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Oregon Sentinel

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE OREGON NATIONAL GUARD

Medical aviation soldiers head for Iraq

Governor honors troops as they depart for a year

Story compiled by Oregon Sentinel staff

SALEM, Ore. -- More than 110 soldiers from an Oregon Army National Guard aviation unit departed for Fort Sill, Okla. on Saturday, Jan. 31 from Salem. Many of the soldiers, members of Charlie Company, 7th Battalion, 158th Aviation Regiment, have deployed before -- some as many as four times.

"We've got a lot of experience here, and that is going to help out a great deal," said Chief Warrant Officer 2 Matt Hill.

At their mobilization ceremony, Jan. 29, at the Army Aviation Support Facility in Salem, the soldiers of Charlie Co., 7th Bn., 158th Rgt. received a warm send off.

"Today, we celebrate and acknowledge the training that has brought this group to preparedness," Chaplain John Dinsmore said during the invocation.

Oregon Governor Theodore R. Kulongoski led the official party, including U.S. Rep. Kurt Schrader and Oregon Speaker of the House Rep. Dave Hunt, in the farewell salute to the soldiers and their families.

After two months of training at Fort Sill, the battalion will deploy for the remaining 400-day mobilization for duty in Iraq. Major Geoffrey Vallee, the mission commander said the unit will carry out medical evacuations, or MEDEVAC, and patient transports in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom.

MEDEVAC provides wounded troops and civilians immediate, professional medical care as they are transported from an incident to treatment facilities capable of handling severe



Above: Guidon bearer Spc. William Waitz stands at parade rest during a mobilization ceremony for Charlie Company, 7th Battalion, 158th Aviation in Salem, Jan. 29. Photo by Tech. Sgt. Jefferson Thompson, Oregon Military Department Public Affairs

Right: Chief Warrant Officer 2 Brent Peters and his wife, Meaghan, carry their daughter, Sadie across the tarmac at McNary Field in Salem, Ore., Jan. 31. Peters, of Tigard is a Blackhawk pilot with Charlie Co., 7th Bn., 158th Avn. Photo by Kay Fristad, Oregon Military Department Public Affairs Office.

and traumatic injuries.

Many of the soldiers on the deployment have supported search and rescue operations in Oregon, giving them valuable training for their active duty mission.

"It's extremely valuable because it puts them in a mission profile similar to a MEDEVAC mission," said Maj. Mark Ulvin, acting state aviation officer. "In theater we respond to a MEDEVAC request which is similar to a request from a sheriff for search and rescue operations."

See Families and friends on PAGE 7



Oregon Air Guard undergoes leadership changes

Story by Tech. Sgt. Nick Choy Oregon Military Department Public Affairs Office

PORTLAND, Ore. -- Oregon Air Guardsmen gathered to witness a change of command and promotion of their top leaders at the Portland Air National Guard Base, Jan. 10.

Maj. Gen. Daniel B. O'Hollaren was promoted during the morning ceremony, receiving his second star in front of about 400 Airmen, friends and family in the main hangar at the base.

Immediately following the promotion ceremony, Brig. Gen. Bruce W. Prunk assumed command of the Oregon Air National Guard in the position just vacated by Maj. Gen. O'Hollaren.

Maj. Gen. O'Hollaren, who served as the commander for the Oregon Air National Guard, will serve as the Air National Guard Assistant to the Commander, Air Force Materiel Command. There he will advise the commander on all policies and programs between the ANG and AFMC.

Brig. Gen. Prunk has served in several positions throughout the Oregon Air National Guard, including Vice Wing Commander of the 142nd Fighter Wing and Director of Staff (Air) at Joint Force Headquarters, in Salem.

In his civilian employment, Brig. Gen.

See ORANG on PAGE 8



Brig. Gen. Bruce W. Prunk addresses Maj. Gen. Raymond F. Rees, The Adjutant General, Oregon National Guard (center), and Maj. Gen. Daniel B. O'Hollaren, (right), following O'Hollaren's promotion ceremony and change of command ceremony at the Portland Air National Guard Base in Portland, Jan. 10. Photo by Staff Sgt. John Hughel, 142nd Fighter Wing Public Affairs.

