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Soldiers with C/7-158 Aviation demob following year in Kuwait: Page 4


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In this issue...

Maj. Gen. Rees inducted into Order of the Minuteman:

Oregon Soldiers hold mob ceremony at State Capitol’s Senate Chamber

Forward Support Medical Team of Charlie Co., 7-158 Aviation mobs to Kosovo

Airmen recognized with Bronze Stars, Purple Heart medals

Oregon Army National Guard Sgt. Jonathan Edwards holds his son, Grant, as he talks with family, following the mobilization ceremony of his unit at the State Capitol in Salem, Ore., Feb. 21. Soldiers with Charlie Company, 7-158 Aviation, will deploy to Kosovo as a Forward Support Medical Evacuation Team (FSMT) using the UH-60 Blackhawk helicopters. See page 3 for the full story.

Detachment-47, 2-641 Aviation deploys to Kandahar, Afghanistan

Maj. Sarah Fritts (right), commander of Detachment 47, 2-641 Aviation, passes the unit guidon to Oregon Governor John Kitzhaber, as Maj. Gen. Raymond F. Rees (left), Adjutant General, Oregon, looks on during the mobilization ceremony for two aviation units in the Senate Chamber at the State Capitol in Salem, Ore., Feb. 21. The governor keeps framed guidons of deployed Oregon National Guard units until they return home to Oregon. Five Soldiers with Detachment 47, 2-641 Aviation, will deploy to Afghanistan in support of the Communications Electronic Attack with Surveillance and Reconnaissance (CEASAR) mission. See page 3 for the full story.

Airmen recognized with Bronze Stars, Purple Heart medals

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

PORTLAND, Ore.—In a rare break with normal ceremonial protocol, the commander of Air Force Special Operations Command (AFSOC), invited family members onto the stage for photos following the pinning of each of the five Bronze Star Medals and one Purple Heart Medal awarded to members of the Oregon Air National Guard’s 125th Special Tactics Squadron.

“This ceremony is as much to honor the families of these Airmen as it is for the Airmen themselves,” said Lt. Gen. Eric Fiel, who flew in from AFSOC headquarters in Hurlburt Field, Fla., to present the awards.

The six Airmen, in Air Force dress uniform, wearing their signature special operations scarlet beret, were honored during the afternoon ceremony in the Rosenbaum Hangar for their distinguished service in support of Operation Enduring Freedom in Afghanistan. The crowd was comprised of Airmen, Soldiers, Oregon National Guard leadership, representatives from the Port of Portland, and family members and friends.

Five of the Airmen were awarded Bronze Stars, two of which included the “V” for valor, and another received the Purple Heart. The group are all trained combat controllers in an elite squadron of Special Operations—a career field which has garnered the highest number of decorations in the entire Air Force, remarked Fiel.

“Between the demanding pace of today’s global special operations and your community’s commitment to the quiet professionals, we are all fortunate to be able to recognize these special tactic Airmen on occasions like this,” said Fiel. Recipients of the Bronze Star Medal were: Staff Sgt. David A. Albright, Tech. Sgt. Jeffery A. Dolezal, Staff Sgt. Jacob M. Guffey, Master Sgt. Scott A. Geisser and Senior Airman Chadwick J. Boles. Tech.

See Wedan on Page 11
Oregon Guardsmen prepared to handle any challenge

The changes coming in the near future for our military forces will require adjustments across the board. We should keep in mind, as the Nation’s Militia, we receive our authorization from the United States Constitution.

Article One, Section Eight gives power to Congress “to provide for calling forth the militia to execute the laws of the Union, suppress insurrections, and repel invasion.” As we look into the future of the potential Act of Active Duty Force, there will no doubt be a larger reliance on the cost effective National Guard and Reserve component forces. The Oregon National Guard is ready for the task.

During a Presidential Proclamation in 2011, President Obama stated, “The members of our National Guard and Reserve demonstrate the dignity and saltiness that are the core of the American spirit. These patriots serve not only in combat but also when disaster strikes at home, offering a strong hand to victims of flood, fire, and acts of terrorism.”

These words highlight the unique capabilities of our organization. Not only do we support our Federal mission through activations, we also answer local emergency responders and come to the rescue of our fellow Oregonians in times of crisis.

The individual skills you learn, both in the Guard and your civilian occupations, are uniquely suited to the variety of missions we support throughout the year. Our State Partners Program with Bangladesh and now Vietnam as well, continue to highlight the ability of our Citizens-Soldiers and Airmen to bring a new perspective to the table. This perspective is what allows us to continuously be successful in everything we do.

Chief Warrant Officer 5 Terry Swertfegel, Command Chief Oregon National Guard

Soldiers: Teach, coach and mentor, lead from the front

We must ensure, as Soldiers, Non-Commissioned Officers and leaders, we are working as one team to produce the best trained Citizen-Soldiers in the Army, which allow us to move forward in the fight as the most professional and disciplined leaders of our units. Everything we do, from maintenance to taking care of our families, affects our ability to accomplish this task. The most precious asset we have is each other and above all, our Soldiers. They need to know that we truly care for them and their families.

We must continually challenge ourselves mentally and physically to ensure that we sustain our combat readiness and fighting spirit. I will never ask you to do something I myself have not done. We are Soldiers 24/7/365.

Lead by example - from the front! Ensure all leaders do the same for their Soldiers. Ensure all non-commissioned officers maintain the highest standards of military appearance, bearing, courtesy, and discipline. They must also enforce the standard throughout the ranks. Ensure all non-commissioned officers carry out their inherent responsibilities, and require them to set high standards for their Soldiers. Enforce all orders, for it is your unit; its standards reflect your standards. Be the best.

Take pride in the way you carry yourself and the work you do. It reflects in your actions and is contagious. I am not a zero defect person. The key here is to understand that a mistake made in good faith while trying to accomplish the mission is acceptable, but I will expect you to learn from that mistake and move on.

I have no tolerance for mistakes due to negligence or willful misconduct. I will expect you to learn from that mistake and move on. I have no tolerance for mistakes due to negligence or willful misconduct. I will expect you to learn from that mistake and move on. I have no tolerance for mistakes due to negligence or willful misconduct. I will expect you to learn from that mistake and move on.

I am referring to a currently more important generic issue for guards’ men and women. I am referring to “change”. I am referring to those instances, regardless what driving factors bring them about, that we have to initiate adjustments to our normal activities and thoughts to better deal with routine situations.

Never was that more evident for me than my recent experience of going through knee replacement surgery. My entire life changed. Coping in the hospital, trying to meet all routines and continue with no pain medication, and forcing myself to inflict pain on myself so as not to prolong the recovery period to complete healing, were just some of the challenges.

Did I mention that I hate hospitals? The experience has been a learning experience, and illustrates that change can teach valuable lessons. Taking the current situations and/ or projected ones, how do we go about accomplishing what must be done? What are we doing now that doesn’t really have to be done? What is our current mission? What is currently most efficient or economically sound for our organization?

The bottom line is change is inevitable. We can either prepare for it in advance or react to an impending crisis. It’s a question of proactive versus reactive. Which makes more sense? Now is the best time to be utilizing “thinking outside of the box” for addressing situational circumstances and to prepare for those “moving targets.” Time for the professional Warrant Officer to initiate and spearhead creative processes for our ORARNG in these turbulent times. Are you ready for the challenge?

For the Corps

Oregon Guardsmen prepared to handle any challenge

The Oregon National Guard continues to support our Federal missions through small unit and individual augmentation mobilizations, with the 41stmistake made in good faith while trying to accomplish the mission is acceptable, but I will expect you to learn from that mistake and move on. I have no tolerance for mistakes due to negligence or willful misconduct.

Professionalism and discipline are intangible traits that form the backbone of any unit. These traits are learned and are continually being developed. Always choose the right road over the wrong.

Do the right thing when nobody is watching, and if you catch someone doing this, reward them. Take care of, and look out for each other, for it is each other and above all, our Soldiers. They need to know that we truly care for them and their families.

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For the Corps
Two units mobilize Oregon Soldiers to Middle East missions

Continued from Front Page

Story by Sentinel Staff

SALEM, Ore. - The Oregon Army National Guard mobilized two groups of aviation Soldiers during a ceremony in the Senate Chamber at the State Capitol in Salem, Ore., Feb. 21.

