Oregon Governor pilot remembered at memorial

Story by Staff Sgt. Jefferson Thompson
142nd Fighter Wing Public Affairs

ST. HELENS, Ore. — Members of the Oregon National Guard, friends and family came together at St. Helens High School in remembrance of Maj. Greg D. Young.

Young died during a routine training mission when his F-15 crashed into the ocean off the Oregon coast, June 26, 2007.

Young received full-military honors which included a missing-man formation. Four F-15’s performed the fly-over, and as they passed over the gathering on the high

See YOUNG on PAGE 5

Oregon Sherpa unit sees changes

Story and photo by Spc. April L. Davis,
Oregon National Guard Public Affairs

Oregon’s C-23 Sherpa aircraft arrived at their new facilities at the Portland Air National Guard Base in Portland, Aug 20.

Changes are on the horizon for the Oregon Army National Guard’s Alpha Company, 641 Aviation Regiment. The unit is preparing to deploy to Iraq, while simultaneously moving from Salem, Ore. to the Portland Air National Guard Base.

The company, formerly known as Alpha Company, 249 Aviation Regiment, is moving into facilities formerly occupied by the Army Reserve’s 939th Air Refueling Wing at PANG-B. The purpose of the move is to prepare for the Joint Cargo Aircraft, a program in which the Army and Air Force are replacing their aging fleet of Army C-23 Sherpas and Air Force C-130s with C-27J Spartans. The unit will be operating from buildings 375 and 374 at PANG-B by mid-October, and will acquire building 355 sometime in May or June.

“We’re excited about the program, we’re excited about the transformation,” said Maj. David Doran, commander of Alpha Co., 641 Avn. “We are ready for the new airframe; we now have the facilities at PANG and we have slowly tripled our strength this year.”

According to Doran, the C-27J Spartan will have about eight-times the lifting capacity, a better range, and will fly at double the air speed in comparison to the Sherpa. The new airframe will also have the ability to fly at higher altitudes and use shorter runways, therefore making the C-27J operable in Afghanistan; a theater the Sherpa has been unable to support.

“We needed these aircraft yesterday, last year. We’re flying the blades off the
Guard members and their families are encouraged to submit any articles meant to inform, educate or entertain readers about their service experience, including stories about inspiring Guard personal stories and unique unit training. Letters to the editor are also welcome. All letters must include the author’s name, address and phone number. Navy Mail is also accepted. We need your input to ensure better publications.

The Oregon Sentinel is distributed to all Oregon National Guard members and their families. The Oregon Sentinel is also distributed electronically via the Internet at http://www.oregon.gov/OMNI/AGPS/publications.shtml.

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The Oregon Sentinel
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Stories and photos from this field are gratefully accepted.
We need your input to ensure better coverage.

We here in Oregon are very proud of what we do, and I want to congratulate (newly promoted) Senior Airman April H. Taylor for being selected as the Air National Guard’s Senior NCO Outstanding Airman of the Year. As state winner, Sgt. Taylor competed against the entire ANG in June and came out on top. Furthermore, he was automatically submitted for the 12 Outstanding Airman of the Year for the Air Force and (once again for our state) won that category. This is one of the biggest honors an Airman can get in their career.

I have to mention that for the last three years, Oregon has won the Air National Guard and 12 Outstanding Airman of the Year for the Air Force. We have had a winner from each category. Airman (Senior Airman John Lockhead), NCO (Staff Sgt. Dan Dietrick) and now Senior NCO. All three have just happened to come from Oregon. We now have state and local policy we are obligated to follow regarding how and when we wear our uniforms.

The regulations and policies are clear about when you will and will not wear the uniform.

State law 399.155 Unlawful wearing of uniform or insignia, says that “No member of the organized militia shall wear, while on or off duty, any uniform or any device, strap, knot or insignia of any design or character used as a designation of grade, rank or office, such as by law or regulation, duly promulgated, prescribed for the use of the organized militia, without the permission of the commanding officer. [1961 c.454 §75(3)].”

Command Policy #130 states “ORNG members must never wear the uniform without permission to discuss their membership in the National Guard in an effort to gain personal favor of any public official.”

The policy goes on to say “they should not wear the uniform in a situation when it may be implied that the ORNG Guard sanctioned the cause for which the activity is conducted.” Army Regulation 670-1 also prohibits wearing uniforms at any time it would bring discredit to the service.

My message is this: Unless you are tasked with an official civilian event or attending a civilian event as part of your official duties you should never wear your uniform. If you have any questions about whether or not you should wear your uniform to a civilian event, proceeding or meeting, ask your chain of command beforehand.

In my opinion, that soldier’s answer to the judge was the wrong answer. When you wear the uniform in public you represent not only yourself, but all of your fellow servicemen and women. If you are truly proud of being in the service you would not even consider wearing your uniform if you found yourself in a situation that would not bring credit to yourself or your fellow service members.

Airman’s role in military defined by oath, values

Before I get to the meat of this article, I want to congratulate (newly promoted) Senior Airman April H. Taylor for being selected as the Air National Guard’s Senior NCO Outstanding Airman of the Year. As state winner, Sgt. Taylor competed against the entire ANG in June and came out on top. Furthermore, he was automatically submitted for the 12 Outstanding Airman of the Year for the Air Force and (once again for our state) won that category. This is one of the biggest honors an Airman can get in their career.

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Legislation addresses deployment, tax breaks, TRICARE

The Oregon Sentinel Page 3

TRICARE: Members must re-enroll by Oct. 1, 2007

Story by Kim Lippert,
Oregon National Guard Public Affairs

TriCare Reserve Select, the pre-
mium-based health plan for qualified National Guard and Reserve mem-
bers, will be completely restructured as of October 1, 2007. Those wish-
ing to enroll must enroll by October 1, 2007.

To transition to this new cover-
age, all existing-tier TRS plans will be terminated on September 30, 2007.

Members wishing to continue their TRS coverage must re-enroll in TRS prior to October 1, 2007. Failure to do so will result in a loss of coverage.

Beginning in October, TRS will be available to all members of the Selected Reserve regardless of active duty served, with the exception of those who are eligible for program or currently covered under the Federal Employees Health Benefits.

In addition to the eligibility chang-
es, the new TRS Plan will be priced the same to the tiers and associated six premium rates. Beginning in October there will be one premium amount for each type of coverage. Member-only coverage will cost $81 a month, while the Member-and-Family premium will be $253.

Some of the benefits of the re-
viewed TRS health plan include coverage similar to TRICARE Stand-
ard (and TRICARE Extra) and includes deductibles, copayments, and a catastrophic cap on yearly out of pocket expenses for covered medical services.

Eligible members will no longer be limited to purchasing the insurance immediately following activation or during the annual open season. The improved TRS plan will allow eligible members to purchase the insurance at any time throughout the year. TRS enrollees (individuals and family members) have the freedom to access care from any TRICARE-authorized certified or network provider or hospi-
tal that may require care at a military treatment facility (MTF) on a space-available basis.

All drilling service members are eli-

Bill moves Office of Emergency Management under Oregon Guard

Story by Kim Lippert,
Oregon National Guard Public Affairs

New legislation was passed during the 2007 Oregon State Legislative session, which moved the Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Management under the Oregon Military Department. Maj. Gen. Raymond F. Rees, the Adju-
tant General, Oregon National Guard, will assume the post of Homeland Security Advisor to the Governor. According to the new legislation, which was signed into law by the Governor on Aug. 15, the Adjutant General of the Or-
regon National Guard will be placed in a leadership position in the state of Oregon during natural or man-made disasters.

“House Bill 2370 mirrors best practices benchmarks in nearby states – and across the nation – and ultimately will strengthen our abilities to respond in crisis and keep our citizens safe,” said Oregon Governor Theodore Kulongoski.

“By providing the Governor with an established command and control function, we will enhance our effectiveness in emergency management and our overall capacities to respond and bolster discipline interoperability,” the governor added.

One of the biggest benefits of connect-
ing the Oregon Emergency Management office with the Oregon National Guards is the streamlining of resources, Rees said.

“(The bill) will allow us quicker re-
sponse time and more flexibility in terms of response capabilities,” said Rees.

According to the new structure, Ken Murphy will continue as the Director of the Office of Emergency Management, and will report directly to Rees.

The new legislation puts Oregon in line with states like Idaho, Washington, and Alaska who have also placed the Office of Emergency Management under the jurisdiction of the state office of Home-
land Security.

Oregon Governor Theodore R. Kulon-
goski signs the official signing of House Bill 2370, during the official signing of the bill at the State Capitol in Salem, Ore., on Aug. 15, 2007.

“The Oregon Sentinel

Bill moves Office of Emergency Management under Oregon Guard

Oregon National Guard Brigadier General Michael J. Caldwell, Deputy Director of the Oregon Military Department, explains the positive impact of House Bill 3201 on Oregon National Guardsmen and their families, during a signing ceremony July 31, 2007 at the State Capitol in Salem, Ore. In addition to a wide range of tax incentives, the bill includes assistance for Oregon doctors who provide medical care for veterans and their families, and tax credits for employees of the Oregon Youth Challenge Program, a boot-camp style alternative high school program administered by the Oregon National Guard in central Oregon.

Continued from PAGE ONE

deployment, and tax exemptions for military personnel.

“Many of our soldiers have been on mul-
tiple deployments leaving their families for extended periods of time, it’s our goal to make sure we are doing enough to support them in every aspect of their deployment,” said Caldwell, who is Deputy Director of the Oregon Military Department. “Much of our state legislation this year focused on meeting the needs of the soldier and their families as they endure long separations,” he added.

The budget for the Oregon Military Department increased by 257 percent, to include a 70 percent increase for the Oregon National Guard with the rest of the increase accounted for by the addition of Oregon Emergency Management which now falls under the jurisdiction of the Oregon Military Department. For more in-depth informa-
tion on House Bill 2370 please see related article below.

“We’ve gotten smarter as a body since the last legislative session,” Caldwell said. “We’ve figured out some things that needed to be changed and we had a legislative body that supported us,” he added.

Lawmakers passed several pieces of legislation that will make Oregon National Guardsmen eligible for tax deductions. House Bill 2025, allows deploying soldiers to receive a $60,000 property tax deduc-
tion.

House Bill 3201 encompasses a variety of tax related benefits for soldiers including a tax break for health care providers in the first two years of provider’s participation in the TRICARE system.

“This bill helps provide our military fami-
lies with certainty in health care because when our Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen, and Marines are serving overseas, the last thing they should have to worry about is whether their families are getting the health care they need at home,” said Kulongoski.

House Bill 3201 also gives Oregon Guardsmen working at the Oregon Youth Challenge Program a $6,000 tax break.

“In many ways the Oregon Youth Chal-
lenge program is the little program that could,” Kulongoski said.

The boot camp-style program aimed at giving an opportunity for troubled kids to turn their lives around has operated in Bend, Ore., for more than a decade on limited funding. Despite meager resources the program has had outstanding results.

“Eighty-two percent of graduates are still successful five years after graduating from the program,” said Caldwell.

House Bill 2026 modifies exemption from personal income tax for military duty compensation to include any service performed by National Guard or military reserves while on active duty, if duty con-
sists of service away from home for period of three consecutive weeks or more.

Several bills that passed this legislative session focus on helping soldiers navigate legal matters while on deployment. House Bill 2093 allows service members to request a stay of proceedings on legal matters under certain circumstances. House Bill 2092 allows a parent who is in active military service to delegate to spouse, by power of attorney, powers of parent regarding care, custody or property of minor child when parent has joint custody of minor child with child’s other parent.

Other legislation focused on helping maintain Oregon National Guard facilities. House Bill 5006 allocates $11.4 million for the refurbishment of armories.

More information on these bills and others that passed in the Oregon State Legis-
lative Session go to www.leg.state.or.us.

Photo by Tech. Sgt. Nick Choy, Oregon National Guard Public Affairs

Retiree Service Office

Open Tuesdays, 10 am to 2 pm
(503) 584-3804
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E-mail: Randall.Witt@or.ngb.army.mil
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THE SENTINEL WANTS YOU!

We want your stories! We want your pictures!
Stories must be submitted in Microsoft Word files, with all formatting turned off. Photos must be high-resolution color JPEG files, and must have an accompanying caption (also in MS Word) explaining what is happening in the picture, as well as the rank, full name, and unit of the person(s) depicted. Submissions for Letters to the Editor and Letters From the Front are welcome.

Submit them to: The Oregon Sentinel
C/o: Tech. Sgt. Nick Choy,
nick.r.choy@milt.state.or.us

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Photo by Maj. T. Flowers, Oregon National
Guard Public Affairs

The Oregon Sentinel
Sentry Eagle 2007 honors the 60th Anniversary of the Air Force
Thousands turn out for open house, air-to-air combat exercise at Kingsley Field

Story by Tech. Sgt. Nick Choy
Oregon National Guard Public Affairs

KLAMATH FALLS, Ore. — Kingsley Field’s 173rd Fighter Wing hosted Sentry Eagle August 9-11, 2007, inviting military members from 15 different units from across the United States, and visitors from around the world.