Left: Maj. Gen. Daniel B. O'Hollaren gives his flight cap to his 4-year old granddaughter, Keele O'Hollaren, at a promotion and change of command ceremony at the Portland Air Base, Jan. 10. O'Hollaren assumed the position of Air National Guard Assistant to the Commander, Air Force Materiel Command. Brig. Gen. Bruce Prunk assumed the position of commander, Oregon Air National Guard. Photo by Master Sgt. Jon Dyer, 142nd Fighter Wing Public Affairs.

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COMMAND

Oregon celebrates 150 years of statehood



Maj. Gen.
Raymond F. Rees,
Adjutant General,
Oregon National
Guard

Happy Birthday, Oregon! On Feb. 14 Oregon will officially celebrate 150 years of statehood. Since 1859, Oregon has grown to 36 counties with approximately 3.8 million people. Oregon has a rich history of citizen-soldiers volunteering to protect our nation. From territorial days to the current war on terrorism, the Oregon Guard has had the privilege to simultaneously serve the people of Oregon and the United States.

Shortly after becoming a state the Civil War began and the First Regiment, Oregon Cavalry, comprised of all volunteers, served on active duty until June of 1866.

Oregon was called to federal

service during the Spanish American War with service in the Philippines. The Guard members' marching ability was so spectacular under Brevet Brigadier General Owen Summers that the Regular Army said they would have to ride horses to catch up with them.

Oregon again answered the call for federal service in World War I as well as for duty on the border of Mexico to support the punitive expedition against the infamous Pancho Villa between 1916 and 1918. Oregon heroically served during World War II in the South Pacific. What many don't know is when Germany invaded Poland in 1939 President

Franklin D. Roosevelt declared a limited national emergency authorizing an increase in National Guard manpower. Oregon was the first state to meet the goal with the 41st Infantry Division. More than 900 Oregonians answered the call in less than a week. They were ordered to active service in September 1940 and heroically fought in the South Pacific until Aug. 7, 1945. This was the largest call up of Oregonians with more than 6,000 serving.

Since that time, the Oregon National Guard has continued its proud tradition with both

individual augmentees and unit deployments continuing to serve throughout the world.

In this sesquicentennial year, the Oregon Guard will have deployed more troops than at anytime other than World War II. The 116th Air Control Squadron, 142nd

Civil Engineer Squadron, 142nd Security Forces Squadron, 142nd Medical Group, Team Charlie, 7th Bn., 158th Avn., Headquarters, 2nd Bn., 641 Avn., Detachment 1, 47th OSA and the 41st Infantry Brigade Combat Team totaling more than 3,600 Oregon Army and Air National Guard members who will serve on active federal service.

As The Adjutant General, I couldn't be more proud to serve alongside the outstanding men and women of the Oregon National Guard who uphold both the Oregon and United States Constitutions. To all those that have served I salute you and thank you for your service. For those that stand ready today, be proud of your service and the organization you have chosen. It is one of great heritage. The people of the United States and of Oregon couldn't ask for anything better, citizen-soldiers and airmen living the motto "When we are needed, we are there!" Thanks to each of the members of the Oregon Guard for being an integral part of our national and state history. Happy 150th Birthday!



Oregon Guard allows members to 'belong to something bigger'

The Oregon National Guard has never been stronger.

We are recruiting and retaining top-notch soldiers and airmen. We have been at war over seven years now. We continue to grow an all-volunteer force under these extreme conditions.

When I get an opportunity to address our young soldiers and airmen, I always try to remember to tell them how proud I am of their decisions.

I enlisted in the post-Vietnam era and military service was not viewed as positively as it is now. Through hard work and diligence our Army and Air Force leadership focused on a training-based force, and we have overcome that negative perception.

Now the citizen-soldier is viewed as one of the shining stars of our Nation, state and local communities.

Our servicemen and women that enlist or extend, do so because of a need to belong to something bigger than themselves. They do so knowing that a combat deployment or response to a natural disaster is more than likely, and they still enlist and extend.

I do not entertain those that disparage our young soldiers and airmen. I do not entertain those that talk about "the good 'ole days." I do not entertain those that say the old Army and Air Force were better.

I don't believe any of those things.

We weren't better when we old timers enlisted, we were just different. Our mid-grade and new enlistees are better in so many ways. They are smarter, more technically savvy, and have many new skills that they bring to our organization.

