Oregon National Guard dedicates Fort Dalles Readiness Center

The Oregon National Guard held a dedication ceremony for the new Fort Dalles Readiness Center in The Dalles, Ore., April 17. Maj. Gen. Daniel R. Hokanson, The Adjutant General, Oregon, hosted U.S. Senators Ron Wyden and Jeff Merkley, Mr. Frank Toda, president of the Columbia Gorge Community College, along with present and past leadership of the Oregon National Guard, and members of the local community, who attended the ceremony. The Oregon Army National Guard’s Alpha Company, 3rd Battalion, 116th Cavalry Regiment, will share the new facility with the Columbia Gorge Community College. The facility may also be utilized by the local community. See Fort Dalles on page 4 for full story.

Photo courtesy Chief Warrant Officer-3 Devin Wickenhagen

Oregon aviators exchange techniques with Bangladeshi Air Force

DHAKA, Bangladesh — Two Oregon Army National Guard aviators recently completed a Subject Matter Expert Exchange (SMEE) with the Bangladesh Air Force’s 9th Helicopter Squadron, May 7-9, in Dhaka, Bangladesh.

Key objectives for the engagement were for U.S. and Bangladeshi services to identify specific areas within helicopter fire suppression and search and rescue which could be augmented and improved by input from Oregon National Guard subject matter experts.

The group discussed the practicality of using helicopter water drops on buildings or other urban areas in response to fires and other natural disasters, such as earthquakes. The meetings were held at the U.S. Embassy and Bashar Air Base, in the Dhaka Cantonment Area.

Chief Warrant Officer-3 Dave Long, of the 1-168th General Support Aviation Battalion (GSAB), based in Pendleton, Ore., and Chief Warrant Officer-3 Devin Wickenhagen, of Charlie Co., 7-158 Aviation Battalion, based in Salem, Ore., helped the Bangladesh Air Force (BAF) develop techniques and procedures for aerial search and rescue in urban areas, in addition to conducting urban aerial firefighting.

“At first I did not completely understand what the true needs of the BAF and people of Bangladesh were,” said Long. “But after our visit to Dhaka and seeing the actual, very urban environment, I can understand that Bangladesh has a true and genuine need to be able to conduct urban aerial firefighting and search and rescue operations.”

Some of the recommendations to come out of the exchange were ways to adopt Bangladesh helicopter fire suppression (i.e. water bucket drops) certification programs based on similar programs used by the U.S. Federal Aviation Authority.
**Mobilizations, changes impact Oregon National Guard**

This summer the Oregon National Guard is mobilizing approximately 1,100 Soldiers and Airmen. I was honored by the opportunity to visit our troops at Fort Bliss and Fort Hood as they complete their post-mobilization training. The visits brought back memories of these units and their prior mobilizations, and how important our National Guard and women are to our state and nation.

We are fortunate to have so many exceptional leaders at every level, and such highly motivated citizen Soldiers and Airmen who continue to stop forward and answer our nation’s call.

To the families of our mobilized Soldiers and Airmen, I want you to know you are our highest priority and we have family support programs in place to assist you throughout the state. To commanders, past experience has shown a successful family program begins with you and your family readiness group volunteers. I want to personally thank all family program volunteers who make a huge difference to our organization every day, and I look forward to your continued support to the families of our deployed force.

As we continue to mobilize Soldiers and Airmen, the National Guard and the Department of Defense are facing difficult decisions under the Budget Control Act. As I write this, discussions on the National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) continue in our nation’s capital and in every state. While no official decisions have been made, we must be prepared to adjust to the NDAA once it is approved.

Topics being discussed that directly impact Oregon include a potential reduction in the size of our primary assigned aircraft, to F-15 Fighter Wings, and a potential reduction in Air Guard force structure from more than 350,000 to 335,000 or as low as 315,000.

We continue to engage our leaders at every level to express our concerns, inform them of the impacts to our communities, state and nation, and will share decisions that may affect us when they are made.

Although these national level decisions will impact our Oregon National Guard, our leaders will always prepare to answer our nation’s call.

I thank all of you for your service, and the difference you make every day in our communities, our state, and our nation, as you remain Always Ready, Always There!

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**State Command Chief, Swartwout retires, bids farewell**

This is my last Oregon Sentinel article as your Command Chief Warrant Officer. In the near future, I will be retiring from both the Federal Excepted Service Civilian Technical workforce as well as the Oregon Army National Guard.

As I look back over 41 years in uniform, of which there have been several different ones, and over 33 years in one full-time status or another, please indulge me this one last time as I look back at how the military has changed.

One of the things that come to the forefront of my mind is the fact that the military has never been so well trained, equipped, and experienced in its entire history. More than half of my career was spent operating and maintaining old, outdated, hand-me-down equipment.

Now we have a full allotment of the most sophisticated military equipment which enables us to accomplish any and every mission conceivable.

Along with this high-tech equipment is the time, money, and opportunity to utilize it. Back in the old days, we dusted the cobwebs off the equipment to get re-familiarized with it, only to put it away for another year. Today, this week-end-a-month, two-weeks-a-year went out the window many years ago. Already in the 80’s we increased our op temo to the point that middle weekends off at ‘summer camp’ were a thing of the past.

Additionally, as a noncommissioned officer or officer, you put in many additional hours, most without compensation, to enable the brief time we all got together to be highly productive.

The Oregon Army National Guard has been good to me and allowed me to provide well for my family. I do have to learn to carve out time to have meaningful time with my family to ensure we had a healthy household.

I take with me many memories and friendships that I have continued along my journey. Only someone who has been there can truly understand the bond that develops among fellow Soldiers, Airmen, and civilian Guard employees.

And finally, to the Warrant Officer Cohort, I ask all of you to welcome and support the new Command Chief.

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**Oregon Guard’s senior leaders gather in Bend for annual conferences**

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**Col. Kessinger retires**

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OREGON SENTINEL

Oregon Air Guard’s Combat Operations Group welcomes new commander

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

PORTLAND, Ore. - Col. Mark A. Crosby took the reins as the Oregon Air National Guard’s Combat Operations Group (COG) commander during a ceremony May 3, at Portland Air National Guard Base.

Brig. Gen. Michael E. Stencel, Commander of the Oregon Air National Guard, presided over the change of command ceremony. He praised Crosby’s role as the direct interface between the exercise and the work he has done with the countries of Bangladesh and Vietnam over the past several years. After a formal exchange of colors, Crosby addressed the Airmen he will command.

“Till I can’t tell you how excited I am to take this assignment and work again with some familiar faces,” he said.

Crosby highlighted his vision of diversity and experience as key factors for the COG. Noting how many of the Airmen possess the unique combinations of past active-duty service, he said civilian skill sets and one’s current National Guard commitment “are the things we should be most proud of.”

As the current Chief of Public Safety for the Port of Portland, Crosby added background as well as his previous National Guard leadership roles as the state emergency plan officer, and assignments with the 244th and 272nd Combat Communications Squadrons, should allow for a seamless transition into the role as the COG commander.

“The best organizations are the ones who build on their strengths—that’s exactly what I see the COG doing now and into the future,” he said.

During the ceremony, Stencel praised outgoing COG Commander Col. Michael T. Bieniewicz for his role in expanding the training and readiness of the four distinct units that make up the COG.

“Till me, I’m the guy who is always advocating for changes but seeing how well they (Bieniewicz and Crosby) are doing their current jobs, it’s hard to let them go,” said Stencel.

Stencel said under Bieniewicz’s guidance, the COG has become more integrated and has continued to develop its mission skill sets. “Just like he did with the [142nd Fighter] Wing, he jumped in with both feet and has been integral to help posture the organization for growth,” Stencel said.

“In the blink of an eye the last two and half years have flown by. Some of the lessons were easy, some were hard, but hopefully they stuck,” said Bieniewicz, who will now begin work with the state Counter Drug Program.

In his final address as the COG Commander, Bieniewicz left the Airmen with praise and compliments saying, “What you bring with your energy and skill sets never ceases to amaze me. I am humbled and honored to have served with all of you.”

The four distinct units of the COG are made up of the 123rd Special Tactics Squadron, 116th Air Control Squadron, 270th Air Traffic Control Squadron, and 123rd Weather Flight. It was under Bieniewicz’s command that all four units participated in a joint training exercise in June of 2013 for the first time in the COG’s 12-year history.

