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Company G, 1-189th Aviation returns from Middle East

Oregon Army National Guard Soldiers with Company G, 1st Battalion, 189th Aviation Regiment, stand in formation during a demobilization ceremony honoring their return from overseas deployment, March 4, in Salem, Oregon. Approximately 70 Soldiers in the unit returned from deployment to the Middle East, where they provided aeromedical support using HH-60M Black Hawk helicopters. See the full story on Page 5.

Photo by Sgt. 1st Class April Davis, Oregon Military Department Public Affairs

173rd Fighter Wing granted 50-year lease in Klamath Falls

KLAMATH FALLS, Oregon - The City of Klamath Falls demonstrated an unprecedented level of community support for the 173rd Fighter Wing by extending the current lease on the airfield property until 2095 - the longest lease in the U.S. Air Force.

In a ceremony at Kingsley Field, city officials expressed their appreciation for the unique mission of the wing and expressed the desire for its continued success into the next century.

“...and we believe it will make our community one of the best places to live and work and be part of.”

U.S. Representative Greg Walden added that the lease benefits both the community and the Oregon Air National Guard.

“The signing of this lease extension exemplifies how our community in the basin has embraced the Guard’s mission, supports our men and women in uniform, and benefits from the base’s investment back into the community.”

This lease extension adds a capstone to recent improvements including a new airspace expansion which brings the total area to 11,300 square miles, making it among the largest test and training ranges in the U.S. Air Force.

This airspace expansion allows the opportunity for a fairly new concept in training - use of a contracted adversary air (ADAIR) squadron which will serve to increase the number of sorties directly related to student training. This new AD AIR squadron of about six aircraft would simulate enemy aircraft during training sorties rather than requiring some of the F-15C's to fill the adversary role. This will free up more of the F-15C's for student training and allow the unit to graduate a larger number of new F-15C pilots for the Combat Air Forces.

The extended lease also helps solidify over $80M in planned construction projects in response to growth requirements such as the addition of nearly 100 active duty troops in an Active Association and the proposed addition of contract aircraft on the ramp. A new fire station is currently under construction and planned projects include a new fuel offloading and on-loading station, a new corrosion control facility, ramp improvement construction, and many others.

During the ceremony speakers noted the litany of recent accomplishments that have paved the way for both this unprecedented lease extension, and positioned Kingsley Field for the future.

“With its over 50,000 square-yards of ramp space, unrivaled support from the community, and four decades of fighter training culture, Kingsley Field is clearly a perfect home for the F-35, or any future training missions for that matter,” added Walden.

The 173rd Fighter Wing is home to the sole F-15C formal training schoolhouse for the United States Air Force.
Oregonian to become senior National Guard JAG

SALEM, Oregon – Oregon Air National Guard Brig. Gen. W. Dan Bunch has been selected as the Air National Guard (ANG) Assistant to the Judge Advocate General (JAG), U.S. Air Force. He is scheduled to move to this major general position effective July 2018 as the senior Judge Advocate in the National Guard.

Serving part time in the Pentagon, Bunch will be the ANG advisor to the Judge Advocate General of the Air Force. In addition to giving legal counsel on projects of national significance, he will provide leadership, strategic planning and management of the ANG Judge Advocate program, encompassing more than 440 judge advocates and paralegals at Air National Guard legal offices throughout the nation.

“It’s an honor to congratulate one of our own and celebrate Dan’s selection for this prestigious position,” said Maj. Gen. Michael Stencil, Adjutant General, Oregon. “His character, professional skills, and leadership are a credit to him, and to us all.”

Bunch has most recently been serving as the ANG Deputy to the Judge Advocate General of the U.S. Air Force and a senior member of the Judge Advocate General’s ANG Council.

He began his military career in 1990 with the U.S. Navy, serving on the island of Guam and then onboard the USS John F. Kennedy (CV-67), an operational aircraft carrier supporting operations in the first Gulf War and Bosnia. In 1994, he transferred to the U.S. Air Force and was served as a fighter jet chief of military justice and later as a regional circuit prosecutor handling complex and high profile cases. In 1997, he was named the top judge advocate of 11th Air Force.

In 1998, he transferred to the Air Force Reserve and then transferred to the Oregon Air National Guard in 2000 as the Staff Judge Advocate of the 173rd Fighter Wing at Kingsley Field. In 2007, he deployed to Baghdad, Iraq, in support of the Law and Order Task Force in which he commanded a joint force of military and civilian legal specialists in an effort to establish an Iraqi judicial system. Returning home, Bunch was awarded the Bronze Star Medal and named as the nation’s outstanding Judge Advocate in the Air Reserve component. His career continued with his competitive selection to perform national level duties as the ANG Assistant to the Staff Judge Advocate for Air Force Space Command and Air Combat Command.

Bunch received his Bachelor of Arts degree from Hampden-Sydney College in 1987 and his Doctorate of Jurisprudence from the University of Virginia in 1990.

In his civilian career, Bunch has worked as a prosecuting attorney, a partner in a law firm, and as county counsel of Klamath County, Oregon. During 2010, Oregon’s governor appointed Bunch to the state court’s 13th Judicial District in Klamath County, where he is judge having general jurisdiction over all civil and criminal cases.

Bunch is married to Mary Liz Hamilton. He and his wife reside in Klamath Falls and have three adult children: Ali, Faison, and Pierce.

Story and photo by Tech. Sgt. Jordan Boyd, 142nd Fighter Wing Public Affairs

SALEM, Oregon – Reflecting back on a wide-ranging, 33-year military career, Oregon Air National Guard Brig. Gen. Jeffrey M. “Hi Ho!” Silver said, “It was fun the whole way through, and I’m especially grateful I got to experience so many challenging ways of flying.”

The former Air Component Commander for the Oregon National Guard officially retired after a career held in his honor, Feb. 10, 2018, at the Anderson Readiness Center in Salem, Oregon. As he spoke to colleagues, family and others in attendance, Silver described how the excitement of flying fighter jets push the limits of technology and physiology to many unknown transformations in his storied career.

“For me, it was the joyful sense of speed is where it all began and I loved every minute of my 28-years flying fighters,” he recalled his love of flying. “As my career evolved, it was especially gratifying working with senior leaders, and mentoring others while watching them grow up in their own positions.”

After graduating from Oregon State University in 1984, Silver entered the Oregon Air National Guard, eventually attended undergraduate navigator training at Little Rock Air Force Base (AFB), Arkansas. Upon finishing his initial rounds of aviation training, he was assigned as a Weapons System Officer (WSO) with the 142nd Fighter Interceptor Group (FIG) (F-15 Eagles), and had long careers as a seasoned pilot sharing his vast knowledge at the Oregon Air National Guard's state and federal missions.