We need to continue to grow. Embrace these new warriors and those that have



State Command
Sgt. Maj.
Brunk W. Conley,
State Command
Sergeant Major,
Oregon National
Guard

recommitted to our organization. Continue to tell our story and bring more of these next greatest generation citizens into our formations.

'Quiet professionals' get the job done



CW5 Michael Zagyva,
Command Chief
Warrant Officer,
Oregon National Guard

The Oregon Army National Guard currently has deployed or is in the process of mobilizing and deploying the 2nd Battalion, 641st Aviation; C, D and E Companies, 7th Battalion., 158th Aviation; and the 41st Infantry Brigade Combat Team.

At this time all of the warrant positions are filled and the units will deploy with a full complement of commissioned warrant officers. Well done!

But as we all know in the Army, one of the ways you are rewarded for doing an outstanding job is to be given another task.

The 3rd Battalion, 116th Cavalry (Armor) is next in line. They too will mobilize with the technical and tactical expertise of the warrant officer.

To date, roughly 70 percent of Oregon's warrant officer corps is either currently deployed, has deployed, or is scheduled to deploy. The fact is, this percentage will increase.

Warrant officers are integral to the success of the commander and of the unit. It takes all the soldiers of an organization to accomplish the mission. However, more often than not, the "Quiet Professionals" know how to put the "grease in the skids" to get the job done.

For deployment purposes, I have placed all warrants into three tiers: those who have never deployed into a combat theater; those who have combat experience prior to 9/11, and; those who have mobilized and deployed for Operation Iraqi Freedom or Operation Enduring Freedom.

Based on this system I have found we have a "good problem." There are more warrants

volunteering to deploy, that have not been to a combat theater, than we have positions available. Once the 41st IBCT has left, I will start working with the directorates, supervisors, units, and the mobilization office regarding the status of these warrants.

For up to date warrant officer information, log onto the Oregon Knowledge Online - Ground Component - Command Chief Warrant Officer. The council of CW5 agenda, minutes, working papers, issues and draft proposals are located there.

I would also like to take the time to welcome into the warrant officer corps, WO1s Ray Talkington, Al Miner, Ryan Geser, Andrew Rhoden and CW2 Dick Thibodo who recently graduated from the Warrant Office Candidate Course.

Also, I would like to wish the best of luck to WO Candidates Bill Lowe, Doug Herinckx, Nick Thompson, and Raphael Toler as they leave for WOCS within the next two months.

Good luck and I look forward to your promotion as commissioned warrants.

Chief Michael Zagyva promoted to top grade

Story by Sentinel Staff

Chief Warrant Officer 4 Michael Zagyva was promoted to the top warrant officer grade of chief warrant officer 5, in a ceremony officiated by The Adjutant General, Maj. Gen. Raymond F. Rees Jan. 21, at the Anderson Readiness Center in Salem.

His wife and his son were on hand to pin on his new rank. He follows in the footsteps of Chief Warrant 5 James Powell as the State Command Chief Warrant Officer, and as such is a focal point for command concerns at the warrant officer level.

His columns are found here, on the command page, of each issue of the Oregon Sentinel.

NEWS

DoD opens center to help those with brain injuries

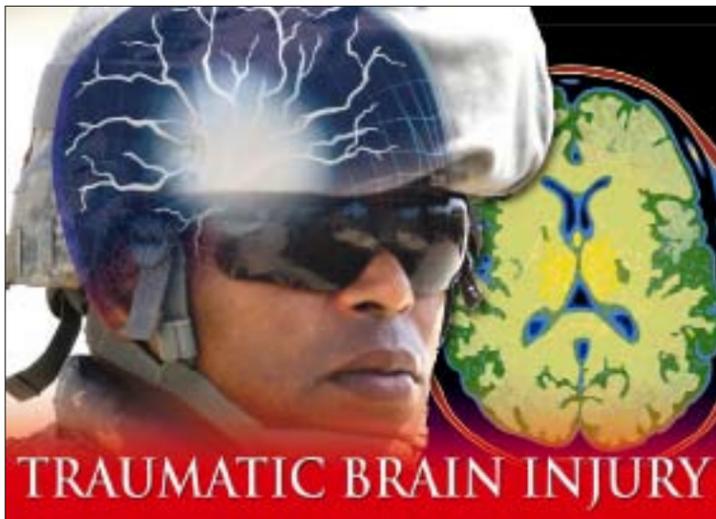
Story courtesy of
Department of Defense
Public Affairs

The Department of Defense recently announced the opening of a 24-hour outreach center to provide information and referrals to those with questions about psychological health and traumatic brain injury.