123rd Air Force Chief travels to Portland to visit with ACA Unit of the Year

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

PORTLAND, Ore. - Chief Master Sgt. Ronald C. Anderson Jr., Command Chief Master Sergeant of 1st Air Force, visited the 142nd Fighter Wing at the Portland Air National Guard Base, June 16, to get a personal look at the wing’s mission and interface with Airmen directly about their role in the Air National Guard.

The United States Air Force Air Combat Command (ACC) is headquartered at Tyndall Air Force Base, Florida. The primary role of 1st Air Force is to oversee the air defense of the contiguous United States. The Oregon Air National Guard’s 142nd Fighter Wing was recently selected as the 2015 Aerospace Control Alert Unit of the Year.

Anderson was accompanied on his visit by Senior Master Sgt. Lorene Kitzmiller, the First Sergeant for 1st Air Force. The 1st Air Force Representation received an introduction and welcome briefing at the wing headquarters from Chief Master Sgt. Julie Eddings, 142nd Fighter Wing Command Chief. Afterwards, they spent the day visiting multiple work sites around the base.

The first stop was the alert facility, where Anderson thanked the crew for their persistence in maintaining air sovereignty for the Pacific Northwest.

“General Ettor’s world, you guys know this better than anyone, it is all about protecting the skies,” said Anderson, referring to Lt. Gen. William H. Ettor, the commander of 1st Air Force.

Chief Anderson met face-to-face with junior NCOs and Airman. He personally recognized several “Redhawks” Airmen for their exceptional work.

During a stop at the Operations Group, Anderson presented Airmen 1st Class Kourtney Muniz and Pamela Carter with his Chief Coin and instilled in the young Airmen his future career expectations for them.

“Till everyone else, there can be struggles with new gear and getting it into service,” said Master Sgt. Mike Lanier, aircrew flight equipment group chief.

Anderson looked over the pilot suits with Lanier and asked, “Are the new G-Suits challenging?”

“They are just different — but the pilots like them because it adds more G-capacities,” Lanier replied, as the two of them inspected the new equipment.

Anderson and Kitzmiller made other stops around the base, including the command post, security forces, several aircraft maintenance work spaces, the munitions storage site, and a display showcasing equipment used by first responders in emergency management and by the CEREBE Enhanced Response Force Package (CERFP).

Anderson and Kitzmiller met with Eddings and 142nd Fighter Wing Commander Col. Rick Wedan to conclude their visit.

The 1st Air Force senior NCOs said they were impressed with the unit. Addressing Wedan directly, Kitzmiller commented on the high motivation of Oregon’s “Redhawks.”

“I have to say you have a very motivated group of Airmen and an extremely high level of morale with this unit,” said Kitzmiller.

“I can’t tell you how much that means to me to hear this kind of feedback,” said Wedan. “When we were selected as the ‘ACA Unit of the Year’, I know that it means a great deal to all our members for this honor as well.”

Anderson concluded with praise about the amazing work going on at the Portland Air Base, and the professionalism of its Airmen.

“Gen. Ettor recognizes, and I concur, that Portland’s readiness and professionalism is, without question, at the top and your Airmen are doing amazing work,” said Anderson.

82nd Brigade welcomes new commander

Photo by Spc. Eric J. Quinn | 414th Infantry Brigade Combat Team Public Affairs

Oregon Army National Guard Col. Gregory Day (right), incoming commander of the 82nd Brigade Troop Command, passes the brigade colors to Command Sgt. Maj. Robert Fosch (left), command sergeant major of the 82nd Brigade, during a change of command ceremony at Camp Ritter, Oregon. June 28. The unit colors were passed from the outgoing commander, Brig. Gen. Steven R. Beach, to the incoming commander to symbolize the brigade changing hands. Beach will move on to become the Assistant Adjutant General — Support for Oregon’s Joint Force Headquarters.

U.S. Army Chief of Staff Gen. Ray Odierno (left), Oregon Army National Guard Chief Warrant Officer 2 Nicholas D. Thompson (center), and retired Col. Lyman Hammond (right), one of the original Douglas MacArthur Foundation, pose for a photo at the Gen. Douglas MacArthur Leadership Award ceremony at the Pentagon. May 30, Thompson, of 2-32nd Field Artillery, is one of 20 company-grade and warrant officers honored by the Department of the Army for epitomizing the ideas of Gen. Douglas MacArthur: duty, honor, country.

MacArthur Award goes to Oregon officer
Old meets new: Milton-Freewater Readiness Center upgraded

**Story by Oregon Sentinel Staff**

**MILTON-FREEWATER, Ore.** The Oregon Army National Guard held a rededication and ribbon-cutting ceremony for the recently upgraded Milton-Freewater Readiness Center in Milton-Freewater, Ore., April 5.

The facility is currently home to Detachment 1, 118th Military Police Company, Oregon Army National Guard.

The first unit assigned to the armory was Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 2nd Battalion, 116th Infantry Regiment, of the 41st Infantry Division, which was federalized recognized in March 1947.

After World War II, with support from the local American Legion post and the chamber of commerce, the Oregon Army National Guard organized in Freewater. The unit initially drilled in the Freewater Community Building.

By 1951, the small towns of Milton and Freewater began promoting a centrally located armory by donating six lots to the state. The building’s original construction was completed on Jan. 1, 1954. The completed armory was dedicated in March 1954, and it previously served as a civil defense headquarters and Red Cross kitchen during the 1964 and 1965 floods.

The armory is eligible for the National Register of Historic Places due to its association with the post-WWII National Guard expansion program. It was the first armory to be built in Oregon using the 75-percent federal and 25-percent state funding program outlined in the Defense Facilities Act of 1950. Also, it was the first armory built to house a single unit in Oregon under the National Guard Bureau plan and therefore an example of the K-style armory.

A unique feature of the armory is the rear, upper-story windows on the rectangular hall drill floor. It is the only K-style armory with tall windows allowing for much natural lighting. All other K-style armories had smaller, and fewer upper-story windows. In keeping with the historical aspects of the armory, the upgraded readiness center has retained its integrity of location, setting, design, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association.

Work on the remodel began in September 2012 and was completed in March 2014 at a cost of more than $4 million. The facility serves the community with flexible rental space and it meets all building codes for Americans with Disabilities Act and seismic requirements. The building also meets State Energy Efficient Design (SEED) requirements.

The readiness center will serve the community with flexible rental space and it meets all building codes for Americans with Disabilities Act and seismic requirements. The building also meets State Energy Efficient Design (SEED) requirements.
**NEWS**

**234th Engineer Company mobilizes for deployment to Kuwait**

Citizen-Soldiers with the 234th Engineer Company, Oregon Army National Guard, pose for a unit photo during their mobilization ceremony at the Salem Pavilion, in Salem, Ore., June 8. Approximately 180 Soldiers are scheduled to spend nine months conducting carpentry, plumbing and electrical construction missions on U.S. military facilities throughout Kuwait and the surrounding region in support of Operation Enduring Freedom.

**102nd CST trains with U.S. Coast Guard**

**SALEM, Ore.** – The Oregon Army National Guard’s 102nd Civil Support Team, of the 1249th Engineer Battalion, mobilized approximately 180 Citizen-Soldiers for deployment to Kuwait in support of Operation Enduring Freedom. A mobilization ceremony for the unit was held, June 8, at the Salem Pavilion, in Salem, Ore. The 234th Engineer Company is headquartered at Camp Rilea, in Warrenton, Ore., and includes a platoon-sized detachment from Prineville, Ore. The Soldiers will spend approximately nine months conducting carpentry, plumbing and electrical construction missions on U.S. military facilities throughout Kuwait and the surrounding region during the deployment.

The Soldiers of the 234th Engineers conducted pre-deployment training at Camp Rilea and then departed for Fort Bliss, Texas, for additional training in preparation for their overseas mission before deploying to Kuwait. While in Kuwait, the 234th Engineers will fall under the 528th Engineer Battalion (Louisiana National Guard).

“I expect that our company will lead the way in the new battalion. We will have the best Soldiers, the strongest team, and be the ‘go to’ company,” said Maj. Andrew Vidourek, commander of the 234th Engineer Company. Vidourek added the unit’s Soldiers not only train to be experts in their assigned construction duties, but they also make safety the highest priority to ensure every Soldier comes home to their families.

“Discipline is a vital factor within our organization,” said 1st Sgt. William Young. “I expect every Soldier, enlisted, non-commissioned officer, and officer, to be professional and respectful.”

The majority of Soldiers in the unit come from communities throughout western and eastern Oregon, but the company also includes individuals from Washington, California, Idaho, and Montana.

The 234th Engineers previously deployed to Iraq from July 2007 to April 2008 where they conducted security operations for civilian contractor convoys. The company received the Meritorious Unit Commendation award for its exceptional performance of the mission.