Kriesel graduated from the University of Notre Dame and earned a Bachelor of Science in aeronautical and astronautical engineering. He received his commission in 1989 after graduating from U.S. Air Force Officer Training School. Trained as an Air Defense Artillery officer, Kriesel was assigned to the First Army Air Defense Artillery, Combat Artillery Command, Joint Force Headquarters, in Salem, Oregon. He was responsible for directly synchronizing the Oregon Air National Guard’s state and federal missions.

Oregon Air National Guard

Brig. Gen. James R. Kriesel (left), incoming commander of the Oregon Air National Guard, awards Brig. Gen. Jeffrey M. Silver the Oregon Distinguished Service Award for 33 years of dedicated service to the Oregon Air National Guard during his retirement ceremony, Feb. 10, 2018, at the Anderson Readiness Center in Salem, Oregon.

Brig. Gen. Jeffrey M. Silver, outgoing commander of the Oregon Air National Guard, gave his parting remarks during the ceremony. During his remarks, he praised the men and women of the Oregon Air National Guard for executing the mission and allowing him to be successful in his prior role as commander.

As the presiding officer for the ceremony, Maj. Gen. Michael Stencel highlighted his long professional and personal relationship with Silver. Stencel described, through a variety of stories, Silver’s unique, light-hearted attitude toward his military service, yet always remaining the ultimate professional.

When Jeff and I attended AMS (The Academy of Military Science) together, he completed the course as the distinguished graduate of the class, yet his intelligence, athletic ability and (jokingly) attentiveness,” said Stencel.

Yet passing from the leader, Stencel reaffirmed to everyone in attendance, in a more solemn reminder, “If you ever needed him, in the dead of night - he would be there - a true friend for anybody and always completely committed to the mission.”
PORTLAND, Oregon – More than 250 Airmen and supporting F-15 Eagle fighter jets deployed in March from the Oregon Air National Guard’s 142nd Fighter Wing in support of Operation Atlantic Resolve (OAR).

The deployment is part of the Theater Support Package (TSP), positioning the 123rd Expeditionary Fighter Squadron (EFS) to three European nations: The United Kingdom, the Netherlands, and Bulgaria. Along with the Oregon Airmen, the deployment is augmented by Eagles and personnel from the Massachusetts Air National Guard’s 131st Fighter Squadron, and approximately 40 Airmen from the 52nd Fighter Wing, Spangdahlem Air Base, Germany.

During a mobilization ceremony held on base prior to deployment, Col. Duke Pirak, 142nd Fighter Wing commander, stressed to those in attendance, the United States continued the commitment to the security and stability in Europe.

“Congratulations on this historic opportunity to strengthen the NATO Alliance and demonstrate American resolve and dedication to its European friends both old and new,” said Pirak.

With the deployment of these three NATO units, the Airmen will conduct readiness training highlighting the United States’ ability to deploy fighter aircraft to support allied partners.

At the mobilization ceremony, Brig. Gen. James A. Kriesel, Oregon Air National Guard commander, acknowledged the high standards the 142nd FW holds and its significance in today’s world.

“When we deploy and bring America somewhere, he said, “we bring confidence to our partners and the rest of the world.”

Echoing Kriesel call to action, Lt. Col. Aaron J. Mathena, 123rd EFS detachment commander, also reflected on the mission.

“Our support to the Operation Atlantic Resolve mission is to underscore the commitment we have for our NATO allies, building partnerships as we train with of our host nations.”

The Frisian Flag 2018 exercise in the Netherlands, as well as training in the airspace in Germany and the United Kingdom will allow the 123rd EFS to gain valuable training with their coalition partners.

“We’re here participating with a number of countries all which have different aircraft, which subsequently bring different capabilities,” Mathena explained. “Ultimately, this collaborations capabilities will enhance our skills, as we practice and rehearse various situations during our deployment.”

The Squadron has sharpened their skills with two recent training periods at Nellis Air Force Base, Nevada, in the past year. Last summer over 120 Airmen and six Eagles spent three weeks supporting the Weapons Instructor Course. Early this year another large wave of Redhawk Airmen were back at Nellis, polishing their skills as part of Exercise Red Flag 18-1, from June 26 to Feb. 16.

“The 123rd Air Expeditionary Fighter Squadron has never been more ready than they are today to handle the nations’ business,” said Mathena, having been the commander during those two temporary duty assignments.

“Heading into training environment of Frisian Flag and Thracian Eagle, our readiness for every Airman is as high as it could be, whether they are deploying or still serving in their home station duty roles.”

The challenges continue for many of the members deploying for this TSP assignment. For Tech. Sgt. Davina Mitchell, a security manager, and her husband Staff Sgt. Michael, an aircraft technician, the OAR mission has the couple deploying at the same time but not to the same location.

“It will be tough at times but I am really ready for this deployment,” Michael Mitchell elaborated. “I know this is a very important mission, so I am just ready to get there and get started.”

“We will find ways to stay in touch,” explained Davina Mitchell, as she described using the internet and mobile device communication during their separation. “(Like Michael) I am really excited about this opportunity, as I get to be part of this mission while going with our unit.”

U.S. Army Central flies on the wings of Guard and Reserve aviation

142nd FW Airmen deploy to support European partners

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U.S. Army Central flies on the wings of Guard and Reserve aviation

ALLI AL SALEM AIR BASE, Kuwait - Transporting distinguished visitors, command teams and supplies across multiple locations are key missions for the 29th Combat Aviation Brigade’s (CAB) fixed-wing detachments.

Tucked away on Ali Al Salem Air Base, Kuwait, is the UC-35 jet detachment operated by U.S. Army Reservists from Fort Dix, New Jersey, and Fort Bragg, North Carolina, and the C-12 detachment operated by Army National Guardsmen from Maine and Oregon.

“There is change constant with this job,” explained Oregon Army National Guard Sgt. 1st Class Destiny Pence, C-12 detachment operations non-commissioned officer in charge.

“It keeps us busy and makes time go fast.”

Although the 29th CAB has many aircraft to support their wide array of missions, they only have a few fixed-wing aircraft for passenger transportation over great distances. The UC-35 jets and C-12 airplanes fly at faster airspeeds and over great distances. The UC-35 jets and C-12 flights provide intra-theater airlift capabilities in support of overseas operations for U.S. Army Central.

“The UC-35s are a very versatile platform,” said Pence.

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“Members of the 123rd Expeditionary Fighter Squadron, of the 142nd Fighter Wing, stand in formation during a ceremony, March 3, honoring their mobilization in support of Operation Atlantic Resolve.


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Medevac Soldiers put their lives on hold to save others

SALEM, Oregon The Oregon Army National Guard’s aeromedical helicopter unit was welcomed home in a demobilization ceremony, March 4, 2018, at the Army Aviation Support Facility, in Salem, Oregon. Nearly 70 Soldiers with Company G (Golf), 1st Battalion, 189th Aviation Regiment, returned from a deployment to the Middle East in support of Operation Inherent Resolve.