Approximately 20 Soldiers of the Forward Support Medical Evacuation Team (FSMT) from Charlie Company, 7-158 Aviation, will deploy to Camp Bondsteel, Kosovo.

The nine-month deployment will support the ongoing Medical Evacuation (medevac) mission using UH-60 Blackhawk helicopters.

In addition, five Soldiers from Detachment 47, 2-641 Aviation, will deploy to Kandahar, Afghanistan in support of the Communications Electronic Attack (CEASAR) mission using C-12 Huron aircraft.

The CEASAR mission includes a total of 10 Soldiers, five (four pilots and one flight surgeon) from Oregon, and the remainder are from Idaho.

Oregon Army National Guard Soldiers stand in formation during a mobilization ceremony in the Senate Chamber at the State Capitol in Salem, Ore., Feb. 21. Soldiers from both Detachment 47, 2-641 Aviation, and Forward Support Medical Evacuation Team (FSMT) of Charlie Co., 7-158 Aviation took part in the ceremony.

State Legislature recognizes Oregon Guard’s first female brigadier general

Story by Sentinel Staff

Oregon State Rep. Cliff Bentz (R-Ontario, District 60), left, reads House Concurrent Resolution 11, honoring Brig. Gen. Julie A. Bentz (right) for being the first female brigadier general in the Oregon Army National Guard.

Her promotion to brigadier general in 2011 came with her assignment as the Director of Strategic Capabilities Policy on the National Security Staff in the Executive Office of the President. She is responsible for writing presidential policy, coordinating interagency dialogue, informing presidential budgetary decisions and building consensus on interagency initiatives in programs that develop United States strategic capabilities to meet 21st century requirements.

Bentz has served in a variety of active, reserve and National Guard assignments revolving around nuclear defense, homeland security, health physics, environmental sciences and traditional nuclear, biological and chemical officer assignments.

In the Oregon Army National Guard, Brig. Gen. Bentz assisted with the initial stand-up of the 102 Civil Support Team in 1999 and served as the executive officer of the unit in 2003. She also served as the operations officer for 82 Troop Command Brigade from 2003-2004.

She then went on to serve in various positions in the Pentagon, developing a national nuclear response framework and shaping the Department of Defense’s leading role in this effort. She served on the Homeland Security Council from 2004-2006 and the National Security Staff from 2009-2011, advising senior-level decision makers on nuclear defense policy.

Measure HCR 11 was carried by Rep. Cliff Bentz (R-Ontario, District 60), Brig. Gen. Bentz’s cousin. Representative Bentz read a list of her accomplishments to the assembly, including the Legion of Merit award, Oregon State Award and induction into the Oregon State University Academy of Distinguished Engineers. For the general’s official biography, visit this link: www.ng.mil/ngbGomo/library/bio/2/2397.htm
**News**

**Soldiers with Charlie Co., 7-158 Aviation demobil**

**Story by Staff Sgt. April Davis, Oregon Military Department Public Affairs**

**SALEM, Ore. - The Oregon Army National Guard held a demobilization ceremo-**

**ny March 9, at the Governor Theodore Kulongoski Army Aviation Support Facil-**

**ity. The event welcomed home Soldiers with Charlie Company, 7th Battalion, 158th Aviation Regiment, following a year-long deployment to Kuwait in support of Opera**

**tion Enduring Freedom.**

**Approximately 20 Oregon Citizen-Soldiers from Charlie Co., 7-158 Aviation, based in Salem, Ore., joined Soldiers from Charlie Co., 1-126 Aviation, of the Maine Army National Guard, to form a Forward Support Medical Team (FSMT). The FSMT provided air ambulance coverage in Kuwait using UH-60 Blackhawk helicopters. They served under Task Force Liberty and Task Force Blackjack in the Central Command (CENTCOM) area of operations.**

**After a long year away, it’s great to be back home in Oregon, spending time with our loved ones,” said Capt. Tyler Eiken-**

**berry, the group leader for the Oregon con-**

**tingent.**

**The unit worked with the U.S. Navy in taking over the aeromedical evacuation mission for Kuwait, including operations with the Kuwaiti Ministry of the Interior. Soldiers in the unit performed general and spe-**

**cialized evacuation (MEDEVAC) missions and 1,200 sorties. The unit also supported the multi-national exercise, Operation Eager Lion, in Jordan.**

**The Soldiers trained with the 24th Ma-**

**rine Expeditionary Unit. They also worked with the 74th Army Divers to develop Standard Operating Procedures for using an Army MEDEVAC unit in over-water personnel recovery. They trained and hosted 25 individuals out of the North Arabian Gulf.”**

**“What an honor it was to serve with such an elite group of Army Aviators this past year,” said Eikenberry. “The success of our mission was profoundly due to the perseverance and expertise my Soldiers delivered every day.”**

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**3rd Battalion welcomes new Command Sgt. Major**

**Story and photo by Staff Sgt. Pat Caldwell**

**3-116 Cav. Public Affairs**

**LA GRANDE, Ore. - Transitions are a way of life in a military organi-**

**zation but that doesn’t mean the process is easy.**

**The Change of Responsibility ceremony for the 3rd Battalion, 116th Cavalry Regiment at the La Grande Army National Guard Readiness Center that welcomed Command Sgt. Maj. Ron Bloker is a good case in point.**

**A time-honored ritual, the change of responsibility is a formal procedure that signals the departure of a senior non-commissioned officer and the arrival of a new top NCO.**

**During the event, the Eastern Oregon National Guard unit officially welcomed Bloker, while it also said goodbye to long-time CSM Bill Wyllie.**

**“I’ve got mixed feelings watching a leader that has meant so much to this organization move on,” said Lt. Col. Jason Lamberti, the commander of the 3rd Battalion. “But I’m excited we are getting a new sergeant major who I think will do an excellent job.”**

**Wyllie, of John Day, Ore., is now the Command Sgt. Maj. for the Oregon Guard’s 41st Brigade. Wyllie spent the past six years as the Eastern Oregon Guard unit’s top non-commissioned officer and deployed with the unit to Iraq in 2010.**

**“It was one of the best jobs you can have as a sergeant major,” Wyllie said of his time with the battalion.**

**Blok er, who hails from Hillsboro, said he welcomes the challenge as the battalions new command sergeant major.**

**“This is an amazing battalion and to be part of it is exciting,” Bl ker said.**

**Blok er, 41, is a math teacher for the Jewell School District. He said the 3rd Battalion is in the middle of a remarkable era because it is training on the U.S. Army’s newest tank, the M1-A2 SEP 2.**

**“We have so much new equipment. Unless you are in the 3-116 you don’t have the Mi SEP 2. So in a place like Ontario, you have 20 to 25 guys that get the opportunity to train on those tanks, an opportunity no one else has,” he said.**

**Blok er said he is eager to get his new post in new post and mentioned several goals he would like to achieve early.**

**“I want to continue to help the battalion develop and grow,” he said. “And help the battalion use the systems already in place.”**

**While he lives in Hillsboro, Bl ker is no stranger to the 3rd Battalion. In fact, the 42-year-old guard member said he spent his entire career in the Eastern Oregon unit.**

**“I enlisted in 1992 with the battalion’s mortars,” he said. Bl ker said when he joined the Guard he wanted to find a job that was unique from anything he could find outside the military.**

**“I asked, ‘what do you guys do that I can’t do in the civilian world?’” He said. Bl ker worked his way up through the ranks but left the Guard in 2001. A few years later, though, he joined back up again with the 3rd Battalion.**

**“By the time I was an E-5, I knew what I wanted but I also knew that meant a lot time studying off duty,” Bl ker said.**

**Blok er conceded his job is not a one-weekend-a-month task anymore. The National Guard changed since he signed up in the early 1990s, he said.**

**“It is not once a month anymore. It is two or three weekends a month,” he said.**

**Blok er said his main focus as sergeant major is simple: taking care of Soldiers. It is a job, he said, he loves.**

**“My worst day with Soldiers is better than my best day outside the Guard,” he said.**

**The 3rd Battalion consists of Guard units in Hood River, The Dalles, Hermiston, Woodburn, Pendleton, La Grande, Baker City and Ontario.**
Charlie Company, then took command as the second-in-command of Ontario’s commissions. Musgrove served war-torn nation in 2004. when the 3rd Battalion deployed to that country. Officers Candidate School to secure his commission and then went to the current 3rd Battalion roster who were recruited by the elder Musgrove. The flags – called guidons – are often the physical depiction of service and sacrifice. The guidons now, of course, are gone and the files and the fragments of paperwork of a fulltime officer in the National Guard are packed away. Musgrove is a member of the 3-116th Cavalry Regiment during a training exercise at Camp Withycombe in Clackamas.