In recent years, the 234th has completed projects throughout Oregon as part of the Innovative Readiness Training Program, including improving city and county parks around Heppner, Ore., renovating the Washington County Fairgrounds in Hillsboro, Ore., and refurbishing a United States Bureau of Land Management forestry facility in Colton, Ore.

**Multi-agency exercise rehearses active shooter response scenarios**

**SALEM, Ore.** – Officers from Forest Grove Police, Forest Grove Fire and Rescue, Cornelius Fire, and Washington County Consolidated Communications Agency worked with members of the Oregon National Guard’s 2-218th Field Artillery Battalion to rehearse tactics in response to several threat situations.

Lt. Col. Maurice Marshall, commander of the 2-218th Field Artillery Battalion, reached out to Forest Grove Police to conduct an independent active shooter drill. The battalion’s full-time staff that works at the armory participated in the training exercise.

Officers from each of the agencies met at the armory in February for a tabletop demonstration of the scenario before the training event took place. It was the first time these police and fire units had performed an active shooter drill with the National Guard inside the armory.

The first scenario simulated a single active shooter inside the armory, and another scenario simulated multiple shooters and bombs inside the building. The training tested each agency’s ability to handle a stressful situation with limited resources. After each scenario, a debriefing was held to discuss lessons learned and how their response tactics can improve.

Forest Grove Police Chief Schutz said the goal is learning how Forest Grove Police interacts with the other agencies and how to get the injured victims out and treated faster. She said these training exercises help make everyone in the Forest Grove area a lot safer in the event an actual situation were to ever occur.

“The goal is everyone goes home,” Schutz said.

**Story by 1st Lt. Eric Krause, 234th Engineer Company**

**Story by Oregon Sentinel Staff**

**Photos courtesy 2-218th Field Artillery Battalion**
Oregon National Guard takes regional Best Warrior title two years running

Story and photos by 
Sgt. 1st Class Thaneen Tangen, 
South Dakota National Guard Public Affairs

RAPID CITY, S.D. — The best enlisted Soldiers and noncommissioned officers from eight states competed in the National Guard Bureau’s Region 6-Best Warrior Competition, hosted by the South Dakota National Guard, May 19-21, in Rapid City and throughout the Black Hills.

Sixteen Guardsmen competed in a variety of mental and physical demands, events designed to challenge the toughest of Soldiers. The competitors competed for the ultimate title, to be named as either the region’s Soldier or Noncommissioned Officer of the Year.

Events included written exams, battle drills, M16 rifle marksmanship, land navigation, an obstacle course, a 10.8-mile road march and a physical fitness test. Soldiers earned points for each event, competing for the chance to advance and represent the region at the national competition.

“The Best Warrior competition is not necessarily about being the best at everything, but it’s about being the best overall Soldier,” said South Dakota’s State Command Sgt. Maj. Susan Shae. “It is impressive to see the caliber of Soldiers competing here and testing their Army values against one another.”

“When a Soldier was challenged with a task, it was common to see the competitors encourage each other, Irving up to 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,’ ” said Shae.

Last year’s Region-6 Noncommissioned Officer of the Year, Sgt. 1st Class Jeremy Carver, Oregon Army National Guard, explained what it takes to win.

“You have to be well-rounded,” said Carver. “You have guys in this competition who are athletic, but their soldiering skills are not up to par and vice versa. It takes a balance of both to win.”

In addition to being physically fit and technically proficient, you have to have an internal drive to persevere through the fast-paced, exhausting three days of constantly being physically and mentally tested, said Carver.

Speaking from experience, Carver said he believes that participating in the Best Warrior Competition develops a Soldier into a better leader.

“I can guarantee these Soldiers will walk away better leaders,” he said. “They will be more technically and physically sound, due to the amount of preparation it takes to compete. Studying Army leadership manuals for months will result in the information being engrained and that will make them more effective as leaders.”

South Dakota’s National Guard Spec. Dalton DeHoër testified to the amount of studying required for the competition.

“There is a lot of information to study and be tested on,” said DeHoër. “Being in this competition motivated me to study warrior tasks that I haven’t used in a while.”

Not only will the participants leave this competition as better leaders, they are also a source of inspiration for Soldiers in their home state, said Carver.

The NCO who claimed this year’s Region-6 Noncommissioned Officer of the Year title was Oregon Army National Guard Sgt. 1st Class Scott Simpson. South Dakota Army National Guard Staff Sgt. Sam Schaefer finished as the runner-up.

Montana Army National Guard Spc. David Notti won the title of Region-6 Soldier of the Year. Idaho Army National Guard Spec. Elijah Patman finished as the runner-up.

Simpson and Notti edged out 14 other Soldiers from Alaska, Washington, Oregon, Idaho, Montana, Wyoming, South Dakota and North Dakota and will advance to compete at the national level competition at Camp Robinson in Little Rock, Ark., in July.

OFFICE OF EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

OEM assists with storm damage repairs

State Coordinating Officer Sean McCormick of the Oregon Office of Emergency Management speaks during an applicant briefing for the Public Assistance Program at Lane County Public Works, in Eugene, Ore., April 16.

Story courtesy OEM Public Affairs

Oregon’s Office of Emergency Management (OEM) will assist in recovery efforts stemming from the severe winter storms in February that left thousands without power.

A presidential disaster declaration has made grants available to eligible applicants in Benton, Lane, Lincoln and Linn counties from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). OEM will be working closely with FEMA and local officials during the application process.

The majority of the damages were to public utilities as a result of snow, ice, winds and flooding in the affected counties.

The Public Assistance Grant Program reimburses state and local governments, federally recognized tribes and certain private nonprofit organizations for eligible expenditures incurred during storm.

The programs are designed to help protect lives and property during disasters, and assist in the clean-up and rebuilding process afterward. The grant program also provides mitigation funds to help rebuild infrastructure that is better able to withstand future storms.

"Oregon’s responders made enormous efforts to protect our citizens and get power lines fixed and debris removed during and after the storm," said OEM State Coordinating Office Sean McCormick. "This gives local, state and FEMA officials the opportunity to help impacted areas fill the gaps that were created from substantial damages."

Under the Public Assistance program, FEMA generally reimburses applicants for 75 percent of eligible expenses, to restore damaged infrastructure to its original state. The federal portion is paid directly to the state, which then reimburses local jurisdictions and organizations that incurred costs.

In addition to FEMA Public Assistance, a percentage of the total reimbursement is eligible to be allocated for hazard mitigation projects that provide a significant return on investment, McCormick said.

Emergency managers collaborate, network at preparedness workshop

The Oregon Office of Emergency Management 2014 Emergency Preparedness Workshop took place in Sunriver, Ore., April 1-3, with more than 140 state, private, non-profit, county, tribal and city emergency management leaders from throughout Oregon in attendance.

The workshop provided education and networking opportunities designed to further develop Oregon’s disaster resilience capabilities.

“In the past year, Oregon has endured drought, fire and extreme winter weather,” said Office of Emergency Management Director Dave Stuckey. “Emergency management is always a challenge and this conference will help Oregon remain collaborative, adaptable and responsive.”

The conference included a variety of presentations from subject matter experts covering all aspects of emergency management, including FEMA Assistant Administrator Grants Directorate Brian Kamosie, Office of Emergency Management Grants Coordinator and Conference Coordinator Jaida Metzger-Hines, said 34 of 36 Oregon counties and six of nine tribes from Oregon were represented at the conference.

“This is a great response and the representation of locals at this conference provides an opportunity for Oregon to map the way forward as a whole community when it comes to emergency management,” Metzger-Hines explained.
STATE PARTNERSHIP

Vietnam Ambassador visits Oregon Guard

A Vietnamese delegation pauses for a photo with Maj. Gen. Daniel R. Hokanson (Vickikagen and General, Oregon, and Air National Guard members, in front of an HH-60M Blackhawk helicopter at the Armed Forces Readiness Center at Camp Withycombe, in Clackamas, Ore., June 16. The visit was part of the State Partnership Program, a program that matches the United States to countries around the world. The delegation toured Camp Withycombe and learned about the use of Oregon Army National Guard helicopters for domestic emergencies, including search and rescue, as well as homeland defense. The group was also given a tour of the Oregon National Guard’s state and federal missions. The Oregon National Guard began a State Partnership with Vietnam in 2012.

Helicopter experts exchange strategies

Continued from Front Page

Administration, and the development of future engagement concepts, in which the Oregon National Guard can act as mentors for implementation of specific certifications.