The unit conducted 24/7 medical evacuations (medevac) using HH-60M Black Hawk helicopters, providing critical care to coalition forces supporting the fight to defeat ISIS in the Middle East.

In attendance at the ceremony to welcome the Soldiers home was Oregon Senator James Manning (SD-7, Eugene), on behalf of Governor Kate Brown; Oregon Representatives Rick Lewis (HD-18, Silverton), Mark Meek (HD-40, Oregon City), Ron Noble (HD-24, McMinnville); Sherronne Blasi, Acting Director of Statewide Veterans Services, ODVA; Maj. Gen. Michael Fiance, Adjutant General, Oregon; Brig. Gen. William Edwards, Land Component Commander; among other community and military leaders.

“One has a lot to be thankful for and should be proud of each and every individual Soldier who served with the Oregon Army National Guard Maj. Brady Phillips, company commander, G Company, 1-189th Aviation Regiment.

Oregon’s G Company deployed an Area Support Medevac Platoon (ASMP), two Forward Support Medevac Platoons (FSMP) and nine Black Hawk helicopters. The company was augmented by an FSMP from the Massachusetts Army National Guard’s C Company, 1-189th Aviation, and an FSMP from the Texas Army National Guard’s C Company, 3rd Battalion, 126th Aviation Regiment. These units combined to make up one medevac company under 2nd Combat Aviation Brigade, 114th Air Support Division (GSAJB), 149th Aviation Regiment, from the Texas Army National Guard.

The unit flew more than 2,300 combat hours while executing more than 180 combat medevac missions, transporting more than 200 patients.

“Our flight hours were not as high as they have been on past deployments, however the missions were dynamic due to the length of flights we had to go on and the seriousness of the injuries for the people we

Oregon Senator James Manning (SD-7, Eugene), talks to Soldiers of G Company, 1st Battalion, 189th Aviation Regiment, to welcome them home during a demobilization ceremony, March 4, in Salem, Oregon.

Oregon National Guard Senior Soldiers with Company G, 1st Battalion, 189th Aviation Regiment, stand in formation during a demobilization ceremony, following their return from overseas deployment, March 4, in Salem, Oregon.

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Emergency managers plan for coordinated disaster response

PORTLAND, Oregon - Airmen of the Oregon National Guard’s emergency response team met with civilian authorities from the Oregon Office of Emergency Management (OEM) today in order to exchange information regarding capabilities and coordinating resources during an emergency.

Members of the Oregon Air National Guard’s 142nd Detachment-1 Chemical, Biological, Radiological, Nuclear and High-yield Explosives (CBRNE) Response Enterprise (CRE) work with civilian authorities to respond to man-made and natural disasters.

In the meeting between the two groups, OEM officials were briefed on the emergency response team’s mission capabilities in terms of emergency equipment and personnel so the civilian officials could understand the best way to employ those resources in the case of an emergency. The OEM team also shared how their office coordinates resources around the state during past and future emergency situations.

“We know that the military brings tremendous resources to bear so we want to make sure we have visibility and knowledge of those resources so we can leverage those resources and direct them to support our civilian population during a disaster response,” said Andrew Phelps, Director of the Oregon Office of Emergency Management.

The mission of the OEM is to lead statewide efforts to develop and enhance preparedness, response, recovery and mitigation capabilities to protect the lives, property and environment of the whole community.

Andrew Phelps, Director of the Oregon Office of Emergency Management shared his takeaways from this familiarization event.

“It’s a capability that we don’t get to see very often here in Oregon during real-world incidents, so being able to get an overview and a tour and see some of the equipment and meet some of the folks who are responsible for managing and using the equipment was really very impressive. It’s important to know this capability exists in our backyard to support Oregonians regardless of what kind of ‘bad day’ we may have,” said Phelps.

“Following the presentation by both teams on mission capabilities, there was an open question and answer period. Participants then walked through a static display showing some of the equipment the CRE is trained to use in rescue, triage and recovery situations in case of a disaster.”

“I think folks would be surprised to know what the military can bring to bear during a response. I think we all see the overseas peacekeeping mission but I don’t think we are as familiar all the time with the defense support of civil authorities and the mission that the Oregon National Guard, in particular provides right here at home,” said Phelps.

Within the structure of the Oregon National Guard’s CRE, the unit is a joint mission, with the Soldiers and Airmen taking on different roles to create the team. The command and control structure is a blend of both forces.

“Every time a team comes to pass, many from the Oregon National Guard’s CRE expressed optimism in getting plugged into the statewide community of emergency managers in order to impact the community in a positive way.

“I’m excited to see where these meetings will push us forward and evolve our mission and hopefully we will be able to have a bigger impact in the community,” said Capt. Daniel Yaveter, Support Flight Commander, 142nd Detachment-1 CRE.

One thing is for certain, the members of the Oregon Air National Guard stand ready, alert and poised to assist if any disaster comes to pass.

“We look up into the sky and see the F-15s flying over sometimes and it’s pretty cool but to know that our citizen-soldiers are right here in our backyard, ready to protect us from wildfires and floods or a Cascadia earthquake…it’s a good feeling,” said Phelps.

Kingsley Field Fire Department safeguards the local community

The Kingsley Field Fire Department plays double duty serving the needs of the 173rd Fighter Wing and the needs of its community in Klamath Falls, Oregon.

During 2017, Kingsley’s Fire Department responded to 239 community calls as a part of their mutual aid agreement.

Although their primary purpose is to provide fire prevention and fire protection services for structural and aircraft responses, they also have the chance to save lives.

On Feb. 17, 2018, the Kingsley Fire Department responded to assist an unresponsive local citizen during a mutual aid call. On scene, the firefighter implemented Basic Life Support capability. As trained professionals, the members executed continuous CPR, assisted ventilations, and drug administration from the first moment on the scene through the transport to the hospital.

“Those folks were at the right place at the right time and willing to do the job,” said Col James Mitchell, 173rd Mission Support Group commander.

After calling the hospital for an update, they found the patient to be recovering in the Intensive Care Unit after experiencing what was identified as cardiac arrest.

“They literally saved the life of a local citizen,” said Mitchell. “If it was another shift, another day, there would be three or four other people [being recognized] because every single one of you is stepping up to take care of people,” he said while speaking to the firefighters.

The Kingsley Field Fire Department was recently recognized for these efforts by Maj. Gen. Michael Stencel, the Adjutant General, Oregon.

“We never want an event like this to happen, but this highlights the ultimate reason that we do what we do,” added Mitchell.
Story by Tech. Sgt. Erin B. Smith, National Guard Bureau

ARLINGTON, Va. - The Army National Guard has undergone a shift in training approach and many Army Guard Soldiers in certain critical units have seen an increase in yearly training days and requirements.

That increase is part of Army National Guard 4.0, an initiative based on changing Army needs and designed to keep the Army Guard responsive and ready to train and respond to threats.

