Oregon National Guard takes to the woods

Story by Kathy Aney, The East Oregonian
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Three dozen men and women of the 2nd Battalion, 641st Aviation Regiment of the Oregon National Guard got an official send-off and personal farewells (Aug. 6) before they head to duty in Iraq.

Gov. Ted Kulongoski, Maj. Gen. Raymond Rees, families and friends gathered at the National Guard’s Army Aviation support facility in Salem to see them off. They will go first to training at Fort Benning, Ga., then to the air base in Balad, Iraq, about 60 miles north of Baghdad. Their deployment is for a year.

Their commander, Lt. Col. Todd Farmer of Stayton, admitted to mixed feelings after the 25-minute ceremony in the hangar.

“A good portion of them have been deployed before, but this is my first opportunity to go forward,” Farmer said. “I’m really excited about it. I’m also anxious, both for my family and my activities.”

Oregon Senate President Peter Courtney, D-Salem, said Democrats and Republicans often tussle about issues.

“But one thing we have never fought on a partisan basis is the care of and concern for these warrior-soldiers and their families,” he said.

Rees, who is Oregon’s adjutant general, said this is the fourth overseas deployment for one of the unit’s Soldiers, dating to the Vietnam War.

The unit traces its start to 1971, and its typical missions at home involve fires, floods and rescues. In Iraq, the unit will ferry troops, equipment and supplies, and support military operations.

“It represents the pride that the Oregon Guard has put into the Army aviation structure,” Rees said.

Oregon Guardsmen mobilize for a year in Iraq

Story by Peter Wong, The Statesman Journal
Reprinted with permission

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Oregon Governor Ted Kulongoski looks on as Col. Todd Farmer, battalion commander, and Command Sergeant Major Karen Jacobsharryman unfurl the Headquarters, Headquarters Company 2/641 Aviation colors. This took place prior to the mobilization ceremony Aug. 6 as the unit readies for a year-long deployment to Balad, Iraq.
Oregon National Guard continues to improve readiness

By Staff Sgt. Jefferson Thompson

Oregon National Guard members and their families are encouraged to submit story ideas. Stories from any source, military and other interested persons by request, free of charge. Contracts with Oregon Sentinel may be reprinted with permission.

Story compiled by Sentinel Staff
Oregon Military Department
Public Affairs

Sgt. Maj. Brunk W. Conley of Sublimity, Ore., was appointed as the new State Command Sergeant Major in July 2008 by Maj. Gen. Raymond F. Rees, the Adjunct General of the Oregon National Guard. The rank structure and standards in place for a rank of First Sergeant. The leadership position, Command Sergeant Major, is the senior enlisted advisor to the command commander and carries with it ceremonial functions including caring for the unit's colors (flag). Primarily he serves as a mentor and advocate of the enlisted men and women of the command.

Brunk W. Conley enlisted in the United States Army in the Delayed Entry Program in December 1981. He reported to Infantry Basic and Advanced Individual Training at Ft. Lewis, Washington. He reported to a follow-on assignment at Ft. Lewis, Washington to A Company, 3rd Platoon 2-75 (Ranger). He held positions as a riflemen, grenadier, automatic rifleman, sniper, rifleman and team leader. In 1986, his last year of active duty he was placed on special duty orders to serve at Ft. Lewis, Washington as a 2nd Battalion, 162 Infantry Training Camp as a Mountaineering Instructor. He left active duty to serve in the Oregon Army National Guard. His first assignment was as a scout section leader with 1-249 (FLAT) in Silverton, Ore. In October of 2003 he was selected as Command Sergeant Major of 2nd Battalion, 162 Infantry, commanded by Col. Jack Rees. In October of 2003 he was selected as Command Sergeant Major of the Continental United States in late March of 2006.

Upon completion of his tour in Baghdad, he was selected as the 41st Infantry Brigade Combat Team Command Sergeant Major. Under Brig. Gen. Douglas Pritt, the 41st Brigade Support Battalion became the Headquarters for Task Force Phoenix V in Kabul, Afghanistan. The HQ was responsible for the training, equipping, and standing of the Afghan National Army. In the middle of the deployment, the 41st was given the same responsibility for the Afghanistan National Police.

Conley has received the Bronze Star Medal with one oak leaf cluster, the Meritorious Service Medal with one oak leaf cluster, the Army Commendation Medal with one oak leaf cluster and many other awards and decorations. Conley has also been awarded the Distinguished Service Award, the Bronze Star Medallion, the Combat Infantryman's Badge, Expert Infantryman's Badge, Expert Parachutist Badge, Pathfinder Badge, Expert Marksmanship Badge, and the Combat Infantryman's Badge.

Bruck was born in Albany, Ore. of Bunk and Mona Conley of Albany and LaPine, Ore. He spent the majority of his early life in Sweet Home and graduated from Stayton Union High School. His father is retired Oregon National Guardman and his son Nick is currently a 1st Lieutenant in B Company, 2nd Battalion, 162nd Infantry based in Corvallis.

Conley has a Bachelor of Arts in Education from Western Oregon University and a Master’s Degree in Political Science from American Military University. In civilian life he is a high school physics chemistry teacher. Conley resides with his wife, Laura, and five sons, Bunk, V., Nicholas, Jacob, Zachary, and Lucas.
The importance of mediation in the military organization

By Senior Master Sgt. Max White, 142nd Fighter Wing
Human Resources Advisor

In July, four members of the Oregon National Guard were selected to attend the Mediation Certification class at the Defense Equal Opportunity Management Institute (DEOMI) at Patrick Air Force Base in Florida. Three of the attendees work in the Equal Opportunity (EO) realm in the Oregon National Guard and all four are graduates of the Diversity Council. The attendees are: Sanchez, Jamil; Sungshik Kim of the Oregon Army National Guard, Capt. Dawn Delan, Tech. Sgt. Sarah Bush, and, Senior Master Sgt. Max White of the Oregon Air National Guard. After a rigor- ous 10-week course, five attendees com- cum, four of all our ems as Department of Defense certified mediators.

