people who know him well, he is anything but a horror outside the ring.



Story and photos by Cory Grogan, Oregon Military Department Public Affairs

## The Real Story

Left: UFC fighter Rick Story gears up to train at the Brave Legion Gym in Vancouver, Wash. Story is set to fight Thiago Alves on May 28 at the MGM Grand in Las Vegas, Nev. Above: Story (in blue helmet), faces off with training partner D.J. Linderman at Brave Legion gym in Vancouver, Wash., March 14, to train for his upcoming UFC fight against Thiago Alves. Linderman successfully defeated Raphael Davis during the Bellator Light-heavyweight tournament on March. 26. Below: Story grapples with Linderman during their training workout.

"He is the nicest guy you will ever meet, but when the fight starts he will punish you," said teammate Ray Armstrong.

"I have trained with some of the best Mixed Martial Arts fighters, and his work ethic is the best I've ever seen," Armstrong added.

Armstrong said Story also thinks about others and always wants them to improve—a trait which caught the attention of his former commanders and trainers in the Oregon National Guard.

According to Maj. Travis Lee, Rick Story had a bright future ahead of him in the Oregon National Guard.

"He would have had a promising career—he depicted the quintessential officer with his background and value set," said Lee, who in 2005, helped train Story during ROTC at Southern Oregon University.

"He is a loss to the organization," he added.

Lee, who now serves as the Executive Officer for 1st Battalion, 186th Infantry Regiment in Ashland, Ore., said Story is a humble and hard-working Soldier who had a bright future as an officer in the Oregon Army National Guard.

But Story gave it all up to become a top fighter in the Ultimate Fighting Championships (UFC).

On May 28, Story will battle one of the top Welterweight UFC fighters in the world, Thiago Alves, in Las Vegas, Nev.

Story said he is thankful for his time in the Oregon National Guard and that the benefits he received not only helped him finish college at SOU, but also helped shape him as a person.

"I learned how much you can get done if everyone works together," he said. "That and the importance of integrity are probably the two most significant things that carry over into my career now."

After spending 18 months training to become an officer in the Army, Story learned about teamwork and attention to detail.

For anyone who is struggling to get ahead in life and motivated enough to work hard, joining the Army is a "no brainer," Story said.

For Story, leaving a promising Army career was difficult, but he had to devote himself fully to his new dream.

"Being in the National Guard conflicted with my training," Story said. "I am striving to be a champion and training six days a week."

Story is scheduled to officially leave the military on April 24 and pursue his dream of becoming the UFC Mixed Martial Arts Champion (MMA).

"MMA is a full time job, and coming to the gym is not an option," he added.

Story is also the part-owner of Brave Legion gym in Vancouver, Wash., and a member of the emerging MMA Brave Legion Team.

His training is evident in his physique. His 5-foot, 10-inch frame, tan complexion, short dark hair, and a compact, but solid, pit-bull-like build, are offset by his humble, soft-spoken persona.

Contrary to his quiet demeanor, Story also exudes an air of confidence, and is a fierce competitor. But things weren't always that way.

In seventh grade, Story found athletics difficult, but he kept working at it and eventually blossomed. He got on a conditioning program and listened to his coaches. Eventually, he had some success as a football player and wrestler in high school.

"I started to realize my physical ability at that point," he said.

In college, he lost every match as a freshman wrestler at Pacific Lutheran University.

### *"I have never seen someone work harder than Rick Story"*

— D.J. Linderman, UFC fighter and Rick Story's training partner

"It made me not want to fall short anymore," Story said. "I knew that I could work even harder."

Listening to Story, one gets a sense that personal adversity and defeat helped him quickly develop a strong sense of where he wanted to go in his athletic career.

"I worked my butt off, and by my junior year, I had put in enough time and effort, and had the mental clarity to know that I was strong enough to make it to the national championships," he said.

Despite his best efforts, Story placed second in a national wrestling tournament during his senior year at Southern Oregon University.

Part of Story's easy-going nature comes from his upbringing. According to his close, long-time friend, high school classmate and former college roommate, Travis Robinson, even though Story wasn't always the best athlete in school, his work ethic and tenacity helped him realize the goals he set for himself.

"He is the hardest working person you'll ever meet," said Robinson, of Gresham, Ore. "Rick wasn't always the fastest, biggest, or most athletic guy, but coaches always knew he would do the right thing."