The biennial event draws units to practice dissimilar aircraft training in simulated air-to-air warfare exercises which tests pilots’ flying skills, basic fighter skills, air combat tactics, and close air support. The event culminated in a public open house and air show on Aug. 11.

Over 400 personnel encompassing the Air Force, Army, Navy and Marines participated in the event. Participating aircraft included F-15s, F-16s, F-18s, KC-135s, a flyover demonstration by an F-117 Stealth Fighter.

I never thought it would happen,” he said.

Kelly is one of only two F-15 C-model pilots in the world who have reached 4,000 hours flying the Air National Guard’s premier strike fighter. He was able to reach the milestone during the Sentry Eagle dissimilar aircraft training exercise on Aug. 10.

Kelly began his military career in the active duty Air Force. At the time, it was considered quite an accomplishment to reach 2,000 hours in a fighter jet – a milestone that he never thought he’d reach.

“When I first started flying, only about five people had 2,000 hours,” Kelly said. He was able to reach the 2,000-hour mark while in the active duty Air Force. After joining the Oregon Air National Guard at Kingsley Field in 1999, Kelly was able to reach the 3,000-hour mark. As he drew close to the 4,000-hour mark, Kelly’s squadron operations officer, Lt. Col. Wes “Pappy” French, began managing his flying hours in July so that the threshold would be reached during the weekend of Sentry Eagle. Kelly tried in vain to remain low-key.

“Pappy” knew how to kill two birds with one stone because there was going to be a lot of media here,” and I said, “I don’t need a lot of personal attention on this thing,” Kelly said with a self-deprecating smile.

The mission Kelly and his fellow pilots flew involved eight F-15 Eagles providing support to two F-18 Hornets which were tasked with putting ‘bombs on target’. They went up against ten F-16 Falcons, who played the ‘bad guys’.

“It was a great mission,” Kelly said.

“The good guys won.”

On the way back to Kingsley Field, Kelly said someone told him over the radio about surpassing the 4,000-hour mark. Once on the ground, well-wishers from throughout the 173rd Fighter Wing came out to congratulate Kelly on the milestone.

“That really dawned on me as the people came up to shake my hand,” Kelly said and knew everyone’s first name,” Kelly said.

“That’s the neat thing about the Guard community. You have a hundred people come to congratulate you, and you know all of them by their first name,” he said.

According to his fellow pilots, Kelly’s achievement is quite a feat considering his other responsibilities as part of the 3173d Operations Group Commander.

“He’s done a great job to be a tactical leader as well as a good administrator and organizer as well,” said Maj. Dave “Chairman” Yoa, 173rd Wing Weapons Officer. According to Yoa, Kelly is one of the top pilots in the 114th Fighter Squadron at Kingsley Field, but his responsibilities go beyond the air base. Kelly is also a dedicated family man. He and his wife Vicky have been married for 20 years and their two sons, Matt and Michael, have called Klamath Falls home for the past eight years. Kelly is scheduled to make the rank of colonel in September, and with 22 years in the military, he hopes the unit will continue to let him fly for several more years. Perhaps even to crack the 5,000-hour mark.

“My goal is to be the first guy to get to 5,000 hours,” said Maj. Robb “Leif” Erickson.

Kelly said he reached the mark due to his philosophy of staying healthy and always being ready to fly at a moment’s notice. He recommends volunteering to take missions which other pilots cannot fly because of prior commitments or medical issues.

“Never turn down a sortie,” he said with a chuckle.

At though the achievement is noteworthy in the annals of aviation history, Kelly remains very grounded, diverting attention away from his achievement back toward the other sections in his unit.

“I’ve been fortunate, and I’ve had some great flying the last few years,” Kelly said. “But we have outstanding men and women here at Kingsley Field and the maintenance folks here are incredible, so when you go to fly the airplane, the airplane works, and we get to fly a lot.”

“I never thought I’d be able to walk amongst the ranks of those few that have that many hours, and here I am now, with 4,000 hours,” he said.

“I think this is awesome,” said Nate Leong, a photographer with Air Force Association Magazine. “We get to see all these different aircraft in one place at one time.”

The impact of Sentry Eagle is visible everywhere in Klamath Falls. Hotels in the Klamath Basin filled up with visiting airmen and civilian attendees, while local area shops and businesses benefited from the increased traffic. The event, according to Bath, is a win-win situation for everyone, allowing the public to see how the different sections within the 173rd Fighter Wing work in unison, but also allowing the local community to get involved in the local air base.

“The unique thing about the event is it brings the militia nation right to the forefront,” Bath said. “Obviously the Guard is not made up exclusively of active duty people, so it brings the civilian community into the military and it’s a unique thing.”

“Sentry Eagle has been a great event. It’s a great way to say thanks to the community,” Yao said.

Units who participated in the 2007 Sentry Eagle include the 173rd Fighter Wing from Kingsley Field; the 102nd Fighter Wing from Cape Cod, Mass.; the 131st Fighter Wing from St. Louis, Mo.; the 125th Fighter Wing from Jacksonville, Fla.; the 154th Fighter Wing from Hickam AB, Hi.; the 120th Fighter Wing from Great Falls, Mont.; the 141st Fighter Wing from Fresno, Calif., the 115th Fighter Wing from Madison, Wis.; Naval Air Station LeMoore, Calif.; the 409th Aerial Refueling Wing from Fairchild AFB, Wash.; the 80th Flying Training Wing from Sheppard AFB, Texas; the 33rd Fighter Wing from Egin AFB, Fla.; the 325th Fighter Wing from Tandydall AB, Fla.; Naval Air Station Fallon, Nev.; the 49th Fighter Wing from Holloman AFB, N.M.; and the 125th Special Tactics Squadron from Portland, Ore.; and the Oregon Army National Guard.

Sentry Eagle is scheduled for August 2009.

Pilot from 173rd Fighter Wing surpasses 4,000 hours in F-15 Eagle

Story by Tech. Sgt. Nick Choy
Oregon National Guard Public Affairs

So when Lt. Col. Rich “Peeewe” Kelly of the Oregon Air National Guard’s 173rd Fighter Wing in Klamath Falls, Ore., was told he was approaching 4,000 hours flying in an F-15 Eagle, he reacted with a bit of cynicism.

“What really dawned on me was as the people came up to shake my hand,” he said. “I knew everyone’s first name,” he said.

That’s the neat thing about the Guard community. You have a hundred people come to congratulate you, and you know all of them by their first name,” he said.

According to his fellow pilots, Kelly’s achievement is quite a feat considering his other responsibilities as the 173rd Operations Group Commander.

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Sentry Eagle is scheduled for August 2009.

“He’s probably going to be the first guy to get to 5,000 hours,”

— Maj. Robb “Leif” Erickson
Young: His passion was flying

Continued from PAGE ONE

school’s football field, one jet peeled off and entered a steep climb.

According to Air Force Print News Today, the the custom of fly-overs began during World War I, as an honor to pilots who were lost in battle.

Young also received a rendition of Taps played by a bugler, and a 21-gun salute performed by an honor guard.

It’s important for them to see we are honoring him as best we can and as best we know how,” said fellow pilot and friend Capt. Paul Shamy, immediately following the ceremony.

“Anytime there’s a loss like this, everyone feels it,” he added.

Like many in the F-15 community, he knew he wanted to fly fighter aircraft from a young age, Shamy said.

“It was his passion. I know he didn’t consider it work. He loved every minute of it,” Shamy said. “On the other side of that his family and friends was where his heart was.”

Young is survived by his wife, Tonya, and four children.

For those who now fly the missions, the focus is on remaining professional, like Young would have wanted.

“I think that’s the best way we can honor him is to go out there and continue to be professionals,” he said. “Continue to go out there and do what he loved, and continue to be there for his family and friends.”

F-15s from the 142nd Fighter Wing in Port- land participated in a missing-man formation at Young’s memorial service in St. Helens, Ore.

The accident remains under investigation, pending findings by an Air Safety Board and an Accident Investigation Board.

College savings accounts have been established for the children. The tax-deductible donations can be made online or sent to: Air Warrior Courage Foundation, ATTN: Young Family, P.O. Box 1553, Front Royal, VA, 22630-0033.

Mastr Sgt. Norio Colipano, of the 142nd Maintenance Group, helps Maj. Gen. Henry C. “Hank” Murrow into the 142nd Fighter Wing’s flagship, tail number 142 at the Portland Air Base on June 11. Murrow visited the Redhawks briefly before flying to Klamath Falls to "Hank" Murrow into the 142nd Fighter Wing’s flagship, tail number 142 at the Portland Air Base on June 11. Murrow visited the Redhawks briefly before flying to Klamath Falls to visit with the 173rd Fighter Wing at Kingsley Field.

Norad commander visits PANG

Story and photo by Tech. Sgt. Nick Choy
Oregon National Guard Public Affairs


Morrow, who is also the commander of the Continental U.S. North American Aerospace Defense Command Region, oversees four direct reporting units, 10 aligned Air National Guard units, and a large number of active air defense alert sites. Morrow is stationed at Tyndall Air Force Base in Florida.

It was Morrow’s first visit to the Portland Air Base. It gave him a chance to get acquainted with the unit and the mission, said 142nd Fighter Wing Commander, Col. Steven Gregg.

“The visit gave him a visual picture of what he’s heard about,” Gregg said.

Morrow said the Oregon Air National Guard has built up quite a name for itself across the country.

“1 think it’s one of the premier units in the guard as far as air defense goes,” Morrow said.

“it’s a testament to the dedication of the folks here in Oregon, and I’m glad to have you on the team,” he added.

After Morrow met with top leaders at the wing and toured the operations group and alert facility, he left for Klamath Falls to visit the 173rd Fighter Wing at Kingsley Field. Morrow made the trip in the 142nd Fighter Wing’s F-15 flagship, tail number 142.

Morrow said he takes with him an overview of the Oregon Air National Guard, and an idea of what Oregon needs to improve their mission capabilities, but he added that he also gained a sense of the culture of the air units in Oregon — something that is difficult to measure without an in-person visit.

“I take back how you’ve gotten to where you are today and share that and the culture of the unit with my staff,” Morrow said. “There’s always things that we can do to help make life more enjoyable and more efficient (with the units),” he added.

Airman’s roles foundation of service

Continued from PAGE TWO

272 Combat Communications Squadron to close in 2008

Story and photo by Chief Master Sgt. Steven P. Nichols, 272nd Combat Communications Squadron

Changes are coming for the 272nd Combat Communications Squadron. The unit is scheduled to close in April 2008.

However, unit members have not slowed down the deployment pace. Five personnel have deployed to Operation Jump Start as communications specialists, Entry Identification Team members, and even a welder.

Over the past couple of years, the 272nd Combat Communications Squadron has been actively engaged in deployments, operations and exercises around the world. In 2005, the unit was called upon to participate in Joint Red Flag at Nellis Air Force Base, and at Student Gap Training Range in Nevada.

They provided telephone, Internet and video teleconferencing capabilities to the 2-43 Air Defense Artillery Battalion who were deployed to Nevada from Ft Bliss, Texas.

In the same year, the 272nd CBCS also deployed over 50 personnel to Mississippi in response to Hurricane Katrina. The first member was ready to depart within 12 hours of notice that the unit was deploying to support Brig. Gen. Douglas A. Pritt and the 41st Brigade Combat Team.

During a period of two hours, the 272nd prepared and deployed over 100 short tons of cargo, much of which had never palletized for airlift before. Once personnel from the unit landed in Mississippi, they began installing communications assets in nine separate locations throughout the city of New Orleans, ensuring the 41st Brigade could communicate with the troops searching the city.

The focus of 2006 was on preparation for Operational Readiness Inspections and deploying members on Air Expeditionary Force Missions (AEF). During the Operational Readiness Exercises, the unit set up a compound typical to those in Iraq and Afghanistan, with the primary goal of building a communications site to provide enough communications - data and voice – to support 500-1000 deployed personnel.

As the systems were being installed, various Ability to Survive and Operate (ATSO) events were used by the team to see how well personnel responded. The various AEF tours included personnel in Kuwait, Afghanistan, Diego Garcia, Manas and Puerto Rico.

Air Expeditionary Force Missions continue to be an excellent opportunity for unit members to deploy. Members have also deployed to Korea and Japan during the Foal Eagle exercise which tested the capabilities of the Korean Military’s Command and Control capabilities. Additionally, members are volunteering for stateside missions such as Hurricane Katrina, a Joint Exercise in Georgia with the 335th Signal Battalion, providing communications capabilities to different locations throughout Georgia and supporting a drug interdiction mission providing support for Homeland Defense.

Other unit members have deployed with the 116th Air Control Squadron to Wendover, Nev., to validate a “Deployed Radar” concept and the contents of the Unit Type Code (UTC) used in the air control arena. Another mission unit members are volunteering for is OPLAN SMOKEY, the Oregon State Forest and wildfire operation. They would support the communications needs of the fire camps as well as working directly on the fire lines helping to contain and/or extinguish the fires.