What is mediation and why is it so important? Mediation is a process that is used in military equal employment oppor- tunity complaints, personnel issues, and workplace disputes. During the mediation process, the parties are given the opportunity to express their interest and concerns. Though not compulsory, the parties are able to reach an agreeable resolution. The benefits to a military unit are many, per- haps the most important being the time and money. According to the EEOC ADR (Ad- ministrative Dispute Resolution) Report for Fiscal Years 2000-2004, average processing time for complaints using mediation or other forms of ADR is 40 days and gener- ally, dismissals and settlements are reached. Medi- nation benefits the agency by reduc- ing labor hours to process complaints, as well as providing cost resolutions. ADR settlements are less expensive on average than EEO litigation. It also helps to preserve and maintain the integrity of the organization. These reduce costs and are less expensive for labor hours, actual process- ing costs and reduced settlement amounts are sometimes lower. ADR mediation is used every day, and we worked on it together.

What gives you confidence as a leader? Cody: When I see a soldier struggling, it makes me want to be a leader, to make the tough decisions, but still have the humility you do with leadership.

Cody: You have to be a leader, to make the tough decisions, but still have the humility you do with leadership.

What would you do? Cody: You have to be a leader, to make the tough decisions, but still have the humility you do with leadership.

Your decision? Cody: I know you are going to miss the Army. I know you are going to miss the Army.

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Klamath Falls hosts one of the largest air shows in the state featuring military and vintage aircraft

Klamath Air Show 2008

“Feel the Thunder”

Story by Staff Sgt. Jefferson Thompson, Oregon Military Department Public Affairs Office

T

venty thousand people from in and around Klamath Falls, Ore. felt the thunder of the 2008 Klamath Air Show at Kingsley Field June 21. The show was primarily driven by the Klamath Falls Chamber of Commerce, but certainly relied heavily on the 173rd Fighter Wing as well as other military units.

“We put in a lot of man hours and added a lot to the military end of the show including statics, and performers,” said Col. James Miller, the 173rd Fighter Wing Commander. “We even had Maj. John Klatt out here, the ambassador for the Air National Guard.” Klatt flies a handcrafted Staudacher S-300D (above) which was built for world-class unlimited aerobatics and is painted in an Air National Guard scheme. The Staudacher is lightweight and is built with an all tubular and wood makeup allowing the airplane to weigh in at a mere 1250 lbs. Visitors were treated to hands-on displays of several types of aircraft including an A-10 Thunderbolt II “Warthog,” a World War II era P-51 Mustang, and other military and civilian aircraft when not keeping their eyes on the sky. A U.S. Navy F-18 Hornet fighter, Kingsley Field’s own F-15 fighters and the U.S. Air Force Thunderbirds were just a few of the demonstrations on the day’s schedule.

“We had the premier demonstration team the Air Force Thunderbirds, they flew several shows and closed the air show on Saturday,” said Miller. According to the official Thunderbirds website, “the Thunderbirds represent the ultimate in skill, precision and American air power in the jet age, the Thunderbirds era P-51 Mustang and made several passes in front of the audience. According to the Air Combat and Command website, “The U.S. Air Force Heritage Flight program was established in 1997 to commemorate the Thunderbirds of incredible,” said Prunk. “The Governor not just on your prior experience but your future potential,” said Maj. Gen. Raymond F. Rees, The Adjutant General of the Oregon National Guard. After receiving his promotion, Prunk recognized his family and friends from the Oregon National Guard and thanked them for their support.

“The job the men and women are doing in Iraq is nothing short of incredible,” said Prunk. “The enlisted force is the heart, soul, and backbone of the Oregon National Guard,” he added. Prunk brings a wealth of military and civilian experience to his new post as Assistant to the Adjutant General, Air. He retired as the Assistant Chief of Police from the Portland Police Bureau in 2004 after 28 years of service. He joined the Oregon Air National Guard in 1983, was selected for an officer’s commission through the Air National Guard’s Academy of Military Science in May 1984. In 1996 he was selected as commander of the 142nd Security Forces Wing is to appeal to those who may consider joining the service. “I think the most important aspect of the Air show was showing the Air National Guard and telling our story, and one of the big benefits of this is generating interest and drawing new recruits to our organization,” said Miller.

The festivities revealed a lighter side in addition to the “shock and awe” aspects like the F-15 demonstration team and the Thunderbirds.

We put in a lot of man hours and added a lot to the military end of the show.

— Col. James Miller, Commander 173rd FW

General Officer promotion for Oregon Air National Guard

During the ceremony, Brig. Gen. Bruce Prunk was also awarded the Bronze Star for his service in Iraq when he deployed as the Deputy Commander of the 732nd Air Expeditionary Group, 332nd Air Expeditionary Wing in 2007.

“It’s a great pleasure to promote you on behalf of the Governor not just on your prior experience but your future potential,” said Maj. Gen. Raymond F. Rees, The Adjutant General of the Oregon National Guard. After receiving his promotion, Prunk recognized his family and friends from the Oregon National Guard and thanked them for their support.

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Photo by Tech. Sgt. Jennifer Shirar, 173rd FW Public Affairs

The U.S. Air Force Heritage Flight program featured a 173rd Fighter Wing F-15 Eagle which was joined by a World War II era P-51 Mustang.

Oregon National Guard
POST DEPLOYMENT ASSISTANCE
(Reintegration Program)

The Oregon National Guard wants to see you succeed, and is ready to help with employment, health care, college, or other matters.

Call toll-free: 1-888-688-2264, 24-hours, 7-days per week

OTHER CONTACTS FOR ASSISTANCE:

- Suicide prevention hotline: 1-800-560-5535
- Oregon Military Department: 1-800-452-7500
- VA Hospital, Portland, Ore.: 1-800-949-1004
- VA Hospital, Walla Walla, WA: 1-888-687-8863
- VA Hospital, Boise, ID: 208-422-1000
- VA Hospital, Roseburg, Ore.: 541-440-1000
- Oregon Department of Veterans Affairs: 1-800-828-8801
- Veterans Administration: www.va.gov
- Military One Source: www.militaryonesource.com or: 1-800-342-9647
- ESGR: 1-800-452-7500 / 503-584-2837
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Photo by Tech. Sgt. Jennifer Shirar, 173rd FW Public Affairs

The U.S. Air Force Heritage Flight program featured a 173rd Fighter Wing F-15 Eagle which was joined by a World War II era P-51 Mustang.
By Staff Sgt. Jim Greenhill, National Guard Bureau

ARLINGTON, Va. – A new relationship with IndyCar promises to propel National Guard recruiting forward and give Citizen-Soldiers and -Airmen a more personal interest in another sport.