Story admits not having many luxuries as a boy. At age six, he moved into his grandmother's single-wide trailer in Spanaway, Wash. She put the young Story on a regular schedule, which taught him discipline. She also showed him the value of how things were done in "the olden days".

"She taught me manners," Story said.

According to Robinson, the boyhood lessons imparted on Story were long-lasting.

"He is very family oriented and whenever he comes back home he always makes an effort to see his friends and family," Robinson said.

Story would say that once he made it 'big', he was going to buy his grandmother a new house, Robinson said.

"His loyalty to friends and family is truly remarkable," he added.

While Story's grandmother was busy helping him build a strong work ethic, interaction with his coaches and friends developed his competitive drive and self



confidence. It is something Story 'pays forward' to his training partners and other gym members.

Brave Legion teammate and training partner, D.J. Linderman, said he has dropped over 30 pounds since training with Story at the gym over the last few months.

"I have never trained harder anywhere else or seen someone work harder than Rick," said Linderman, who defeated Raphael Davis in the recent Bellator Light-heavyweight bout at Harrah's Tunica Hotel and Casino in Robinsonville, Miss., March 26. The fight also aired on MTV2.

Mike Ritchey, Story's college wrestling coach at SOU, said he is a special individual and says a lot of his success can be

traced back to his military experience. "I have coached a lot of guys who have been a part of the military and I definitely think it gives young people an advantage," Ritchey said.

"ROTC gives these guys a level of discipline that's hard to find in youth today," he added. "They learn how to be responsible for a larger group, and that their actions can screw a lot of other people up." According to Ritchey, Story can excel at anything to which he sets his mind.

"He is a self-made guy who has worked as hard as anybody I have coached," he added.

Pat White, Story's current coach, and the person who gave Story his nickname "Horror," said while the members of the Brave Legion Team are becoming an elite group of fighters, the driving force and integral part of that team is Story.

"Rick is a great leader and team member," White said. "He makes everyone feel welcome."

Story's long-time friend Robinson concurs with all the positive accolades, but adds that Story is the most honest, straight-forward person you will ever meet.

"Rick is a special person," he said. "There is not one person who has anything negative to say about him."

Hearing all the positive accolades about Story, his nickname "Horror" seems out of place.

"It's because of my fighting style," Story said of his Mr. Hyde persona in the ring. "I like hurting people."

Story admits having a completely different mentality inside the fighting octagon. "I'm all business," Story said. "I work as hard as I can 100 percent of the time, and I look completely different (in the octagon) than I do on the outside."

Story's fight is scheduled for May 28 at the MGM Grand in Las Vegas, Nev. Part of the fight card is scheduled to be televised on SPIKE TV and is available on Pay-Per-View.

For more information on Mixed Martial Arts or fitness training at Brave Legion Gym, go to <http://bravelegion.net>.



## FEATURES

# 'Airmen ready to take on mission,' says commander

CONTINUED FROM FRONT PAGE

For many, this is their first deployment.

The ongoing training early in 2011 has introduced them to some of the most state-of-the-art equipment used as part of Operation Enduring Freedom. The pre-mobilization training utilized the in-theater system, Battle Control Center-CENTAF, otherwise known as the BC3.

One of the newest battle staff managers in the unit is 2nd Lt. Wayne Doyle, who finished more than a year's training to upgrade his skills prior to joining the unit on the deployment.



"We have to ascertain incoming threats so we can split the airspace, to get both a clear picture of what is happening and then be able to talk to the fighter jets and air tankers while they are in their missions," Doyle said.

"Everyone in the unit is currently going through a rapid learning curve and a big focus right now is getting our younger Airmen the hands-on training they need before they leave," he said.

This will be the largest unit and operations section deployment undertaken by the 116th ACS, according to unit commanders.

Training has always been a part of Doyle's life. He taught High School math and coached track prior to joining the 116th ACS shortly after September 11, 2001.

Several of his students are now young Airmen in the unit and will be deploying with their old teacher.

"Everything we train to do is about protecting and saving lives," Doyle said.

The leaders taking many of the younger Airmen have seen a lot of deployments

Right: Oregon Air National Guard Tech. Sgt. Jay Frances hands ammunition magazines to Tech. Sgt. Charlotte Wolff, during weapons training at Camp Adair, Ore., on Feb. 17.



Oregon Air National Guard Tech. Sgt. Michelle Lowe and Staff Sgt. Richard Lowe, of the 116th Air Control Squadron at Camp Adair, Ore., before the unit's weapons qualification training on Feb. 17. The deployment is the married couple's second trip abroad—the first being to Afghanistan—where they will join over 80 of their unit's fellow Oregon Citizen-Airmen for a four-month mission in the Middle East in support of an Air Force Central Command (CENTAF).