Finally, members of the 272nd CBCS are heavily involved in the planning of the newest Homeland Defense Exercise for the State of Oregon. “Top Off” is an exercise focused on providing communications capabilities to state agencies in the event of a terrorist attack or natural disaster.

Volunteerism. Patriotism. Service Before Self. These are the driving forces that make up the Air National Guard and for the 272nd Combat Communications Squadron, a way of life.

Airman’s roles foundation of service

Continued from PAGE TWO

Structure, lays out concise standards, expectations and opportunities for every enlisted Airman. The foundation of the profession of arms has to begin with our core values, Integrity, Service Before Self, and Excellence. These values, along with the basic roles and responsibilities are needed to accomplish the mission and form our foundation. This instruction establishes general Airmen responsibilities and refines both general and specific responsibilities for each level of the enlisted force. The AFI has clearly defined enlisted knowledge and performance levels while incorporating the Tactical, Operational, and Strategic levels of leadership and development. I urge you all to understand the Enlisted Force Structure. This is your blueprint for success in the Guard and Air Force. Embrace your role and responsibility as an Airman, and we’ll continue to be the outstanding enlisted force our nation values.

On a closing note; as senior enlisted leaders, our goal is clear; develop our Airmen who will collectively leverage their respective strengths to accomplish the mission of the Oregon Air National Guard. Our enlisted corps in Oregon is the best in the world. We owe it to our entire enlisted force to provide the skills and education they need to continue to excel!
Oregon Guard looks at Christmas Valley site for joint force training

The Oregon National Guard has its way, some 200,000 acres near Christmas Valley, Ore., may be made available for joint-force training for Oregon's Citizen-Soldiers and Citizen-Airmen.

The site, located about 90 miles northeast of Klamath Falls in southern Oregon, is currently leased to the Department of the Air Force, and is under the control of the Office of the Secretary of the Air Force, which oversees all real estate assets for the Air Force.

The Oregon National Guard recently submitted a proposal to the Pentagon requesting use of the site, but because the lease expires in 2009, the proposal asks for the Department of Air Force to renew the lease, then transfer responsibilities of the site to the Oregon Guard.

The site includes several existing buildings and infrastructure. The site was used by the Air Force for some time, but it is currently vacant.

According to top officials in Oregon, the Christmas Valley site is integral to training the guard's 173rd Fighter Wing and important for training new, low altitude, and high altitude air space in the state of Oregon, McCuiiston said. "This is a type of data link architecture that we've never tried before, and it has been challenging."

"The key here is creating as many constructive relationships as possible in the area, and it's the same in the military," said Maj. (Ret.) Bill McCaffrey, Oregon National Guard's Community Solutions Team.

"When we have been working with the Governor's Community Solutions Team to insure we have the concerns of the local and county governments up-front in an attempt to maximize the potential solar or wind energy production this site may provide," said Caldwell.

"Our objective is to make this a win-win for all of us," he added.

The group met with members of the 116th Air Control Squadron, who were training at Christmas Valley.

"Our training for this was to provide communications support and data link services to Kingsley Field during the 2007 Sentry Eagle training exercise and open house," said Col. Rendell "Rock" Chilton, commander of the 173rd Fighter Wing.

"The plan to provide a joint-force integrated training site at Christmas Valley for both Army and Air National Guard personnel in the state is important to not just the Oregon National Guard, according to Paul Evans, Major Advisor for Oregon Governor, Theodore R. Kulongoski, but also to the entire state.

"Christmas Valley is essential to the mission here at Klamath Falls, and the training mission of the 173rd Fighter Wing, but it is also critical to training and future opportunities for the Oregon National Guard," Evans said.

"We have access to possibly 200,000-300,000 acres, so if you can picture training special operations such as the 125th Special Tactics Squadron, it can benefit not just the flying units, but future missions that we don't even know about yet," McCuiston said.

"With almost 200,000 acres in question, the Oregon Army National Guard can potentially have access to a large training site in southern Oregon," Rees said. "It can provide an alternate to our existing training sites in the state."

"This is a type of data link architecture that we've never tried before, and it has been successful," Gregory added.

"It's going extremely well, better than we thought, and now we're getting our foot in the door," McCuiston said about the 116th ACS communications package and the established relationship between Christmas Valley residents and the Oregon National Guard. "The only roadblocks we see are getting it through the political channels in Washington D.C.," he added.

McCuiston said although most of the work on the project is complete at the local and state levels, there's still quite a bit of work to do with the Office of the Secretary of the Air Force in order to close the deal.

"We have our state representatives and senators behind us, and it sounds like some of our congressmen, however, we still have a little bit of political work to do," he said.

"The key here is creating as many constructive relationships as possible in the area, and it's the same in the military," said Maj. (Ret.) Bill McCaffrey, State Fire Mangement Officer. "We're looking at ways to help communities in the area protect their natural resources, and we're still at the beginning stages of this project."

"These responsibilities may involve restoring native vegetation, soil erosion control, and fire suppression activities related to the Guard and the community," said Brig. Gen. Michael Caldwell, Deputy Director of the Oregon Military Department.

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City of Tigard says “Thank You” to 41st Brigade Soldiers

The Oregon Sentinel Special Edition
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The Oregon National Guard Public Affairs

The City of Tigard honored the Soldiers of the Oregon Army National Guard’s 41st Brigade Combat Team with a ceremony at the Tigard High School Football Stadium, Aug. 4. Tigard Mayor, Craig Dirksen, Maj. Gen. Raymond F. Rees, The Adjutant General, Oregon National Guard, Brig. Gen. Douglas A. Pritt, commander of the 41st Brigade Combat Team and other representatives from local and state government praised the brigade for their sacrifice and service. The ceremony was sponsored by American Legion Post 158, while the parade and post-ceremony event at Cook Park were sponsored by the City of Tigard.

Almost 900 Oregon Soldiers recently returned home throughout the first quarter of 2007 after a year-long deployment in Afghanistan. The bulk of the deployment was made up of Soldiers from the 41st Brigade. As part of Task Force Phoenix V, Oregon Soldiers joined a total of 5,900 Sailors, Airmen and Marines from 49 states and the two U.S. territories of Guam and Puerto Rico, to spend one year in Afghanistan training the Afghan National Army. The deployment supported Operation Enduring Freedom. Their mission was the single largest wartime deployment of Oregon military personnel since WWII.

“What an absolutely beautiful day,” said Rees, looking out over the 300 Soldiers gathered on the football field.

Rees drew an analogy of the Soldiers’ return to Oregon to the movie, “Field of Dreams,” where the character of Shoeless Joe Jackson asks Kevin Costner, “Is this Heaven?” “No son,” Rees said, continuing the analogy, “This is Tigard Oregon,” to which the gathering erupted in applause and cheers.

Rees praised the 41st Brigade Soldiers for their success in rebuilding the security of Afghanistan, and turned back toward the audience to thank the spouses and employers for their support. He then presented Command Sgt. Maj. Brunk Conley and Pritt with the Oregon Distinguished Service Award for their leadership in Afghanistan. Pritt had high praise of the Soldiers of the 41st Brigade and all coalition partners.

“They gave hope to an entire nation by their compassion, their understanding and caring for those who have only lived a life of oppression,” Pritt said to some 700 spectators sitting in the football stadium’s grandstand.

The contribution and sacrifice would not have been possible without the support of families, friends and employers, Pritt said, turning to the audience behind him.

According to Pritt, almost 20 tons of humanitarian aid, in the way of blankets, shoes, clothes and school supplies were collected throughout the U.S. for the people of Afghanistan. Task Force personnel distributed the items while on missions throughout the country during their deployment. “It enabled us to shape a future generation of Afghans, and to create an environment of peace,” Pritt said.

Pritt made a special presentation to Joyce Lindsey, wife of Staff Sgt. Nathaniel “Brad” Lindsey, who was killed by insurgents Sept. 9, 2006 near the town of Shajoie in Afghanistan’s Zabul province. Another Oregon Soldier who died during the Afghanistan mission

See TRIBUTE on Page 14

Col. Dave Enyeart, 41st Brigade Combat Team Deputy Commander, and members of the 41st BCT, render courtesies during the 21-gun salute at the Tigard event. Above: Brig. Gen. Douglas A. Pritt, commander of the 41st BCT, makes a presentation to Tigard City Mayor, Craig Dirksen, in honor of the city’s support of the Brigade during their one-year deployment in Afghanistan.
Afghanistan deployment built a legacy of success performance

As the Commander of Combined Joint Task Force Phoenix V, I extend my personal congratulations to the members of the 41st Brigade Combat Team who deployed as Afghan National Army advisors in support of Operation Enduring Freedom. Your accomplishments were unprecedented and continued the legacy of success and exceptional performance that the Oregon Army National Guard is well known for. Your professionalism, positive attitude and dedication exceeded all expectations and set a standard for excellence that few organizations will ever match. Operating in a harsh and hostile environment this exceptional team trained 30,000 members of the Afghan National Army. In January, the senior U.S. Commander in Afghanistan recognized the unmatched talent the National Guard brought to the mission and expanded the mission to include training 60,000 members of the Afghan National Police.

From 2006 to 2007, Task Force Phoenix grew from a strength of just over 3,000 to a combat experienced and seasoned force of over 7,200 professional warriors. The team also expanded to include active and reserve component members from the U.S. Army, Navy, Air Force and Marine Corps.

In addition, Soldiers from 16 coalition partner nations were assigned to the Task Force and provided invaluable skills, insights and experience that were critical to the growth of the team. This exceptional body of combat-tested patriots continually demonstrated what a well trained force can do in difficult circumstances. The U.S. Ambassador to Afghanistan, Bill Wood, said it best: “The success of OTTF Phoenix in training the Afghan National Army is nothing short of a miracle.”

There is no way my words can adequately capture the impact our great warriors have had on the citizens of Afghanistan. Saving lives, establishing the rule of law throughout the land, and building a professional, trusted and capable security force is tough, demanding work.

The great Patriots from the Oregon National Guard led the way and demonstrated the true spirit of the Citizen Soldier by not only excelling at their military occupation but also helping an impoverished nation rebuild and providing children with hope for a better future.

The Phoenix team adopted 59 schools, constructed 23 new schools, supported 14 orphanages and spent millions of dollars digging wells, constructing roads and clinics. The medical, dental and optometry assistance provided by the team brought critical care to women and children who previously had no opportunity for medical care. The Training Group at the Kabul Military Training Center expanded Basic and Advanced Individual training from 650 new Afghan Soldiers per month to over 2,000 Soldiers per month. They also established mobile training teams that conducted many of the courses at remote locations which further enhanced the war-fighting skills of the Afghan Soldiers. The Logistical team transported more supplies to more locations over more miles than anyone thought possible.

The Embedded Trainers expanded the locations served from 59 to 107 to 343 different sites – many locations without water, sewer, power or adequate shelter.

In every case the men and women of Combined Joint Task Force Phoenix established a reputation for excellence known throughout Afghanistan. Our warriors received countless individual and team decorations, awards and recognition for their accomplishments. This acknowledgement of their performance came from the U.S. Department of Defense, the Afghanis and their international partners.

We mourn the loss of the Soldier’s who lost their lives defending freedom. We also extend our deepest sympathy to their families for their sacrifice and to every Soldier who served with and knew those great Soldiers who gave their all were true heroes who exemplified the finest values and were role models for their fellow warriors. They will never be forgotten.

Your accomplishments exceeded all expectations of the team and set a standard for excellence that few organizations will ever match. Building on the legacy of success and exceptional performance that the Oregon Army National Guard is well known for, your dedication exceeded all expectations and set a standard for excellence that few organizations will ever match.

Elliott to resume ESGR post

Col. (Ret.) Bob Elliott has returned to his position as Executive Director for the Oregon Sentinel Reserve Employment Group (ESGR), after a 20-month leave. Col. Elliott relinquished his position to deploy with the 41st Brigade Combat Team’s Afghanistan mission. He returned to Active Duty Jan. 22, 2006, and reported to Fort Jackson, S.C., before heading to Afghanistan on a 26-day pre-deployment survey. He returned to the United States, joining the rest of Task Force Phoenix V at Camp Shelby, Miss. for mobilization training.

On June 4, 2006, Elliott and his team of 16 left for Herat, Afghanistan to mentor the Afghan National Army (ANA). Elliott was the senior mentor for the 207th ANA Corp Commander, and the senior U.S. Military representative in Western Afghanistan, which comprises 25 percent of the country.

During the early part of the tour the 207th RCAG was given the additional task of mentoring the Afghanistan National Police (ANP). Both missions were highly successful, according to commanders.

He returned to Oregon in early June 2007 and assumed his previous position with the ESGR on July 11, 2007. Elliott said he was volunteered to serve on the Afghanistan mission for several reasons. He wanted to serve with the Task Force Commander Brigs. Gen. Douglas A. Pruitt and Maj. Gen. John G. substantially. He also hoped that his volunteer effort would help keep the Task Force commander and his family stay in the country.