The new center, which is operated by the Defense Centers of Excellence for Psychological Health and Traumatic Brain Injury (DCoE), is open to military service members, veterans and their families.

"We're providing 24/7 support to assist callers with questions regarding psychological health and traumatic brain injury," said Brig. Gen. Loree K. Sutton, M.D., Director of DCoE.

"Getting the best possible information and tools, hassle-free, will empower and strengthen warriors and their families to successfully manage what can be confusing and disturbing circumstances," she added.



Graphic courtesy of www.army.mil

The center can deal with everything from routine requests for information about psychological health and traumatic brain injury, to questions about symptoms a caller is having, to helping a caller find appropriate health care resources.

DCoE promotes resilience, recovery and reintegration of service

members facing psychological health and traumatic brain injury issues, and works to advance research, education, diagnosis and treatment of these conditions.

"If we need to research a question, we'll do the legwork and quickly reconnect with callers," Brig. Gen. Sutton said. "We welcome feedback on how we can

better meet the needs of those we are so privileged to serve."

The DCoE Outreach Center is staffed by behavioral health consultants and nurses, most with master's degrees.

In addition to answering questions, staffers refer callers to contact centers in other parts of the Department of Defense, other federal agencies, and outside organizations when appropriate. Other contact centers also refer callers to the DCoE Outreach Center.

The center serves members, leaders and healthcare providers of the Army, Navy, Air Force, Marines and the U.S. Coast Guard.

The center is also open to all members of the National Guard, Reserves and all uniformed services, along with all veterans. The families of service members and of veterans are also served by the new center.

The center can be contacted around the clock, 365 days a year, by phone at (866) 966-1020 and by e-mail at resources@dcoeoutreach.org.

National suicide
lifeline open

Story courtesy of
Oregon Department of
Veterans Affairs

The National Suicide Prevention Lifeline is a 24-hour, toll-free suicide prevention service available to anyone in the military with suicidal crises.

If you need help, please dial 1-800-273-TALK (8255). When prompted, press option 1 to connect to a VA staffed Crisis Center. Your call will be routed to the nearest Crisis Center in your area or you may call 1-800-923-HELP.

The Youth Drug and Suicide Line is 1-877-553-TEEN.

The Prevention Treatment and Outreach program is designed to serve National Guard members and their families. Outreach services are also provided to any servicemembers in the local community.

Portland Police partners with Oregon Guard for employment opportunities

By Kim L. Lippert
Oregon Military Department
Public Affairs

The Oregon National Guard has partnered with the Portland Police Bureau to help soldiers interested in a career in law enforcement get a jump start on the process.

On Jan. 24, more than 100 soldiers took the written exam for the Portland Police Bureau, which is the first step to becoming a police officer.

The joint effort between the agencies is targeted at the 3,500 Oregon soldiers with the 41st Brigade Combat Team who are scheduled to deploy to Iraq in May. Those who pass the written exam will be allowed to take psychologi-



Graphic courtesy of Portland Police Bureau

cal and medical evaluations when they return sometime in the spring of 2010.

In the past, Guardmembers who were deployed after initiating the PBB's hiring process would have to reapply after they returned home. This sometimes resulted in a delay of up to one year.

"This shows some creativity and imagination to try to get these people through part of the hiring process ahead of time," said Portland Police Chief Rosie Sizer.

The organization has 30 vacancies to fill, she said. And like many law enforcement agencies across the state, the Portland Police Bureau is facing a shortage of qualified police officer candidates.

"Many of our soldiers are drawn

to a career in law enforcement because it fits with their military training, and offers them the perfect opportunity to use those skills in the real world," said Col. (Ret.) Scott McCrae, of the Oregon National Guard Reintegration Team.

Each agency benefits, say Portland Police Bureau representatives. Portland Police officials are confident their recruiting efforts will help fill vacancies as they face continued retirements, even if soldiers aren't available until next year or 2011.

According to McCrae, roughly 35 percent of soldiers returning from deployments are unemployed or underemployed.

"During combat they're working on an adrenaline high for

about a year, and then they'd come home and some would find that running a forklift at the warehouse wasn't quite as exciting as it was before," McCrae said.