Vickikagen said some of the challenges facing emergency responders in Dhaka are foreign concepts to most western firefighers and first-responders. For example, streets in most of the city are narrow, with people and vehicles blocking the path of most emergency vehicles.

“Everything is so densely packed in Bangladesh,” Vickikagen said. “The U.S. can’t just take it for granted that emergency and fire services will quickly respond to emergencies anywhere, especially in an urban area. But the neighborhoods are so congested in Dhaka, it is literally not possible for emergency vehicles to drive to fires or other emergencies in progress.”

One of the recommendations to come out of the SMEE was that helicopters could put out urban fires utilizing water buckets — a concept widely accepted in the Pacific Northwest for fighting forest fires.

“We are trying to help the Bangladesh Air Force get started on this concept,” Vickikagen said.

Cpt. Craig S. Taliarco, Bilarial Affairs Officer for the Oregon National Guard, met with former commander of 1-168th GSAB in Penafort, said he didn’t truly appreciate the unique and innovative aspects of the mission, so he appointed his officers. His first task was to understand some of the things we need to do in order to operate, and maintain water buckets and to rescue people from rooftops in the city.”

Vickikagen said, “We know it is possible to do this, and we are excited to try what we have learned and to work with the Oregon Air Guard in the future.”

Director of Air Operations for the BAF, Air Commodore Farukh, posed a key question during the SMEE closing ceremony; “Why should we learn by trial and error when we have the opportunity to learn from the best?”

Farukh continued, “With our strong partnership with the Oregon National Guard, we know that we can gain the skills needed to meet this unique mission we have. With the Oregon Guard’s help, we want to be able to train our own instructors.

Long said he was very happy to be a part of this training, adding that the unique challenges faced in Bangladesh present opportunities for both sides.

“Bangladesh is a very unique place and I hope we can continue to build on our positive relationship we have built with them,” he said.

Oregon Guard female Soldiers provide insight for Bangladesh counterparts

U.S. Army officers, including several Oregon Army National Guard representatives, pose for a group photo with Bangladesh Army counterparts during the Female Officers & Soldiers Subject Matter Expert Exchange (SMEE) at the Bangladesh Army Headquarters in Dhaka, March 6. The seminar focused on women in the military as the Bangladesh Army seeks to recruit more females into its services.

Story by Mohammad Al-Mamun Molla

DHAKA, Bangladesh — Members of the Oregon Army National Guard traveled to Bangladesh, March 5-6, as part of the Oregon State Partnership Program to participate in a Female Officers and Soldiers Subject Matter Expert Exchange (SMEE). The visit was requested by Maj. Gen. Ahsanul Islam, Adjutant General of the Bangladesh Army, who asked U.S. Pacfic Command for female officers from the United States to speak with Bangladesh female officers and participate in an open discussion to address their concerns.

The seminar was hosted by the Bangladesh Army to focus on women in the military with the objectives of changing the role of female officers in military service; identifying their potential and the challenges they face in the armed forces; and bringing them into mainstream military practices alongside their male counterparts.

“Is it a tough job, but if anyone has determination the challenge can be overcome,” Bangladesh Army Captain General Ferdous, attached to the Army Ministry.

The conference included round-table discussions, training and education that will further strengthen military to military relationships and support the emerging roles of women in the Bangladesh Army.

Col. Jennifer Walker, of U.S. PACOM’s Surgeon’s Office, led the U.S. delegation. She commended the Bangladesh female officers for their motivation, enthusiasm and professionalism.

“The first thing that I have been so impressed with is how motivated everyone is. They are so enthusiastic,” she told the Dhaka Tribune about the Bangladesh officers at the conference. “When your country relies on volunteer service members you have to think about the factors that they are motivated and enthusiastic... it is the same in the U.S. Army.”

Walker added, “The other thing is the professionalism. They have already demonstrated their professionalism and are looking to continue to develop their professionalism.


The conference was structured to allow both United States and Bangladesh female Soldiers to present a topic, followed by a question and answer period, which Stua said proved to be incisive and allowed a great exchange of information.

Stua discussed the role of noncommissioned officers during the symposium. She was also able to visit with a new group of female enlisted recruits while visiting Dhaka.

Recruitment of female regular officers in the Bangladesh Army began in 2001. Historically, the Bangladesh Army has not incorporated female enlisted Soldiers into their military. However, for the first time in the country’s military history, more than 1,260 female Soldiers were recently recruited (945 of those are for the medical corps) to become the first enlisted female Soldiers in the Bangladesh Army.

During the conference, Bangladesh Army Major Sifat said the condition of women in Bangladesh was better than that in most countries of the world.

“Through the U.S. Army has around 250’s tradition of female army officers and is more developed than the Bangladesh Army, they also find it difficult to manage the family life and service life simultaneously,” Sifat said.

Major Nusrat Nur Al Chowdhury echoed Sifat, saying the big challenge was to keep a harmony between family life and service life.

Major General Ahsanul Islam said in his concluding remarks at the conference the Bangladesh Army attached due importance to the services of female members and recognized their contributions to nation-building activities.

“Considering Bangladesh society, religion and the service...we can realize that inclusion of female officers and Soldiers in the army has been a timely decision and certain,” he said, adding that the intake of females into military service would increase further.
41ST INFANTRY BRIGADE COMBAT TEAM

Nearly 900 Oregon Army National Guard Soldiers of the 41st Infantry Brigade Combat Team are training and mobilizing for deployment to Afghanistan to provide security in support of Operation Enduring Freedom. They will be among some of the last troops there to help turn out the lights as operations wind down.

Story by Sgt. Erica J. Quinno, 41st Infantry Brigade Combat Team Public Affairs

Soldiers from the Oregon Army National Guard’s 41st Infantry Brigade Combat Team conducted pre-mobilization training exercises at the Orchard Combat Training Center in Basin, south of Boise, Idaho, and at Camp Rikka in Warrenore, Ore., in preparation for their upcoming deployment to Afghanistan.

The unit is mobilizing nearly 900 Soldiers from three battalion elements. The unit will be tasked with providing security and support for U.S. military facilities in Kandahar and southwestern Afghanistan as part of the regular rotational cycle of forces in support of Operation Enduring Freedom.

Approximately 400 Soldiers will deploy with 2nd Battalion, 162nd Infantry Regiment, headquartered in Springfield, Ore., with companies based in Oregon, California, and Washington. The unit will be deployed to Kandahar province.

Approximately 190 Soldiers will deploy with 1st Squadron, 162nd Cavalry Regiment, headquartered in Boise, Idaho, with companies based in Utah, Idaho, and Montana.

A mobilization ceremony will be scheduled for July 18 at the Southern Oregon University Michael Twombly Field in Ashland, Ore. Soldiers from the 41st NBC training on such things as individual weapons qualifications, qualifying vehicles and personnel at entry control points, identifying and reacting to improvised explosive devices, decontamination and operating from over-land vehicles in the event of a soldier's death. The training is designed to help prepare Soldiers for any number of challenges they may face as they perform security missions while deployed in Afghanistan.

United States Senator Ron Wyden

"For dollar for dollar, the National Guard is by far the best value for our national security," said Wyden. "Although troops in Afghanistan are being drawn down, the Oregon National Guard soldiers we've always worked with the mentality of "we aren't nice people," and their deployment will be no exception.

"You always want to be the best soldier you know you will be successful," said 1st Sgt. John Foreman of Boise Troop, 1-82 Cav. Sgts. "This is the entire squad will be to deploy with us, so we are to select the cream of the crop for the unit that is deploying."”

White will be the first deployment for many young Soldiers of the 41st NBC, unit leaders say that all the Soldiers are prepared to go on the mission and their confidence level has grown.

"Soldiers are anxious to be deployed where they will serve," said Zechel. "Confidence is high and he's been waiting for this deployment for a very long time before they even reached the training site."

Their survey of military ambulances had stopped near the Saint Michael on Highway 39 in Jefferson County to do maintenance on one of their vehicles when a group of motorists approached them asking for help.

They reported that a head-on collision, resulting in a three-vehicle crash, had just occurred about a mile up the road, near milepost 81. Several people were injured and emergency services had not yet arrived.

McCrory, the highest ranking of the group, instantly took charge and led the group of motorists to the accident site with their military ambulances. McCrory described the scene as if it were a war zone.

"The place looked like an IED had just gone off," he said.

The medics quickly grabbed their medical supplies and went right to work, performing surgery and providing medical treatment on the injured for about 30 minutes until emergency services arrived to the remote location. Unfortunately, one of injured motorists did not survive their injuries.