“I’m looking forward to learning new job” said Musgrove.

Musgrove personifies the often deep combat operations. “That (leading soldiers in combat) is your test, the culmination of all your training,” Musgrove said. “I didn’t do anything heroic. I just got the flag.”

“Yes, it was the 82nd new job to go after people who are running away from him and get the job done here at 25th and Main today in Vancouver,” said Koor Harlan a reporter for KOIN 6 News.

“Besides, I’m ready for a new challenge,” he said.

As Musgrove relocates to Clackamas, he will likely have three guidons – one faded and torn from its service in Iraq – on the walls of his new office.

“arrest a suspect while a criminal was running from police was chased by Fox. “About a minute after the accident some onlookers saw him in that direction and a good looking, built guy took off in that direction too,” Musgrove said pointing to the path where the driver who wrecked two vehicles ran — before Fox chased him.

As many others stood and watched, Fox said he used his military and civilian experience and
together failed to stop the suspect before police arrived. Fox, who is an infantryman with the Oregon Army National Guard’s 23rd Infantry Company, 2nd Battalion, 162nd Infantry Regiment, based out of Gresham, Ore., is a loss-prevention and security officer for the High School Pharmacy franchise. He is also an experienced combat veteran who deployed to Iraq in 2006-07, and Afghanistan in 2008-09, with the Oregon National Guard.

Reports of the incident stated that after investigating the scene, Fox found Justin Taylor hiding underneath a car. Fox asked Taylor to come out and give himself up. When the suspect refused, Fox dragged him out, wrestled him to the ground, and handcuffed the evader with the cuffs he carries for his work. Fox explained that even though he was nervous he knew what needed to be done. Fox said he is glad the story of his heroic act is being told because he hopes it may make someone trying to get away with a crime think twice.

“I like to do what is right morally and socially,” Fox said. “I think some people who go away with crimes have a misconception that no one will try to stop them.”

Fox explained that he has aspirations of becoming a Logistics Officer and knows chasing the suspect was a dangerous move, but that his moral conviction would not allow him to stand by while a criminal got away.

Spc. David Horstman, a former Marine and fellow infantryman, grew up with Musgrove and was recruited by him into Charlie Company. Horstman said he was not surprised about what Fox did.

“He has always been like a big brother to me,” Horstman said. “He is as honest as the day is long, even if it means being a little bit harsh, but he is always fair and always there to help someone in need.”

A platoon leader with Charlie Company, 2nd Lt. Kevin Johnson, said Fox is what you want as an infantryman. “He is hard working, he holds his Soldiers to a high standard, and continues to learn,” Johnson said before mentioning that he and Fox both have aspirations of getting into law enforcement.

“What he did doesn’t surprise me one bit — he is going to be a great police officer,” he added.

Johnson said Fox epitomizes what a National Guard Soldier should be. “He’s a veteran that wants to help his community and doesn’t take his job lightly.”

For his bold actions, a news report by KOIN 6 CBS News out of Portland, Ore., called Fox the “Hit-and-Run Hero.” “It is his to job to go after people who are running away from him and get the job done here at 25th and Main today in Vancouver,” said Koor Harlan a reporter for KOIN 6 News.


Zoesch comes to G-Co. from the 2-162 Headquarters, Headquarters Company. This will be his first command. Helzer has been the commander of G-Co. since their return from deployment in 2010, and will now serve as the new 2 Battalion, 218 Field Artillery S4.

Sgt. Michael Fox, an infantryman with the Oregon Army National Guard’s Charlie Company, 2nd Battalion, 162nd Infantry Regiment, cleans his weapons at the unit armory in Gresham, Ore., during drill weekend, Feb. 24, Fox apprehended a hit-and-run suspect following a dangerous, high speed chase that ended in a crash in Vancouver, Wash.

To see the television news story about Sgt. Fox go to the Oregon Military Department YouTube site: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5DvOImjDcTS.

Sgt. Michael Fox, an infantryman with the Oregon Army National Guard’s Charlie Company, 2nd Battalion, 162nd Infantry Regiment, passes the company guidon to incoming commander 1st Lt. Jason Zoesch, during a ceremony, Jan. 15, at the Richard Miller Armory in Forest Grove, Ore.

Zoesch assumes command of Golf Co., 141 Brigade Support Bn
MG Rees inducted into Order of the Minuteman

Formal ceremony attended by more than 500 Oregon Guard members and guests

Story by Sentinel Staff


The ceremony preceded the Oregon National Guard’s annual Military Ball.

As Oregon’s adjutant general, Rees directed, managed, and supervised the administration, discipline, organization, training and mobilization of the Oregon National Guard, the Oregon State Defense Force, Joint Force Headquarters, and the Office of Oregon Emergency Management.

Rees is responsible for developing and coordinating all policies, plans and programs of the Oregon National Guard in concert with the governor and legislature of the state. He also served as the governor’s homeland security advisor.

The three-term adjutant general also served as an air operations officer and troop commander during the Vietnam War from December 1968 to November 1969. He also served in many high-level command positions throughout the U.S. Army and National Guard Bureau including, director of the Army National Guard, and then vice chief and acting chief of the National Guard Bureau in Washington, D.C. He also served as Chief of Staff at U.S. Northern Command (USNORTHCOM) / North American Aerospace Defense Command (NORAD).

Rees’ first term as Oregon’s adjutant general began in May 1987, when he was appointed by then-Oregon Gov. Neil Goldschmidt. His second term as adjutant general followed his appointment as acting chief of the National Guard Bureau in 1994, when Oregon Gov. Barbara Roberts reappointed him to the post as the commander of Oregon’s Citizen-Soldiers and Airmen.

Rees’ third and final term as adjutant general—his longest appointment—began in July 2005, when Oregon Gov. Ted Kulongoski asked him to return to Oregon. At the time, Rees was serving as chief of staff at USNORTHCOM/NORAD at Peterson Air Force Base, Colo.

In addition to serving as adjutant general for three different governors, Rees’ long military career also spanned 10 U.S. Presidents. When Rees began his military career as a U.S. Army West Point cadet in 1962, President John F. Kennedy had been in office for only a year.

Through the course of his military career, Rees has been recognized with numerous civilian and military awards, including the Army and Air Force Distinguished Service Medals, Legion of Merit, Bronze Star Medal, Vietnam Service Medal, and the Republic of Vietnam Gallantry Cross. He is also qualified as a parachutist, Army aviator, and Army Ranger.
Vietnamese-Americans find many benefits in the Oregon National Guard

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

SALEM, Ore.—Oregon Army National Guard Staff Sgt. Jay Nguyen has some poignant feelings about being a member of the National Guard.

As the full-time enlisted aide to the Army Chief of Staff at the Oregon Military Department in Salem, Ore., the Vietnamese-American Nguyen said there is a definite upside to being a member of the National Guard.

Aside from the obvious benefits; education, retirement, training, and a paycheck, he believes the cohesion and a sense of accomplishment—two factors which are held in very high esteem in the Vietnamese community, and indeed throughout the Asian culture.

“The National Guard, we’re just like a family,” Nguyen said. “If you go into battle, you want to have your brother-in-arms next to you protecting you.”

Every unit in the Oregon Guard promotes a philosophy of cohesion, but it also extends out to the community, he said.

Nguyen, who emigrated to the United States when he was 14, is also a member of the nationally-recognized, and award winning TAG's Select Honor Guard. Initially his mother didn’t want him to join the military, but he persisted.

After 12 years of military service, with two overseas deployments including Iraq in 2008-09, and a full-time AG position, Nguyen says he has no regrets.

Thinking back to the Vietnam War and the desire to see a strong relationship between the Vietnamese community and the Oregon National Guard, he said: “We fought the war side by side, for the Vietnamese people.”

As a Vietnamese-American veteran and member of the VNCO. Nguyen adds that there are many opportunities for assimilation, which combines patriotism with a strong sense of achievement—another integral part of the Vietnamese culture.

Nguyen says he has no regrets.

Every unit in the Oregon Guard promotes a philosophy of cohesion, but it also extends out to the community, he said.