Upper Left: Oregon Air National Guard Staff Sgt. Artemio Idelbong and Airman 1st Class Summer Cook of the 116th Air Control Squadron train with the latest Air Battle Management equipment during pre-deployment training at Camp Rilea in Warrenton, Ore., Feb. 3.



Oregon Air National Guard Tech. Sgt. Michelle Lowe and Staff Sgt. Richard Lowe, of the 116th Air Control Squadron at Camp Adair, Ore., Feb. 17. The deployment is the married couple's second trip abroad, where they will join over 80 of their unit's fellow Oregon Citizen-Airmen for a four-month mission in the Middle East in support of an Air Force Central Command (CENTAF).

over the last decade. Chief Master Sgt. Bob Birman has been on multiple CENTAF missions, but this deployment is different. His son, Staff Sgt. Tyler Birman has joined him on trip.

As the operations superintendent, Chief Birman will be able to share a unique experience in a deployed environment, and

pass on real-world knowledge to his son.

"I am ecstatic to be able to do this mission with my son," the elder Birman said. "This is something I wanted to be able to do with Tyler before I retire."

As for Staff Sgt. Birman, his job in computer maintenance will keep him busy and make the time pass quicker with his

dad as a helpful guide.

"When I am able to 'Skype' back home, I know that seeing my own wife and children will (also) allow my dad to see his grandkids at the same time," he said. "I think my mom is both relieved and worried that we both are going together on this mission."

The Birmans are not alone as a family unit on this deployment. The 116th will also be sending a husband and wife team.

Tech. Sgt. Michelle Lowe and Staff Sgt. Richard Lowe spent their last deployment working in Afghanistan. Although they've been married since mid-2009, they will spend this deployment just like their last one—living in separate quarters. Unlike the U.S. Army, it turns out the Air Force does not allow married couples to cohabitate while on deployments.

"We have been really professional about it and found ways to spend time together and still maintain our professional standards," Michelle said.

In her civilian job, she is high school counselor at Mulino Elementary School, in Mulino, Ore. She plans to share her deployment with her students via e-mail and web updates.

The Lowes spent their pre-deployment

training on the rifle range at Camp Adair in February. They qualified on weapons training and technical equipment in preparation for their Middle East tour.

Richard Lowe is a full time member of the 116th ACS, and knows from past experience that having Michelle at work each day brings them closer.

"We find humor in our situation so we try and make it fun when we have time together," he said.

The Yellow Ribbon Program's pre-deployment event recently held at Camp Rilea addressed finances, military benefits and other issues facing families whose loved ones will be gone for extended periods of time.

Lt. Col. Gregor Leist, 116th ACS Commander, said his Airmen are ready to take on the mission, and are looking forward to supporting the ongoing contingency operations in the Middle East.

"We're grateful for the shared sacrifices that the employers, family and friends make during our deployment," he said.

"The ongoing training allows our people to be ready to support this operation and will be a chance for our younger members to be part of this real-world assignment."



Oregon Air National Guard members from the 116th Air Control Squadron review maintenance procedures they will have to perform during their upcoming deployment to the Middle East during their pre-deployment training at Camp Rilea in Warrenton, Ore., Feb. 3. From left to right are; Staff Sgt. Tyler Birman, Staff Sgt. Nathanael Pfund and Senior Airman Matthew Martin.

## NEWS

## For 3-116 Cavalry officer in Iraq, safety is serious business

Story and photo  
by Staff Sgt. Pat Caldwell,  
3-116 Cavalry Regiment Public Affairs

**JOINT BASE JOINT BASE BALAD, Iraq** - For one officer deployed here, safety is more than just another buzzword.

For 1st Lt. Jeff Sagen, with the 3rd Battalion, 116th Cavalry Regiment, 3rd Sustainment Brigade, 103rd Sustainment Command (Expeditionary), it's serious business.

Sagen, a Kennewick, Wash., native, and the executive officer and safety officer for Company A, 3rd Battalion, said he believes safety is essential for mission success. Much of his job revolves around some tried and true concepts like proper planning and attention to detail, he said.

"You can't take away all of the risk. But you try to mitigate the things you can," he said.

Sagen's duties as a safety officer and the company executive officer keep him busy. He must manage all the pieces that go with being the executive officer and ensure his Soldiers are using proper safety measures while conducting convoy escort missions.