The motorists directed traffic at the scene, helping to reduce the risk to other motorists.

Once the ambulance from Sisters-Camp Sherman Fire District arrived, the Soldiers briefed the paramedics on the extent of the injuries and what treatments they had already administered.

Medics described the scene as if it were a war zone.

"They told us we were volunteers and we're definitely ready for this," they said.

"We're volunteers and we're definitely ready for this," said McCrory.

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Medics described the scene as if it were a war zone.
KINGSLEY FIELD, Ore. - The 173rd Fighter Wing mission is set to grow by an estimated 84 active duty personnel this fall. The Total Force Initiative (TFI) is designed to augment Kingsley’s mission with Air Force active duty Airmen stationed at the Air National Guard base in order to increase the number of pilots trained in a given period of time.

“We expect 84 Airmen will be phased in to Klamath Falls over a six month period beginning this October,” said Col. Jeremy Baenen, 173rd FW commander.

The Total Force Initiative is a military organization which contains both reserve and active component members working side-by-side in the same organization for a common mission.

According to Baenen, there are various models of TFIs, this one constitutes an “active association” where the 173rd FW retains principal responsibility for the mission, equipment, and base infrastructure, while active duty personnel are integrated in the 173rd’s existing organizational and command structure.

Of the 84 Airmen, eight are pilots, 68 are maintenance personnel, and an additional eight will provide base operating support. The first Airmen are scheduled to arrive in Klamath Falls in October of 2014.

In addition to personnel, the 173rd will continue to expand its growing fleet of F-15C pilots. To achieve this goal, the Air Force recognized the need for the addition of seven aircraft that began arriving six months ago. The aircraft additions will grow the unit from 23 aircraft to a total of 32 aircraft by the end of this summer. Even with the addition of these aircraft, the 173rd will still be able to operate within the limits of existing environmental impact studies.

The TFI was initiated after the Chief of Staff of the Air Force directed increased production of F-15C pilots. To achieve this goal, the Air Force recognized the need for additional aircraft and manpower at the 173rd FW, the sole F-15C training base for the U.S. Air Force.

Kingsley is an ideal training facility due to excellent flying weather, including an average 300 days of sun per year and extensive military operating areas located in the eastern part of the state. The Oregon Air National Guard is currently examining plans to possibly expand that airspace; however, in the interim they will continue to utilize only current approved airspaces to train.

The TFI represents a significant economic impact for Klamath Falls and the greater basin, said Baenen. The addition of 84 active duty families is estimated to bring more than $7 million annually in direct salary, as well as an indirect job creation. Additionally, the TFI will result in numerous multi-million dollar construction projects awarded to local businesses.

The additional experienced work force will be a great benefit to the 173rd FW, Baenen noted.

“In order to meet the nation’s need for increased pilot production, additional resources and personnel are an absolute necessity,” he said. “This TFI will create operational efficiencies, saving money and resources, and, above all, increasing Air Force combat capabilities. Additionally, a TFI significantly helps ensure longevity of Kingsley Field.”

Baenen noted another advantage for the active duty component. Currently, there are no active duty continental United States based F-15 units, with the exception of the Weapons School and test bases. Because of this, active duty F-15 maintainers and pilots may spend most of their careers on extended overseas tours. Kingsley Field will afford active duty personnel an opportunity to be stationed here in the U.S.

“Further, the active duty can rapidly gain experience from ANG personnel who have been operating and maintaining this aircraft for many years,” said Baenen.

Baenen did note one negative effect of this growth. “Due to this no-notice increase in the operations tempo of our civil engineering unit, volunteer projects such as the Mazama High School turf project had to be delayed a year because of engineering manpower constraints,” he said. “Although the USAF has nightight the $12 million in short notice construction projects throughout the summer and into next year which benefit local businesses, it came at a cost to our ability to provide volunteer support to the local community.”
173rd Security Forces Squadron partners with local police

KLAMATH FALLS, Ore. – Kingsey Field’s shooting range and 173rd Fighter Wing Security Forces training facilities provided the latest venue for the Klamath Falls City Police Special Weapons and Tactics Team to partner with the 173rd Fighter Wing, March 19.

Klamath Falls’ law enforcement agencies and the 172nd Fighter Wing face challenges where missions with growing demands suffer shrinking resources. Wing and community leaders say partnerships are playing a vital role in maintaining those missions.

“We have saved money for our guys going (on temporary duty) since the closest facilities are at Camp Rielka and Redmond,” said Chief Master Sgt. Joseph Stickel, 172nd Security Forces superintendent.

“It also saves a lot of other local agencies money because they can use the buildings, so it’s a good partnership opportunity,” he added.

During an exercise, the Klamath Falls Police Department SWAT practiced mounted approaches on an all-terrain vehicle operated by a 173rd Security Forces Defender normally used for recovery operations. Upon arrival, the team entered and cleared numerous simulated urban training structures on the base.

The structures known as a “MOUT site” simulate an urban environment. According to the team, the site is the only ones available in the region. Security forces troops constructed the entire village as a self-help project in their off-duty hours. Detective Jack Daniel, KPFD SWAT assistant team leader, explained to Airmen and police officers that this partnership allows local law enforcement agencies to provide a high-quality training experience to their personnel while reducing training costs. Also, the proximity to the KPFD headquarters allows them to respond to a real-word incident, should the need arise.

Efforts like this garnered the 173rd Fighter Wing the Air Force Chief of Staff Team Excellence Award for the Air National Guard for its Public-Public, Public-Private program, also known as P4. This is an initiative designed to find new and innovative ways to partner with the local community, organizers say.

142nd Fighter Wing rehearse accident response at PANG

An Oregon Air National Guard F-15 Eagle, assigned to the 142nd Fighter Wing, Portland Air National Guard Base, Ore., sits idle on the ramp of the base, May 19, after it was used as a simulated accident to a fighter jet. The exercise focused on initial emergency response to preserve life and equipment. As the exercise wound down, a redeployment group made up of finance and logistical support members traveled to Las Vegas to assist the members coming back to Portland.

142nd Fighter Wing moves equipment and Airmen for Red Flag training exercise

Oregon Air National Guard members Tech. Sgt. Sam Riggs guides Tech. Sgt. Michael Jones as he moves a fork lift into place to load a C-130 Hercules at the Portland Air National Guard Base, Portland, Ore., Feb. 27. The 142nd Fighter Wing Logistics Readiness Squadron packed equipment for the Red Flag exercise at Nellis Air Force Base, Nev.
Oregon Soldier tours with U.S. Army show focusing on strength, resiliency

Story courtesy U.S. Army Installation Management Command

SAN ANTONIO, Texas – Oregon Army National Guard Staff Sgt. Duane Reno, a human resource specialist for Oregon’s Joint Force Headquarters in Salem, Ore., has been touring the country performing vocals with the 2014 U.S. Army Soldier Show.

The Soldier Show is a live Broadway-style variety performance in support of the U.S. Army’s Month of the Military Child and Recreational program. The show features Soldiers from the active component, Army Reserve and Army National Guard singing and dancing.

Each year, Army Entertainment brings together a troupe of performers who are selected through a lengthy audition process. They spend months rehearsing and training before taking the show ‘on the road’ annually between May and September.

From a poem scratched by a prisoner on the back of an envelope during the War of 1812 to troops smart-phoning home from Baghdad, the 2014 U.S. Army Soldier Show tells the enduring story of how Soldiers and their families ‘Stand Strong.’

This year’s show pays tribute to the 200th anniversary of Francis Scott Key’s writing of ‘The Defense of Fort M’Henry’ [sic] the poem that became our national anthem, by weaving the music and related imagery into the 50-minute production.

However, the overarching message is one of strength and resiliency.

“The show tells the Army story — via music, song and dance — by showcasing those things that instill strength and character in our Soldiers and their families; inspiring them to exemplify Army values and take care of themselves and each other,” said Lt. Gen. David Huelsen, commander of the U.S. Army Installation Management Command, the headquarters element for Army Entertainment and the Soldier Show.

Reno credits the Salem Boys Choir for developing his foundation as a singer. In high school, he placed in the bass division of the state solo-ensemble competition and competed in both the Oregon All-State Choir and the Oregon All-State Jazz Choir.

After a semester of community college, Reno joined the Oregon Army National Guard and continued to pursue music as a part-time worship leader of his church. Reno shares his love of music with his wife, Sarah, and their two children, Liliana, 4, and Max, 1.

“I love to play guitar and worship with my family,” Reno said. “We sing together all the time.”