Elliott said, “When I was told there was a new program offered that allowed retirees to be recalled to Active Duty, I jumped on it,” Elliott added.

He also said that his experience would allow him to better understand what it is like to be a Soldier who has deployed, and his experiences would help him assist them with their jobs.

Elliott briefs all branches of the reserves on their rights under the USERRA law, which protects their employment rights.

“Now I can stand in front of the reservist and know what they are going through,” he said.

He wanted to help his employer, IIF Data Solutions for their support of his deployment. Elliott said, “Knowing I had a job to return home to make his deployment less stressful.”

“With a job to return home to make his deployment less stressful.”

He added, “If I didn’t get my job back at least I knew who to go to for help.”

If you need employment assistance, contact Col. (Ret.) Bob Elliott at 503-584-2837, or at 503-932-2362. He can also be reached via email at: bob.elliott@or.nga.army.mil.

Salem group says ‘thank you’ to returning veterans

Story and photo by Tech. Sgt. Nick Choy

Oregon National Guard Public Affairs

FORT LEWIS, Wash. (June 6, 2007) A senior group in Salem, Oregon has turned their collective hobby of carving into a philanthropic endeavor. About ten members of the Capitol Carvers turned the three-hour drive to Missouri Valley Medical Center in Fort Lewis, Wash., to meet with National Guard Soldiers who are recovering from wounds received while deployed to Iraq and Afghanistan.

The group presented Soldiers with hand-crafted walking canes. Each cane came with an accompanying letter thanking the individual Soldier for their sacrifice and service. The letter also highlighted the Capitol Carvers’ background and history, and explained the type of wood used in each walking cane.

The Capitol Carvers comprise primarily of Oregon seniors. The group meets once a week at the North Salem Senior Center in Salem, Ore., to carve items ranging from animals, people and caricatures, in various mediums, including stone, wood and bone.

The group’s organizers were inspired by a similar group in North Carolina, which carves walking canes for injured members of a Marine unit who recently returned to that state.

The Capitol Carvers presented 50 walking canes to injured members of the Marine unit who recently returned to that state.

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The Oregon Sentinel Special Edition

New Army program helps identify Soldiers with Traumatic Brain Injury

Traumatic Brain Injury, Post-Traumatic Stress share many common symptoms

As combatives, airborne or air assault training, according to the Army's new MTBI training program.

"Anything that causes you to see stars, ears to ring, or loss of consciousness could cause a brain injury," said Fitch. Fitch said many Soldiers don't realize they have a mild brain injury and will return to combat situations where they receive repeated concussions before they start to notice something is seriously wrong.

"If they know the signs and symptoms of MTBI, they can prevent further injury from happening in the future," said Fitch. "It's all about knowledge, education and prevention."

MTBI disrupts brain functions and if left untreated could cause permanent damage. Medical Command personnel say it is important for Soldiers and their families to know the symptoms, so they can seek treatment as soon as possible.

"The first step is for Soldiers and leaders to be able to identify if they might have it or if they know someone who might have it, and then get the Soldier to someone who can help them," said Lingle.

Physical symptoms of MTBI can include blurred vision, headaches, ringing ears, dizziness, fatigue, and sensitivity to light and sounds. Behavioral symptoms can include confusion, memory loss, difficulty organizing daily tasks, loss of concentration, slowed thinking or speaking, impaired decision making or problem solving, sleep problems, and impulsive behavior. Emotional symptoms can include always feeling sad or anxious, feeling easily overwhelmed, and feeling easily irritated or angered.

According to the Army's training program, many of the symptoms of MTBI are similar to what Soldiers experience with Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), or Post Combat Stress, is an anxiety disorder that develops after someone experiences a life-threatening situation.

Physical symptoms resulting from combat stress include fatigue, headaches, chest pain, sleep problems, difficulty breathing normally, pounding heart, profuse sweating, muscle tremors, weakness, and nightmares. Behavioral symptoms can include withdrawal, restlessness, emotional outbursts, paranoia, easily startled, and alcohol or substance abuse. Emotional symptoms can include anxiety or panic, fear, easily irritated or angered, and depression.

Soldiers who have Post Combat Stress have trouble putting the event out of their mind and will continue to "re-experience" a traumatic event, and may become emotionally detached. Both MTBI and PTSD are common and treatable conditions, Fitch said, but she added that many Soldiers choose not to seek treatment for fear that it will affect their military career. For the safety of themselves and others, it is important that Soldiers seek help, she emphasized.

"As a Soldier you should not only be maintaining your physical health, but also your mental health," Fitch said. "We are not here to hinder Soldiers or hurt their career, we're here to help them. Our goal is to successfully put Soldiers back into boots."

Fitch said Soldiers can seek help confidentially through the Oregon National Guard Medical Command. "Unless Soldiers become a potential danger to themselves or others we will not inform their chain of command that they are seeking treatment," she added.

Lingle said the Medical Command does not perform the treatment, but can help coordinate proper care through the Veterans Administration and help ensure that VA paperwork is filed correctly for Soldiers to receive treatment at no cost.

"We can't treat them here, but we know who to pick up the phone and call," said Lingle. "It is important that they notify us, or contact the VA, but make sure someone knows, so they can take appropriate actions to get treatment."

If you or someone you know has symptoms of a mild brain injury or combat stress, you may call the Medical Command at 503-584-2383. All inquiries are kept confidential.

Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI)

Common symptoms of TBI:

- Difficulty organizing daily tasks
- Blurred vision or eyes tire easily
- Headaches or ringing in the ears
- Feeling sad, anxious or restless
- Easily irritated or angered
- Feeling tired all the time
- Feeling light-headed or dizzy
- Trouble with memory, attention or concentration
- More sensitive to sounds, lights or distractions
- Impaired decision making or problems solving
- Difficulty inhibiting behavior, impulsiveness
- Slowed thinking, moody or negative talking or reading
- Easily confused; feeling easily overwhelmed
- Change in sexual interest or behavior

Some symptoms may be present right away. Others may appear much later. People experience brain injuries differently. Speed of recovery varies. Most people with mild brain injuries recover fully, but it can take time. In general, recovery is slower in older persons, and people with a previous brain injury might find it takes longer to recover from a current injury. Talk to your healthcare provider about any troubling symptoms or problems.

For more information, visit www.pdhealth.mil.

Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)

PTSD is a condition that develops after someone has experienced a life-threatening situation, such as combat. In PTSD, the event must have involved actual or threatened death or serious injury and caused an emotional reaction involving intense fear, hopelessness or horror. People with PTSD have three kinds of experiences for weeks or months after the event is over and the individual has returned to a safe environment.

People who have PTSD have experiences from all three of these categories that stay with them for most of the time and interfere with their ability to live their life or do their job. To find out if you are experiencing PTSD, take the Mental Health Self Assessment test at www.militarymentalhealth.org.

Re-experiencing the Event

- You can't put it out of your mind no matter how hard you try
- You have repeated nightmares about the event
- You have vivid memories, almost like the event is happening all over again
- You have a strong reaction when you encounter reminders such as a car backfiring

Avoiding Reminders

- You work hard at putting it out of your mind
- You feel numb and detached - lack of feelings
- You may have trouble relaxing or falling asleep

Feeling "keyed-up" or "on-edge"

- You easily startle
- You feel irritable or angry for no apparent reason
- You are always looking around, hypervigilant

PTSD is treatable. Therapy has proven to be very effective in reducing and even eliminating symptoms. Early treatment leads to the best outcomes. If you think you or someone you know may have PTSD, please seek treatment right away.

Information courtesy of Army One Source.
Kaiser Permanente doctor owes personal success to U.S. education

He returns to Afghanistan to help build schools alongside Task Force members

Story by Ixt. Lt. Amanda Straub, CJTF-V Public Affairs

KABUL, Afghanistan – Dr. Mohammad Khan Kharoti knows firsthand what a difference education can make in a life. He moved as a family to the nomadic Kuchi tribe in Afghanistan, Kharoti is now a doctor of nuclear medicine at Kaiser Permanente Hospital in Portland, Ore.

"My father was a simple nomad with only a few camels," Kharoti said. "He died not being able to read. My mother is still living, but she can not read. Because of a family in the United States, I was able to get an education and become a doctor."

Kharoti said. "Three of my children are now studying in the best schools around the world," he said. "All of this prosperity and opportunity came in the light of education."

A man of small stature, Kharoti speaks gently about himself and his family, but a fire is kindled behind his eyes and he waves his hands animatedly as he talks about the importance of education. "Education is the key to fight terrorism, the darkness of ignorance, to build bridges, to go forward hand in hand," Kharoti said.

Dr. Mohammad Khan Kharoti

"Education is the key to fight terrorism, the darkness of ignorance, to build bridges, to go forward hand in hand."

"One child will grow to meet with senators and the people who will be here from the school. He will tell them about what America did for his people."

Approximately 1,100 students currently study at Green Village School in newly constructed, freshly-painted classrooms complete with real desks donated from the United States.

"It is important for the people to see this side of America," Kharoti said. "It is one thing for the people here to see a Humvee in the street. It is another to see their children sitting on desks from America. I want to see them walk in the library and see rows and rows of books from America that will last years and years."

Kharoti sees the Green Village School project as a way to show his gratitude for the opportunities he was given and share his blessings with the people from his home country.

"I could never have become a doctor on my own. But thanks to the help I received from friends in the United States I have prospered and now, thanks to my work, 1,100 more boys and girls will walk into the light of education."

Kharoti believes firmly that it is important to educate both genders in any society and says that educating girls provides more long-term benefits for Afghan society than educating boys only. Educated women can teach their children about the world and how to tolerate and respect people from all cultures and countries. Today the school teaches nearly equal numbers of Afghan boys and girls.

"An educated mother has great influence on a child. The mother is with the child from the crib. Children are closer to their mother than their father when they are young, she teaches them about economics, peace, all things," Kharoti said. "She is the light of the house. In Afghanistan we have a saying, ‘If a wife dies, the light goes out of the house.’"

Kharoti recently visited the Green Village School to assess its progress and needs. He wants to expand the school to include 12 new classrooms, a library, a computer lab, and sanitary bathrooms with flushing toilets and running water.

Visiting the school was difficult due to recent security threats. In February bomb threats forced the school to close temporarily. Kharoti was not sure he would be able to visit the school due the security situation and insurgent threats against his life. He says it is very difficult for him to travel to his old home without a military escort.

"The security posture is necessary to make Afghanistan’s schools safe. All nations who support and care about Afghanistan’s children must fight terrorism and support education," Kharoti said.

Kharoti also said that gaining support from the village elders in Green Village is vital to the success of the school. The school serves as a community center for important holidays, weddings and other celebrations. It has a mosque on the grounds where villagers can go to pray.

The school was used as a voting center in the last parliamentary election where thousands of people, including 4,000 women, came to vote. The multi-purpose function of the school ensures the support of the elders in the community who can negotiate with Taliban to keep the school safe.

Kharoti was able to secure $70,000 in additional funding from the Combined Joint Task Force Phoenix V Commander’s Emergency Response Program. Task Force Phoenix V is commanded by the 41st Brigade Combat Team based out of Oregon. The task force is made up of servicemembers deployed to Afghanistan from 49 states, with more than 800 from Oregon.

"It’s not because we can stay in touch with this school even when we redeploy," Maj. Robert Fraser, task force Civil Affairs Officer said. "There will always be a piece of Oregon here in Afghanistan."

"Ten years from now these children will be standing with you side by side," Kharoti said.

"One child will grow to meet with senators and he will come from this school. He will tell them about what America did for him. I hope I will be alive when this dream comes true. This will be an example for all of Afghanistan that we are for understanding," he said.

"We are not against any particular religion," he continued. "We are for cooperation, understanding, tolerance and respect. Children with this kind of education will become candles, the light at the end of the tunnel."

If you would like to learn more about the Green Village School or ways you can help support Dr. Mohammad Khan Kharoti’s work, please visit www.greenvillage.org or write to: Green Village Schools, Inc., P.O. Box 80061, Portland, OR 97280
Two female combat medics see actual combat in Afghanistan

Ivanov says everyone was hesitant about letting the ANA guys go on patrols with the ANA. No one was sure how the ANA would react to having women on patrol. Even some of the U.S. Soldiers were leery about having women in combat. However, their skills were in high demand due to the shortage of medics in Afghanistan. Now accepted into 3rd Kandak, Turner and Ivanov have become an integral part of the team. “They stared and stared at first,” Ivanov said. “Then they saw us sleep on the ground like they did and eat their food like they did and ever since then Turner and I have been okay.”

Both womenearned Combat Medical Badges as a result of their work under fire. They drive armored Humvees for the embedded trainers assigned to 3rd Kandak during patrols and provide medical support during missions.

In addition to providing medical assistance on tactical missions, Turner and Ivanov have provided invaluable assistance to the ANA soldiers and prove their capabilities to the American supervisors. The ANA were extremely hesitant to trust Turner and Ivanov or seek medical care because of their gender. But any doubt as to their abilities were put to rest following an unfortunate incident.