The Army National Guard 4.0 is making the transition for all Army Guard units, and the changes will bring new opportunities for training and readiness.
Oregon CERFP answers Montana’s call for help during Vigilant Guard 18

Story by Sgt. Tyler Meister, 115th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

GREAT FALLS, Montana – Whether it’s sunshine and clear skies or high winds and artic temperatures, natural disasters can occur anywhere with little to no warning. The most important aspect of natural disasters is being able to respond to and mitigate any loss of life or property damage. That is the goal of the Oregon National Guard’s Chemical, Biological, Radiological, Nuclear and Explosive (CBRNE) Enhanced Response Force Package (CERFP) team strategically spread throughout the country.

The CERFP team from the Oregon Army Guard’s team leader with Oregon’s CERFP, Johnson, ambulatory decontamination Oregon Army National Guard Spc. Joseph development and broaden their skill sets,” said opportunity has allowed our team to train in cold climates like this, so this flooding which led to contamination. The exercise required Oregon and Guardsmen with many scenario and real-world training opportunities as they were placed in a new climate and environment. The exercise required Oregon and Montana National Guard personnel to respond to a simulated earthquake and mass disaster response departments.

The Oregon CERFP provided Oregon Guardsmen with many scenario and real-world training opportunities as they were placed in a new climate and environment. The exercise required Oregon and Montana National Guard personnel to respond to a simulated earthquake and mass disaster response departments. The CERFP team is made up of both Army and Air National Guard personnel, from the Army Guard’s 567th Component Repair Company and Air Guard’s 142nd Medical Group, 142nd Fighter Wing, who specialize in disaster response. Combined, the CERFP’s capabilities include decontamination, search and extraction, mass casualty stage, medical response and overall command and control.

“We have done CERFP long enough with the Army that we are truly one service and one fight,” said Oregon Air National Guard Maj. Chris Webb, deputy commander of the Oregon CERFP. “Our teams no longer see each other as green or blue and instead as one singular CERFP family and team.”

In December the Oregon Army National Guard’s 813th Troop Command Battalion took over the entire mission of CERFP except for the medical response portion. “Some of our new personnel were not fully trained yet, so this exercise has been a fantastic opportunity to get our new guys trained and up to the level they need to be,” said Lt. Col. Cory Edelman, battalion commander of 813th Troop Command. “Our CERFP team’s training is well ahead of where we should be and I am highly motivated that we are going to be one of the best teams in the nation soon.”

Oregon brought a total of 187 personnel to the exercise and was able to setup multiple response operations areas in different regions of Montana. Oregon Army National Guard Capt. Tony Bagall, the exercise battle captain for the tactical operations center, said the integration and facilitation with the Montana National Guard was practically seamless.

“As the exercise played out, our ability to communicate and handle any emergency response situations greatly improved,” said Bagall. Many Montana Guardsmen were mixed in with the Oregon CERFP and tackled the challenges of the exercise together. “Air and Army medics always work well together and it was great knowing that Oregon’s CERFP was eager to support us,” said Montana Air National Guard Staff Sgt. Brianna Howse, an aerospace medical technician with 120th Airlift Wing, 120th Medical Group.

Oregon Army and Air National Guardsmen with the Oregon National Guard’s Chemical, Biological, Radiological, Nuclear and Explosive (CBRNE) Enhanced Response Force Package (CERFP) setup their mass casualty decontamination response stations during Exercise Vigilant Guard, March 6, 2018, at Great Falls, Montana. Vigilant Guard is a United States Northern Command and National Guard Bureau sponsored exercise program. Exercises are held in a different state each year. These exercises help National Guard personnel refine their response for domestic operations and build a closer relationship with community and state departments.

Photo by Spc. Timothy Jackson, 115th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

Army National Guard Soldiers with the Oregon National Guard’s Chemical, Biological, Radiological, Nuclear and Explosive (CBRNE) Enhanced Response Force Package (CERFP), assess and decontaminate a simulated patient during Exercise Vigilant Guard, March 6, 2018, at Great Falls, Montana. Vigilant Guard is a United States Northern Command and National Guard Bureau sponsored exercise program. Exercises are held in a different state each year. These exercises help National Guard personnel refine their response for domestic operations and build a closer relationship with community and state departments.

Photo by Sgt. Tyler Meister, 115th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

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Photo by Staff Sgt. Zachary Holden, 115th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

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Photo by Sgt. Tyler Meister, 115th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment
New Oregon Air National Guard commander meets Airmen during base tour

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

Oregon Air National Guard Airman Brig. Gen. James A. Kriesel, Oregon Air National Guard commander, takes a moment to listen to Airmen of the 142nd Fighter Wing during a tour of the air base.

PORTLAND, Ore. – As the new commander of the Oregon Air National Guard, Brig. Gen. James A. Kriesel used the opportunity of the three-day, March 2-4, regularly scheduled drill (RSD) to brief and interact with Airmen of the 142nd Fighter Wing.

As he made his way around base and stopped into one of several briefing rooms full of wing members, Kriesel emphasized many of the current Department of Defense (DoD) policy principles and discussed interaction with public and private civilian education.

“I want to take this opportunity to interact directly and listen to your concerns,” he said, during his first stop with the Maintenance Support Group. “I want you all to know, that there is no group or organization that is as universally well-respected and trusted by a majority of Americans right now, than members of the U.S. military.”

Making multiple stops and meetings around the base, Kriesel had a chance to emphasize new deployment policies, readiness issues and larger global operational concerns. Citing a new Pentagon policy, service members who have been in a non-deployable status for more than 12 months or more, will be in most cases, separated from military service.

“Right now, somewhere about 10-12 percent of the total DoD force is non-deployable,” Kriesel described. “It’s really not fair or sustainable, seeing the same people again and again deploy because many of our service members cannot deploy.”

During his career, Kriesel said that he has deployed nine times prior to his current assignment and highlighted some of those missions abroad during the question and answer session during a tour of the air base.

“During the past several years, I’ve been deployed to the Middle East on multiple occasions, as well as throughout Europe and the Pacific. It’s important for our leaders to have a deep understanding of what our men and women are enduring worldwide.”

“Any opportunity to show up on the front lines of our nation’s security is the privilege of every member of our military.”

Kriesel explained, “These are tough decisions, but we will always do our best to keep people paired up with their families. If we could give them a year of leave between deployments, it would be a huge step forward.”

The Hometown Heroes program is a new leadership role to assist incoming Airmen during their first few days on base.

“It’s a really good opportunity to give them a little bit more guidance,” he said, “We have a chance to get to know each other much better right out of the gate.”

“It’s a great program, and I think it’s something we can grow and expand,” Kriesel said, “I think we can add a program like this to any unit we can.”

“Right now, somewhere about 10-12 percent of the total DoD force is non-deployable,” Kriesel described. “It’s really not fair or sustainable, seeing the same people again and again deploy because many of our service members cannot deploy.”