In 2011, Reno saw a Soldier Show performance at Joint Base Lewis-McChord, Wash., and knew that’s where he belonged. He auditioned to sing the national anthem at a Portland Trailblazers game and got the job. A successful audition for this year’s Soldier Show followed after that.

The show weaves physical readiness training, the Sexual Harassment/Assault Response and Prevention program, sponsorship, ceremonial drill, and even the loss of a Soldier and suicide prevention into the production.

“The entire show, artistically, is reinforcing Army messaging,” artistic director Victor Hurtado said. “Social media and (mass) media is not the only way to deliver those messages — sometimes you need that human factor.”

That human factor brings topics like the loss of a son and family in combat and attempted suicide onto the stage through powerful vocal performances crafted by Music Director Jovi Biebe, Choral Master Vioki Golding and Sound Designer Blair Ferrier.

The sets and lighting designed by Nicole Coppiinger and Paul Turner create the choreography by Amy Lynn Miles are designed to keep the audience engaged. The show then brings the audience back up, as the Soldiers on stage build from Kelly Clarkson’s “People Like Us” to a crescendo with Yolanda Adams’ “Still I Rise” that brought the audience to their feet during both opening weekend performances.

Spc. Duqum Sims, of Fort Bragg, N.C., then leads almost the entire cast in “Happy” by Pharrell Williams, restoring a sense of levity and joy to the stage.

There is not too many children in the audience, as well, with a short scene based on the recent LEO Movie, a medley of nine songs ranging from “Over the Rainbow” which debuted at the start of World War II to the 2011 David Worsley hit ‘Have You Forgotten?’ offers something for everyone in the audience.

Sgt. Amy E. Ilgrii, of Fort Bragg, N.C., caps off the show by teasing the audience to verses of “The Defense of Fort M’Henry” [sic] that most have probably never heard before. Then all cast members take the stage to perform a choral version of “The Star-Spangled Banner” so moving that those in the audience in uniform on opening weekend had a hard time staying at the position of attention.

Spc. Envelope Williams, a performer from the Texas National Guard, said she wasn’t surprised to see how emotionally investted the audience was during the opening weekend performances.

“I loved being in the 2011 show, but it was strictly entertainment,” Williams said. “This year, I feel like it’s more connected to what the Army is all about.”

The entire entry is about the Soldier, his family at home, and the Army family,” Williams continued. “It’s real to the audience.”

The 2014 U.S. Army Soldier Show will be performing at the Evergreen Theater at Joint Base Lewis-McChord at 5:00 p.m. on Saturday, April 12. For more information visit the JBLM website at www.jblm.mwr.com, learn more about the Soldier Show and Army Entertainment visit their website at www.army.mwr.com/soldier-show.aspx.

Two brothers follow their father’s footsteps into the Oregon Air Guard

PORTLAND, Ore. — He speaks quickly with a certain believability and earnestness about him and sports a fresh, short haircut not two days old. Perhaps that’s because he’s trying to set an example.

As a first sergeant in the Oregon Air National Guard, Senior Master Sgt. John Phillips reports directly to the 142nd Fighter Wing commander on matters of enlisted morale, welfare, and conduct.

As a father, he reports to two sons, Lewis and Zach, both of whom dream of joining the military ever since they toured the Portland Air National Guard Base as small children, coming to see their dad’s office.

“They’d come out here to the base for family day, Christmas parties, it was always an exciting place for them to visit,” said Phillips.

Phillips’s sons said they both remember the awe and excitement they felt seeing and hearing the jets take off as kids when they traveled from rural Roseburg, Ore., to visit their dad at his unique workplace.

“My first memory was my dad introducing us to his co-workers. We had a day to try on military goggle and flight suits, and he took us around to see the flight line and the control base,” said Lewis Phillips, John Phillips’ eldest son.

The culture of the Oregon Air National Guard is often described as a close-knit, close-knit group but few embody these values quite like the Phillips family. Not only did Phillips’s two sons decide to join the military, both followed their dad to the Oregon Air National Guard and the 142nd Fighter Wing. They now work just a few steps away from each other.

Senior Airman Lewis Phillips said he was inspired by his father and decided to join the military during his junior year of high school, but he wanted to follow a career path that would provide both financial benefits and in all uniform of equal.

After selecting the medical field as a career specialty, Lewis Phillips now works as a search and extraction medic for the 142nd Medical Group’s Chemical, Biological, Radiological, Nuclear and high-yield Explosives Enhanced Response Force Package (CERFP). His job is to stabilize patients in emergencies and help transport them from the field for more comprehensive medical care.

Airman 1st Class Zachary Phillips (center), a fuel systems specialist for the 142nd Fighter Wing, was promoted to the rank of senior airman, June 7, in a ceremony at the Portland Air National Guard Base. Senior Airman Lewis Phillips (left), Zachary’s brother, and Senior Master Sgt. John Phillips (right), his father, participated in the ceremony.

Senior Airman Zach Phillips, the younger son, now works as a fuels systems specialist for the 142nd Maintenance Squadron, following in the footsteps of his father, who worked as a jet engine mechanic on the F-4 Phantom II, the A-10 Thunderbolt II and the F-15 Eagles.

“Zach’s been learning about jets his entire life, and it’s very cool to know that we’ve worked on some of the same jets too,” said John Phillips.

Despite the often challenging military life with deployments, training and time away from home, John praised his wife, Tera, for her unwavering support not only in his career, but also for supporting their two sons when both decided to follow in the footsteps of their dad into the military.

“I’m glad they chose the Guard,” said John Phillips. “It’s a totally different culture, and I think it’s a great environment for them.”

As of the level of expectations put upon the family due to John Phillips’ duties on base, he likened the situation to coaching soccer.

“It’s like being the coach’s sons when they’re out here,” said John Phillips. “The expectations are always that they are held to a higher standard.”
Air Guard STARBASE Program goes beyond ordinary science education

PORTLAND, Ore. – It’s a typical group of fifth graders; kids enthusiastically raising their hands to answer questions from the teacher, as a few begin shouting out the answer before called upon.

Yet, the situation and subject is not the normal classroom setting with playgrounds and lunchrooms in the building. At STARBASE Portland, the kids can see F-15 Eagles taking off from their classroom window and can program robots made from Legos.

With the emphasis for science and engineering education working together, organizers say the need for this 20-year-old program has never been more pertinent. The 25-hour STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) curriculum is taught over five days and is aligned with national and state common core education standards for math and science.

The kids at STARBASE Portland this particular week were from Chief Joseph-Ockley Green Elementary School in Portland, Ore. The group was working on a chemistry experiment as they studied warm and cool compound reactions.

“This program is an amazing way to open kid’s eyes,” said Molly Chun, the school’s principal.

The Oregon STARBASE program has two locations; one at the Portland Air National Guard Base and another at Kingsley Field, in Klamath Falls, Ore. The two programs have been serving more than 40 Oregon schools each year (about 2,000 fourth and fifth graders annually) since 1993.

Chun has been an educator for more than 34 years and is in her first year as the principal at Chief Joseph-Ockley Green. When she discovered the STARBASE program at the Portland Air National Guard Base, she quickly realized it was making with her fifth grade students.

“The work is hands-on and is meaningful because right away they (the kids) get it,” she said. “The learning is taking them out of their normal element and allowing them to comprehend STEM education in a fun and meaningful way.”

Recent National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) scores of Oregon students revealed that only 34 percent of fourth grade students and 35 percent of eighth graders tested above the proficient levels in science.

The key is to engage the students and create an interest in STEM careers and to fill the void of qualified applicants for many Oregon companies.

“Getting kids out from behind the desk and setting ‘that hook’ early in their lives for this kind of learning and this subject is what makes this program at STARBASE so outstanding,” said Chun.

The interaction and hands-on approach creates an atmosphere of enthusiasm, not only for the youth, but also for teachers as well, Chun said. As the kids engage in experiments, their teachers also participate in the learning.

Andrew Jaquiss, a teacher for more than 18 years, has attended STARBASE Portland countless times over the years with his students. He watched as his class engaged in a STARBASE technology lesson on robotics. This is his first year teaching at Chief Joseph-Ockley Green.

“I love this program, it is great because it really excites the students,” he said.

The positive approach to science combined with five full days out of the daily classroom while at STARBASE fosters new understandings and approaches to learning.

“The equipment at our school does not even begin to compare to what the kids have here at STARBASE,” said Jaquiss. “For these kids, science has now been turned into a fun activity.”