An Improvised Explosive Device (IED) hit a truck full of ANA Soldiers early in the deployment. Other ANA Soldiers responded to the attack by quickly loading the wounded into another truck and speeding them to Khost before Turner and Ivanov could give them on-the-scene care.

“It was only our second time out and nobody had seen what we could do,” Turner said.

Most of the men in the truck were fatally wounded, but Turner believes they could have saved at least one of the men by applying a tourniquet to his severed leg. Turner said the Soldiers killed in the attack were some of the first to befriended and support her and Ivanov which made the incident difficult to accept for both women. All but one of the men of the men in the attack died of their wounds, and when Turner and Ivanov learned at least one of the men could have been saved, they made it clear to the Afghan Soldiers that wounded warriors should receive treatment before being evacuated. The medics later went for the fallen ANA Soldiers as if they were their own.

Ivanov says everyone was hesitant about letting the ANA guys go on patrols with the ANA. No one was sure how the ANA would react to having women on patrol. Even some of the U.S. Soldiers were leery about having women in combat. However, their skills were in high demand due to the shortage of medics in Afghanistan. Now accepted into 3rd Kandak, Turner and Ivanov have become an integral part of the team. “They stared and stared at first,” Ivanov said. “Then they saw us sleep on the ground like they did and eat their food like they did and ever since then Turner and I have been okay.”

Both women earned Combat Medical Badges as a result of their work under fire. They drive armored Humvees for the embedded trainers assigned to 3rd Kandak during patrols and provide medical support during missions.

In addition to providing medical assistance on tactical missions, Turner and Ivanov have provided invaluable assistance to the ANA soldiers and prove their capabilities to the American supervisors. The ANA were extremely hesitant to trust Turner and Ivanov or seek medical care because of their gender. But any doubt as to their abilities were put to rest following an unfortunate incident.

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Oregon eye doctor helped give the gift of sight to Afghans

Story and photo by 1st Lt. Cathrin Fraker, CTJ/TV Public Affairs

KABUL – Afghanistan – In addition to caring for vision needs of the Warriors of Task Force Phoenix, Lt. Col. James Randolph and Spc. Cheryl Ivanov, a class counselor, urban planner, and Petty Officer 3rd Class Khalil Waheedi, gave the gift of sight to the people of Afghanistan.

A villager in his mid-fifties sat down in the exam chair. His look was very serious as he concentrated on the eye chart to which Weaver was pointing. Randolph, an eye doctor from Oregon, used an antique skiascope to determine the correction the man needed, and Bundrick located a pair of glasses with the ThinOptics prescription and passed them to the doctor.

Randolph placed the glasses on the man and adjusted the handles. He looked at the eye chart and his face transformed. The once stern look was replaced with a bright smile. The man laughed and told the interpreter he could see. He pointed and said that he could clearly make out the eye chart that was barely visible without the glasses.

“...the result is usually the same, most were paying their respects or meditating and eye drops and the smile that re assures the team of their success.”

“...women here have so little,” Bundrick said. “People here have so little.”

“...and women can play soccer,” she said. “The women are sick and tired of their children getting beaten.”

“...I went through it and I don’t think she could get to his side fast enough.”

“...and we were told to always wear our protective gear,” Cheryl said. “Ogi always made sure to follow orders.”

“...It took us really hard when we learned he got hurt,” said Milagry Laygui, a slot department manager at the Mill. “You don’t expect someone you know to get hurt.”

The feeling of making a difference has become the right hand to the middle of his forearm. His right eye appeared to be damaged by the explosion. His right femur broke and his lungs have several contusions.

Doctors examined his right eye and determined his sight was fine. He has been removed from the intensive care unit and put into an intermediate care ward.

It is difficult to determine how long it will take Oregon to recover from his injuries, though Cheryl said doctors have said he may be one or two years of hospital time.

Since the accident, the doctor has been providing updates to staff at both The Mill Casino and Bay Area Hospital.

“It took us really hard when we learned he got hurt,” said Milagry Laygui, a slot department administrator at The Mill. “You don’t expect someone you know to get hurt.”

By the time he left for Afghanistan, Ognian had risen to the rank of bENCH TECH nician at the casino. He was training and working with the nine other technicians in his department. But many more were interested in his well being.

“We had an article in our last newsletter about the two employees we have in Afghanistan,” said Bernie Crowder, an assistant manager at The Mill. “After we learned about Ogi, everyone was bugging me about updates, so I just started sending the letters I received to everyone on the casino e-mail list.”

At Bay Area Hospital, Vickie Montgomery serves a similar role, disseminating e-mail updates to the 50-person lab. Mont gelly remembered speaking to Cheryl the first time after the accident happened.

“She called me from Afghanistan as soon as she had been injured,” she said. “We cried on the phone together. She was very afraid. I don’t think she could get to his side fast enough.”

Cheryl said that neither she nor Ognian has any regrets about going to Afghanistan.

“That’s what you do, you offer yourself to your country,” she said.
Reintegration team provides resources for returning Soldiers

Story by Kim Lippert,
Oregon National Guard Public Affairs

The return of the 41st Brigade Combat Team brings almost 900 Oregon Soldiers back to their home state. For many return to civilian life is an easy one. For others it can be a bit more challenging.

The Oregon National Guard’s Reintegration Team helps facilitate a smoother transition back into civilian life by helping returning soldiers with job placement, educational training, and even referrals for emotional counseling.

“We have a higher rate of (soldiers seeking help) this early in the game, said Ray Lewallen, retired Oregon National Guard soldier now working for the Reintegration Team. “We are getting calls almost daily from soldiers needing help,” added Lewallen. The Oregon National Guard Reintegration Team has been in existence for more than two years. Lewallen said the teams outreach continues to grow – with more people than ever seeking help.

“I think our Soldiers are smarter now, more of them are on their second and third deployment, they are recognizing troubleshooting symptoms sooner and seeking help,” said Lewallen.

The statistics speak for themselves. According to Col. (Ret.) Scott McCrae, who also works with reintegration team, 65 percent of returning Soldiers are unemployed or underemployed, and 17 percent of service members nationwide have a diagnosis of Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD). One half of female deployed Soldiers come back with some sort of readjustment issue that needs to be addressed, McCrae said.

Nearly 100 Soldiers who deployed with the 41st Brigade Combat Team to Afghanistan were women.

“We’ve never had a situation in our history where so many female Soldiers were seeing combat,” said Lewallen. According to the National Center for PTSD, women are twice as likely as men to develop Post Traumatic Stress Disorder.

“We are not sure what levels of combat stress and family stress we are going to be dealing with because part of Afghanistan was fairly secure and part of it was just as bad as Iraq,” McCrae said.

McCrae said the ORNG Reintegration Team has grown and changed in the two years since its inception.

“The biggest difference is when we started out in February of 2005 we weren’t sure where we wanted to go,” said McCrae. “We have matured now and we have networks across the state,” he added.

The group has relationships with the Oregon Department of Veterans’ Affairs, several government agencies, local employers, and other members of the community. More than two hundred employers across the state have signed an agreement with the Reintegration Team to list themselves as “Veteran Friendly”; those businesses looking to hire service members.

Those relationships allow the reintegration team to steer soldiers in the right direction and help meet whatever need they may be facing, McCrae said.

“We help soldiers help themselves,” said McCrae. “I think this has been the best thing we have done for our Soldiers in my 35 years in the Oregon National Guard,” he said.

The ORNG Reintegration Team is hosting several military job and benefit fairs across the state; Sept. 23, at the Medford Armory; Oct. 13, at Klamath Community College in Klamath Falls, Ore.; and Nov. 3, at Clackamas Community College in Oregon City.

For more information on the Oregon National Guard Reintegration Team, call 888-688-2264. The number is manned 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. You can also visit the website at www.oregonarmyguard.or.ngb.army.mil.

CJTF-V members help flood victims

combined Joint Task Force Phoenix V member, Maj. Arnold Strong, of the Oregon Army National Guard, carries bags of supplies for flood victims in front of the Afghan Olympic Stadium April 10, 2007, in Kabul, Afghanistan. Kabul was ravaged by the first flood in 15 years. The Training Assistance Group from Camp Alamo coordinated food distribution efforts to supply flood victims in Kabul. They provided 100 pounds of rice, beans, wheat, flour, tea, cooking oil, shovels, sand bags, tarps and more to approximately 100 families. Hundreds of families lost their homes, belongings and supplies to the flood.

Oregon guardsman finishes college courses while in Afghanistan

Spc. Jonathan Cartney stands in front of a destroyed Soviet-era tank near the city of Kunduz, Afghanistan during his year-long deployment with the 41st Brigade Combat Team.

Story and Melanie Moisan,
Cheyenne Community College Marketing & Public Relations Coordinator

Spc. Jonathan Cartney, Oregon National Guard, was a soldier serving in Afghanistan when he signed up for classes at Cheyenne Community College in the fall of 2006.

Hoping to get help paying his tuition, he called the financial aid office to see if he qualified for assistance. He learned his combat pay pushed his income too high, and he was ineligible for aid, but, even so, that didn’t stop the financial aid office from adopting him as their “guy in Afghanistan.”

“Be was such a nice young man,” said Elaine Smith, federal work study coordinator, “and talking to him put an Oregon face on the nightly news. He’d call or send e-mail and bring us up-to-date on what was going on in his life.”

When he first went to Afghanistan, Jonathan had already served 10 months in Kirkuk, in the northern part of Iraq. He had little time there to study, but in Afghanistan he signed up for online classes in reading, writing and math.

“It wasn’t easy,” he said. “I completed much of my reading while bouncing up and down in the back of a Humvee.”

It may not have been easy, but it could help him achieve his goal. Jonathan grew up in the northeast corner of Oregon and graduated from Cove High School. He has wanted to be a paramedic since he was 8. At the age of 17, he joined the Oregon National Guard, in part to help pay for a college education.

“I also wanted to serve my country,” he said, “and I wanted the chance to work as part of a team.”

Because of his interest in the medical field, he asked to serve as a medic while in the Middle East. It was hard being away from friends and family, but helping other people, no matter what nationality they were, helped make that separation easier.

“The best part of my tour,” he said, “was being a part of MedCAPS [Medical Civilian Assistance Program]. We’d go out to villages for three or four days and treat people for their health problems. It was good just being able to help someone in need.”

Around Christmas that year, Jolene Jones, financial aid assistant at Chemeketa, suggested they send Jonathan a Christmas present, an idea that grew into a series of care packages.

“Elaine really took the lead,” said Jolene. “People from several departments contributed, but she collected everything and got it to the post office. She was also our main contact with Jonathan.”

“They sent me a lot of stuff,” Jonathan said. “It seemed like about 800 pounds of books, snacks, games, socks, hats, stamps, and writing material.”

“Things,” he said, that he always appreciated receiving. Of more importance to Jonathan, however, was the friendship those gifts represented.

Now back home after “364 days, 12 hours and 13 minutes in Afghanistan,” Jonathan is enrolled in Introduction to Emergency Services and a psychology class, hoping to enter Chemeketa’s Fire Protection and Emergency Medical Technician-Paramedic programs in the fall. He also works for the Sublimity Fire Department as a “sleeper” – a position that provides experience and a place to live for students attending school full time in the emergency service field.

He’s happy to talk about his future, but, like many soldiers, there are other things he’d rather not talk about. For example, he’s not interested in the politics of his situation, saying these are problems for the politicians.

“My job is to be a soldier on the ground and make sure my guys are okay,” he said. “That’s what we do.”

Nor is he interested in watching the war unfold on television.

“A soldier dies and it’s covered for a minute,” he said, “but they spend days on it.”

When asked if he or any of his friends had been wounded, he is even more succinct.

“A couple of my friends were injured; a couple are no longer here.”

Then he lets you know it’s time to move on to another topic.

On Sept. 11, 2006, Jonathan requested that an American flag be flown for Chemeketa over his base in Kabul, and on June 26, 2007, he gave that same flag to President Gretchen Schuette as a gift to the college out of his gratitude for the professionalism and caring of the college’s staff and faculty. He took a second flag, flown that same day in Afghanistan, to Elaine Smith, for going out of her way to be a friend to him.

People at the college knew I had some issues,” he said, in a classic case of understatement, “and that sometimes situations might keep me from meeting a deadline. The people at Chemeketa always treated me like a real person.”
“You enabled us to shape a future generation of Afghans and to create an environment of peace.”
— Brig. Gen. Douglas A. Pritt, commander, 41st Brigade Combat Team

Afghanistan veteran awarded for valor as Portland Police officer

PORTLAND, Ore. — An Oregon Army National Guard captain returned home from Afghanistan to a heroes’ welcome not just for serving overseas, but also for his actions in his civilian job as a Portland police officer.

William “Jack” Gillentine Jr., a member of Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 41st Infantry Brigade Combat Team, was awarded the Medal of Valor, the Portland Police Bureau’s most distinguished award, on June 20 during an awards ceremony at the David Douglas Performing Arts Center.

“It’s an honor, the Medal of Valor is not an every day award of course, but it’s nice to be formally recognized for all the things police officers do every day to help the public,” said Gillentine.