The new 230-MPH, No. 4 National Guard IndyCar was unveiled at the Army National Guard Readiness Center here at Arlington Hall.

“We’ve been involved with NASCAR for a number of years,” said Maj. Gen. Ray Carpenter, special assistant to the director of the Army National Guard. “This is the next step in racing for us. It’s a great, great opportunity for us to showcase our National Guard capability in a different forum. It’s a great, great step forward.

“The benefit for us is that it provides another venue for us to tell the National Guard story and reach out to a target population.”

Driven by Vitor Meira for Panther Racing team owner John Barnes, the Dalyara IR car has a 3.5 liter Honda Indy V-8 engine and runs on ethanol. Meira’s state: Hailing from Brazil, the Indianapolis resident is 31 and married.

Meira said a visit to wounded Guard-members at Brooke Army Medical Center in Texas was the moment he truly understood what the National Guard stands for. “I’m gaining so much from every Soldier I meet,” he said. “It’s something very different than other sponsors. We pass the message on – a message of honor and pride for the great things this country stands for. I’m really honored to drive the National Guard car.

The Soldiers influence me. If I drove as good as they perform their duty every day, I would be in the winner’s circle every time.

Meira sees common ground between the training he must do and the training Soldiers do. “Training is everything in life,” he said. “Soldiers and the Guard are a statement of that. The amount that they train and how well they perform their duty is a statement that training is everything.

Adrenaline and the spirit of competition are among Meira’s driving forces. “It’s my way of life,” he said. “It’s his work. It’s something I was doing as a kid – something I would pay to do and now get paid to do.”

The National Guard was the car’s primary sponsor at Richmond International Raceway on June 28 and is also scheduled to be on July 6 at Watkins Glen International in New York, on Aug. 9 at the Kentucky Speedway and on Sept. 7 at the Chicagoland Speedway.

Panther Racing hosts up to 200 Guard members at each race. Owner John Barnes is in his 42nd year of racing and he said he’s come full circle: The racing driver who was his father’s best friend and best man and who inspired Barnes to enter the world of the track himself was a National Guard Guardsman.

“Now to have the National Guard support my team is unbelievable,” he said, “I’ve never dreamed of.”

If I drove as good as they perform their duty every day, I would be in the winner’s circle every time.

— Vitor Meira, Team Driver

Prepare for the future

CWS James Powell, Command Chief Warrant Officer, Oregon National Guard

This month, we highlight some of the things for you to consider if you would like to become a warrant officer. All of the specialized warrant officer positions require “pre-requisites,” those things which must be completed before you can be approved to enter Warrant Officer Candidate School (WOCS).

Generally speaking, you should have attained the rank of E-5, and certainly have completed Warrior Leader Course. Some positions require completion of the Basic NCO Course. College degrees are not required, although it is a benefit to you to have two years of college (or an Associate Degree) in a related specialty when you apply.

For most of the positions, you must submit all NCO Evaluation Reports. For those of you who have Specialist or “E-4” evaluations, keep those for submission.

Completion certificates from military and civilian-related courses are a must. Military awards including copies of all award certificates are necessary.

You need to complete an Army Physical Fitness Test, and be within the guidelines of AR 600-9.

Beyond these common personal history items, you can find all the requirements for each Warrant Officer MOS online by going to the US Army Recruiting Command website, located at www.usarec.org. If you still have questions about the job, call the proponent office to ask them about the Warrant Officer Recruiting, then on the next page, call the drop-down menu for “all Warrant MOS.”

This page will list each Warrant Officer MOS; click on your desired position, and you can learn the requirements for that position. Please don’t call the proponent office to ask them questions about the job. Call me at (503) 584-3579, or call Sgt. 1st Class Lenora Landwehr at (503) 584-2886. We are ready to answer any of your questions! Good Luck, review the requirements, begin preparing now for your future as a Warrant Officer in the Oregon Army National Guard! 
Oregon Guardsmen head to Washington, Idaho to hone skills during annual training Aug. 9.

Iraqi refugees help Soldiers develop new skills for the battlefield

Story by Spc. John Crosby, 115th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

Over the course of the last two decades and two wars fought in the Persian Gulf, many displaced persons have found their way to America, many of whom are Iraqi.

Iraqi Americans displaced from Operation Desert Storm are stepping up to make a difference in their native country more than a decade later in the midst of Operation Iraqi Freedom.

Iraqi Sunnis, Shias and Kurds, Muslims and Christians are working together with one common goal in a program integrating the knowledge, customs and culture of Iraqi nationals with the experience of the U.S. Military in Iraq.

The program is aimed at preparing the U.S. Armed Forces for service in support of the Global War on Terrorism.

Contractors and Iraqis, working together under Blue Canopy, are assisting the 41st Infantry Brigade Combat Team (IBCT) in training to prepare for a deployment to Iraq, slated for 2009.

"The benefit of the Iraqi participation here is indescribable," said 1st Lt. Spencer Cookson, engineer platoon leader, Company A, Special Troops Battalion (STB), 41 IBCT. "The training here is not like anything I have ever seen. They speak authentic and fluent Arabic, with Coalition Forces in Iraq as interpreters. "The Iraqis always have something to add during our (after action reports)." Cookson said. "They have lived many of the things we are training for first hand in Iraq. More than five years into Operation Iraqi Freedom and more and more Iraqis are standing up across the United States to fight for their motherland. "We are all Iraqis," said Azad Yousef, an Iraqi refugee who moved to the U.S. in 1996. We live together and work together. We joke with each other about being Kurdish, Sunni or Shia. People make it a big mess, it's all propaganda. We are all family. We are all Iraqi."