Sagen said he often draws on his experience as a full-time police officer at the Kennewick Police Department to help him with his safety officer responsibilities.

"As a police officer, before I even go out, I go through a routine," he said. "I put things like my weapon in the same place every time. And that is the same type of safety checks you do before a mission."

Sagen's Soldiers in A Company spend a lot of time on the road escorting convoys. While the mission tempo can be hectic, Sagen said that a fast pace demands a high degree of awareness regarding safety.

"Safety is a huge deal," he said. "Think about it in terms of how many people we lose to IEDs [improvised explosive devices] versus getting injured when an ammo can isn't tied down and hits someone in the head inside a truck."

The little things mean a lot, he added. And common sense also plays a big role.

"If you have to ask yourself if the action you are taking is safe or not, chances are it probably isn't," he said.

Sagen's routine regarding safety inside his company is based on spot checks and consistent oversight.

"With the platoons, I look for things specifically they are not looking for," he said. "Simple details. And I make sure I hit every platoon when I can. Most of the time I go out and spot check them. Tie-downs, are they storing ammo correctly, that kind of stuff."

Sagen said there is usually a different safety issue to look for every few weeks.

"Recently it has been tie-downs," he said. "So I ask certain questions like, do the crews need equipment to help them tie stuff down?"

The safety officer position is a key one within the A Company command chain, added Sagen.

"First and foremost, I manage all the [safety] reports and counsel the commander on what the safety protocols are," he said. "I offer solutions and recommendations."

While his job as safety officer is a busy one, Sagen said the devil is in the details.

"You have to double-check Soldiers," he said. "You can control whether stuff is tied down in the vehicle or whether a weapon is on safe. Those things we can mitigate ourselves," Sagen added.



First Lt. Jeff Sagen, safety officer for Company A, 3rd Battalion, 116th Cavalry Regiment, 3rd Sustainment Brigade, 103rd Sustainment Command (Expeditionary), and a Kennewick, Wash., native, watches as Pfc. Shawn Karens, a Jefferson, Ore., native checks fluids on a vehicle recently at Joint Base Balad.

## Oregon National Guard's 'Spur Ride' returns after six year hiatus

Story and photos  
by Cory Grogan,  
41 IBCT Public Affairs

From the days when Troops rode horses into battle Cavalrymen have been distinguished by their Stetsons and spurs.

This rich tradition lives on as the Stetson still sets them apart from other Soldiers, but it is the spurs that separate the best of the Cavalry.



Guard's 41 Infantry Brigade Combat Team took part in a traditional "Spur Ride."

During the event, contestants face grueling conditions in an effort to earn their spurs under the "Order of the Spur."

An elaborate set of tasks pertaining to the Cavalry Scout Military Occupational Specialty include map reading, obstacle course, weapons maintenance, call for fire, rappel operations, land navigation, listening post/observation

post, military operations on urban terrain, and a seven-mile ruck-sack march under adverse conditions at night. "After the Spur Ride, those who pass a series of tasks under the exhausting conditions, are honored with silver spurs that they can wear with pride at formal Cavalry events," said Platoon Spur Ride Master, Sgt. 1st Class Travis Sigfridson, the senior non-commissioned officer who has already earned spurs.

A custom well known throughout the Army took place at Camp Rilea, on March 18-19, as 1st Squadron, 82nd Cavalry Regiment, of the Oregon National



Platoon Spur Ride Master, Sgt. 1st Class Travis Sigfridson, of 1st Squadron, 82nd Cavalry Regiment, places silver spurs on the boots of a Spur Ride contestant at Camp Rilea, March 20. Sigfridson was the senior non-commissioned officer who has already earned spurs at the traditional Cavalry event.

"If you see gold spurs it means they were earned in a combat zone," he said.

The Spur Ride contest has been around since the Cavalry rode on horses and it initiates new Troops, Sigfridson said. He said motivation for the event has been high as it is the first time 1-82 CAV held a Spur Ride since 2005.

Competitors sacrificed sleep and completed an event that normally takes three days in 26 continuous hours during a drill weekend.

The sleep deprived and physically exhausted Troops who trained for and participated in the event were selected by their command element for meeting high standards within their unit, Sigfridson said.

Squadron Command Sgt. Maj., Command Sgt. Maj. Ken Jackola, said "This is a continuous operation and it gets difficult; the Troopers out there are really motivated." Final results showed those who competed were made to work hard for their silver spurs—less than 50 percent of those eligible were awarded spurs according to data from the Tactical Operation Center at the Spur Ride.