Because the setting of the STARBASE program is on the Portland Air National Guard Base, students are also introduced to the positive role models who work on the installation.

Uniformed Airmen often lead tours to showcase leading edge technology ranging from the science of controlling a drone to finding explosives in the removal of explosive ordnance. Seeing technology used outside of the textbook keeps the knowledge tangible.

On the fifth and final day at STARBASE Portland for the Chief Joseph-Ockley Green students, they had a class in forensic science given by Jon Dyer, a crime lab technician for the State of Oregon. He brings in real life tools that are used in the field for the students to use for a fingerprint testing experiment.

“Teaching science to kids is something I really love doing,” said Dyer.

With more 13 years of experience in the field, he mixes in real life stories with a high-energy approach as he instructs the group to carefully examine their own fingerprint samples.

“What do you see when you inspect the print? Do you think that both of your thumb prints look the same?” he asks.

He says he gets excited to see the kids connect not only to science but to each other.

“This is a kinetic experience and what I want the kids to know is that you don’t have to be a genius to be a scientist,” said Dyer.

The work he does is voluntary, yet it allows him to learn something new each time he gives a class at STARBASE.

“The program is awesome and when I see kids get excited about science that keeps me excited as a scientist.” he said.

Overall the STARBASE program promotes creative approaches to learning. It allows students to see how science, technology, engineering and math knowledge are used in practical applications.

“These kids really need to see how this kind of learning is used beyond a text book,” said Chun. “The real world now becomes their classroom.”

Camp Withycombe hosts Skills USA youth job skills conference


Skills USA is a partnership of students, teachers, and professionals involved in trade, technical, and health fields to prepare young people for the workforce. It is a national nonprofit organization serving teachers, high school and college students who are preparing for careers in trade, technical and skilled service occupations, including military occupations.

“We are proud to partner with the Oregon National Guard and very appreciative of the hospitality to host us here at Camp Withycombe,” said Teresa Mankin, Skills USA state director. “This facility is amazing and the Guard has been very accommodating.

“All of the Soldiers have been really great to work with,” Mankin continued. “Fifth grade students is a tough group to teach but the Army training is really teaching them because of the hands-on experience they are getting.

“Youth from high schools throughout the state converged on Camp Withycombe to attend workshops and test their skills in job-related competitions. Competitive events included everything from delivering speeches, taking bookkeeping tests, evaluating digital photography and video, to carpentry, welding fabrication, automotive repair, electronic technology, and culinary arts.

“These guys are doing great,” said Staff Sgt. Stephanie Schloesser, of 367th Maint. Co., during the automotive electrical systems competition. “Some of their dishes are very well-prepared and delicious.”

Oregon Army National Guard Soldiers served as observers and judges for several of the competitions related to their job skill in the Army. For example, Army cooks served as judges for the culinary arts events and Army mechanics served as judges for automotive service technology.

“I’ve really enjoyed working with the students,” said Staff Sgt. Craig Dyer, of 367th Maint. Co., during the automotive service competition. “We are not really teaching them because they came here to compete and should already know what to do, but they’re still learning a lot from it (the experience).”

The Oregon Army National Guard’s Recruiting and Retention Battalion provided a rock wall, and obstacle course for the youth to take advantage of fun and fitness breaks between events. Several recruiters spoke with the high school students about the different types of careers available in the National Guard.

“This is a great recruiting event for us to support and introduce interested teenagers to the job opportunities in the Guard,” said Sgt. 1st Class Josh Searcy, of the Oregon National Guard’s Recruiting and Retention Battalion. “They are perfect candidates because they are already interested in jobs that we offer.”

The top students in each category at the state competition went on to compete in the National Skills USA competition in Kansas City, June 23-27.

For more information on the Skills USA program visit their website at http://skillsusaoregon.org.
FEATURES

University of Oregon commissions largest ROTC class since 1972

Story and photo by Sgt. Aaron Reza, 115th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

EUGENE, Ore. — The Oregon Army National Guard will begin to see a few new lieutenants filter among the ranks in the coming months after the University of Oregon’s Reserve Officer Training Corps (ROTC) program commissioned 19 new officers at the Ford Alumni Center in Eugene, Ore., June 18. This particular group is a certain distinction not seen in nearly five decades.

“Swift is the single largest commissioning we’ve done since 1972,” said Cpt. Darren McMahon (Ret.), recruiting officer for the University of Oregon ROTC program. “The most commissioned at one time.

Of those 19, seven will join Oregon Army National Guard units throughout the state. Two will venture to other state National Guard units and the rest will go to active duty assignments.

“This one day is about you, because every other day, leadership requires the rest are about our subordinates,” Col. Lance English, professor of Military Science at the University of Oregon, told the graduating cadets. “Your job is to inspire me to follow you. To treat you with my life.”

Like many ROTC programs throughout the country, the class which started with 35 cadets, was a mix of Soldiers with both prior service and no past military experience.

“I’ve always felt I wanted to serve. My honeymoon was in Hawaii which has a lot of military,” said 2nd Lt. Noeal Smith, who was previously attached to Alpha Company, 1st Battalion, 162nd Infantry Regiment and will be joining the Oregon

Army National Guard’s Bravo Company, 41st Brigade Special Troops Battalion.

“I was sitting there on my honeymoon contemplating things and my wife wanted to know what was up. I told her I was thinking about military service and she said now’s the time, it’s a young man’s game.”

The opportunity to gain a new experience was the lure for one Soldier.

“This will be the first time for me going into the real Army beginning in August,” said 2nd Lt. Eli Shinkle, 163rd Infantry, who is new to the military and will be joining the 101st Airborne Division at Fort Campbell, Kentucky. “It’s going to be a big step and transition, but I’m looking forward to it.”

Whether the cadets were prior service or new to the military, enrolled in the two-year or four-year program, they all came away with fresh outlooks on their capabilities and self-esteem.

“I have self-confidence,” Shinkle said. “Having confidence is huge. It took me out of my comfort zone and I needed that.”

Desert agreed. “I learned to be proud of myself. I feel like I’m doing something right,” he said. “I see people looking up to me now. It feels good.”

Family members from all over the country and the globe attended the commissioning ceremony to applaud and support the new officers.

“I came to witness his commissioning,” said Olt Jhsh Michael, who flew 18 hours from Jomo State, Nigeria, to see his nephew, 2nd Lt. Godwin Nwando Jr., graduate and get commissioned. “He’s going to take me to some places where I haven’t been in the United States.”

Twenty-one-year-old Erika Hangate, wife of 22-year-old 2nd Lt. Chester Hangate, was present with their nearly three-year-old daughter Lyla. They’ve been together for five years and Erika mentioned one of the most significant changes she’s seen in her husband.

“‘He’s a man,’ she said. ‘When we met we were kids and now he’s grown into a man.”

Brig. Gen. Todd Plimpson, Land Component Commander for the Oregon Army National Guard, was the guest speaker who delivered simple, but timeless words of wisdom.

“You want to make things better than you found them. What you owe to your Soldiers is the best,” Plimpson said. “The Oregon Guard couldn’t be any prouder.”

Aside from military academies such as West Point, the University of Oregon has produced the most graduates to obtain the rank of general or ‘flag officer,’ whether through ROTC or non-military graduate programs. That includes Navy and Air Force flag officers as well.

“I think the biggest thing for someone coming into college or someone thinking about doing ROTC or someone who has already made up their mind is, make sure you have balance in your college career,” McMahon said about students who might be contemplating joining the program.

“Have balance with your academics, your ROTC commitments, and your other commitments.”

Training, academics keep Southern Oregon University ROTC cadets busy

Southern Oregon University’s Reserve Officer Training Corps (ROTC) cadets were busy over the academic year.

Cadets tested their mental and physical toughness during the combat water survival test in the SOU pool in mid-February. This swim test is a requirement before cadets go to Leader Development and Assessment Course (LDAC). Cadets were required to successfully negotiate three events; a 15-meter swim with weapon and combat load-bearing vest, a three-meter drown proofing, and treading water for 30 minutes. During the test, each cadet must swing logs with rubber rifles above their heads, jump from a 10-foot dive while blindfolded, and jump into the water with combat gear, remove the gear underwater, and swim to the bottom of the pool to pull up the rubber rifles.

The cadets participated in the second annual joint field training exercise (FTX) with cadets of University of Oregon’s ROTC program. The training took place at Dorena Lake, near Cottage Grove, and included day and night iterations of land navigation, as well as squad tactical exercise scenarios.