In 2004 Yousef deployed with the U.S. Army as an interpreter to Iraq for a one year tour. He has worked with Blue Canopy ever since readying Soldiers for what they may face in deployed life. "I love my job," said Alaa Al Janabi, a former Iraqi Republican Guard Soldier turned refugee in 1991 after Desert Storm. Aljana was able to speak Arabic fluently and helped us get something great," Alaa said. "I love my job," said Alaa Al Janabi, a former Iraqi Republican Guard Soldier turned refugee in 1991 after Desert Storm. Aljana was able to speak Arabic fluently and helped us get something great," Alaa said.

"We all want the violence to stop," Jalal said as his brother agreed. "It takes sacrifice to build something great," Alaa said. "I think we have sacrificed enough. We are ready for a new, free Iraq. That is why we are here."

Blue Canopy moves across the U.S. training Soldiers, Marines and Seamen.

They help familiarize new Service members with what they are up against, and remind seasoned Service members to train as they fight. "Their experience and skill sets are invaluable to the war fighter," said Dave Pawlus, a Blue Canopy employee that works with the Iraqi-Americans. Pawlus, like many of the Blue Canopy contractors that work with Iraqis, served in Iraq as a Soldier and contractor. "Using true Iraqis for the exercises allows them to make more realistic and more intense training for the Soldiers, and enables them a chance to evaluate how they act and react," Pawlus said. "Basically anything that is happening in Iraq, we try to recreate here," Pawlus said. Lt. Col. Ken Nygren, STB commander agrees.

Nygren said it gives his Soldiers a chance to interact with the Iraqis in a role-playing environment as well as a relaxed classroom. It allows them to get one-on-one time with the Iraqis. "It gets us in the mindset that the bad guys and the good guys will look alike," Nygren said. "It helps show us that the Iraqis are people just like us with the same wants and same needs as we do."

"We teach them our culture and our customs, and give them insight into our way of living."

Al Janabi's brother, Jalal Al Janabi was a student in Iraq before Desert Storm. He also became a refugee in 1991 and came to the U.S. in 1996. "I really love it," Al Janabi continued. "I feel that the Soldiers really need us and we are here for them. We think we have sacrificed enough. That is why we are here." Pawlus said. "Basically anything that is happening in Iraq, we try to recreate here," Pawlus said. Lt. Col. Ken Nygren, STB commander agrees.

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"I feel that the Soldiers really need us and we are here for them.

We teach them our culture and our customs, and give them insight into our way of living."

— Al Janabi, former Iraqi Republican Guard Soldier turned refugee in 1991
Medics maintain mission readiness

Story and photo by Spc. John Crosby, 115th MPAD

Medics of 1-186 Infantry, 1st Infantry Brigade Combat Team, Oregon Army National Guard are hard at work. Aug. 4 at the Orchard Training Area near Boise, Idaho, for an upcoming deployment slated for 2009.

On a desolate landscape, the medics prepare for real world missions using front line ambulances (FLA), UH-60 Blackhawk Helicopters and other various military vehicles to simulate medical evacuations (MEDEVAC).

“I love it,” said Pvt. Matthew Keeling, a Medford native and medic in Company D, 1-186 IN. “I’m really excited. This is my first time round a hot Blackhawk.”

This is Keeling seconds annual training since joining the Oregon Army National Guard.

“This AT blows any other training I’ve received out of the water,” Keeling said. “We’re focused on our mission and we’re operating the way we would be in Iraq.”

Before conducting practical exercises, the medics receive several blocks of instruction from Staff Sgt. Eric Powell of Eagle Creek, Ore., medical platoon sergeant, Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 1-186 IN.

“I want to get the (advanced individual training) mindset out of them,” said Powell. “Medics fight too. Shoot, move, communicate. I want them to be autonomous units, moving on their own, responding to any situation, and getting the casualties off the battlefield as quickly as possible.”

In addition to medical training, the medics receive their fair share of tactical training as well.

“The medical training has been great,” Keeling said. “We get the best of both worlds. We run around doing the infantry stuff in the field and come back and do more medical training.”

As annual training at the Orchard Training Area comes close to the end, Soldiers are working to get the most out of this opportunity.

“I’m excited about having the chance to get these guys thinking like Soldiers instead of (Emergency Medical Technicians),” Powell said. “I want them to be as prepared as they possibly can for their upcoming deployment.”

Brigade Support Battalion live-fire

Story by Spc. John Crosby, 115th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

Spc. Andrew Flores, a designated safety on this convoy security training lane, watches as Pfc. Jessica Greer opens up an M2 .50 Caliber machine gun from an up armored humvee on pop-up targets on the horizon. Flores and Greer are both truck drivers in the Transportation Platoon, Company A, 141 Brigade Support Battalion, 41st Infantry Brigade Combat Team, Oregon Army National Guard.

Brigade Support Battalion (BSB), 41st IBCT, conducted annual training (xCTC) training at Orchard Training Area, near Boise, Idaho.

Contact right! Contact right!” is echoed over several machine guns varying in caliber, opening up from up-armed humvees on their respective targets. Carbon laced CLP spits from the bolts of rhythmically blazing automatic weapons into the sweaty faces of gunners belonging to the 141 Brigade Support Battalion (BSB), 41st Infantry Brigade Combat Team.

The BSB’s mission today was to provide security for a convoy carrying much needed supplies to nearby troops. That and learn a thing or two in the process. It was another day of lanes training in the Orchard Training area near Boise, Idaho, Aug. 12.

“It’s an excellent starting point,” said Company A Commander, Capt. Ginger Roberts, 141 BSB. “It will help us put in the right frame of mind and enable us to look at the things we need to look at in order to become proficient on a daily basis.” Roberts said approximately 65 percent of the Soldiers in her company have not yet deployed.

This is my first time firing the .50 Cal. while moving,” said Pfc. Jessica Greer, a truck driver in the Transportation Platoon, Co. A, 141 BSB, from Portland, Ore.

“I really enjoyed it. The desert, the heat and getting us used to the possible scenarios we might face in Iraq. I think they’re making this as realistic as possible,” she said. Soldiers of Headquarters and Headquarters Company as well as Company A were tested against simulated improvised explosive devices, rocket propelled grenade fire, small arms and indirect fire.

Mounting and dismounting vehicles and providing tactical aid to combat casualties were also scenarios thrown at these Soldiers.