Headquarters and Headquarter Troop Commander for 1-82 CAV, Joseph Snyder, said the tradition is rooted in Knighthood at the awards ceremony.

According to the legend those aspiring to Knighthood would have to perform a task or deed on the battlefield to "win their spurs," Snyder said.

Squadron Commander, Lt. Col. Chris Reese, said that the Cavalry is wrapped up in tradition and pride.

The key to this event is getting back to the "doctrinal meaning" of what it is to be a cavalryman, he said.

"The guys signed up to be Cavalry Scouts and they're getting back to that," Reese said. "The camaraderie and *Espirit de corps* that happens when you see what they are going through makes you feel good."

Calvary Scout, Sgt. Vincent Martin, said he already has his spurs and competed in the event for the third time anyway.

"I signed up to be a scout and



Sgt. Carl Colberg of Alpha Troop, 1st Squadron, 82nd Cavalry Regiment, lunges over a wall on the obstacle course at Camp Rilea during the Spur Ride Contest, March 19.

this is the type of training I need to stay refreshed and on top of things," he said. "By competing we are constantly forcing each other to get better."

Squadron Operations Officer, Maj. Scott Caughran, summed up

the event by saying the event is important because the troops who pass set the examples and become leaders.

Awards were given to top finishers in addition to those who earned their silver spurs.

### Upcoming Commissary Case-Lot Sales coming to Oregon

National Guard and Reserve members, military retirees, and active duty military service members and dependents can take advantage of the great savings at the Commissary Case-Lot Sales. See the upcoming commissary sales listed below.

Customers must present an appropriate Department of Defense ID card that authorizes commissary privileges in order to shop.

Cash, checks, debit cards, and credit cards are accepted for payment. The use of coupons is highly encouraged.

See the listings below for the location near you.

**June 17-19, 9am-5pm**  
**Jackson Armory,**  
**6255 NE Cornfoot Rd.**  
**Portland, Ore.**

**July 15-17, 9am-5pm**  
**162nd Inf. Reg. Ctr.**  
**3106 Pierce Pkwy., Ste. A**  
**Springfield, Ore.**

## NEWS

# AZUWUR

## OREGON NATIONAL GUARD

### NOSTRA offers eye glasses to retirees

Veterans' Affairs Director Jim Willis and Attorney General John Kroger today announced an agreement with Fred Meyer Stores for the company to provide back pay and pension benefits to Oregon employees who were deployed for military service during the last seven years and to modify its employment practices.

"We are pleased that Fred Meyer, a progressive and prominent Oregon employer, has taken a proactive approach to comply with re-employment rights for all of its veteran employees," said Director Willis.

The Department of Justice in conjunction with the Oregon Department of Veterans' Affairs launched an investigation after receiving complaints from veterans that they had not received step increases and pension benefits during their periods of military deployment in violation of the federal Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act (USERRA) and state law.

Once the concerns were brought to Fred Meyer's attention, the company was cooperative during the investigation and agreed to correct pay discrepancies for certain qualifying veterans.

Under the settlement, Fred Meyer agrees to:

- Identify all Oregon residents who took military leave from Fred Meyer employment on or after January 1, 2004, who returned to work within 90 days of discharge, and who were subject to a compensation structure providing for pay increases and pension benefits based on their time of service;
- Calculate and provide a pay and pension adjustment that represents the difference between what the veteran received in step increases and pension benefits and what the veteran should have received if the veteran remained employed at Fred Meyer and had not gone on military leave;
- Going forward, provide deployed

veterans step increases and pension benefits consistent with the terms of the agreement; and,

- Contact all qualifying veterans who were employed by Fred Meyer and advise them of the agreement.

Assistant Attorney General Diane Sykes and Keith Dubanevich, Chief of Staff and Special Counsel to Attorney General Kroger, handled the case.

Attorney General John Kroger leads the Oregon Department of Justice.

The Department's mission is to fight crime and fraud, protect the environment, improve child welfare, promote a positive business climate, and defend the rights of all Oregonians.

### Hoopla tournament set for July

The 13th annual Oregon National Guard Hoopla is scheduled to be held July 22-24.

The three-day event closes out Court Street in front of the Oregon State Capitol in Salem, Ore., each year.

The Oregon National Guard partnered with the state's largest three-on-three basketball tournament in 2010.