Several squads combined the cadets from both schools, focusing them to quickly assimilate and work as team. Joint training events force cadets to learn and adapt their leadership styles to achieve mission success while adjusting to the formation of a new team in an unfamiliar environment. The training event provided the cadets from both programs a perspective of the dynamics associated with small unit leadership.

“I found being squad leader with a bunch of cadets I don’t know to be very challenging, but understanding that we have all been trained the same, meant I could still lead them,” said Cader Blake Palfrey, MSJ junior, who was assigned as a squad leader for one iteration of the training lane.

The cadets also hosted the first annual spring clean-up of Suzanne Homes Hall, which houses SOU ROTC department and cadet barracks. The ROTC program also shares the hall with the Honors College and McNair programs who spent three hours cleaning inside common areas and the grounds outside, as well as putting up the flag pole.

The flag pole is significant because ROTC is the designated keeper of the university’s original flag pole, first enbarked in 1926 when SOU was known as the Southern Oregon Normal School.

Many of the ROTC cadets were also members of SOU’s wrestling team and applied the lessons learned in both programs for their success as scholar-athlete-leaders.

“Wrestling has taught me to set goals, and work hard every day to achieve them ... you can’t look at anyone else to pick up the slack,” said Cadet James Bower, a sophomore and 133-pound wrestler.

Cadet Alex Howell, a 141-pound wrestler, said his reason for joining ROTC is because he always wanted to serve his country.

“ROTC brings a new element to my life by teaching me to not only lead by example, but to bring my brothers and sisters up with me,” said Howell.

ROTC helps keep students on track to achieve their academic goals by training them to focus on skills for success as a leader in their community and throughout life.

Ducks salute the troops at spring game

The Oregon Army National Guard’s Select Honor Guard performs a flag-flowing ceremony in the spring game at the University of Oregon Ducks, at Autzen Stadium, in Eugene, Ore., May 3. Oregon Guard Soldiers and Airmen, along with military members from other services branches, participated in the Ducks’ military tribute, which included a chance to exchange jerseys with the players on the field after the game.

Adjudant General presides over OSU tradition

Members of Oregon State University’s Reserve Officer Training Corps (ROTC) participate in an annual Joint Service Review ceremony, May 2, at the OSU campus in Corvallis, Ore. Maj. Gen. Daniel Hukkanen, Adjutant General, Oregon, was this year’s reviewing officer. The event is a long-standing tradition which allows cadets and midshipmen to participate in a formal review before they become commissioned officers in their chosen military service branch. The annual pass and review at OSU dates back as far as 1918 when the state governor would review the soon-to-be officers during World War I.
Study aims to increase retention of veteran employees in the workplace

The SERV Study WANTS YOU!

There are plenty of stories out there about veterans not finding employment, but what about those who DO find employment? How are they being supported and understood? SERVE – The Study for Employment Retention of Veterans – is a Department of Defense grant awarded through Portland State University and is the only study of its kind focusing on veteran retention in the workplace.

The goal of this study is to improve the health and well-being of veterans and their families, as well as to increase retention of veterans in the workplace by training supervisors to better support their employed service members, as well as all employees in general.

SERVE is a win-win for veterans, their families and organizations. Supported workers are more likely to stay in their job longer, be happier with their job and their family, and be healthier overall. This positively impacts the bottom line of any company, and reflects positively on the management.

Supervisors will receive a free online training. Survey information collected from the veteran employee will be used to evaluate the effectiveness of the training.

It is known that happy workers make happy families, so SERVE also wants to invite your spouse or partner to participate. The SERVE study is included in the complete picture.

If you are a veteran of the Armed Forces – including National Guard and Reserves – and have served since post 9/11, you can sign up through your employer. If you are a qualifying veteran, you will be compensated for your three survey responses at $25 each - $75 total. If your spouse or partner chooses to participate, combined you can earn up to an additional $255 per couple. Participation and information provided is completely confidential and will not be shared with your employer.

Employer supervisors receive free training to understand military culture and learn about supportive behaviors. The training will only take about an hour. Upon completion of training, the supervisor will receive SERVE certification to recognize their commitment to employee relations and giving back to our nation’s veterans.

To learn more, go to https://servestudy.org/home. To participate in the study, go to http://servestudy.org.

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Oregon National Guard units of World War II consisted of the 123rd Observation Squadron, the 249th Coast Artillery, and the 41st Infantry Division.

More than a year before the attack on Pearl Harbor, the 41st Infantry Division was one of only four National Guard infantry divisions activated for federal service. Scouting duties in the South Pacific during World War II, the 41st Infantry Division was made up of units from Oregon, Washington, Idaho and Montana and was considered the best National Guard infantry division in the United States at the time. President Roosevelt felt there might be a possibility that the United States may have to take action, so he prepared by activating four National Guard infantry divisions.

The 41st Infantry Division mobilized and moved to Camp Murray, near Fort Lewis, Wash., for training. They then moved to Camp Roberts, in California, for large unit training maneuvers. The 41st returned to Camp Murray, known by the men as “Camp Swampy,” until the attack on Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941. Immediately following the attack, the 41st was called to protect the Northwest coastline along Oregon and Washington against the possibility of Japanese invasion. The United States was sure that the Japanese would continue from Hawaii and attack the West Coast, so the 41st was sent to be the first line of defense. The 41st was relieved by the 41st Infantry Division.

Instead there were 10,000 reinforced by an additional 2,000 well-trained Japanese soldiers. This was the first battle of the Pacific where the Japanese used a new strategy of letting the Americans land relatively unopposed, then fought from well-fortified cave locations. Biak was also the first tank-to-tank battle in the Pacific. The 41st used Sherman tanks to quickly defeat the Japanese Ha-Go tanks.

Elements of the 41st, primarily the 163rd Infantry Regiment, remained in contact with the enemy for 76 consecutive days. After a chance to recover, the 41st joined General Douglas MacArthur in his quest to return to the Philippines. The division’s 186th Infantry Regiment assaulted Palawan Island while the rest of the division landed on Mindanao and captured Zamboanga City and Caldera Point. The 41st took out Japanese resistance throughout the southern Philippines until hostilities ended in August 1945.

The division went on to occupation duty in the Hiroshima district of Japan and was inactivated on December 31, 1945 at Camp Abbott, in Central Oregon. The division served a total of 45 months overseas, the longest overseas service of any U.S. division. During the war, the 41st lost nearly 1,000 dead and more than 3,500 wounded. It participated in three campaigns and ten assault landings.

Oregon’s Air National Guard was created when the 123rd Observation Squadron was organized in April 1941. The squadron trained at Swan Island, in Oregon National Guardsmen with a U.S. Army Air Force, trained at Fort Lewis, Wash. Wartime training changed after the attack on Pearl Harbor.

On that day, the 123rd joined the Pacific Air Forces mission to detect foreign warships and attack them. The 123rd began air patrols over the South Solomons, in the hopes of finding a Japanese aircraft carrier. The 123rd was activated at the Tillamook Naval Air Station, two of largest wood-frame buildings in the world were built to house blimps that would patrol up and down the Oregon and Washington coast for enemy vessels. However, the blimps missed spotting the I-25 submarine not once, but twice.

The I-25 submarine went back to Japan and picked up a “Glen” seaplane designed to be disassembled and put into a submarine. It came back to the Southern Oregon coast, surfaced, reassembled the seaplane and catapulted it off the submarine. The seaplane then dropped two bombs outside of Brookings, Ore., in the hopes of starting a forest fire.

Fortunately, the 1940s saw more rain than the previous decade. The pilot of the seaplane, Nobuo Fujita, then flew back to the submarine, landed and went back to Japan. The pilot’s next mission was to train kamikaze pilots. He felt so bad about his role in WWII that he came back to Brookings after the war and presented his 400-year-old samurai sword to the city. The samurai sword is still in the Brookings library today.

Camp Adair, located north of Corvallis, was used to train four infantry divisions, three of which were created there. More than 100,000 troops trained there, straining the resources of the area. Those troops moved over to do maneuvers in Central Oregon before heading off to fight in the war. Camp Adair was then used as a hospital, specializing in tropical diseases and then became a prisoner of war camp for German and Italian POWs.

Camp Abbott, in Central Oregon, was established as an Engineer Replacement Training Center (ERTC), sending combat engineers into the Pacific. Soon, Oregon National Guardsmen would help build the most advanced airfields in the world. When the war ended, Abbott would become a prisoner of war camp for 45,000 Japanese soldiers.

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About 10,000 guardsmen were organized into two divisions. The 41st Division was inactivated at Camp Abbott, in Central Oregon, and was the last unit to return to the United States.

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