“While this training will get us thinking tactically and remind us of our battle drills,” Roberts said. “It helps us to know what to expect when we’re in country.”

Exportable Combat Training Capability upgrades AT

Story by Staff Sgt. Jefferson Thompson

Oregon Military Department Public Affairs Office

The Oregon National Guard’s 41st Infantry Brigade Combat Team (IBCT) conducted annual training at Gowen Field, Idaho from Aug. 4 to 24.

The training, called Exportable Combat Training Capability (xCTC), replicated the contemporary operational environment the brigade will face during its deployment to Iraq in 2009.

During xCTC Soldiers underwent intense combat training where they were taught and tested in realistic war scenarios and military missions.

“The range itself is set up as close to realistic as you can possibly get,” said 1st Sgt. Bradley Happen. “We have civilians on the battlefield; we have embedded reporters; we have people that are out there shooting at us,” he added.

The program provides a unique way to evaluate their performance. Commanders see the battlefield in real time, through 2D, 3D and video battlefield surveillance.

Global Positioning System technology monitors Soldiers’ movements and unit and individual role-playing elements create a more realistic battlefield environment.

It provides the Soldiers and leaders greater immersion, and it is very mobile.

“It lets us go virtually anywhere we need to go, wherever the unit that’s getting ready to go needs to have that capability,” said Phil Stemple, Army National Guard Training Chief. “So that we’re not having the cost of moving units halfway across the country,” he said.

The program benefits Soldiers by reducing the amount of time spent on deployment, and by cutting the amount of time needed for training prior to a unit’s deployment.

xCTC is one of the best training events available to prepare our Soldiers for next year’s deployment,” said Col. Daniel Hokanson, Commander of the 41st IBCT. “We have programmed a series of realistic training scenarios that our Soldiers are likely to encounter during their deployment utilizing the many resources provided by xCTC and the similarity of terrain and atmosphere of Idaho’s high desert.”

The Brigade’s deployment to Iraq will be the largest war-time deployment of the Oregon National Guard since World War II. It will be three times larger that the Brigade’s recent deployment to Afghanistan in 2006-2007 and will involve the entire Brigade of 3,400 Soldiers and will likely affect every community in the State of Oregon.
**Portland Air Guard Supports PDX Air Fair**

**Story by**
Tech. Sgt. Rachelle Avery
142nd Fighter Wing

Members from several organizations around the Portland metropolitan area got a closer look at the Portland International Airport during the PDX Air Fair, held at the airport on July 12, 2008.

Community members joined representatives from the Port of Portland, Oregon Air National Guard, Federal Aviation Administration, Transportation Security Administration, Oregon Department of Transportation, and several other groups to learn about airport operations, and what the airport is doing for the community.

**He drapped the tent over his body.**
*Ten seconds.*

He grabbed the edges and positioned them.

*Fifteen seconds.*

Grabbing the handles, Loomis hunkered down.

Per instructions, the men stayed inside their tents and chattered to one another like they would in a real burnover situation.

*You guys all right out there?* one soldier ventured.

*Sgt. McCracken - you want to come over for a barbecue?* said another.

Finally, they got permission to come out. Loomis emerged, sweaty and smiling, and described the imaginary burnover.

*It was hot,* he said. *I dug a little hole for clean air so I wouldn’t have to breathe hot gasses and waited for the fire to blow over.*

The Pendleton Guardman said it was his first experience with wildland fire, real or imaginary, but said he's ready to go.

*I feel pretty confident in myself and my fellow Soldiers,*” he said.

Though Oregon is having a tame fire season so far this summer, Nicely thinks the governor is acting wisely.

*All one has to do, he said, is look south to California to see how fast the fire situation can heat up.*

**Commissary on-site at Camp Rilea**

Story by Spc. Michael Bley, 115th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

Servicemembers, along with veterans and their families, were treated to gospel and quilting demonstrations last month during Oregon’s first ever On-Site Commissary Sale at Camp Rilea in Warrenton, Ore.

The event was arranged in order to provide the opportunity for lower commissary prices, a benefit of military service, to military members who serve in Oregon and Southwest Washington.

The nearest major commissaries are located several hours north in Tacoma, Wash. at McChord Air Force Base and Fort Lewis.

With fuel prices at an all-time high, it simply may not be a viable option for many military families.

An Air Force sale, which ran from June 27th through the 29th, customers were given shopping carts and a complete list of all available items and prices.

Under a large canvas tent, everything from laundry detergent to fresh fruit was on hand, most products were marked down significantly from neighboring retail stores like Fred Meyer and Wal-Mart.

Customer service was also a priority for commissary workers at the event. Dan Witcock, a resident shopper, described staff members at the event as being *“very prompt,”* saying *“everyone here seems to really care about this and how much this (event) helps people who live far from a commissary.”*

The On-Site Commissary Sale was conceived and organized by Zone 12 Commissary Manager Robert J. Bunch, who recognized the need for additional coverage in states without commissary support and wanted to do his part to help Oregon military members who serve their country during a period when food prices are on the rise.

With enthusiastic cooperation from the Fort Lewis and McChord Air Force Base commissaries, the event was arranged with several vendors such as Proctor & Gamble and Del Monte became involved.

Even the Buffalo Bills chose to lend their support by flying two of the team’s cheerleaders to meet and greet servicemembers at Camp Rilea.

There were indeed many uniformed Soldiers who browsed the provisional commissary on their own, surfing merchandise and looking for bargains.

**Servicemembers, along with veterans and their families, were treated to gospel and quilting demonstrations last month during Oregon’s first ever On-Site Commissary Sale at Camp Rilea in Warrenton, Ore.**

**Story by Spc. Michael Bley, 115th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment**

**View the day off members of the 125th STS, Master Sgt. Aaron Massey and Tech. Sgt. Benjamin Miller conducted a demonstration using a remote-control drone and laser guided tools used to paint targets for precision guided munitions.**
**Stronger Couples workshop in Sept.**

There will be a Strong Bonds Couples Weekend Retreat (formerly known as Mari- riage Enrichment) offered September 19 – 21, 2008. This seminar is open to Oregon Soldiers and Airmen only. For more information contact Mr. Bob Giordano, b.giordano@oregonarmy.mil or call 503-584-3856.