The event joins similar programs, such as those with the Portland Trailblazers NBA team, University of Oregon and Oregon State University.

The event has generated over \$175,000, which was donated to local youth sports and charities in the Keizer/Salem area.

The event attracts over 700 teams, 3,000 participants and 40,000 spectators. The event includes a free kid's clinic, three-point shoot out, and slam-dunk contest. In 2009, the West Coast Bank Shoot-Turn-Shoot contest featured a \$25,000 cash prize. The West Coast Bank is the event's founding partner.

The Oregon National Guard is allotted a limited amount of free team entries. Prospective players can contact Guy Britnell, Oregon Army National Guard Recruiting Command Marketing Manager at 503-584-3821.

## State grant beefs up emergency response communications

Story by Kimberly L. Lippert,  
Oregon Military Department Public Affairs

Due to a state grant, Oregon's emergency responders now have a more robust communications system in times of natural disasters.

In early December 2007, an intense storm struck the Oregon Coast, flattening 3,500 acres of forest, leveling 40 million board feet of timber, and killing 18 people.

Flooding from the Nehalem River and landslides caused the town of Vernonia to be completely cut off from the rest of Oregon.

The Oregon National Guard responded to the crisis by evacuating residents and helping emergency responders – still communication was difficult.

Oregon Emergency Management's methods of communicating with counties by land lines, cell phones, and computers was impossible, because the county's emergency communication system had been wiped out in the floods.

Marty McKillip, Communications Officer for Oregon Emergency Management, said a state grant allowed officials to develop a better method of communication during times of natural disasters.

"After the December 2007 storms that hit the Coast of Oregon, Governor Kulongoski allocated a \$250,000 grant to establish a radio network using High Frequency Radio, and Very High Frequency Radio to transmit digital messages similar to your email but sent via radio," he said.

The new system uses Amateur Radio frequencies and can provide email type messages in and out of areas impacted by natural or man caused disasters in addition to giving access to weather bulletins, tsunami alerts and weather forecasting tools when the Internet is unavailable.

The HAM (Amateur Radio) system is one of many vital tools the Oregon Office of Emergency Management can use in a disaster.

"Each county has volunteers and so do we," said Jennifer Chamberlain, Public Affairs coordinator for Oregon Emergency Management.

"If communications are down, our ham radio operators are the ones that pass on the requests for assistance," she added.

When an emergency strikes, there is a system in place to respond.

"All disasters start at the local level, when they have used up their resources they will go to the next level and ask the county, and finally the state," said Chamberlain.

"Once the Governor declares a state of emergency in the county, Oregon Emergency Management becomes a coordinating agency for all state resources including the Oregon National Guard," she added.

Once that happens the Emergency Coordination Center (ECC) in Salem is activated and as requests for assistance come in from the counties, Officials in the ECC coordinate with other state agencies to fill those requests.

It's a well thought out system, Chamberlain said, and with the added security of the HAM radio system, functions as a machine ready to be activated at any time.

Some members of the Oregon State Defense Force train and assist with communications during times of natural disaster, to include HAM radio operators.



The coastal town of Vernonia, Ore., was hard hit by heavy rains in December, 2009. Governor Ted Kulongoski toured the area in an Oregon Army National Guard UH-60 Blackhawk helicopter. The town eventually qualified for federal disaster assistance.

## 'Best Warrior' Competition: For Soldiers, title doesn't come easy

CONTINUED FROM FRONT PAGE

competitors grappled with one another.

The weekend culminated in an award ceremony and luncheon.

Soldiers and Noncommissioned Officers each had a mentor to coach and encourage them through the various events.

"I think it's crucial," said Spc. Tyler Brown of his mentor. "I would have stumbled on my face a few times if I hadn't had a sponsor."

The event was coordinated by ten Camp Rilea support staff, keeping track of the Soldiers' scores, provided logistic support and pushing the competitors to their mental and physical limits.

Brown, of Bravo Company, 2nd Battalion, 162nd Infantry, said he was impressed with the quality of Oregon's NCOs who came to the event.

After the scores were tallied, the results for the 2011 Soldier of the Year were: 3rd place; Spc. Jessica Greer, Alpha Company 141st Brigade Support Battalion. 2nd Place; Pfc. Cody Connell, Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 3rd Battalion 116th Cavalry. 1st place – Oregon Soldier of the Year; Spc. Tyler Brown, Bravo Company, 2nd Battalion, 162nd Infantry.