After Kriesel stepped back on the RSD, he met with the Oregon National Guard’s state Youth Leadership Board to discuss the importance of the youth program. He also met with the 173rd Fighter Wing leadership to build rapport and share ideas on how they can enhance their community partnerships with one another.

“I can’t emphasize and stress the importance of working on PME and other career advancement opportunities,” Cole said. “You don’t want to miss out on a promotion or being able to take that next step in your career when applying for a job.”

Both Cole and Kriesel discussed the current Oregon House Bill 4035, which would provide for tuition assistance for Oregon National Guard members.

“We are just one of only two states in the country that don’t provide any tuition assistance for our members,” Cole said. “It’s important because the Air Force has mandated that promotions to Senior Master Sergeant (E-8) and Chief Master Sergeant (E-9) require a CCFA (Community College of the Air Force) degree.”

“Making multiple stops and meetings around the base, Kriesel had a chance to emphasize new deployment policies, readiness issues and larger global operational concerns. Citing a new Pentagon policy, service members who have been in a non-deployable status for more than 12 months or more, will be in most cases, separated from military service.”

Col. Jeff Smith, the 173rd Fighter Wing commander, led the tour beginning in the Klamath Falls Police Department officer of the year, Beads Yahwhee, and OIT president, Dr. Nagi Davila, were both selected as the first commanders in a new Civic Relations program.

Additionally, OIT president, Dr. Nagi Naganathan, stated that he would also like to see the possibility of a Reserve Officer Training Corps detachment starting the school, potentially making it the first ROTC program in the Klamath Basin.

Ultimately the meeting underscored the mutual benefit both parties may reap from a partnership going forward and it illustrated once again why the 173rd Fighter Wing works hard to grow and maintain the support of the local community.

The backbone of the military are our senior NCO’s (Non Commissioned Officers), said Kriesel. “I cannot stress enough how important the senior enlisted force is when it comes to training and mentoring junior members, but just as importantly, providing that critical feedback to the officer corps as well.”

To emphasize this point, Kriesel acknowledged key enlisted Airmen at each stop, as he presented his commander’s coin to a select handful of Airmen, highlighting their outstanding effort and teamwork.

“Being a good wingman means being a good teammate,” Kriesel concluded. “Our Oregon National Guard state motto stresses that, ‘Every Airman is a leader,’ but what set us apart in Oregon is not just that we are all leaders, it’s that we’re a leadership factory for the nation as a whole.”

Klamath Falls Police Officer Beads Yahwhee with his sons before her fight.

Klamath Falls Police Officer Beads Yahwhee with his sons before her fight.

Oregon Air National Guard Airman Brig. Gen. James A. Kriesel, Oregon Air National Guard commander, discusses changes in Department of Defense readiness policies and other Air Force recruiting topics with members of the 142nd Fighter Wing Medical Group during a tour of the Portland Air National Guard Base, Ore., March 2, 2018.
Local Klamath Falls high school hosts military appreciation night

Promotion ceremony marks pinnacle moment for married Chiefs

Airman earns “Thunderboldt” honors

142d Airmen train at Red Flag Exercise
DOD, Oregon Guard help set scene for Clint Eastwood movie

Story by Katia Lange, Defense Media Activity

WASHINGTON – Every year, there are a few blockbuster movies based on true stories of U.S. service members, and the upcoming “15:17 to Paris,” directed by the legendary Clint Eastwood, is no exception. What makes this one unique, though, is that all three men who were the real-life heroes play themselves in the movie. “15:17 to Paris” is about Spencer Stone, Aleksander Skarlatos and Anthony Sadler – three childhood friends who stopped a gunman on a Paris-bound train in August 2015, preventing the loss of innocent lives. The film is internationally praised for its accuracy and how it relates to their class,” said Master Sgt. Scott Dickey, with the Oregon Army National Guard. “The administrators had reached out to our local recruiters to give us the opportunity to brief our particular branch of service and how it relates to their class,” said Master Sgt. Scott Dickey, with the Oregon Army National Guard. “I had the opportunity to sit through the first class, and this was a perfect presentation for this audience,” said Dickey. “The students were intrigued as to the capabilities of our assigned aircraft and the fact that they could serve part-time in this career field.”

Other military-specific scenes were shot at various locations in Georgia with on-set consultation by a DOD project officer, who was either on set or was verbally consulted for all scenes depicting Stone in uniform. Some current Airmen also got to join Stone in the film as extras. They were mostly used to do marching drills around base.

While the Air Force took the lead on most of the production, the Oregon Army National Guard also contributed. Capt. Leslie Reed, who was stationed in Afghanistan with Skarlatos prior to the August 2015 incident, helped fact-check and provided photos and other guidance for producers so they could accurately recreate scenes. As for the finished product? DOD officials said Eastwood did a good job with it.

“This film entertains and highlights a moment in time when ordinary people did an extraordinary action, potentially saving hundreds of lives. That’s the message of the film, and the film accomplishes this very well,” said Develyn Watson, the deputy director of the Air Force Entertainment Liaison Office. She said the movie helps further the DOD mission, which is to educate and inform civilians about all of the incredible people in the U.S. military.

“An Air Force Airman took control of a situation with no regard for his personal safety. This epitomizes service before self, one of our core values,” Watson said. “This film does a very good job of showing the selflessness of who we are as a military and what we represent.”

Stone received a Purple Heart and the Airman’s Medal, while Skarlatos received the Soldier’s Medal. Both medals are considered their respective branch’s highest noncombat awards. All three men were bestowed with France’s highest award, the Legion of Honor. Stone continued on in the Air Force to the rank of staff sergeant until 2016, when he left to pursue a career in international relations. Skarlatos re-enlisted for two more years with the Oregon Army National Guard a month before the train attack. He has since left the Guard to pursue other things, following a stint on the 2015 season of “Dancing with the Stars.”

Soldiers re-enlist, meet Governor

Story by Oregon Sentinel Staff

The Oregon Army National Guard’s Recruiting and Retention Command (RRC) provided speakers for the Unmanned Aircraft Systems (UAS) class at the Career Technical Education Center (CTEC) in northeast Salem, Oregon. The CTEC prepares high school students for high-skilled, high-wage, high-demand careers while developing the skills, technical knowledge, academic credits and real-world experience to assure their success upon graduation.

The Mountain West Career Technical Institute (MWTCTI) in partnership with the Salem-Keizer School District develops the curriculum and operates the CTEC. Together, they ensure students are joining the workforce with the skills and training employers are seeking. CTEC programs align with high school graduation requirements, as well as industry certifications and standards. This is the first year that CTEC has offered the UAS class. Students learn advanced aspects of UAS class. Students learn advanced aspects of high school graduation requirements, as well as the Oregon State Capital, March 2, in Salem, Oregon. The ceremony recognized sixteen Oregon Army National Guard Soldiers for varying backgrounds who volunteered to continue serving the state and nation. The ceremony concluded with a tour of the Capital building and a chance to view the Oregon Legislature in action. The Retention Operation Center (ROC) arranged this and other re-enlistment ceremonies across the state in an effort to honor Soldiers for their continued commitment. Since January 1, more than 115 Soldiers from all across the state have re-enlisted in the Oregon Army National Guard. For more information about re-enlistment bonuses and incentives contact the ROC at (503) 584-2909.