**Veterans “Stand Down” in Lane County**

Stand Down 2008 – Eugene, OR. The Lane County Stand Down occurs September 19, 2008 at the Eugene National Guard Armory.

All veterans are invited to join in, with local veteran organizations exhibiting programs and activities throughout the day. Veterans of every age, branch and economic level come together for one day, said Maas. The Stand Down registration fee is charged for the meal which includes a full luncheon and dessert. There is no cost for participation. The luncheon is served at 11:30 a.m. and the luncheon is served at 12:20 p.m. The event is being held at the Salem Eagles Hall, 3562 Commercial St. E., Salem, OR 97301.

**TSP limits change for those who deploy**

If you work in a combat zone anytime during the calendar year and also contribute to the Defense Savings Plan (TSP), the annual addition limit is important to understand. See more about the annual addition limit of TSP at www.dfas.mil/ml-news/ mar2008/additionallimits.html.

**Retiree Luncheon scheduled for Sep 19**

Twice each year, in April and September, a retiree luncheon is held at the Salem Eagles Hall. The next luncheon is scheduled for September 19.

Attendees are retired members of the Oregon National Guard, both Active Army, Air National Guard and former civilian employees of the Oregon Military Department.

Luncheons begin with a “get acquainted” time at 11:30 a.m. and the luncheon is served at 12:20 p.m. By e-mail, contact Eileen Cope at escopa@gmail.com or call 503-584-3910.

**Creative Writing group seeks military women veterans**

An award-winning Oregon writer and founder of the Mid-Valley Veteran’s Writing Group is interested in starting a writing group designed for women Veterans or women who have military backgrounds.

The group is open to women with either considerable or with little creative writing experience, and regardless of writing genre (whether it be poetry, essays, short stories, etc.).

There is no cost for participation. The time and dates for the writing group will be determined at the first meeting, based on availability of participants.

For more information, e-mail Rosy Macias, R. Macias@va.gov or Marilyn Johnston, Red-DustRising@att.net.

**Expanded retiree program available**

The Oregon National Guard Retiree’ and Veteran’s Council has expanded its area of responsibility to include veterans, and retired state or federal civilian employees of the Oregon National Guard.

A veteran is anyone that has been discharged or relieved under honorable condi- tions during peacetime or war.

The Council’s challenge is to recognize the future changes in the make up of our civilian workforce. The Oregon National Guard is a different person when you come back from a deployment. With that growth often means a shift in career goals for both the Soldier and sometimes his or her spouse.

Another place Soldiers can speak with CTAP members and potential employers are Career and Benefit Fairs held throughout the state. The next event is September 19.

“We’re one more iron in the fire, and we’re here to help you,” said Maas.

You might want to be on the invitation list, and are not, please contact Chief War- rant Officer (Ret) Lee Ashwill, at (503) 638-1767 or by e-mail, l.ashwill@oregonarmy. comcast.net.

**State agencies host career fair in Salem**

The state of Oregon will host a major career event in September on the Capitol Mall to showcase the many diverse job opportunities that exist in state agencies, the Department of Administrative Services (DAS) announced Thursday. The event, careerfairOregon, will take place on Saturday, Sept. 13, from 10 a.m.-2 p.m. on the lawn of the Capitol Mall. Its purpose is to invite state job seekers to check out employment opportunities with state government, Oregon’s biggest employer, and to encourage existing employees to explore new job possibilities within state government.

“The next five years, a third of our state workers will become eligible to retire,” said DAS Director Scott Harra. “It is important that people interested in finding employment opportunities in government stay informed about the great opportunities that await them.”

More than 40 state agencies will participate in careerfairOregon, Harra said. Agency representatives will describe to job-seekers the advantageous working in state government, and the satisfaction of following a career in public service.

“The fair will help job-seekers understand the progressive and innovative ways that state government serves the needs of the workers, consumers and citizens of Oregon,” Harra said. The event will include presentation sessions and on-the-spot informational interviews, he added, with emphasis on how someone can get a job with the state.

For additional information about this event, contact careerfairOregon at (503) 378-5544 or visit the website at oregonjobs.org and click on “careerfai- r Oregon.”

**DMDC website offers free service for active duty personnel**

A new free service is available on a De- fense Manpower Data Center (DMDC) Web site to obtain certificates of current active duty, former or retired, and the Servicemembers’ Civil Relief Act of 2003 (SCRA). The Web site is www.dmrc.forms.com and click on “careerfai- r Oregon.”
Senator Observes Troops Training For Future Deployment

Sen. Ron Wyden expresses his support and appreciation for troops of 2-162 Infantry Battalion of 41st Infantry Brigade Combat Team during XCTC training near Bisbee, Idaho. He was able to see methods used to extract a wounded Soldier from the battlefield into a more stable triage area.

Troops gathered in a half-circle as Wyden expressed his support and appreciation for their efforts in current and past conflicts. "You are folks who represent our country and do it with great courage and great patriotism. And anybody—anybody—is anybody who wanted to say, I've got your back," Wyden said.

Operation Tiger Balm:
Joint U.S. and Singapore exercise in Hawaii builds skills and relationships

Right: Brig. Gen. Philip Lin and Brig. Gen. Charlies Yiartate, commander of the 82nd Brigade, Oregon Army National Guard, meet to discuss the success of Operation Tiger Balm, a joint exercise between U.S. and Singapore forces at Schofield Barracks, Hawaii. July 20. Operation Tiger Balm, which cycles every two years, is an exercise designed to give the United States Army the opportunity to train in a joint training environment which includes a revamped GI Bill. Photo by Staff Sgt. Kevin Hartman, 115th MPAD. Oregon Army National Guard

New GI Bill Offers more options to veterans for education

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

President Bush signed new legislation which included a revamped GI Bill July 24, 2008. Many post-9/11 veterans and servicemembers will soon see be eligible for a new comprehensive education benefits package that goes well beyond helping to pay for tuition. Many veterans who served after Sept. 11, 2001, will get full tuition and fees, a new monthly housing stipend, and a $1,000 a year stipend for books and supplies. The new bill also goes Reserve and Guard members who have been activated for more than 90 days since 9/11 access to the same GI Bill benefits. The Post-9-11 Veterans Educational Assistance Act goes into effect on August 1, 2009 and is not retroactive. It levels the playing field in that our Soldiers will now be treated the same as the Active Duty Soldiers." said Brig. Gen Mike Caldwell, Deputy Director of the Oregon Military Department. "It’s not a perfect bill by any means, but it does help out our combat veterans.”