“Both sides are missing out on a lot,” Nguyen said. “The Vietnamese community is not asking us, we’re not asking them. I think we’re missing out.”

Nguyen cites patriotic events, such as the Vietnamese American Recognition Day, as one such group (perhaps due to language differences between English and Vietnamese), the rates of economic assimilation were the highest among all the large immigrant groups.

Vietnamese Americans, being political refugees, view their stay in the United States as permanent and became involved in the political process in higher rates than other groups, the study says.

“Close to home, one Vietnamese group which, in combination with Vietnamese owned businesses in the community, are members of the VNCO. The group convenes every month in a non-descript meeting hall in SE Portland to discuss topics which encourage, develop and support activities which help the Vietnamese in Oregon to thrive and continue to be contributing citizens. Vietnamese Americans are unique in that they have a strong business acumen is the Vietnamese Community of Oregon (VNO)

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Nguyen, who emigrated to the United States when he was 14, is also a member of the nationally-recognized, and award winning TAG’s Select Honor Guard.

Initially his mother didn’t want him to join the military, but he persisted.

After 12 years of military service, with two overseas deployments including Iraq in 2008-09, and a full-time AG position, Nguyen says he has no regrets.

Thinking back to the Vietnam War and the desire to see a strong relationship between the Vietnamese community and the Oregon National Guard, he said: “We fought the war side by side, for the Vietnamese people.”

As a Vietnamese-American veteran and member of the VNCO. Nguyen adds that there are many opportunities for assimilation, which combines patriotism with a strong sense of achievement—another integral part of the Vietnamese culture.

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Many Americans don’t realize the benefits they have of being born here,” Dial said. “If you have never seen what change or freedom look like you can’t even hope or dream it.”

Studying many Vietnamese parents pressure their children to excel in school and to enter professional fields such as science, medicine, or engineering because the parents feel insecurity stemming from their chaotic past and view education as the only ticket to a better life.

So why doesn’t the Oregon National Guard go after these prime and upwardly mobile and educated population, Nguyen wonders.

“I say bring me those people who can represent these communities,” he says. “Bring me people who can be a recruiter in your community.”

Persons who possess native language skills, and more importantly, vital cultural awareness and sensitivity, receive preferential hiring status in the Oregon National Guard’s recruiting ranks, Dial says.

He cites the Oregon National Guard’s success in the local Hispanic community as one example.

“The best people to bring a message of hope to anyone are those who have gone through change,” Dial adds. “And these people are in our structure today.”

Dial invites all individuals who are un- or under-represented in the Oregon National Guard to step up and be a part of change.

“Tired people who are ready and willing, and excited about (the National Guard) to be on my team and be a part of the solution,” Dial said. “We definitely take idea about how to break into those markets.”

In the face of fiscal and cross-cultural challenges, Nguyen adds something which may make the difference.

“I was not born here,” Nguyen said. “But this is my country now. My kids are here, and I want to protect their freedom. I would like the Vietnamese community to understand that. We are no longer two nations. We are one nation.”
The Korean War was the first conflict to see extensive employment of the Air National Guard (ANG) in combat service. Many ANG units were activated, in whole or in part, and served directly in Korea, or in many other locations in the United States and around the world during the war.

Oregon ANG members were among those who answered the call to duty. It was then that United Nations air forces received some timely help from members of the Oregon Air National Guard. Some 60 years ago, Mr. Gregory James and Mr. Ernest Wakehouse were members of the Oregon Air National Guard (Ore ANG) in the organization’s first war era. They were among a group of Oregon Air Guard pilots who flew 100 combat missions in Korea.

In recent conversations they shared some recollections of their Korean War experiences.

“They sent nine of us,” said Ernie Wakehouse. “Seven of us completed 100 missions. Oral Tandy became a Prisoner of War.”

There were nine Oregon ANG pilots of the 18th Fighter Bomber Group (18FBG) who flew combat in Korea. As for how these individuals were selected for duty in Korea, Wakehouse related that the pilots in the 142G’s 123rd Fighter Squadron had been overseas in World War II.

“The 123rd first checked for bachelors without any combat experience in WWII,” Wakehouse said. “But they needed more, so they checked for married men without combat in WWII. Two pilots, Dick Andrews and Jim Byers, both flew fighters in WWII but volunteered for duty in Korea.”

Overall, James thought this prioritization in candidate selection was pretty fair.

During World War II both Wakehouse and James went through flight training and were trained to fly fighter planes. James flew the F-39 and P-40 in training, and was a P-51 pilot replacement pool in Florida awaiting overseas duty when that war ended.

Wakehouse flew the P-40 and P-51 fighters during the war, including ferry flights in the United States. He also flew in fighter combat training units, and was ready to go overseas when the war came to a close. He returned to civilian life, got into automobiles sales, and later signed up for the Oregon Air Guard. But as the Cold War developed, war came again.

“Korea was a rugged, hot war—the Forgotten War—they called it a police action, (but) the bullets in Korea were real,” Wakehouse said.

As pilots were selected for Korea, they had a week or two of notice before departure for some refresher training at the USAF’s gunnery school. James left for training two weeks ahead of Wakehouse, and first went to Nellis AFB, Nev. But the gunnery school was in the process of moving so he was sent to Luke AFB, Ariz.

Wakehouse on the other hand proceeded directly to Luke Field. Only Robert Daggett, who went to F-80 fighter jet training, was sent elsewhere.

The gunnery training at Luke lasted about a month, during the summer of 1951. They employed the Mustang’s six .50-caliber machine guns in air-to-ground, air-to-air gunnery and conducted a lot of dogfighting.

Wakehouse didn’t think he really needed the dogfighting for what he was eventually assigned to do in Korea, which was mostly air-to-ground work. He and a few others had previous air-to-air training during his time in the Ore ANG, having flown the F-51 since the summer of 1948. He also felt that the ANG pilots were ready, but the training at Luke would only help. After completing the gunnery training, the pilots returned to Portland for a four- or five-day furlough, then flew to Sacramento to take a Military Air Transport Service (MATS) flight from Travis AFB to the continent.

Wakehouse had been to Sacramento the summer before, when the Ore ANG had ferried several F-51s to the naval base at Alameda.

Each guard unit equipped with the F-51 had to provide eight to ten Mustangs which were loaded aboard the Navy aircraft carrier Boxer and quickly sent to Asia during the first summer of the war. Later in the campaign, the ANG units sent to eight to ten F-51 pilots each to Korea to help the stretched active duty force meet the burgeoning demand for aircrew and the lengthening operational requirements. The Ore ANG answered that call as well.

The pilots arrived in Tokyo, Japan, where they received their first theater indoctrination, some ground training, and paperwork. There was no operational flying in Japan prior to his going to Korea, recalled Wakehouse. When they got to Korea, first at Chinhae (also known as K-10), they performed a local check out in the F-51.

“Chinhae was a hard-top surface field, with a long runway. At that time our forces were fighting roughly along the 38th parallel. It was a nice base, with good quarters,” Wakehouse said.

Shortly thereafter, he flew on to Seoul City Airbase (also known as K-16) with a mesh steel runway which was not very long, and had smokestacks on each end, Wakehouse recalled. He flew combat missions in the F-51 with 1,850 rounds of .50-caliber machine gun ammunition, and carried four rockets and two general purpose bombs or two napalm bombs beneath the wings.

“Bringing the engine up to 3,000 RPM, 61 inches manifold pressure and let off on the brakes,” he said, remembering the short runway takeoffs.

Most of the Oregon pilots served in the 39th Fighter Interceptor Squadron (39FIS), known as the "Cobras." The F-51 Mustang squadron was attached to the 18th Fighter Bomber Group (18FBG) from its parent 35th Fighter Interceptor Group.

Both James and Wakehouse flew in the 39FIS, in both different flights within the squadron. The 18FBG had four fighter squadrons during this time, including the 39FIS, the 12th and 67th Fighter Bomber Squadrons (FBS) and No. 2 Squadron, South African Air Force.

Aside from Daggett, who flew F-80s, Wakehouse said that Jim Byers was first assigned to the 39th but later transferred to the 12th FBS. In the 39FIS, James and Wakehouse flew a variety of combat missions, including close air support, interdiction and combat air patrol for search and rescue operations.

The Oregonians soon proved the capability the Air National Guard pilots.