Results for the 2011 Noncommissioned

Officer of the Year were: 3rd place; Sgt. Joshua Meng, Charlie Company 141st Brigade Support Battalion. 2nd Place; Sgt. John McCully, Charlie Company, 7th Battalion, 158th Aviation. 1st place – Oregon Noncommissioned Officer of the Year; Sgt. Benjamin Standley Charlie Company 1st Battalion, 186th Infantry.

Brown and Standley are scheduled to compete in the regional competition in North Dakota later this year.

"Really excited to get on to the next level and show the region what Oregon has to offer," Brown said.

"It was a lot of hard work and I'm proud that I pushed through and finished strong," said Standley. "I feel pretty confident. Basically what I learned from this is that it isn't being a PT stud or being good at one topic, it's about being good (in) many different areas."

During the award ceremony, Oregon National Guard State Command Sergeant Major, Command Sgt. Maj. Brunk Conley recognized the hard work and perseverance of all the competitors.

"This is leadership training," Conley said. "We are developing our future leaders—our future platoon sergeants, first sergeants and sergeants major. We call it competition, but really it is leadership training."



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

Command Sgt. Maj. Richard Burch, Command Sergeant Major of the Army National Guard, speaks to Soldiers during the 2011 Oregon Army National Guard Best Warrior Competition at Camp Rilea, Warrenton, Ore., March 12. The three-day event pitted Oregon Citizen-Soldiers against one another as they competed for the title of Oregon's Soldier and Noncommissioned Officer of the Year.

## AIR NATIONAL GUARD NEWS

**Kingsley Field Airmen train in Florida**

Members of the 173rd Fighter Wing in Klamath Falls, Ore. board a Navy C-9 aircraft from Whidbey Naval Air Station, Wash., after a refueling stop in Owensboro, Ky. The Oregon Airmen left Kingsley Field earlier in the morning and continued on to Tyndall Air Force Base, Fla., via Oceana, Md., March 18.

Story and photo by Tech. Sgt. Jefferson Thompson,  
173rd Fighter Wing Public Affairs

**TYNDALL AIR FORCE BASE, Fla.** -- Six F-15 aircraft and nearly 100 personnel made their way from Kingsley Field in Klamath Falls, Ore., across the country to the Florida panhandle in support of F-22 flying operations at Tyndall Air Force Base in Panama City, Fla., March 18.

"We found out we were going to come down here about 45 days prior to kickoff," said Capt. Tyler "Tiny" Cox, the project officer responsible for coordinating the deployment.

"Ordinarily we'd have six months to get a deployment like this planned but with the cancellation of Sentry Down Under in Australia we had a much tighter schedule," he added.

The trip is a chance to support the F-22 training program at Tyndall, and allows Kingsley pilots to participate in the Weapons System Evaluation Program (WSEP), where pilots will fire live missiles at unmanned drones over the Gulf of Mexico.

For the first several days Kingsley pilots simulated adversary aircraft allowing the new Raptor pilots an opportunity to develop the skills needed to detect and engage them.

Tyndall is the sole provider for F-22 training, as Kingsley is for the F-15, and the deployment provides an opportunity for the two to practice air dominance.

There are a number of hurdles for the deployed maintenance troops to keep the jets flying.

Tyndall no longer flies F-15 aircraft so the Kingsley maintenance staff has to anticipate what might break on their planes, and bring any necessary spare parts along. With space constraints on the airlift, only critical items can be brought on the trip.

Each shop assesses the risk to their respective systems and processes on the aircraft, said Chief Master Sgt. Andy Gauntz, the maintenance chief.

"In the past we've had special spare parts kits for deployment, now we don't have them--so we use our parts on hand," he said.

**Oregon Air Guard celebrates seventy years of protecting Pacific Northwest**

Photo by Cory Grogan, Oregon Military Department Public Affairs

Airman 1st Class Elliot Gile, (right), and retired Chief Master Sgt. Jack Klein, (left), participate in a wreath-laying ceremony during the Oregon Air National Guard's 70th Anniversary celebration. Gile, a crew chief with the 142nd Fighter Wing, is the newest member of the unit, while Klein is a former member of the 142nd Aircraft Control and Warning Squadron, and served in the Pacific in WWII as a radar operator. Klein joined the ORANG in 1947, and was part of the 50-man cadre that started the new squadron.

Story by Sentinel Staff

**PORTLAND, Ore.** -- The Oregon Air National Guard celebrated its 70th anniversary at the Portland Air National Guard Base, April 15.