He adds that many soldiers are interested in a career in law enforcement because it fits well with what they have already done in the military.

Assistant Chief Brian Martinek said the bureau is committed to recruiting applicants who are problem-solvers, community-oriented, communicate well with empathy and compassion – not just those who are tactically adept.

The bureau will continue to strive to identify those skills through interviews and probationary evaluations, he said.

COMMENTARY

Oregon residents need to prepare for more than floods

By Jennifer Bailey
Public Affairs Coordinator
Oregon Emergency Management

It might seem like Oregon does not have many disasters. We usually hear about the yearly flood in the same old places. However, our state is very large and is divided by the Cascade mountain range into two distinct geographic areas that suffer different types of disasters, many of which are not large enough for a Federal Declaration, but are certainly devastating to those affected.

If an event is not big and horrible, we won't hear much about it on the news outside of the affected area. If it is not happening to us, we don't spend much time thinking about it. This can lead to a false sense of security. We forget to plan.

When I encourage people to be prepared for an emergency, I am often told that all we have are floods and that it is "no big deal." I disagree. Besides flooding being a very big deal, Oregon can and has suffered a wide variety of hazards, both natural and man-made.

Most recently parts of Oregon suffered from The Great Coastal Gale of 2007. A series of powerful Pacific storms hit the

U.S. states of Oregon and Washington and the Canadian province of British Columbia between Dec. 1, 2007 and Dec. 3, 2007.

Those storms reportedly produced an extreme long-duration wind event with hurricane-force wind gusts of up to 129 mph at Bay City, Oregon. The storm also brought heavy rains and produced widespread record flooding throughout the region, particularly Vernonia, and was blamed for at least 18 deaths. That's a big deal.

Oregon's history reveals many short-term and a few long-term droughts. Long-term drought periods of more than one year can impact forest conditions and set the stage for potentially devastating wildfires.

And don't forget the Spring Break Quake. Oregon is quite vulnerable to earthquakes (and tsunamis, which often accompany major seismic events) because of the state's proximity to the Cascadia Subduction Zone just off the Pacific Coast.

Depending on the epicenter, areas receiving major damage from an 8.0 – 9.0 magnitude earthquake would include most of the counties in Western Oregon; the heavily populated metropolitan areas of Portland, Salem, and Eugene would certainly experience major damage.

Landslides also pose significant threat

to many communities in Oregon. They threaten transportation corridors, fuel and energy conduits, and community facilities. While not all landslides result in property damage, many landslides impact roads and other infrastructure, and can pose a serious life-safety hazard.

That's just a few of the events that Or-

chemicals turns over in your town? Your family plan for flooding should be different than your plan for a chemical spill. Knowing what the possibilities are will help you create a better plan.

Knowledge is power. Brains often freeze under extreme stress. Having a plan and practicing your family plan

“Oregon has even seen a tornado or two over the years.”

— Jennifer Bailey, OEM

egonians have suffered through over the years. Earthquakes, fires, severe storms, power outages, mudslides, snow storms, and thunderstorms are some potential emergencies we may encounter in the future.

We are also at risk for blackouts, chemical emergencies, and terrorist attacks. Oregon has even seen a tornado or two over the years.

So, why the concern over different types of disasters?

In some cases such as winter storms, we have prior warning, but sometimes we don't. What if it isn't a storm? What if one of the big semi trucks carrying toxic

ahead of time can train you not to freeze. People automatically do what they have learned and practiced.

"Knowing where to go was the most important thing," says a 9/11 survivor. "Because your brain, or at least mine – shut down."

Bill McMahan, a Morgan Stanley executive who survived 9/11 said "One thing you don't ever want to do is to have to think in a disaster."

Have a plan, get a kit and be informed. Know the possible disasters for Oregon. Talk to your family about what to do in different situations. Stay safe and call or write with any disaster related questions.

OREGON GUARD NEWS

Rescue on the mountain:

Oregon National Guardsman instrumental in assisting with rescue of injured climber

Story and photos by Tech. Sgt. Jefferson J. Thompson
Oregon Military Department Public Affairs Office

Derek Mamoyac's ordeal started the afternoon of Oct. 12, 2008, as he made his way down the slopes of Mount Adams in heavy snow. He then lost his footing and tumbled down a steep slope.