“In Korea we had an operations officer by the name of Devol Brett. He was the only West Pointer to fly with us, and he flew a lot of missions with us,” said Wakehouse.

“We all ended up in his squadron and he finished his 100 missions just like the rest of us. He always supported the National Guard from that point on, Wakehouse said.

(Note: Devol Brett also flew combat in Vietnam, was ultimately promoted to the rank of lieutenant general, and retired in 1978.)

During this phase of the Korean War in late 1951, the ground situation was stabilizing, as air and naval operations proceeded apace. The peace talks at Kaesong broke down on Aug. 23, 1951 and with concern about another possible communist ground offensive, Far East Air Forces initiated “Operation Strangle” on August 18, 1951.

Strangle was an aerial interdiction campaign designed to hamper communist supply operations. The attacks against the railroad network in northern Korea drew a response from the communist air forces, which began their own offensive from Chinese bases into Korean airspace on Sept. 1.

In three weeks time, enemy MiG jet fighters made it hazardous for any United Nations air force fighter-bombers such as the F-51 to operate in the area in the northwest part of Korea opposite the Chinese border known as “MiG Alley.”

But there were plenty of railroad targets further south which were battered, and by October and November, the rail cuts outpaced the enemy’s ability to repair them. This drew a more aggressive response from the MiGs, as well as increased numbers of anti-aircraft artillery.
Wakehouse recalls Korea as a ‘rugged, hot war’

continued from previous page

along the enemy supply lines in this see-saw aerial interdiction battle. James and Wakehouse flew their 100 missions in this challenging environment. For his first 20 combat missions Wakehouse flew out of Seoul City Airbase, and then the squadron moved to Hoengsong Airdrome (K-46), an airfield to the east near Wonju - which in his opinion was a bit better for flying with a mix of gravel and blacktop. He flew a total of 108 combat missions between 12 September and 16 December, 1951. On some days he flew two or three missions. On four or five days in this period he flew four missions, including three in the day and one at night. When he took off at dusk for a night mission, he dropped bombs only and didn’t perform any strafing attacks.

James said the F-51 was the best aircraft for the mission and it performed great, though a hit in the engine could be a problem. He said he was hit twice during his 100 missions but it was nothing serious for the operations of the aircraft. He also thought that the aircraft maintainers did well in the rugged, hectic and demanding conditions in which they all worked.

“Our maintenance was good, once in a while there was a problem but they kept it up pretty good,” James said.

Wakehouse also considered himself lucky, and was never hit in the radiator, a critical thing for the Mustang’s liquid-cooled engine. If an F-51 took a hit in the radiator, it had about five minutes before the coolant was lost and the engine seized up.

“We lost a lot of buddies that would still be there if they flew the F-47. You could knock a whole cylinder off an F-47 and still fly,” Wakehouse said.

(Author’s note: The Republic P-47/F-47 Thunderbolt fighter-bomber had an air-cooled engine - requests for the propeller-driven F-47 by commanders in Korea were disproved by HQ USAF for various reasons).

Still, the Mustang fighter-bombers performed well in the air-to-ground encounters, the pilots said. Wakehouse recalled one air-to-air encounter with the enemy, flying a jet fighter.

“I was dive bombing a railroad track up in MG Alley and all at once I saw some red balls come across the top of my engine,” he said. “And they were so close that I couldn’t hear the ‘boom, boom, boom.’ I thought, ‘What was that? How come those are coming horizontal?’”

Wakehouse said if he normally comes up from the ground, so taking evasive action, he dropped his bombs, looked off to his right side, and saw the MiG-15 with a big red star on the side.

Wakehouse said. “(It) made sense to converge at 800, 1,000 or 1,500 feet in front of the aircraft. Napalm was a fearsome weapon. (I) didn’t feel great about using it, but it was war.”

James agreed.

“It (napalm) was awful, and we had to make sure we put it in the right place,” said James. “The .50-caliber machine guns—three in each in a wing—could be sighted to converge at 800, 1,000 or 1,500 feet in front of the aircraft. Napalm was a fearsome weapon. (I) didn’t feel great about using it, but it was war.”

James agreed.

As an example of the weapons delivery challenge, the space between the rails of the enemy railroad tracks was 56 inches, and only a direct hit was effective against such a narrow target. Standard ordnance used by a fighter-bomber against the railroad tracks was a pair of 500-lb bombs - about one-tenth of the total sorts obtained rail cuts, which was an improvement over WWII success rates against similar targets.

Wakehouse started out-flying the number four and number two wingmen positions in a four-ship flight formation. Then after 30 missions, he became a flight leader. As he gained more combat experience, he took on the challenge of the whole squadron, and even the whole group.

Wakehouse recalled an occasion when his flight was scrambled for a long seven- and-a-half-hour mission in support of a search and rescue combat tour. The flight was scrambled for two B-29 bombers that were shot down and crashed into the Yellow Sea. The Mustangs flew low and high cover in the area, and James recalled there were some British ships out there. This was probably the most demanding mission to Nassiri on Oct. 23, 1951, also known as “Black Friday,” in which communist MiG-15 jet fighters inflicted painful losses on the 307th Bomb Wing during its attack on Nassiri Airfield in North Korea.

The name on the plane, “Myasis Dragon,” described how he felt at times during his combat tour. Another F-51 pilot, Wallace Parks, looks on.

Of the 26 crews aboard these two bombers, five were killed by friendly fires, including the Australian frigate HMAS Murchison and 3rd Air Rescue Squadron SA-16 “Dumbo” aircraft. Wakehouse was awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross in 1952 for a notable mission he flew on Nov. 18, 1951. Excerpts from the citation reveal what a close fight this air war could be.

Wakehouse, then a first lieutenant, "led a flight of four F-51 fighter planes to Sondong-ni in close support of a United Nations push," said the citation. “The flight annihilated 100 enemy troops, enabling a ROK force to take without opposition a hill which was the target of their advance. After the furious air attack, an unarmored T-6 spotter plane flew over the scene, counting the bodies of Wakehouse’s 40 victims and 60 killed by the remainder of the four-plane flight,” the citation continued.

Unfortunately, one Oregon Air Guardman, 1st Lt. Orval Tandy, was buried by enemy ground fire on his 57th mission on Sept. 5, 1951. He was captured by Chinese Communist Forces which marched him for four days to his first prisoner of war camp and he spent the rest of the war in a harsh environment.

Medical care was nonexistent in the camps. No letters from home made it in or out of the camp in his first year, but he had home in Camas. Wash., Mrs. Tandy with her three small boys knew her husband was alive because of a picture that surfaced in a Fitchburg community newspaper. He eventually received seven or eight letters from home during his two years in confinement, and sent six out, badly cut up by censors. Boredom and dysentery in the camps took their toll on the prisoners, and Tandy went from 170 pounds down to 128, but fortunately, he survived. He was in the last group of prisoners returned to Oregon, with the armistice, exactly two years to the day and within an hour of the time of day at which he was shot down. He continued to serve on active duty until retirement as a lieutenant colonel in 1972, completing a 30-year career.

All together, Oregon’s fighter pilots flew a total of 1,051 combat sorties in the Korean War, claimed one enemy aircraft destroyed and two more damaged. They dropped 1,056 bombs, fired 3,715 rockets, dropped 456 napalm bombs and expended 1,194,000 rounds of 50-caliber machine gun ammunition during their combat missions. Their contributions to the war effort in Operation Strangle helped forestal a communist offensive planned for the late summer of 1951 and enabled the enemy only had supplies for a static war situation.

Ironically and sadly, two of the Oregon pilots who flew combat in Korea, both World War II veterans, were lost in separate aircraft accidents after the war. Capt. Taylor White, Jr., was lost in an F-51 accident on a routine training mission from bases in Japan on May 5, 1952, not long after surviving 100 combat missions in Korea. His Korean combat record lasted 19, 10, from December 1 to December 10, 1951 and he received the Distinguished Flying Cross for “courage distinguished by exceptional heroism.”

On June 25, 1950, Capt. Wallace Parks, who flew 90 air combat missions in Korea, claimed 104 enemy aircraft destroyed, the extra mission “for good luck,” was lost in an F-94B mishap at Gowen Field, Idaho, during the 142nd Fighter Group’s summer training encampment.

At the time of his Korean War service, Wakehouse was 29 years old. He received a temporary captain’s rank, but was returned to first lieutenant after he left Korea. Upon returning to the United States, he went through the ground school for the F-86 Sabre fighter jet. He had already qualified on the T-33 jet trainer, and was ready to make the transition into the jet age.