The Oregon Army National Guard Chief Warrant Officer-4 Mark Braeme, UAS platoon commander of Detachment 1, Company D, 741st Brigade Engineer Battalion, gives a presentation to high school students at the Career Technical Education Center (CTEC) in Salem, Oregon.
Taking care of Soldiers has always been a priority for Oregon Army National Guard Sgt. Maj. Vinnie Jacques, whose 28-year career includes an inspiring comeback after he was severely wounded in combat. He deployed with one of the most highly decorated units in Oregon National Guard history, the 2nd Battalion, 162nd Infantry Regiment (2-162). The 2-162nd Infantry Battalion saw some of the heaviest fighting of the Iraq War in the Sunni Triangle, where Jacques was wounded in an improvised explosive device (IED) attack, suffering injuries that included a broken neck, third-degree burns, a broken femur and shrapnel wounds on the majority of his body. The attack took the life of his vehicle driver, Kenny Leisten, and severely wounded the gunman, Benjamin Ring.

On that fateful day, retired Sgt. Marty Theurer, a firefighter and paramedic currently living in Prineville, Oregon, was in the three-vehicle element with Jacques doing reconnaissance and sector patrol. Theurer said he was in the first vehicle, and that his vehicle had driven over the same IED that detonated violently two vehicles later.

“We were headed to the FOB [Forward Operating Base] when I heard a loud explosion and immediately knew they were hit,” Theurer said. “I slammed on the brakes, did a U-turn and saw things falling out of the sky. It was very surreal, like nothing I could even imagine in a movie as we pulled up to them.”

While Jacques feared he may lose his life, Theurer said his spirit never broke during the attack, or the comeback he would go on to make afterward.

“We knew it was bad but immediately we knew what to do thanks to Vince holding us to a higher standard and all the training we had done. We learned a lot from Vince and he expects a lot from his Soldiers,” Theurer added.

Jacques refused to dwell in his own pain, selflessly thinking of his Soldiers who were also wounded, and his family according to Theurer.

Theuer said Jacques grabbed him by his collar almost pulling him nose to nose and said, “Tell my boy I love him.” With emotion Theurer said that he responded, “you’re going to tell him yourself.” The next thing Theurer said Jacques told him was, “make sure everyone gets on the bird before me.”

“That’s the Vince I know and love. Even lying there in pain he was thinking about others. That’s at the heart of who Vince is and what he has always been about,” Theurer said.

After being loaded on the helicopter last and barely surviving, Jacques made a miraculous comeback. Jacques followed a yearlong recovery, that he describes as very difficult in many ways, by deploying with his unit to provide relief efforts in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina the same day he was cleared to leave the hospital.

Jacques went on to become the chief instructor combat arms battalion for the Oregon Army National Guard’s 249th Infantry Brigade Combat Team (249 IBCT), to graduate Mountain Warfare School on the Commandants List; became one of the first three E-9’s selected from the military to attend the Joint Commanders Training Course conducted at NORTHCOM; received a four-year degree; and created the first and only Joint Reintegration Program in the United States consisting of all branches of military service.

For Jacques, the idea of having a joint service reintegrations program started during his recovery, when Jacques noticed how hard it was for Ring to receive the proper treatment for a badly wounded hand. Jacques added that he also noticed other Soldiers were having trouble getting the help they needed. So in 2005, Jacques worked with others to see what could be done at home, and started to shape a program called the Oregon National Guard Joint Transition Assistance Program (ORNG JTAP). The ORNG JTAP served service members and their families who demobilized back to Oregon after deployment. In Oregon, there is no military base with the resources and duty service members and families normally have access to. The ORNG JTAP became a national model for helping service members and their families with employment, health care, and education in a similar way to the nationwide Yellow Ribbon Program is helped to inspire.

Along his journey, Jacques met Suzanne DeLaurentis, a Hollywood film producer and advocate for Veterans. DeLaurentis received the Oregon National Guard Commendation Medal in 2010 for giving countless hours of support to the mental and financial well being of Veterans. The award is rarely given to civilians who are recognized for their significant and meritorious achievement.

“My interest in these Soldiers has always been about the job they do and how they put their lives on the line for freedom and democracy,” DeLaurentis said when she received the award. “It’s all about brave men and women in uniform and that included firefighters, police officers and others who do what they do to serve others.”

DeLaurentis said that while receiving the medal is one of her greatest achievements, that it is more important to recognize Veterans for the work they do.

“Making a difference for the families and women of our military make it possible for me to do what I do for a living, so it is important to support them and recognize their sacrifice,” she said.

Jacques received the “Hero Award” along with three other Veterans at a gala event sponsored by Suzanne DeLaurentis Productions at the InterContinental Hotel in Burbank, California on March 3, 2018.

Veterans were recognized with the Hero Award at a gala event sponsored by Suzanne DeLaurentis Productions at the InterContinental Hotel in Burbank, California, March 3, 2018. From left: Staff Sgt. Paul Supp; Maj. Lynette Jones; Vietnam Veteran Clyde George Lines; and Oregon Army National Guard Sgt. Maj. Vinnie Jacques (right), Senior Enlisted Advisor to the Joint Domestic Operations Commander.

Jacques insisted he would not accept the award on behalf of himself, but rather those who support Veterans, families of Veterans, and those he has served with who (in some cases) paid the ultimate sacrifice.

“This award is for you, Thanks for supporting us,” Jacques said to the audience. “I am also accepting it on behalf of my brothers and sisters – this award is not about me, it’s about them.”

A photo taken in 2004 shows the vehicle Oregon Army National Guard Sgt. Maj. Vinnie Jacques was riding in during an improvised explosive device (IED) attack that severely wounded him and his gunner, Benjamin Ring, and took the life of his driver, Kenny Leisten. Jacques was a former platoon sergeant with 3rd Platoon, Bravo Company, 2nd Battalion, 162nd Infantry Regiment.
`Rosie the Riveter Day` recognizes service and sacrifice during WWII

Portland, Oregon – At the height of WWII, as hundreds of thousands of men headed off to war, almost as many women volunteered on the home front. They worked in factories and shipyards to produce planes, tanks, ships, and armaments to keep up with the war effort. Leaving behind their traditional roles in the home, these women forged new skills while helping ensure victory and peace around the world, and in the process, became forever known as “Rosie the Riveter”.

On March 21, 2018, as part of a nationwide campaign designated by Congress, Portland and seven other sites throughout Oregon, celebrated “Rosie the Riveter Day,” as nearly 100 members of the Portland community paused to honor their spirit of service and sacrifice at the Portland International Rose Test Garden.