Gillentine and several of his colleagues were awarded for assisting in the rescue of a 14-year-old girl who witnessed a suspect stabbing and killing her grandmother outside of her home.

“Everybody that was there did a great job and all the awards that were given for this incident were well-deserved,” Gillentine said.

On March 12, 2005, Gillentine and his partner, Portland Police Officer James Nett, responded to a request for assistance from a Multnomah County Sheriff’s deputy to help rescue the teenager. After witnessing her grandmother’s murder from a window, the girl locked herself in an upstairs bedroom and called 911.

“Our biggest concern was for the safety of the 14-year-old-girl,” said Gillentine. “She was still on the phone with dispatch and they were telling us through our radios that the suspect was now inside the house.”

“Jack and I got there first, the deputy and four more officers arrived soon after,” said Nett. “We found the grand- mother deceased just outside the house and we quickly developed a plan that four of us were going to go inside.”

The officers kicked down the door and began searching the house. They found the suspect sitting on the floor in the kitchen.

“He had the knife and he was covered in blood,” Gillentine said. “The deputy challenged him to drop the weapon, the guy got up off the ground, he yelled like a war-cry and charged at us.”

The officers fired at the suspect several times as he kept charging. “My first thought was, is this really happening, is this guy really going to charge three officers with a knife?” Gillentine said. “And then because of your training and experience you instantly realize what is going on and you just automatically react.”

The officers continued to fire shots at the suspect until he eventually stopped advancing. He later died as a result of his wounds.

“He started out about fifteen feet away and he got about two feet from us before he finally went down,” said Gillentine.

In his 14-year military career and eight years as a police officer, it was the first time Gillentine had to shoot a suspect. He said the stressful situation helped him prepare for the firesights he faced in Afghanistan while deployed with the 41st IBCT.

“You can never get enough training in stressful situations,” said Gillentine. “As a police officer you deal with a lot of stressful incidents and you have to maintain your sense of calm. All of my experiences over the past eight years with the police bureau certainly helped me stay calm when bullets, (rocket propelled grenades) and mortar rounds were flying.”

Gillentine said he was involved in about 12-14 firesights while stationed with an Embedded Training Team near Gardez and the Pakistan border.

“The firesights were more intense than anything I’ve ever dealt with as a police officer, because you couldn’t really tell when one firefired ended and another one began,” said Gillentine.

He said that his experiences in Afghanistan will, in turn, help his career as a police officer. He plans to use what he learned in Afghanistan to help battle terrorism in the Northwest.

“My job as a police officer and my job as a Soldier definitely complement each other,” Gillentine said.

He attributes his success as both a police officer and Soldier to the support of his wife, Shana, his partner, James Nett, and all his family and friends.

“You sleep safe in your beds because rough men stand ready in the night to visit violence on those who would do you harm.”
— George Orwell, author, (1903 — 1950)

From a BBC broadcast, April 4, 1942
Oregon Soldier helps save lives through suicide prevention

Story and photo by Sgt. 1st Class Erick Studenicka, National Guard Bureau

ARLINGTON, Va. (8/20/2007) — In terms of a threat to Army National Guard Soldiers, it easily rivals rounds and a conceited snipers, the devastation of an improvised explosive device or a blast from rocket propelled grenades.

The threat doesn’t stem from any foreign armed forces or military power, and casualties resulting from this threat are often the saddest and most heartbreaking of deaths for the family and friends of these Soldiers.

The threat is suicide, which ranked as the No. 3 cause of death for Army National Guard Soldiers through August 13, according to the Army National Guard’s Suicide Prevention Program. There have been 42 cases of suicide in the Army National Guard this year, up from the 31 cases for the same period in 2006, making it the highest number since 1991. The Army National Guard’s total of 42 is already 17 more than the 2006 total and marks the highest total since the Army National Guard began keeping suicide statistics in 2004.

The prevention of suicide is managed by the Oregon National Guard Bureau Suicide prevention manager. “The active duty Army has resources and facilities available to the Soldiers 24 hours a day, seven days a week,” Bradshaw said. “They have a greater ability to track information and provide suicide prevention resources to their Soldiers.

“However, suicide prevention resources (for the National Guard) is a greater challenge,” he said.

Bradshaw is the subject matter expert for the National Guard Bureau, and he attended the Army suicide media roundtable held in conjunction with the Army’s release of its 165-page Army Suicide Event Report.

Bradshaw said that current suicide numbers for the Army National Guard may be skewed high due to recent changes in reporting methods and improved information collection.

“The National Guard appointed its first full-time suicide prevention program manager in August 2006. Until that time there weren’t good tracking mechanisms in place,” said Bradshaw, an Oregon National Guard Bureau suicide prevention manager on Aug. 1. “We believe much of our information, our increased numbers, is due to better tracking mechanisms.

However, logic would tend to agree, along with the Army and its increased deployment numbers would increase also,” Bradshaw said.

It’s yet to be proven, however, that there is a direct correlation between deployments and suicide. Col. Elspeth Ritchie, the behavioral health psychiatry consultant to the U.S. Army surgeon general and roundtable participant, said there is currently little statistical evidence linking suicide with the number and length of Soldiers’ deployments.

She did say that failed relationships are believed to be the cause of 70-80 percent of suicides, that deployment-linked stress definitely could be a factor behind strained relationships.

“Other National Guard suicide statistics from this fiscal year show that gunshot wounds are the most common method of suicide (67 percent) and lower enlisted ranks make up the majority of suicides (32 percent) of the suicides were committed by the ranks of sergeant and below).

Thirty-nine of the 42 suicides this year were committed by male Soldiers.

The National Guard’s suicide rate (12 per 100,000) remains about the same as that of the general U.S. population, which is 11.05 per 100,000, according to the Center for Disease Control.

Every Soldier is an irreplaceable resource to the military, and the National Guard will continue to prioritize suicide prevention, Bradshaw added.

In addition to the National Guard’s commitment toward funding a full-time suicide prevention program manager, 30 states have now appointed part-time managers as an additional duty. Training for the suicide prevention program managers is set to begin at the end of January.

Also, funding is being pursued to establish a new position in each state.

The suicide prevention program will partner with the U.S. Army Center for Health Promotion and Preventative for the release of the ACE Suicide Intervention Program in January 2008, and Bradshaw will host “Train the Trainers” events for all state suicide prevention managers at their training event during the spring of 2008.

Bradshaw said anyone considering suicide but fearing the stigma associated with seeking help should know that studies show suicide crises are best handled by professionals, including mental health counseling.

Anyone considering suicide or who knows someone considering suicide is encouraged to contact their local chaplain or call the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline at 1-800-273-TALK, the civilian suicide prevention number at 1-800-SUICIDE or military OneSource at 1-800-342-9647.

Training in Germany a chance for 3670th to show their ‘stuff’

Story and photo by Master Sgt. Thomas Hovitz, Oregon National Guard Public Affairs

For the 127 soldiers from the 3670th Maintenance Company, their recent annual training took them to Bamberg and Svininford, Germany for the week of July 23.

Driven by the demands of the war in Iraq, active duty deployments allowed members of the Oregon Army National Guard to help undermanned units already in Germany.

The unit’s three-week annual training provided a unique opportunity for Oregonians to not only sharpen their skills and help out active duty forces, but also give the Oregon Soldiers a chance to experience life in Germany.

“A lot of this stuff is new to me,” said Spc. Curt Steininger, an Oregon Guardian who deployed with the 3670th.

Steininger said he knows generators, but since he had a chance to work with different vehicles during his deployment, he learned quite a bit. He also had a chance to see things in Germany which he had not experienced before.

“Getting out in Germany and seeing things is an experience,” he said.

Many other soldiers felt the same way.

Chief Warrant Officer 3 Kevin Hanks, who is the officer in charge of the element in Svininford, Germany, said his troops have been busy helping out a motor pool unit which has had its share of difficulties.

“Obviously they don’t have the staff to do a job or two and then letting them go,” George said.

About 100 kilometers north of the army base in Bamberg, more Oregon Guardsmen were working in a similar situation.

Sgt. 1st Class John Hernandez, a maintenance supervisor with the active duty Army’s 317th Maintenance Unit, is also one of the maintenance shop’s non-commissioned officers in charge. He supervised some of the Soldiers from Oregon.

“We have a shop with 14 people, but we have should have 42. We are drastically undermanned, but these folks have come in and filled in fantastically,” he said.

The troops under Hernandez’s management concentrated their efforts on work orders pertaining to electronic equipment such as Night Vision Goggles, field phones, and mobile fax machines that have been piling up because of the shop’s staffing issues.

He was impressed with the working knowledge of troops from Oregon.

“I’ve been extremely impressed with this particular group of people,” Hernandez said. “They are so professional and so knowledgeable. I would take this group of soldiers anywhere in the world.

The technicians from the 3670th do far more than electronic repairs. Many of the soldiers are heavy-equipment repair operators and metal fabrication technicians as well. The Soldiers work on everything from Humvees to the M-109 Howitzers.

They had a chance to do a number of varied tasks, ranging from fine-tuning their welding skills, to simple installation of radio and antenna mounts.

Spc. Jennifer Scott, a forward signal specialist from Portland, Ore., who has been with the unit for 10 years, spent a few days installing radio mounts in Humvees which had just returned from Iraq.

“It’s been going great,” she said. “They are keeping us busy, and we’re doing what we’re supposed to be doing…you really can’t ask for more.”

“We got to go to Munich last weekend,” Scott said. “We were doing a lot of work and the locals were really nice to us. We got stuck on the train due to a storm and the German lady showed us how to take the taxi’s back to base, it was quite an adventure.”

Overall, the deployment was a huge success, Ralph said.

“The Oregon Guard Soldiers received valuable training and the Army got caught up on a lot of backlogged work. It was truly a win-win situation,” he said.

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“We have a shop with 14 people, but we

Training in Germany a chance for 3670th to show their ‘stuff’
Members of the 142nd Civil Engineer Squadron stop for a photo opportunity during their construction of the fishing dock at Slusher Lake at Camp Rilea in Warren, Ore. the week of June 25. The construction of the dock was completed within 14 hours, with members of Industrial Arts and Arson who had never put their hands to construction, Chief Master Sgt. (Ret), Joe Bluston. Funding for the construction of the dock, which will be used primarily by youth who attend Camp Rosenbaum, include: the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife, the Astoria Kiwanis Club, Nike, Inc., and the Rosenbaum Foundation. Photo t o r t . T e c h . S t a f f . J o h n M c C o r q u o d a l e , S t a f f . S t a f f . S c o t R i c k e r t , A i r m a n F i r s t C l a s s G o r d i a n G r a u , S t a f f . S t a f f . R a m o n L o p e z , S e n i o r A i r m a n A n d r e w W o o l f , S e n i o r A i r m a n C h a r l e s J e d d a, and Tech. Sgt. Ron Eckert.

Story by Mark Brown,
The Daily Astorian
Reprinted with permission

WARRENTON, Ore. (July 23, 2007) — Girls and boys were landing speckled pink rainbow trout left and right while fishing at Slusher Lake near Warrenport.

Camp Rosenbaum was in full swing again for its 37th year at Rilea Armed Forces Training Center, and the kids had a new dock to use as they tried to pull lunkers from the lake.

“I just heard they needed a new dock a couple years ago, and they really do need things with kids here, so we did what we could,” said Eli Swede Nyberg, Lieutenanent Governor of the Pacific Northwest Kiwanis Foundation Division 67, at the ceremony dedicating the new dock. Each year, 165 children ages 9 to 13 from disadvantaged backgrounds spend a week at Camp Rosenbaum, where they learn that police officers and military personnel are normal people just like them.

“These kids come from some tough backgrounds, and they don’t always have very positive interactions with authority,” said Rachel Strobel, a Portland police officer working as a counselor for the seventh year. “Maybe they saw an officer arrest a parent, or worse, they witnessed it,” she said. “This way, they get to know us as people.”

Nyberg’s group helped secure a portion of the funding for the project.

All of the campers are selected by housing authorities from Oregon and southwest Washington. Counselors say that many of the kids haven’t seen the countryside before, and most of them are said to leave after a week of horseback riding and other activities.

Trysten Hendricks, a 10-year-old camper from Portland, had fished once before but “not at a pretty place like this.” She said that after only one day at the camp, she had already made a “ton” of friends and decided that if she caught a fish, the other half of the dock would be required to eat worms.

“There’s a lot of mosquitoes here, but it’s way better than where I live,” she said. Lila Daneland, with the 142nd Fighter Wing of Air National Guard, said “some of the stories these kids tell you about their lives are heart wrenching... but you can’t help but get a chance to be kids. Here, they get that chance.”

Oregon Youth Challenge Program provides environment for change

Story by Kim Lippert,
Oregon National Guard Public Affairs

REDMOND, Ore. — One hundred nine teenagers said goodbye to their past and embarked on a journey when they walked across stage at the Oregon National Guard Youth Challenge graduation on June 13, at the Oregon State Fairgrounds in Redmond, Ore.