Calldwell said it’s important for Soldiers to look at all of their options, because some Soldiers may actually receive more money under the existing Montgomery GI bill. The Post 9/11 GI Bill gives financial credit based on how many months a soldier

Post 9/11 GI Bill Benefit Eligibility Requirements:

- Be honorably discharged from Armed Forces; or
- Be released from Armed Forces with service characterized as honorable and placed on the retired list, temporary disability retired list, or transferred to the Fleet Reserve or the Fleet Marine Corps Reserve; or
- Be released from the Armed Forces with service characterized as honorable for further service in a reserve component; or
- Be discharged or released from Armed Forces for:
  - EPTS (Excluded Prior to Service)
  - HDSP (Husband or Wife Disability)
  - TUSD (Total Unit-Size Determination with Duty); or
- You are eligible for chapter 30, 1606, 1607 education benefits through the Department of Veterans Affairs after September 11, 2001
- Remain on active duty.

Three of the major benefits of the new GI Bill are up to 100 percent paid tuition, a monthly housing stipend, and a stipend of up to $1,000 a year for books and supplies. The housing allowance is calculated using Basic Allowance for Housing (BAH) rates for your area and are determined specifically based on the E-5 pay grade. The stipend for books and supplies is paid in full if you are a full-time student, however if you attend less than full-time you will receive a proportional amount of the payment based on the number of units of study. These benefits are prorated on the above scale, for example if you aggregated 12 months of active duty service in the guard or reserves, and were going to school full-time, you would be eligible for 60 percent of the tuition and fees rate, $600 (60% of $1000) for books and supplies, and 60 percent of the BAH allowed for the area.

One of the newest benefits provided in the new legislation is transferability. It is possible to use the Post 9/11 GI Bill to transfer your benefits to your spouse or family member, but that benefit will not be available until August of 2009. Following passage of the bill through the U.S. Congress and upon signature by President Bush the bill became law, however as the law is enacted and interpreted changes to the new GI Bill are inevitable. The Oregon Sentinel will work to keep you updated as new developments arise.

For more information on the GI Bill as well as a list of answers to frequently asked questions go to www.gibill.va.gov or contact the Oregon National Guard Education Services Office, Chief Warrant Officer Diane Beach at (503) 584-3456.

Oregon Senators join together to improve mental health care services for veterans

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

Oregon Senators Gordon J. Smith (R) and Ron Wyden (D) joined forces in an effort to improve mental health care services for America’s veterans by introducing the Healing Our Nation’s Heroes Act of 2008. The bill will establish a commission to improve mental health care services to veterans and also recruit and train veterans to serve in the mental health care profession.

“Whether it is referred to as post-traumatic disorder, shell shock or combat fatigue, these very serious mental illnesses deserve equal attention and care as a physical wound,” said Smith. “Our goal is to ensure our heroes in arms face no shortage of trained professionals available to treat their unique health care needs.”

Senator Wyden stressed the importance of helping soldiers move past their war wounds and lead productive lives. “Surviving the trauma of combat shouldn’t sentence our forces to a life-time of mental and emotional pain,” Wyden said. “This bill will help them move beyond the invisible scars of the battlefield and rebuild their lives at home.”

More than a year ago, Smith and Wyden held a Senate Special Committee on Aging field hearing at the Portland Veterans Affairs Medical Center in Oregon. The recent legislation introduced to the Senate focuses on the issues brought to light at the hearing, by veterans advocates.

The bill has three important parts with the potential to improve mental health services to our veterans. First, it will establish a commission to oversee care provided to veterans and members of the Armed Forces with post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and other disorders that affect their mental health. The commission will report to Congress and make recommendations to the Department of Veteran Affairs and Defense, and look for innovative ways that the two can collaborate to better support veterans’ interests.

Second, the bill will establish the Heroes-to-Healers program to train former service members to become part of the mental health work force. This proposal builds upon the success of the Troops-to-Teachers program which transitions troops to teachers in high-need school districts. This will help alleviate workforce shortages and bring professionals with military experience into the mental health care field. Finally, the legislation will create a grant program for Mid-Career Professionals that will allow state and local mental health agencies as well as nonprofit mental health organizations, to expand, establish or enhance mental health provider recruitment and retention efforts.

Retiree Service Office
Open Tuesdays, 1-3 p.m. to 4-7 p.m. (503) 584-2891 1-800-452-7500, ext. 2891 ORRSO@or.ngb.army.mil http://orngretirees.info/
Retiree Service Office PO Box 14350 Salem, OR 97309
Hawijah, Iraq — Two middle-aged men enjoying a ‘friendly’ afternoon game of checkers in a bustling marketplace as shoppers, traffic, no body-armor, partnered with Forward Support Company and Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 1249th Engineer Battalion, position vehicles in preparation for work on the South Salem High school field. The soldiers are working on the field as part of their annual training.

Soldiers from Forward Support Company and Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 1249th Engineer Battalion, position vehicles in preparation for work on the South Salem High school field. The soldiers are working on the field as part of their annual training.

Story and Photo by
Staff Sgt. Margaret Nelson
1BCT, 10th Mtn. Div. PAO

Friendly game of checkers shows safety, tranquility has returned to war devastated region

We all want peace and a place where our children and grandchildren can live and prosper without fear and violence.

— Khalaif Ibrahim Ali, Hawijah Sons of Iraq leader

As to who won the checker game, Vanek smiled and said, “considering Ali and I are here together; we—without body-armour, in an area where commerce has returned, and the citizens can reap the benefits of without fear of reprisals, in an area once thought lost to the insurgency—we’re both winners, more importantly—the citizens of the district are the true winners.”