“It’s only fitting that on the first day of spring, as we plant the Rosie the Riveter rose,” that we can recognize the courage, shared-sacrifice, and can-do attitude of these women,” said Barbara Jenson, chairwoman and founder Oregon Spirit of ’45.

The Rose the Riveter Rose strain was specifically created to honor these hard-working WWII women. When it blooms, this flower is a vibrant coloring of orange-gold with pink and gold accents.

Flanked by Jenson and members of the Portland Royal Rosarians [the official greeters and ambassadors of Goodwill for the City of Portland], two honorary Rosies, dressed in traditional attire, planted the new rose, creating a living memorial to all those Rosies.

“The Rose the Riveter Rose,” named in honor the hardworking women during WWII, after it has been planted at the Portland International Rose Test Garden, Portland, Oregon.

Adeena Rose Wade (center left) and Ada Wyn Parker (center right) share a laugh after planting the “Rosie the Riveter” ceremonial rose, marking “Rosie the Riveter Day,” March 21, 2018, at the Portland International Rose Test Garden in Portland. Ore. Ada Wyn Parker was one of the original Rosie’s working on aircraft production at the Alameda Air/Navy Base in California, supporting the war effort in the 1940’s.

“By creating this memorial with today’s ceremonial planting, we honor not only those women who served our nation more than 75 years ago, but all those who follow in their footsteps,” said Jenson.

There are few public records that document the labor contribution to the war effort by an estimated 15 million women during the 1940’s, as women took on new roles in factories and assembly lines; all the while, redefining the roles that many women had prior to the war.

The iconic Rosie the Riveter poster and other images of women at work rolled up their hair and rolled up their sleeves’ while supporting the war effort, became symbols of American feminism as women gaining economic power.

As part of National Women’s History Month, the ceremony paid honor to this lineage of women who broke those traditional working roles while serving during that era at a critical time in history.

The honorary chairwoman for the Garden project, Elinor Marie Ott, age 98, was a riveter from 1942 to her 95th birthday. In a press statement prior to the nationwide ceremonies, she stated, “We hope that our example will inspire a new generation of 21st century Rosies who can succeed in the high technology workplace of the future.”

Although she was dressed in vintage Rosie attire for the ceremony, Ada Wyn Parker was the first woman to be hired at the Alameda Air/Navy base at the age of 17, and soon she convinced her sister Naomie Parker Fraley to apply. When not building aircraft, they participated in recruiting projects, promoting recruiting and at the battleship.

On behalf of that next generation of Rosies was Adeena Rose Wade from Battle Ground, Washington, who helped Ada Wyn Parker plant the ceremonial rose. Over the past two years, Wade has represented the Rosie the Riveter “Yes We Can” attitude at events around the region, evoking WWII history and the story of Vanport, Oregon. Vanport was a wartime housing development, also known as Kaiserville, where shipyard workers lived. It was Oregon’s second largest city when it flooded in 1948.

“I’ve been able to talk to various groups about our unique history from the war years with nearly 30,000 Rosies working in the Kaiser shipyards, to the devastation and displacement of the Vanport floods that later followed,” said Wade.

But one doesn’t have to go far (from the International Rose Test Garden) in Portland to find other enthusiastic Rosie devotees. A group of Portland Thorns Football Club (FTFC) devotees proudly proclaim the name, Rose City Riveters, those working in the past, while emulating their tenacious spirit that still lives on today.

Oregon National Guard recognizes women’s history milestones

In 1980, President Jimmy Carter issued the first presidential proclamation declaring the week of March 8, as National Women’s History Week. The U.S. Congress, in 1986, formally designated the third Sunday of March in March as National Women’s History Month. The U.S. Congress, in 1987, declared March 8 as a National Women’s History Day with a presidential proclamation declaring the week of March 8, 1988, as National Women’s History Week. The U.S. Congress, in 1989, designated March 8 as National Women’s History Day, with a presidential proclamation declaring the week of March 8, 1989, as National Women’s History Week. The U.S. Congress, in 1990, designated March 8 as National Women’s History Day, with a presidential proclamation declaring the week of March 8, 1990, as National Women’s History Week. The U.S. Congress, in 1991, designated March 8 as National Women’s History Day, with a presidential proclamation declaring the week of March 8, 1991, as National Women’s History Week. The U.S. Congress, in 1992, designated March 8 as National Women’s History Day, with a presidential proclamation declaring the week of March 8, 1992, as National Women’s History Week. The U.S. Congress, in 1993, designated March 8 as National Women’s History Day, with a presidential proclamation declaring the week of March 8, 1993, as National Women’s History Week. The U.S. Congress, in 1994, designated March 8 as National Women’s History Day, with a presidential proclamation declaring the week of March 8, 1994, as National Women’s History Week. The U.S. Congress, in 1995, designated March 8 as National Women’s History Day, with a presidential proclamation declaring the week of March 8, 1995, as National Women’s History Week. The U.S. Congress, in 1996, designated March 8 as National Women’s History Day, with a presidential proclamation declaring the week of March 8, 1996, as National Women’s History Week. 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The U.S. Congress, in 2017, designated March 8 as National Women’s History Day, with a presidential proclamation declaring the week of March 8, 2017, as National Women’s History Week. The U.S. Congress, in 2018, designated March 8 as National Women’s History Day, with a presidential proclamation declaring the week of March 8, 2018, as National Women’s History Day. The U.S. Congress, in 2019, designated March 8 as National Women’s History Day, with a presidential proclamation declaring the week of March 8, 2019, as National Women’s History Day. The U.S. Congress, in 2020, designated March 8 as National Women’s History Day, with a presidential proclamation declaring the week of March 8, 2020, as National Women’s History Day. The U.S. Congress, in 2021, designated March 8 as National Women’s History Day, with a presidential proclamation declaring the week of March 8, 2021, as National Women’s History Day. The U.S. Congress, in 2022, designated March 8 as National Women’s History Day, with a presidential proclamation declaring the week of March 8, 2022, as National Women’s History Day. The U.S. Congress, in 2023, designated March 8 as National Women’s History Day, with a presidential proclamation declaring the week of March 8, 2023, as National Women’s History Day.
SALEM, Oregon – The 2nd Battalion, 641st Aviation Regiment, is one of two Oregon Army National Guard battalions selected as Focus Readiness Units (FRU); a standard set for sustainable readiness in personnel, equipment and training.

“We were notified of FRU status in October. We quickly planned and executed a four-day MDMP [Military Decision Making Process] training and execution event for December IDT [drill], where we published an OPORD [operations order],” said Lt. Col. Geoffrey Vallee, battalion commander, 2-641st Aviation Regiment.

In four months, 2-641st Aviation Regiment went from institutionally trained individuals to a fully functional staff, capable of supporting the battalion in a combat situation. Leaders and Soldiers worked together to research, draft and publish a Planning Standard Operating Procedure (PSOP) and Tactical Standard Operating Procedure (TACSOP) along with a multitude of additional products.