The event was held at the Rosenbaum Hangar at the Portland Air National Guard Base. The seven survivors of the original 117-man 123rd Observation Squadron were hosted at the event.

It also marked the roll out of six upgraded F-15Cs with Boeing's APG-63(V)3 Active Electronically Scanned Array (AESA) radar. The AESA radar is the latest in a series of upgrades that will ensure the F-15s combat-proven air supremacy well into the 21st century.

Maj. Gen. Raymond F. Rees, Adjutant General, Oregon, and the Commander of the Oregon Air Guard, Brig. Gen. Steven D. Gregg honored Oregon Air National Guard Airmen from the past and present.

Since April 18, 1941, Oregon Air Guard members have represented less than one-half of one percent of Oregonians who protect the lives of millions living in the Pacific Northwest. Since 1953, the Oregon

Air National Guard has been standing watch over the Pacific Northwest skies.

As World War II began, then Maj. G. Robert Dodson, an Oregonian serving with the 321st Observation Squadron Reserve at Pearson Field, in Vancouver, Wash., requested the National Guard Bureau's authorization to form an Oregon flying unit.

The 123rd Observation Squadron was soon launched, and would become the first unit to conduct maritime surveillance of the Continental United States coastline following the Japanese attacks on Pearl Harbor on Dec. 7, 1941.

The squadron was federally activated under different unit designations and flew the O-47, BC-1A and later the F-5 reconnaissance version of the P-38 in the China-Burma theatre. Others would serve in Europe. After the war, the unit regrouped as the 123rd Fighter Squadron.

By 1946, the unit was redesignated as the 142nd Fighter Group and, in 1951 the unit mobilized in support of the Korean War. After supporting the Korean War it remained very active in air defense matters through the intervening Cold War years, eventually becoming a Fighter Wing in 1995.

**Portland Air Base sees last STARBASE class through it's gates**

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

**PORTLAND, Ore.** -- An eager group of fifth graders from Woodstock Elementary School are quick to answer questions from Senior Master Sgt. Stanley Durfee, standing next to an Oregon Air National Guard F-15 Eagle aircraft.

The group is touring the Portland Air National Guard Base as part of the Oregon Air National Guard's STARBASE Program, which provides an up-close look, as well as hands-on education into Oregon's premier strike fighter, the F-15 Eagle, in addition to how Oregon Airmen uphold the unit's Air Sovereignty Alert Mission.

"The kids just love the program because they get to see firsthand the airplanes and how they function and that provokes a new way of thinking," Durfee said.

Through the program, Airmen open up a whole new world of science and mathematics for students.

The hangar tour and up-close look at the jets have long been the highlight of the STARBASE Program, but recently the program has shifted to more class room and a core textbook approach.

The curriculum is funded by the Department of Defense, with over 60 programs providing students with 25 hours of exciting learning time on military installations across the nation.

The Portland program is a partnership between the Portland Public Schools and the Oregon National Guard. Since 1993 Marilyn Sholian has been working with STARBASE Portland, and helped the program grow and develop many of the classes in chemistry, fluids and avionics, and other areas the students see when they are on base for the two week class.

The Portland-Metro area has 21 schools which send 1,340 students through the program.

"The kids are here four days each week and the classrooms are full all the time," Sholian said.

Planting the seeds for science and technology is the key to that makes the program so successful, she added. The program is designed to focus on at-risk students, and in urban areas where access to math and science classes are a challenge, Sholian said.

"For some of our kids, this is almost all the science that they sometimes have for the entire school year," she said.

The tour for Woodstock Elementary School was the final STARBASE class for the Oregon Air Guard.

The Department of Defense directs many of the classes the children will have, gearing the education curriculum to the classroom rather than touring the base or meeting military personnel like Durfee.

"This is the last year we are doing the



Senior Master Sgt. Stanley Durfee, with the 142nd Fighter Wing, Oregon Air National Guard, speaks to students from Woodstock Elementary School as part of the STARBASE Program, which opens up students to science and math in a non-traditional curriculum.

tours because now all the classes will be selected and scheduled by the DoD," Sholian said.

The tour was also the last of Durfee's military career.

"I am retiring in a couple months so the weekly tours I have been doing since 1998 will be ending just as I retire," he said.

In the future, the classes will no longer

be so close to the Oregon Air National Guard's premier strike fighter jet. Classes will be held at neighboring Jackson Armory, and administrators said the curriculum will continue to help area students develop strong math and science skills.

The STARBASE program has been helping Portland students since 1998.