While in Korea the Oregon ANG told him he would have to sign on for a five-year commitment in order to fly the F-86, Wakehouse said he was a security-minded Air Guard and returned to civilian life and his automobile dealership. James also remembers his decision to focus the war on raising his family.

James said flying in combat in Korea was “(it was) a great, great, great feeling. There were 17 countries in Korea helping against the communists,” he said.

Wakehouse visited Korea for the first time since the war, by special invitation from the South Korean government in 1995.

“They paid for the trip, as well as his stay at the best hotel in Seoul,” he said.

He received an escort to the Demilitarized Zone to see Parnumjon, and Namchon, Korea beyond. Seeing how South Korea had developed since the war made him feel real good, he said.

In 2010, President Lee of the Republic of Korea sent him an invitation to visit Korea once more. James has not yet returned, and said he would like to someday.

Wakehouse and James, the last two Oregon ANG pilots who flew combat missions in Korea were reunited in April 2011 at the 70th anniversary commemoration of the Oregon Air National Guard. The two reminisced their war experiences, and caught up on things.

The two beamed with pride as they observed the modern organization they helped build, through their service in the “ Forgotten War.”

This story is dedicated to the brave members of the Oregon Air National Guard who participated in the Korean War.
**Witnesses in Tigard recall Valentine’s Day P-51 crash**

*Story by Joel R. Miller, Special to the Sentinel*

Photos courtesy of Tigard Historical Assoc.

As a teenager in the 1960s, I lived at Southwest 69th Avenue and Bayfield Street in the West Portland Heights area of Tigard. I knew that my next-door neighbor, Irven L. Shirley, had been an eyewitness to an aircraft crash in the mid-1940s, but he never spoke in detail about what he saw that day just a few blocks from our home.

Recently, my interest in the incident was rekindled. I obtained a copy of the official accident report and discovered that Mr. Shirley had written one of the two witness statements included in the report.

Wanting to learn more, I searched the newspaper archives, enlisted help in finding more eyewitnesses, and thoroughly researched this event. What follows is the story.

Tragedy struck Tigard on Valentine’s Day, Feb. 14, 1946. At 2:55 p.m., 1st Lt. John W. Heaney of the 432nd AAF Base took off in a P-51H fighter plane from the Portland Army Air Base on a local training flight to check a malfunctioning compass. A little over a half-hour into his flight, Heaney started experiencing engine trouble over southwest Portland. At 3:32, he radioed the tower that his plane’s motor had died and he was going to bail out at about 2,500 feet. However, as his aircraft rapidly descended through the thin overcast, he must have become concerned his fighter would crash into homes in the thickly populated area. He stayed with the plane as long as he could while aiming for a vacant patch of land.

Heaney finally jumped, but at an altitude of a mere 100 feet. Seconds later, at 3:33 p.m., his P-51 slammed into the ground just off Washington St., (now SW 69th Avenue)* near 5th St., (now SW Elmhurst St.), a couple of blocks west of where Landmark Ford Lincoln now is located. Miraculously, his goal of not hitting any homes proved successful. Irven Shirley and a neighbor rushed from our homes. Shirley quickly located Mr. Heaney’s parachute and there was the pilot with his open parachute around him.”

Mrs. Sparks heard the plane and then her radio went dead. She then heard what she thought was someone blasting a tree stump, but what the sound turned out to be actually was the P-51 crashing with a dull boom. “Right outside the corner of the house I saw this plane. There was an awful smell of gasoline and dust filled the air,” said Mrs. Sparks.


First Lieutenant John William Heaney was 26 years old at the time of his death. A native of Tacoma, Belmont County, Ohio, he enlisted in 1938 and attended pre-flight school in December 1942. He graduated from flight school in June 1943. Heaney had logged 220 combat hours and a total flying time of 658 hours. A veteran of 65 missions over Europe in B-26 bombers during 1944, he was assigned to the Portland Army Air Base in December 1945 as an aircraft maintenance officer two months prior to his death. He was training in transition to the P-51H in which he had logged 4-1/2 hours flying time.

Among Heaney’s awards were the Distinguished Flying Cross, the Air Medal with nine bronze oak leaf clusters, and the European Theater of Operations (E.T.O.) Ribbon with five bronze battle stars. He is commemorated at the war memorial in Bremerton, Ohio.

John Heaney was survived by his parents, Mr. and Mrs. Cecil Heaney of Tacoma, Ohio, and a brother, Corporal George B. Heaney, who also was serving at the Air Base in Portland.

Many thanks go to my friend of 50 years and former neighbor, Leonard Shirley, whose father was Irven Shirley. Len was very young at the time but he still remembers the sounds of the spattering P-51 and the thud of the crash. He and his mother ran down the street to see what had happened. Len put out word to his network of contacts that he was seeking information on the crash and he found two more eyewitnesses.

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Observing from a half-mile to the north near Highway 99W and Red Rock Road, which is now SW 72nd Ave. Hap Metten rice recalls seeing the P-51 going down and his grandfather piling him into a car to drive to the scene of the crash.

An unusual recollection comes from John Winkiebleck, who saw the plane go down from his grandmother’s home on Varnes Rd., (now SW Varns St.) a half-mile south of the accident.

John wrote, “How strange you should ask about this. I saw that crash. I was shooting at the aircraft with a stick and it was spooky because it was as though I had influenced it. The plane suddenly went into a nosedive and I could see the pilot and chute but he was too low and I don’t think it opened.”

Was John Heaney’s P-51 an accident waiting to happen? One has to wonder, considering a previous problem with that particular aircraft.

On February 6, eight days before the crash, 1st Lt. R. S. Leisy flew the plane and reported that the engine momentarily cut out on takeoff and several times in the air. Whatever the answer, one thing is certain: On Valentine’s Day in 1946 near Tigard, the Army Air Force lost a fine aviator in the prime of his life.

*In 1957, U. S. Post Office and Washington County officials agreed that a uniform system of street names and addresses should be extended throughout the unincorporated areas near Tigard. One result of that agreement was the street name changes in the vicinity of the P-51 crash.*

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**142nd Security Forces Squadron deploys**

Oregon Air National Guard Master Sgt. Derek Moore, 142nd Security Forces Squadron, passes the 142nd Security Forces Squadron guidon to Mr. Cameron Smith, who represented Oregon Governor John Kitzhaber, during the unit’s mobilization ceremony at Camp Withycombe in Clackamas, Ore., Dec. 11. The unit guidon will hang in the governor’s office throughout the 142nd SFS deployment as a reminder of Oregon’s sons and daughters who are answering the nation’s call overseas.

**142nd Fighter Wing honors Astoria**

The City of Astoria becomes the 14th city in Oregon to be recognized by the 142nd Fighter Wing as part of its Cities of Honor program. The dedication ceremony was held at the Portland Air National Guard Base, Portland Ore., Feb. 21. From left to right are Maj. Jordan Schnitzer, Maj. Frank Page, Lt. Col. Chris Lantagne, Command Chief Master Sgt. Julie Eddings, Mr. Willis Van Dusen, Mayor of Astoria, Tech. Sgt. James Cripps, 142nd Fighter Wing Crew Chief, Lt. Col. Joe Harris, Chief Master Sgt. Bill Green, and Col. Rick Wedan, 142nd Fighter Wing Commander.
Kingsfield Field welcomes new commander

Col. Jeremy Baenen (center) accepts the wing flag from Brigadier General Steven Gregg (left), commander of the Oregon Air National Guard, symbolizing his acceptance of command of the 173rd Fighter Wing during an official ceremony, January 13, 2013, at Kingsfield Field in Klamath Falls, Ore.

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

KLAMATH FALLS, Ore. - Col. Jeremy “Weed” Baenen, who has more than 20 years of military experience, took command of the 173rd Fighter Wing, during a change of command ceremony at Kingsfield Field, Klamath Falls, Ore., Jan. 13.

Baenen’s military experience includes 10 years with the active duty component before joining the Oregon Air National Guard in 2002. He most recently commanded the 173rd Operations Group after holding numerous positions at the 142nd Fighter Wing, Portland Air National Guard Base, Portland, Ore.

The official ceremony included the passing of the wing flag, a flag that represents the command, from the outgoing commander to the incoming commander.