The idea for the game of checkers came about when the key leaders of Task Force Summit and the Hawijah district began to realize the “dynamic” security gains in January, according to Vanek. He thought that a true demonstration of increased security would be to, “conduct a game of checkers in the middle of the day in the most crowded area of the city, with no body armour in June.” He said the game served several purposes.

“The game united a U.S. battalion member with a local resident, to show the change in the atmosphere and the peace loving people of Hawijah, and to the provincial government—that enduring security gains have been established, representative government is working well. ISF is responsible for security, the economy is booming, and it is time for the provincial government to step forward and serve all districts,” Vanek said.
New General joins ranks of Oregon Guard

Story and photo courtesy of Oregon Department of Veteran Affairs
Reprinted with permission

Thomas Jefferson wrote in the Declaration of Independence that: “We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal.” Abraham Lincoln said in his Gettysburg Address that we live in “a new nation, conceived in liberty and dedicated to the proposition that all men are created equal.” However, for veterans attending the celebration of the 60th Anniversary of the Desegregation of the Armed Services, July 18 in Salem, their liberties were hard won during a different time in our nation’s history.

Hosted by the Oregon Department of Veterans’ Affairs (ODVA) and the Oregon Military Department, the celebration drew more than 100 family, friends and interested visitors to the Joint Force Headquarters in Salem, African, Japanese, Indian and other-descent Oregon’s first African-American general officer, Brig. Gen. Gary C. Dean, was the keynote speaker. ODVA Director Jim Willis welcomed guests to the ceremony and praised the military’s changes to establish equality for all service members, which is important that we hold events commemorating the success we have achieved as a result of President Truman’s Executive Order, 9981, regrettably our armed forces,” he said.

Among the honored guests who served in World War II, Korea and Vietnam were two members of the Desert Storm’s famed Tuskegee Airmen—the first “black” flyers in the Army Air Corps during World War II. Japan’s Secretary General of the Oregon National Guard, Col. David B. Enyeart, is promoted to brigadier general. Brig. Gen. Enyeart is joined by his wife, Kate Enyeart, and currently serves the community of Toledo, Ore. as a patrol officer. Enyeart and his wife, Catherine, reside in Toledo, Ore.

Oregon Guard bids fond farewell to 30-year Soldier

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

After nearly 40 years of military service, Col. Timothy Kelly retires from the Oregon National Guard. In a retirement ceremony held at the Joint Force Headquarters in Salem, Aug. 18, Maj. Gen. Raymond F. Rees, The Adjutant General of the Oregon National Guard, took time to commend and pay tribute to the 60th Anniversary of military desegregation and to honor all those who served. Col. Timothy Kelly retires from the Oregon National Guard.

Kennea Nambu a Purple Heart recipient recounts his military experience following World War II during the ceremony at the Astoria Reading Room in Salem, Ore. saying “At the time we weren’t considered American enough to carry a rifle. We wanted to show that we were proud Americans to fight and willing to die for our country.” Nambu recalled. “But, that was a long time ago and our lives have changed since then.”

Delivering his remarks in uniform, Oregon Army National Guard Lt. Col. Ricardo Gioria, said that bravery isn’t limited to a veteran’s skin color. He noted how several veterans were awarded the Medals of Honor for heroism in Vietnam.

Story and photo by Staff Sgt. Jefferson Thompson

The Adjutant General, Oregon Maj. Gen. Rees presents Col. Timothy Kelly with his certificate of retirement after nearly 40 years of service. The Oregon National Guard State Army Aviation Officer (SAO-VO). While in Iraq, Kelly served as the unit Tactical Operations Officer and flew hundreds of hours in the Apache and Black Hawk missions. Lt. Kelly volunteered to serve with the 2-147 Assault Helicopter Company of the Hawaii National Guard for their Operation Iraq Freedom deployments.

In 1986, he transferred into the Oregon National Guard and served as a pilot for the newly formed B-118 Assault Helicopter Company. Over the next two decades, Kelly’s military career included leadership experience and he was credited with building a superior Army Aviation organization that went one step further by many accolades for its performance in combat and peacetime.

During his Vietnam tour, Kelly oversaw the training and fielding of the CH-47D helicopter unit in Pendleton, Ore. and the construction of the Oregon Army Aviation Support Facility. In 1996, his efforts paid off when the unit flew numerous air support rescue missions during the floods and wildfires.

Rees selected Kelly for command of the 641st Medical Evacuation Battalion where he served from 2000 to 2002. Simultaneously, Kelly became committed to serving with distinction throughout his military career in the Army Reserve.

Kennea Nambu a Purple Heart recipient recounts his military experience following World War II during the ceremony at the Astoria Reading Room in Salem, Ore. saying “At the time we weren’t considered American enough to carry a rifle. We wanted to show that we were proud Americans to fight and willing to die for our country.” He went on to say that today his family’s life is much improved.

And Ruth went to purchase groceries in her hometown of Hood River. The signs in many store windows read “No Japs.” Japanese returning to their homes in Hood River County were strongly encouraged to “dispose of their holdings” while buyers would offer them “a square deal.” Nambu recalled. “But, that was a long time ago and our lives have changed since then.”

Delivering his remarks in uniform, Oregon Army National Guard Lt. Col. Ricardo Gioria, said that bravery isn’t limited to a veteran’s skin color. He noted how several veterans were awarded the Medals of Honor for heroism in Vietnam.

Now serving at the Pentagon as the U.S. Air Force’s Deputy Inspector General, Dean personally thanked the special guests in attendance for their service. Dean saluted all veterans for their dedication to serve their nation, “I value your courage and determination to reach their potential by opening doors of opportunity that he could walk through. I value your courage and determination to serve our nation,” Dean said. “You did so with dignity and honor. I truly salute your service. You were discriminated against, yet you chose to defend freedom. Your response to segregation was to serve with honor.”

60th Anniversary of military desegregation celebrated

In 1960, it was still considered a duty to serve as a commander, brigade embedder trainer in Vietnam. And was the keynote speaker. Delivered his remarks in uniform, Oregon Maj. Gen. Rees says “At the time we weren’t considered American enough to carry a rifle. We wanted to show that we were proud Americans to fight and willing to die for our country.” Nambu recalled. “But, that was a long time ago and our lives have changed since then.”

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