The hard work and extensive preparation was put to the test when the simulated exercise, held at Camp Rilea Armed Forces Training Center in Warrenton, Oregon, kicked off on Jan. 31. This was the first evaluated collective staff training since 2005. Many Soldiers said they were delighted to conduct a training that strengthened their capabilities and allowed them to expand their knowledge on the hands-on aspect of being a staff member.

The training resulted in multiple Soldiers receiving acknowledgments, including five impact awards, three Command Sergeant Major coins, two Army Achievement Medals, and one Army Commendation Medal.

The unit’s training was supported by multiple organizations, including Mission Command Training Support Program (MCTSP); Oregon Army National Guard Land Component Command; State Army Aviation Office; the Directors of Intelligence (G2) and Information Management (G6); 82nd Troop Command Brigade staff; the 1249th Engineer Battalion; and the command of A Company, 1st Battalion, 112th Aviation Regiment.

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2-162 Infantry Soldiers clean up park in Hillsboro

Oregon Army National Guard Soldiers with 2 Company, 2nd Battalion, 162nd Infantry Regiment, 41st Infantry Brigade Combat Team, participated in a park cleanup project, March 4, in conjunction with the city of Hillsboro Department of Public Works. The Soldiers teamed with a few students from Hillsboro High School to complete the project. This is the third community outreach project the unit has recently performed in an effort to build its community outreach. They have previously conducted cleanup projects at Jackson Bottom Wetlands and Fairgrounds Sports Complex.

234th Army Band hosts high school honor band concert

Oregon Army National Guard Soldiers with the 234th Army Band hosted the 2018 High School Honor Band. Students from local high schools gathered for a weekend of band instruction culminating in a concert performance at Clackamas High School, in Clackamas, Oregon, Feb. 18, 2018.
AZUWUR

WWII battle streamers added to 142nd Fighter Wing flag

Story by
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PORTLAND, Oregon – Members of the 142nd Fighter Wing (FW) honored their World War II heritage with a Battle Honors ceremony March 3, 2018, at the Portland Air National Guard Base. Six campaign streamers and a streamer for the highest-level unit award in the U.S. armed forces, the Distinguished Unit Citation, known as the “Lucky Bastard” of the Vosges Mountains of France, were pinned to the 142nd FW unit flag during the Battle Honors ceremony, March 3, 2018.

The 142nd FW honored their World War II heritage, including Oregon’s 123rd Observation Squadron, who were mobilized for war. With the hard-fought victory in Europe and the Pacific achieved in 1945, the U.S. no longer needed so many combat groups, and most were inactivated. However, recognizing the soon implemented post-war plans for increasing the air reserve forces in order to ensure future readiness for crisis or war, the War Department issued Adjutant General Order 322 of 1946, in which the National Guard was allotted group-level air units; many came from inactivated combat groups with significant records of achievement. The 142nd FW was allotted the Air National Guard 100-series of unit identifiers, retaining the lineage and honors of their predecessors.

Effective May 24, 1946, the 371st Fighter Group (FG), which flew combat with the Republic P-47 Thunderbolt in the Northwestern Theater in Europe from 1943-1945, was renumbered as the 142nd Fighter Group and allotted to Oregon as its state unit identifier.

The 371st FG was activated in Richmond, Virginia, on July 15, 1943, making 2018 the 75th anniversary of its founding. Three fighter squadrons were assigned to the group during WWII, the 371st, 372nd, and 373rd. During WWII, the 371st’s mission was to protect against MITAGV from Germany and France, and the 372nd’s mission was to protect against the advancing German Panzer forces. The 373rd’s mission was to protect against the advancing Luftwaffe. The 371st FG was allotted to Oregon (Became Wing in 1992).

The 371st, assigned to the IX Tactical Air Command at Prince of Belgium, Regent of the Kingdom. Number 1392, Nov. 20, 1945, by Charles, Army General Orders 43, Dec. 19, 1950, the 371st FG was awarded battle participation credit in the war-torn skies of Europe from the Luftwaffe. It was awarded battle participation credit for participation in Normandy, which occurred from June 5 to July 24, 1944. The 371st FG was awarded battle participation credit for participation in the Ardennes-Alsace campaign, which took place between Dec. 16, 1944 and Jan. 28, 1945. On Dec. 16, German paratroopers, paratroopers and infantrymen, who were surprised by the battle readiness of the American 6th Army Group moving up from southern France to the German border.

One of the 371st’s pilots in this campaign was 2nd Lt. Gene W. True, a Portland, Oregon native, who flew two combat missions with a total of 1,702 transport vehicles, 180 factories and buildings, 57 railroad cars, 20 tanks and 7 gun emplacements.

The lack of long-range escort fighters hampered American forces in this campaign. In early April 1944 this was reversed and Allied airpower began to wrest control of the skies over Europe from the Luftwaffe. By April 1944, when the 371st FG joined the battle, the campaign was producing positive results. The group had already added another streamer to its colors, and especially gaining control of the skies over Europe in time for the D-Day landings on June 6, 1944.

A local resident, Mr. Gene Madore, personally played a part in five of the group’s six campaigns in Europe. On a fighter sweep over France before D-Day, he pressed home his attack on a railroad train at minimum altitude to evade accurate light flak from the train, though he came home with tree parts beneath his wing and fuselage streamers. He added 100 missions and shot down four enemy aircraft, and probably downed more.

The 371st FG counted among the 8,000 war casualties, including six enlisted men. Another 20 pilots were shot down and became prisoners of war, although three escaped and evaded capture. However, he was killed in an accident on the way to the 371st in 1944. The 371st played a vital role in the successful rescue of the American “Lost Bastions” in the Vosges mountains of France.

As the 371st FW began to take place in the area and timeframe of the Ardennes-Alsace campaign, the 371st FW was awarded battle participation credit in the war-torn skies of Europe from the Luftwaffe. It was awarded battle participation credit in the Northern France campaign, which occurred from Jan. 29 to June 12, 1945. The 371st FG was awarded battle participation credit in the Rhineland campaign, which occurred between Sept. 20 and Nov. 1, 1944.

In late Oct. 1944, during the Rhineland campaign, the group was assigned to help get the Allied-American ground forces up from southern France to the German border after the landings in southern France in August 1944. The group played a vital role in the successful rescue of the American “Lost Bastions” in the Vosges mountains of France.

The 371st FG was awarded battle participation credit in the Southern France campaign, which occurred between June 6 and July 24, 1944. The 371st FG was awarded battle participation credit in the Southern France campaign. The 371st FG was awarded battle participation credit in the Northern France campaign. The 371st FG was awarded battle participation credit in the Normandy campaign. The 371st FG was awarded battle participation credit in the Ardennes-Alsace campaign. The 371st FG was awarded battle participation credit in the Northern France campaign. The 371st FG was awarded battle participation credit in the Southern France campaign.