They came from a wide variety of backgrounds, male and female. But they all shared a common purpose; a desire to better their lives.

“Before I came to the Oregon Youth Challenge Program I was 18 years old, a drop out, and homeless,” said Cadet Allen Serfass. “I didn’t think I was capable of change, but the Youth Challenge Program is a quasi-military style educational program for change. It is self contained. Juniper trees dot the landscape just outside the compound, and jackrabbits roam freely about. Many do not make it through the first two weeks, known as the ‘pre-challenge’. Cadets go through intense physical training and discipline from the moment they arrive. They are also expected to take on responsibilities, and held accountable for every work. The work ethic is also mentally intense, as cadets are expected to hold a minimum of 80 percent on all their academic work.

Furthermore, cadets are not allowed access to cell phones, television, or access to the Internet except for educational purposes. According to OYCP officials, the average high school grade-point average for incoming cadets is 1.1. But for those who make it, the rewards are life changing.

“Before this program I could have told you that every shot and type of alcohol on the shelf, but not much else,” said Cadet Caitlyn Henry of Bend, Ore.

Henry thrived in the program. She went from skipping school and abusing drugs and alcohol to becoming a member of student government. Her future plans include attending the Seattle Arts Institute.

“It’s kind of gotten me on track,” said Henry. “Anyone who wants to change their lives around should come here,” she added.

As the cadets prepared to walk across the stage to accept their certificates, Maj. Gen. Raymond F. Rees, the Adjutant General of the Oregon National Guard, offered his congratulations.

“I’m proud because you stood up and understood you needed to make a change,” said Rees. Without change troubled teens often become another statistic, Rees added.

“One out of five babies are born to parents who do not have a high school diploma,” said Rees. “One in nine teenagers drops out of high school,” Rees said.

“Everyone who makes it to graduation has the potential to be a leader,” said Rees. “A true champion is one who can be trusted.”

Richard Norlan received the Ryan Hill Champion of Youth Award at the Oregon National Guard Youth Challenge graduation ceremony in Redmond, Ore. on June 13. Maj. Gen. Raymond F. Rees, the Adjutant General of the Oregon National Guard (left) attended the ceremony. Shawna Hill (left center), and Master Sgt. (Ret.) Pat Shields, OYCP Commandant (right), are also pictured.

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graduated from OYCP in December, 2003. Hill died on January 20, 2007 in Baghdad, Iraq. Shawna Hill presented the PFC Ryan Hill award to the OYCP graduate that demonstrated the positive qualities Hill possessed, like making a difference, being a team player, and having fun.

“When Ryan was killed I made a decision that good must come out of the tragedy,” said Hill. “Ryan wanted to motivate and inspire others to become the absolute best that they can be and to passionately pursue their purpose,” added Hill.

Richard Norlan received the first annual Pvt. 1st Class Ryan Hill Champion of Youth Award which is engraved with a quote from Hill’s myspace page, “A true champion is one who wants to make a difference, never gives up, works hard and never stops following their dreams.”

“It’s my desire that this award will make a small difference in helping the recipient accomplish their mission,” said Shawna Hill.
Oregon Soldier proves you can never be too old to be a patriot

Story and photo by Staff Sgt. Russell Bassett
115th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

FORT DIX, N.J. — Sgt. 1st Class Michael Gholston comes off the firing line and removes his kevlar helmet. Large droplets of sweat stream down his face. Gholston wipes the sweat from his brow and looks around at his fellow Oregon National Guard Soldiers.

“What water?” Gholston says, slinging his M-4 rifle onto his shoulder.

Hearing their squad leader, the other Soldiers drink deeply from the hydration packs they wear on top of 30-plus pounds of body armor.

In early June, Gholston and the rest of Oregon’s 115th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment fired their weapons at the Short Range Gunnery Range, where the range they were only firing at targets, two short months later they could be shooting to save a life.

The 90-degree New Jersey heat makes the training tough, but it’s nothing compared to the 130-degree days they will face in Iraq.

At 52 years of age, Gholston stands out from his fellow Soldiers, all of whom are in their 20s. He’s the oldest in his squad, gray and greyer and his face is more lined, but as the other Soldiers take a short respite from the day’s training, they note the shade of a tree, Gholston remains standing.

He goes from Soldier to Soldier asking them about their experience, he’s one of the most senior NCOs and has words of congratulations to those who shot well and words of encouragement to those who didn’t.

“Iraq will not be Gholston’s first war experience. Many of his fellow Oregon Soldiers had not yet been deployed. Gholston was deployed to Vietnam in 1975. Gholston was deployed with the U.S. as a combat videographer, a new role the Air National Guard has taken on as it aids in the evacuation of refugees from the war-torn country in the waning days of the Johnson administration.

Thirty years after the Vietnam War, Gholston decided it was time to once again serve his country.

“We are at war, and by watching the news it became very apparent that troops were needed to support the war effort,” Gholston said. “I think going to Iraq is a chance of a lifetime. It’s the biggest story out there and it’s the story that needed to support the war effort,” Gholston said. “I think going to Iraq is a chance of a lifetime. It’s the biggest story out there and it’s the story that needed to support the war effort.”

Gholston says he’s trained hard to get ready for his mission in Iraq. When Gholston first started with the 115th MPAD in 2005, his leadership didn’t know what to make of the new staff sergeant with no Army experience.

“He scared the hell out of us because of his lack of Soldier skills” admitted 1st Sgt. Michael Cummings, the unit’s top non-commissioned officer. “We had to teach him how to shoot an M-16. He had never fired an automatic weapon before.”

Gholston’s first real test was being sent to New Orleans to help with the Hurricane Katrina relief effort.

“New Orleans was a real eye-opener,” Gholston said. “My experience is with the Navy, but I was really submersed in the Army. We got the job done though. I shot over 18 hours of footage documenting the devestation and interviewing Soldiers of the Oregon National Guard.

“Afther that “eye-opener,” Gholston applied himself to becoming a good Soldier and good NCO.

He started working out everyday, doing push-ups, sit-ups and running. He also took every Army class he could, successfully graduating the two phases of Basic Non-Commissioned Officer Course, both of which are two weeks in length, and then completed the month-long Warrior Training Course. During this time, he lost 25 pounds and honed his soldier skills.

“Because of my prior service, I was put right into a leadership position, so I’ve had to not only pull my own weight, but set the example,” Gholston said. “I couldn’t just sit at a desk and tell people what to do. I had to be out there leading the way.”

His fellow 115th Soldiers noticed the improvement.

“When Sergeant Gholston first arrived, I was like ‘oh,oh,’” said Staff Sgt. Kevin Hartman, a 115th team leader. “The first time I saw him handle a rifle I thought, ‘Oh, he’s older, so I had to really train and focus to keep up.’

When Gholston, a 115th Soldier from Oregon, is on the firing line, he’s leading the way, so when the Soldiers see him moving to run to cover, they know they have to do the same.

His fellow 115th team leaders note the improvement.

“When Sergeant Gholston first arrived, I was like ‘oh,oh,’” said Staff Sgt. Kevin Hartman, a 115th team leader. “The first time I saw him handle a rifle I thought, ‘Oh, he’s older, so I had to really train and focus to keep up.’

‘I’ve been impressed with his adaptability and his ability to acquire the knowledge and skills he needs to become a successful NCO,’” Troxell said. “I feel privileged to serve as a commander with someone who served with Public Affairs in Vietnam. He was standing on the deck of the U.S.S. Hancock when they evacuated the refugees from Vietnam. I remember watching that on the news as a kid and Sergeant Gholston was actually there.”

The 115th leadership was so impressed with Gholston’s improvement that they promoted him to sergeant first class in May. Gholston said squaring himself away was challenging but rewarding, and he had the support of his family and children who are attending classes to earn promotions.

Gholston and the other 20 members of the 115th MPAD arrived in Iraq in August. They will be stationed at Camp Speicher, in the Northern Iraqi city of Tikrit. Gholston will lead a team of print and broadcast journalists throughout the theater of operations, telling the Soldiers’ stories for Army and civilian media outlets.

Oregon Airman takes national top honors: making it three in a row

Prepared by Oregon Sentinel Staff

ARLINGTON, Va. (Aug. 13, 2007) — ‘It’s been absolutely awesome, and I’ve enjoyed every minute of it,” said Taylor who was also recognized as one of the Air Force’s 12 Outstanding Airmen of the Year. He said his service as an air traffic controller at home and at Baghdad Airport in Iraq and the team members he worked with there were central to his success.

The process began with unit- and wing-level competition programs progressing to squadron, task force, and corps competition levels. The six national winners were selected by the Air Guard’s top leaders from our 100+ candidates at the 54 states Air National Guard dotted throughout the U.S.

The special group conversed and shook hands with military, civilian and political leaders in and around Washington, D.C. They were lauded at several ceremonies, and they toured the nation’s capital in the summer heat. When they left, they carried a suitcase full of memories as well as certificates, coins, plaques, statuettes and other special rewards which will help support their achievements.

It’s not everyday you get to visit the White House, or have the guard’s senior leaders at their homes, including Army Lt. Gen. H Steven Blum, chief of the National Guard Bureau.

“This is one of the best groups we’ve ever had,” said Smith. “No matter what your job is, if you do your best, you will be recognized. The most important job you have is the one you have now, so do your best today, and you will progress. I’m living proof of that.”

Rounding out the National Guard Bureau’s top six Airmen were: Staff Sgt. Jesse Permenter, 116th Air Support Operations Squadron, Washington (Airman of the Year); Tech. Sgt. Michael Keller, 179th Air Lift Wing, Ohio (Noncommissioned Officer of the Year); Master Sgt. Lawrence Permenter, 116th Air Control Wing, Georgia (First Sergeant of the Year); Tech. Sgt. Wendy Hight, 123rd Airlift Wing, Kentucky (Honor Guard Program Manager of the Year) and Tech. Sgt. Celia Herrera, 107th Air Support Operations Group (Honor Guard Member of the Year).
Never ignore high-blood pressure

I had a patient some years ago who suffered a heart attack. He came to my intensive care unit (ICU) after being resuscitated from death in the emergency room. It took a lot of drugs and care but we stabilized him after about three days of total care.

He was then moved to a medical floor. The very next day he had found unresponsive in his hospital bed. He came back to ICU as he had suffered a stroke. After the stroke and his battle for life was put on dialysis. He was on a ventilator as he could not breathe on his own and his blood pressure was kept up by a variety of drugs. After eight days of this, the family made the decision to terminate all life support and to let him go.

His wife told us that her husband had known “for years” that his blood pressure was “high”. He refused to see a doctor, and was proud of the fact that he would somehow always be able to handle blood pressure checks during his physicals. He didn’t want to “jeopardize” his career.

He died and left his wife and three children, ages 6, 7, and 6. He had 13 years in the active Air Force. He was just 33 years old. He wasn’t stupid; he was just ignorant of the facts. High blood pressure (hypertension) and the medications to control it will not spell the end of your career. Properly treated hypertension may not even affect your status to deploy. If you have hypertension, you need to take care of it. Have your pressure taken and follow up if there is a problem. Hypertension will cause heart attack, stroke, and kidney disease.

As part of the ARNG Defense of Health Initiative there will be blood pressure kiosks set up in seven ARNG locations. The kiosks are similar to those you see at pharmacies. These include Camp Withycombe, Camp Riley, the Anderson Readiness Center in Salem, the Ashland Armory, and the La Grande Armory. Be smart and use the kiosk to check your pressure monthly.

Free exams from the Department of Defense offer free blood pressure checks as well. Your unit medics should also be able to conduct blood pressure checks. For any questions call Capt. Daryl Ottaway, at 503-584-2284 or via e-mail at daryl.ottaway@us.army.mil.

Capt. Daryl Ottaway, Occupational Health Nurse, Oregon Army National Guard

Deputy Chief of Staff receives gift from Camp Rosenbaum group

Hello Everyone,

Greetings! I hope this e-mail finds you all well. Jan and I, along with our family, want to thank you all so very much for the cards, letters and e-mails we’ve received from you all over the last week. Your support, thoughts, and prayers have been of great comfort to us as we grieve the loss of Jan’s mother, Gloria Hicks.

This week was another busy week of travel back and forth to Baghdad. The military travel system here in Iraq offers many options with both Army and Air Force flights. The staff and volunteers moved to move us around here in theater. Before I left for Iraq I was told that this assignment required a lot of travel, and they weren’t kidding. I’ve flown over 35 trips in every size aircraft from a seven-passenger L-2, flown by the Montana Army National Guard, to an Air Force C-5 “Globemaster,” which carries over 100 passengers in addition to a huge load of cargo. The C-12 was the most comfortable, but the best overall ride was a C-17 flight, when I was able to sit in the cockpit with the crew as we flew a night flight to Baghdad.