According to Air Force protocol, the ceremony is rooted in military history, dating back to the 18th Century. During this time, organizational flags were developed representing the individual units. When a change of command took place, the outgoing commander would pass the flag to the individual assuming command. The ceremony was held in front of the entire unit so that all could witness the new commander assuming his position.

Additionally, Baenen’s name was revealed on the Wing Rankings F-15 Eagle as the commander of the 173rd Fighter Wing. Flowers were presented to the wives of both of the outgoing and incoming commander from the members of the 173rd Fighter Wing.

Baenen replaced Col. Jeffrey “Hi-Ho” Silver, who commanded the 173rd Fighter Wing since September 11, 2011.

CLACKAMAS, Oreg. – Fifteen Oregon Army National Guard Soldiers participated in the first ever Gladstone High School Leadership Symposium at Camp Withycombe on Feb. 27.

Soldiers from Co. B, Recruiting and Retention Battalion greeted the over 80 students that arrived just past 8am, nearly all of whom had never been at Camp Withycombe before.

A combination of all grades, the students anxiously peered out the window of their school bus as they first noticed ‘Welcome Gladstone High School’ on the reader board and then the tanks located in front of the main building. But today wasn’t about tanks; it was about developing their leadership skills.

In a concept developed in partnership between Gladstone High School vice principal Patti Alexander and Oregon Army National Guard Recruiting and Retention Battalion commander, Capt. Pete Fritsch, the leadership symposium was designed to give the Gladstone students an opportunity to spend the day discussing leadership skills and then putting those skills to work.

“As a very proud to be a part of this project. I’m a firm believer that the Oregon Army Guard has a role in working with our community, helping these young leaders and problem solvers develop the resources they all demonstrated today,” Fritsch said.

Prior to arriving at Camp Withycombe, the students were divided into four groups of 20, and each group decided on an issue at their school that they would like to address as students leaders.

Once the students were seated in the auditorium, State Command Sgt. Maj. Shane Lake welcomed the students, discussed his personal leadership philosophy and then challenged the students to work hard in developing their leadership potential.

Lake then dismissed the students to their respective classrooms where their Oregon Guard instructor teams would begin the breakout sessions and instruction.

Lt. Col. Kevin Dial, Oregon Army National Guard Recruiting and Retention commander for Co. B, led the ‘Orange Team’ through the ‘Be, Know, Do’ process. B commander, led the ‘Orange Team’ through the ‘Be, Know, Do’ process. Habeck was impressed with the students’ enthusiasm and level of engagement.

“An instructor I was extremely proud to be working with the students and want to thank them for the opportunity,” he said.

They then facilitated the group through the problem solving of their particular issue; equality for all sports teams and clubs throughout the school. After the morning training, the students all smiled as the doors opened and the pizza was delivered.

Once reconvened in the auditorium after lunch, the four student groups reported back to the larger group on what their issue was and the details of their problem solving strategy.

Faculty members said they were impressed with the students' problem-solving skills and ideas for their respective issues.

Included in the ideas presented was the idea of a Gladstone Mentorship Program to assist incoming freshman feel comfortable in their new school.

Another novel solution was a Gladstone smart phone app which would serve as a clearing house to disseminate information on all sports events and club information throughout the week.

Assistant School Principal Alexander said the school was very proud to partner with the Oregon National Guard.

“As an instructor I was extremely proud to be working with the students and want to thank them for the opportunity,” he said.

“Our students learned a lot and had a great day.”

Retired Maj. Chuck Kovitch was the featured keynote speaker. He had the students sit in a semi-circle as he talked to them about the power of ‘Yes’ and how attitude and motivation can be the foundation to effective problem solving and goal setting.

He said the event offered an opportunity to teach students about the basics of leadership.

“Gladstone High School and the Oregon Army National Guard now have a solid partnership educating the new leaders of tomorrow,” Kovitch said.

Each student went home with a cinch sack full of Oregon National Guard promotional items and a sweatshirt in the school’s distinctive orange and black colors, emblazoned with their Gladiator logo.

The group planned another meeting in late March to discuss the progress of their respective plans.

As the 12 year war on terror fades, the military no longer needs the same number of soldiers it did at the height of the war on terror. Still, Gomez’s mission is unique because the unit he recruits from is second deployment to Iraq in late 2011, the citizen-soldiers from eastern Oregon have been training on the new tank.

The new armored vehicle in turn means the 3rd Battalion has a lot of space on its roster for new people and that is where Gomez fits in.

Gomez, 29, a former Milton-Freewater resident, said the Oregon area appears to be a place where service in a local Guard unit is a well-known job avenue.

“There is a lot of potential here,” Gomez said.

Gomez said along with showing off the new M1A2 SEP, his big focus is outlining the educational benefits the Guard can offer to prospective recruits. The Guard, he said, offers a host of programs to individuals who join the part-time organization and want to go to college.

“Money for many people right now is tight. So people are looking for ways to get through school,” Gomez said.

Student loan debt in America is an often overlooked, but growing, challenge. Last May, for example, the total student loan debt load in America crossed the $1 trillion mark.

Gomez said the Guard offers a tuition assistance program, a student loan repayment program along with two versions of the renowned GI Bill.*

* Currently the National Guard’s Tuition Assistance Program has been put on hold in March due to budgetary concerns related to sequestration. As of this printing, the program is still on hold.
Nearby trees sway frantically as clouds of red smoke sweep across the empty meadow. The rotors of the UH-60 Blackhawk helicopter blur into nebulous dark streaks as it hovers just inches over the rippling grass.

Soldiers, nestled into firing positions in the surrounding bushes, brace themselves against the turbulent wind, watching as their buddies move swiftly towards the helicopter to load the wounded for safe transport out of hostile territory.

This is how Soldiers with the Oregon Army National Guard’s Bravo Company, 1st Battalion, 186th Infantry Regiment, 41st Infantry Brigade Combat Team, spend their drill-weekend.

The infantry company conducted a large-scale training exercise simulating battlefield scenarios, March 9-10, at the Fairview Training Center in Salem, Ore.

Bravo Company’s headquarters is based in Coos Bay, Ore., and the unit’s Detachment I, is located in St. Helens, Ore. The Fairview Training Center provided a central location where the two units could meet and train together.

“We mesh incredibly well considering we are stationed in two different places,” said Sgt. Justin Gray, with Bravo Company headquarters in Coos Bay, Ore. “Today was all about being able to adapt, overcome and succeed in what we do together, and we did just that.”

The goal of the exercise was to provide realistic training for any given situation. Noise simulators provided grenade explosions.

Blank ammunition simulated an attack from the opposing force and triggered a firefight. Canisters of thick, red smoke billowed out a smoke-screen to reduce visibility.

“This is the best training we’ve had so far,” said Spc. William Ashley, based in Coos Bay, Ore. “It’s beneficial for us to be able to practice our situational awareness of any obstacles we may encounter in order to prepare us for the real thing.”

The training exercise hit on key infantry skills, such as moving tactically in rough terrain, communications, obstacles, treating and evacuating the wounded, and being able to resolve any unexpected problems along the way.

“This training was great,” said Cpl. Andrew J. Miller, also based out of Coos Bay, Ore. “Our commanding officer is working hard to make sure we have effective and useful training at all times.”

Capt. Mark Timmons, commander of Bravo Company, said his desire is to create challenging training to produce well-trained and motivated Soldiers for the state and nation.

“Seeking out new training areas improves the esprit de corps of the unit and challenges Soldiers with new situations and circumstances,” he said.

Bravo Company took advantage of every minute during their drill weekend to ‘train like they fight’ by combining urban operations training with medical evacuation training using aviation assets from the Oregon National Guard’s Charlie Company, 7th Battalion, 158th Aviation Regiment.

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Oregon Senator Ron Wyden visits town hall honoring Korea War veterans

The commemoration is occurring on the 60 year anniversary of the Korean War to honor contributions and sacrifices made by Korean War veterans.

In addition to recognizing Korean War veterans, Wyden mentioned the Oregon National Guard's Joint Transition Assistance Program, which he called a national leader in veterans' services.

"The Korean War has been considered the forgotten war and we don't believe it should be forgotten," said Tom Towslee, communications director for Wyden. "It was time to say thank you for your service."

Korean War veteran Jim "Jimbo" Fagnoud proudly accepted a framed copy of the resolution from Wyden on behalf of veterans and said he felt like he was walking on air after receiving the award.