The helicopter flights are the most common way I get around here in Iraq. I’ve flown on a six-blade twin rotor CH-47 “Chinook,” another twin rotor helicopter, the CH-46, and my preferred way to get around for short trips, the UH-60 “Blackhawk” helicopters. Over half the crews that I’ve flown with have been National Guard crews and I like flying with them because they’re always more experienced. One of the UH-60 helicopter crew chiefs I flew with this week was from the Kansas Army National Guard.

He’s served in the military since 1968 (two tours in Vietnam), is a High School science teacher, and claims to be the oldest helicopter crew chief in the Army. Besides the fact that he was a really nice guy, it was great to find someone here that is older than I am!

This week’s photo is a very special one. When I returned from Baghdad on Thursday I had a package waiting for me. Upon opening it I found a truly amazing gift from Master Sgt. SuEllen Holmes, “Zinger,” who serves with me in the Oregon Air National Guard. SuEllen volunteers at Camp Rosenbaum, where she works in arts and crafts, and has worked with our campers for many years.

The quilt she made measures 52” by 66” inches, has a patriotic border of American flags, and contains 12 panels with pictures from Camp Rosenbaum. On the reverse side, the staff from Camp Rosenbaum signed their names along with messages of support. SuEllen volunteers at Camp Rosenbaum, where she works in arts and crafts, and has worked with our campers for many years.

The quilt she made measures 52” by 66” inches, has a patriotic border of American flags, and contains 12 panels with pictures from Camp Rosenbaum. On the reverse side, the staff from Camp Rosenbaum signed their names along with messages of support. SuEllen volunteers at Camp Rosenbaum, where she works in arts and crafts, and has worked with our campers for many years.

Also, in mid-October the unit will deploy 14 Soldiers to Logistic Support Area Anaconda, along with about 30 Soldiers from Oklahoma, South Dakota and Washington. The unit will spend six-months flying Sherpas, transporting personnel and equipment throughout Iraq and Kuwait in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom.

The unit is in the volunteer force for this deployment, chosen by Capt. Daryl Ottaway, at 503-584-2284 or via e-mail at daryl.ottaway@us.army.mil.

Capt. Daryl Ottaway, Occupational Health Nurse, Oregon Army National Guard

A/641 prepares for deployment

All-volunteer unit will fly Sherpas in Iraq

Chinooks, we’re flying the wings off the Sherpas, and the bottom line is we need a more capable aircraft to do the same thing that the C-23 Sherpa is being used for,” said Capt. Daryl Ottaway, at 503-584-2284 or via e-mail at daryl.ottaway@us.army.mil.

Oregon is currently third on the pre-allocation list to receive the C-231 Sherpa. In top are the Montana Army National Guard and the 1720th Assault Company. Due to the “Below Oregon” list, the unit will receive the Sherpa from the 1720th Assault Company. Doran said Oregon’s state Adjutant General, Maj. Gen. Gene Leland, will be able to increase the size of the Sherpa unit’s mission; including night vision, upgraded medical equipment and increased cargo capability.

Doran agreed that staying in contact with family and friends via the Internet or phone is important, but it still doesn’t take the place of actually being there during those times. His wife will give birth to their third child while he is deployed.

"It’s our job to go over there and do the best possible mission we can, and part of this is to bring everyone home safely,” said Sgt. 1st Class Scott McCoy, who will be a Flight Platoon Sergeant on the deployment.

"We’ll be working with a lot of familiar faces, we know what their expectations are,” said Capt. Daryl Ottaway, at 503-584-2284 or via e-mail at daryl.ottaway@us.army.mil.

"We’ve done everything we can do at the company to prepare for this deployment and national level to be poised and postured to receive the Sherpas,” said Capt. Daryl Ottaway, at 503-584-2284 or via e-mail at daryl.ottaway@us.army.mil.

Capt. Daryl Ottaway, Occupational Health Nurse, Oregon Army National Guard
Retiring conductor plays in Astoria event


Command Sergeant Major Keith Neal is not necessarily known for his musical expertise, but he was more than happy to be selected to guest conduct the Jazz & Samba Ymca Band during the city’s 2007 Fourth of July Celebration.

Neal was the guest conductor for the band during two concerts July 3-4, during which he conducted the “National Emblem March” by E. I. Bagley.

The first concert on July 3 was held in the historic Liberty Theater in Astoria. The second concert was held the following day in the Cannon Beach City Park.

Neal, a tuba player in the band since 1998, said he enjoyed playing with the band. “I was pleased to be asked to conduct. The experience was a great honor, he added.

“It was really exciting for me to conduct the band and an experience I will not forget,” Neal said. “I was fortunate to have great support from the other band members.”

NCBS is a 45 member band, made up of community musicians that range in age from high school students to retirees. Members travel from all over northwest Oregon and Southwest Washington to play in the band.

Neal recently honored the first responders ceremony on July 15 in Lake Oswego, Ore. After the ceremony Neal was asked to conduct the band. Neal, who served in Afghanistan and served in Vietnam before being honorably discharged in 1974. He later joined the U.S. Army National Guard and served various duties throughout the organization before retiring as the Command Sergeant Major in May, 2007.

Brig. Gen. Charles Yriarte praised Neal for his musical talent and expertise which will be greatly missed by the Oregon Army National Guard.

Trailblazers to host military on Nov. 10

The Portland Trailblazers will pay tribute to Oregon’s military on Nov. 10, 2007, as part of their 2007-2008 Season and the Combat Team during the Veteran’s Day weekend.

Oregon National Guard members can take advantage of $10 tickets to see the Portland Trailblazers play the Dallas Mavericks at the Rose Garden Arena in Portland, Ore. The game is set to begin at 7:00 p.m.

Other discounted tickets include seats for $15 and $41. Tickets must be purchased before Sept. 28, 2007. After this date, tickets will be offered to the general public. All sales are a first-come, first-served basis.

Prior to the game, military members and their families will be allowed to use the court to play half-court games from 2:00 to 3:00 p.m.

For more information contact Sgt 1st Class Nancy Pine at 503-584-3989, or via email at nancy.pine@us.army.mil. The website is also sign up online at www.givelife.org. The sponsor code is ORMilitary.

New law clarifies where and when to render salute

WASHINGTON, D.C. – U. S. Senator Jim Inhofe (R-Okla.) today praised the passage by unanimous consent of his bill (S.1877) clarifying U.S. Law to allow veterans and servicemembers in uniform to salute window decals. The current law (U.S. Code Title 4, Chapter 1) states that veterans and service members in uniform should place their hand over their heart without clarifying whether they can or should salute the flag.

“In order to show our respect, representing pride in one’s military service,” Inhofe said. “Veterans and service members continue to represent the military service even when not in uniform.

Unfortunately, current U.S. Law Leaves confusion as to whether veterans and service members of Outlaw Union can or should salute the flag,” he continued. “My Legislation will clarify this issue and protect the honor and respect of veterans and servicemembers alike to salute the flag, whether they are in uniform or not. Senator Inhofe said he looks forward to seeing those who have served saluting proudly at baseball games, parades, and formal events.

“I believe this is an appropriate way to honor and recognize the 25 million veterans in the United States who have served in the military and remain as role models to others. Citizens who are currently serving or have served in the military have earned this right, and their recognition will be an inspiration to others.”

High Desert Museum offering discounts to military members

The High Desert Museum began offering a discount to all Military members starting June 9.

Any person who shows an active, reserve, or retired military ID during normal business hours will receive a 10 percent discount on admission. The High Desert Museum is open 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. daily, except for Thanksgiving, Christmas, and New Year’s Day.

The museum is located at 5980 S. Highway 97, in Bend, Ore. For more information, please visit www.highdesertmuseum.org.

Salem center offers free yoga classes to Oregon vets

Indigo Wellness Center in Salem is offering free yoga classes to all returning Oregon military members.

Yoga can be a helpful tool in re-integrating back into life. The center offers classes for all levels throughout the week. The center is located at 3276 Commercial St. SE in Salem.

For more information, contact Zora Campbell at 503-370-9090, or visit their website at www.indigowellnesscenter.com.

Humans, not nature causing many Oregon wildfires

While lightning generated fires have taken the spotlight this summer, human-caused fires have kept firefighters busy on state and private lands throughout Oregon.

Nearly 400 abandoned campfires, debris burns, smoking, and other vegetation misuse have sparked wildfires in the state.

“Even though we’re having a period of cooler weather, we’re still responding to a high number of human-caused fires” said Rick Gibb, Fire Management Officer for the Oregon Department of Forestry.

“Since firefighters are kept busy extinguishing these small human-caused fires, our resources are not able to fully focus on the natural fires that we have no control over” said Mary Ellen Holly, president and CEO of the Keep Oregon Wild organization.

When Holly, a resident of the state’s forested areas, including private, federal and state lands, are in a restricted use status, which means forest users must check before they go into the forests or perform any operations on their properties to see if their planned activities are allowed.

Campfires are prohibited on all state private lands in designated campgrounds, Gibb said. Furthermore, debris burning is not allowed except on very few districts where a permit is first required. Equipment for wood and yard debris are also restricted.

Once investigators have determined that a wildfire is caused by carelessness, the responsible party will be charged for suppression costs. Gibb stated that over 250 of those charges were made and collected in 2006.

Miracle League to dedicate baseball field

The Columbia River Miracle League and several other Oregon groups will dedicate a baseball field in Vancouver, Wash., Saturday, Sept. 22.

The field, located at the Harmony Sports Complex at Northeast 18th St., and 192d Ave., in east Vancouver, Wash., has been upgraded to include wheelchair-accessible ramps, sidewalks, 12 handicapped parking stalls, and a new playing surface.

Oregon’s non-profit organizations play a key role in the upgrades almost two years ago, according to TEAM Construction spokesperson, Shonnie Sanchez. Donation organizations, companies, with equipment and a labor force supplied by the Oregon Army National Guard’s Innovative Readiness Training program, made the project possible, she said.

For more information, visit www.columbiavermiracle.org.
Oregon Soldiers’ efforts help save nature trail in Newport

Prepared by Oregon Sentinel Staff
Photos courtesy of IRT

Soldiers with the Oregon Army National Guard, Innovative Readiness Training Program (IRT) started construction on a coastal erosion mitigation project on March 6, 2007 in Yaquina Bay. The Hatfield Marine Science Center (HMSC) and Coastal America Northwest Regional Implementation Team requested assistance from the Oregon Army National Guard to address erosion problems along part of the Center’s Estuary Trail in Newport, Ore. The trail winds around HMSC campus along the bay.

State and Federal agencies determined that placing rock and gravel along the bay shoreline would be the best method to stabilize the trail. The design was implemented to avoid the impact of hard shoreline stabilization on the estuarine species, habitats, biological productivity, and water quality of the bay.

Soldiers with the Oregon Army National Guard, Innovative Readiness Training Program (IRT) first shoveled sections of the collapsed and damaged asphalt trail.

As truck loads of gravel and rock started to arrive, soldiers and employees of the HMSC washed the gravel and rock before placing it along the shoreline. This process helped prevent contamination to the water and marine life in the bay. The cleaned rock was then placed along the shore using rubber-tracked hoboats — another method of preserving the existing shoreline and habitat.

The project was completed on March 8. Project NCOIC Sgt. 1st Class Stacy Heathcock supervised a small crew, which included Soldiers from the 124th Engineer Battalion.

Those who worked on the project included: Spc. Heidi Miller, Spc. Zach Spencer, Pfc. Eva Finnel, and Pfc. Joaquin Waldroop, who were from various units including the 234th Engineer Co. in Warrenton, Det. 1, 224th Engineer Co. in Newport, and the Headquarters Support Co., 124th Engineers based in Salem, Ore.

According to officials with the Hatfield Marine Science Center, the new trail construction and stabilization will allow the local population and visitors to resume use of the estuary trail for exercise, study, and recreation. The HMSC receives about 150,000 visitors annually with about 25,000 visitors coming from local elementary and high school touring groups.

Keep your family safe: Get a kit, make a plan, be informed

It’s early in the morning. You wake to the rumble and shake on what was supposed to be a quiet Saturday morning. The noise and shaking gradually worsen, and you soon realize that you’ve just experienced a large earthquake.

In 1993, a magnitude 5.9 trembler hit the Willamette Valley, leaving many buildings throughout the area severely damaged.

The “Spring Break Quake”, centered near Scotts Mills, Ore., was caused by a sudden shift in the Mt. Angel fault line.

The event also caused a sudden shift in the planning and preparation efforts for Oregon’s citizens and increased the awareness of disaster management at the family level.

The Oregon National Guard was very fortunate to get the State Legislature to add a tax deduction of $2,500 for doctors who enroll in TRICARE, Caldwell said.

“I hope this has a positive impact on getting more Oregon doctors to accept our soldiers,” he said.

The legislation also included additional tax deductions for Oregon Guardsmen, doubling the annual deduction from $3,000 to $6,000. It also allows employees of the Oregon National Guard Youth Challenge Program, headquartered in Bend, Ore., to take advantage of the $6,000 annual tax deduction.

The legislation was sponsored by the Oregon War Veterans Association and passed by the Oregon Senate and House. For the full story, see “Legislation addresses deployments, tax breaks, TRICARE” on page three.