"This is for all the veterans," said Jimbo. "There were 53,000 men lost over there and we pray for their families, and pray for the veterans that are still with us."
March is National Women's History Month

Women Inspiring Innovation through Imagination was the theme of National 2013 Women’s History Month, observed each March. The theme honors generations of women who throughout American history have used innovation and imagination, sense of wonder, and tenacity to make extraordinary contributions in the fields of science, technology, Engineering, and Mathematics.

Those attributes describe Oregon Avenue Online Hancock, 80, who was the first Chinese-American woman to fly a military aircraft during World War II, but also serve as a member of the Women Airforce Service Pilots (WASP). Look for her story on page 16.

DoD cuts tuition assistance to military

WASHINGTON (3/13/13) – The Air Force will end its support for the pursuit of higher education through the variety of programs that are available.

The force will eliminate the Montgomery GI Bill-Active Duty (Chapter 30), Montgomery GI Bill-Selected Reserve (Chapter 1606), Reserve Education Assistance Program (Chapter 1607), the Post 9/11 GI Bill, federal or state educational assistance. National Guard Airmen may also be eligible for their state's individual TA benefits.

Believe me, this was a tough decision because our Air Force truly values education,” said Chief Master Sgt. of the Air Force James Cody. “We’re still looking at the impacts for fiscal year 14 and will do our best to have TA reinstated, although we’ll likely need to review the eligibility requirements for those programs.

Airmen should contact their local education centers with questions and get updated information.

On the Army side:

Funding for tuition assistance ceased March 11, 2013. Enlisted personnel requests for tuition assistance, according to Acting Chief W. B. Blomberg, deputy chief of staff, G-1.

Soldiers from both the active and reserve components are impacted.

Those currently enrolled in courses approved for TA will not be impacted and will be allowed to complete their funded coursework.

National Guard Soldiers may be eligible for other state and federal educational assistance programs. Federal loans or grants are another option for all Soldiers, as well as their family members in pursuit of higher education.

Soldiers are encouraged to contact their local education centers with any questions they might have about their education needs and planning, according to officials from the Office of the Assistant Secretary of the Army – Civilian Education Program (Army GI-1). Also, updates on any changes to the TA funding will be posted to http://www.gibill.va.gov. The GI bill includes:

- The Montgomery GI Bill, Post 9/11 GI Bill and several other education programs listed on its website: http://www.gibill.va.gov/benefits/index.html

Army Reserve offers trial defense services in Salem

The 4133 Regional Trial Defense Team Headquarters and 653rd Trial Defense Team, Oregon Element, JAG Trial Defense Program (JA-GTDP), have moved to the Salem Reserve Center, room 120.

The Reserve Center is located at 775 Airport Road, SE, in Salem just down from the fire station. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) legal representatives are also on hand to assist veterans connected to the Salem VA.

Army trial services are still available at the Portland Regional Trial Center, 6925 S.W. Barnes Road, Portland.

Accessing EE by username and password

The Department of Defense announced its new DoD Safe Helpline Mobile Application. With this new app, service members transitioning to civilian life will have access to critical resources that assists in managing the short and long-term effects of sexual assault.

DoD launched a smart phone app for Safe Helpline

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During World War II, a select group of young women pilots became pioneers, heroes, and role models. They were the members of the Women Airforce Service Pilots (WASP) - the first women in history trained to fly American military aircraft.

The war was an historical time and aviation history was rewritten as nearly 1,100 WASP serve their nation during the 1940s. Portland native Hazel Ah Ying Lee added to the WASP story by becoming the first Chinese-American woman to fly a military plane and one of the few women to do so in the line of duty.

Lee fell in love with flying at a time when less than one percent of American pilots were women. In 1932, Lee couldn’t serve in the U.S. Army Air Corps, so she wanted to fly for the Chinese Nationalist Air Force.

Yet, there too, she was not allowed to fly for the Chinese. Lee remained in China until 1938 and contributed to that nation’s war effort in other ways.

Upon returning to New York City, Lee worked for the Chinese government as a buyer of war materials for China, but by 1943, she learned about an opportunity to fly military aircraft as a WASP.

She applied and was accepted to begin formal training at Avenger Field in Sweetwater, Texas.

Lee’s flight training was considered by her peers to be a fine aviator with an added strong, fun personality. Former WASP Anna (Flyn) Moniekiewicz, 93, of The Dalles, Oregon, stationed with Lee in Michigan. She recalls the Portland native as a prankster and a nickname.

Once while she was in a restaurant with a bunch of the girls, Hazel pretended not to understand English and ordered in Chinese,” Moniekiewicz said. “It was funny because the waiter wasn’t sure what to do. I flew with her on a few missions from Michigan, but usually she was flying planes in one direction and I flew in another. She was a very good pilot,” she added.

During one training flight, Lee made an emergency landing in a farmer’s field in Kansas. Mistaking her for a Japanese pilot, the farmer held her at “picketfork point.” She finally stood her ground, told the farmer who she was and demanded that he put the pickfork down. He complied.

After graduating Aug. 7, 1943 (Class 43 W4), Lee joined the Air Transport Command’s 3rd Ferrying Squadron at Romulus, Michigan and began ferrying trainer and liaison type aircraft. She and Flynn-Moniekiewicz were two of only 134 WASP to complete Ferry School which allowed them to ferry advanced fighter aircraft.

In late-November, 1944, she was to fly a new P-63 King Cobra to Great Falls, Mont. As a large number of P-63’s approached the airport the same time, there was confusion in the control tower.

Bucking the landing, Lee’s plane and another P-63 collided she hit the fire ex and shut down diesel, but died from the burns she received in the accident.

Only three days after learning of Lee’s death, her family received another telegram. Lee’s brother, Victor had been killed in combat in France while serving with the U.S. Army Tank Corps.

As the family made funeral preparations they chose a burial site in Portland. Yet, the cemetery refused to allow the family to bury Lee and Victor in the chosen spot, citing cemetery policy that did not allow Asians to be buried “in the White section.”

After a lengthy battle, the Lee family prevailed and the female aviator was laid to rest in a non-military funeral. She was buried alongside her brother on a sloping hill in Riverview Cemetery.

Lee’s death at age 32 made Lee’s personal history a little sadden. She was in love and had agreed to marry a man in China when the war ended. Although they had not yet wed, she listed him as next-of-kin in her WASP personnel records.

It took nearly a year before military officials could locate this man to notify him of Lee’s death. Yet, the man was serving in the mobile Chinese army.

Lee, one of 30 Oregonians who piloted WASP flight training, was the last of the 38 WASP to die in service to their country. In her lifetime, she flew more than 1,100 hours in different aircraft and died doing what she loved: flying.

WASP members contributed to WWII effort

Chinese-American and Portland native WASP one of 1,100 who served during war

The USS Pueblo remembered as nation begins 50th anniversary of Vietnam War

Historical wartime incidents are part of the fabric of how history is written. During the Vietnam War, one incident that resonated worldwide involved the capture of a United States Navy spy ship and the death of a sailor from Oregon.

With the U.S. battling the war in Southeast Asia on the front lines and prosperity at home, the capture of the USS Pueblo (AGER-2) by the North Korean navy on Jan. 23, 1968 may be described as one of the Cold War’s most momentous events. It would become known as the Pueblo incident or Pueblo crisis.

Upon the ship. The last salvo killed Fireman 1st Class and went to a modified General Quarters (no personnel on the starboard and stern rails wrapped in .57mm cannons and machine guns, signaled BuCher to “heave to or they would open up.”

Bullets then raked the ship’s superstructure. A cannon round struck the radar mast and bridge winging Buchar and two others. Orders were given to immediately destroy all classified material and go to a modified General Quarters (no hands above deck.)

Pueblo’s .50 caliber guns sat mounted on the starboard and stern rails wrapped in frozen tarps. With the ammunition stored below, no attempt was made to man them.

Bucher then ordered Pueblo to follow the escorting vessels, but later he ordered the ship stopped just outside of what he believed to be North Korean territory.

The North Korean war vessels, armed with .57mm cannons and machine guns, signaled Buchar to “heave to or they would open up.”

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The North Korean vessels having led up to the incident, and if the crew was actually culpable, isn’t totally clear. Yet, there too, she was not allowed to fly for the Chinese. Lee remained in China until 1938 and contributed to that nation’s war effort in other ways.

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