"I fell and I tried to self-arrest and I felt my ankle break," Mamoyac said.

After falling what he estimates was perhaps 1,000 feet, Mamoyac took stock of his surroundings and was surprised that his injuries weren't worse. He noted that his ankle was left at a bad angle, obviously broken. He knew he was in trouble.

His predicament spurred a five-day search by volunteer rescue crews who trekked into the wilderness, hoping to find Mamoyac. His chances seemed to dwindle as the days wore on and night temperatures fell to 20 degrees.

By happenstance one of those volunteers was Oregon Army National Guard Soldier Pfc. Jeb Oliver.

The steady boyfriend of Mamoyac's sister, Oliver came with the family to the site of the rescue operations "mostly to lend moral support" he said. Once there he found ample opportunity to lend not only support, but the expertise gained from his military training to the search effort.

"The first thing I did was go talk to the sheriff and said, 'Hey, I'm Jeb Oliver am I'm with the National Guard Bravo Company two of the 162 out of Corvallis and I may have some skills you

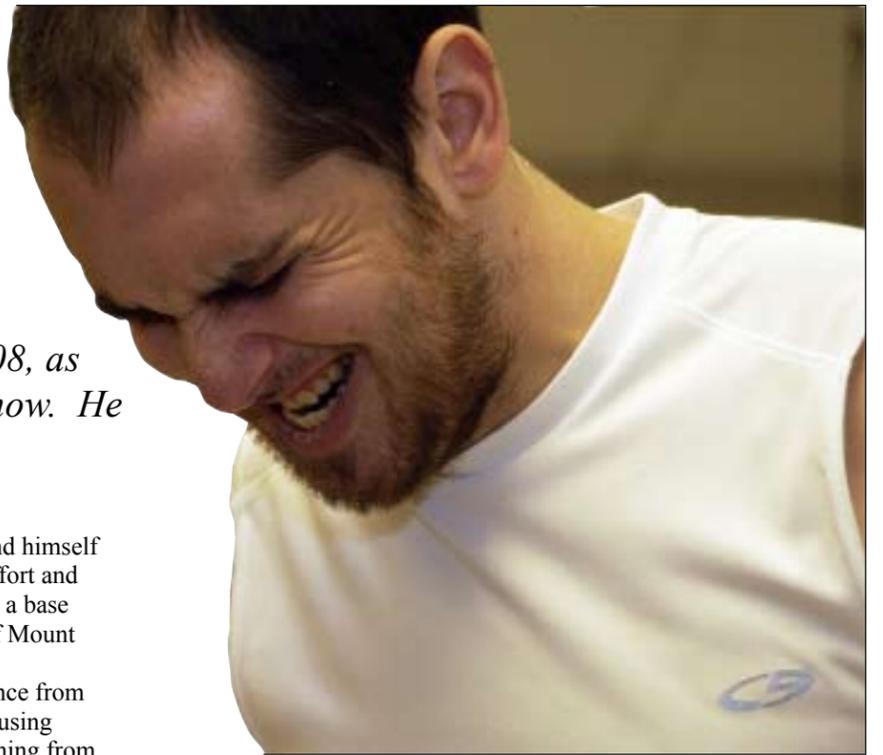
could use.'"

Oliver quickly found himself a part of the search effort and ended up establishing a base camp on the slopes of Mount Adams.

"I took my experience from being in the infantry, using skills like dead reckoning from a map—skills I had from the Guard—and went to work," he said.

Steve Mamoyac, father of the missing climber, expressed his deep appreciation for the help.

"It was gratifying to have him there, the way he just jumped into things and helped out," the elder Mamoyac said. "He dem-



onstrated his support for our family in our time of need. Knowing that there are those folks who are normal citizens who get the type of training that helped us out, well, we're just extremely grateful to the Guard for that."

On Oct. 17—six days after his fall—searchers found Mamoyac. He was suffering from frostbite, a broken and dislocated ankle, and dehydration.

He had descended all the way down the mountain crawling and dragging himself causing third degree frostbite burns on his legs and buttocks. After his carefully guarded stash of granola bars ran out, he ate ants, centipedes, a spider and berries.

After it was all over, and his son was safe, the elder Mamoyac wrote a note of thanks on Oliver's behalf to The Adjutant General, Maj. Gen. Raymond F. Rees (below). He thanked the Guard for not only for equipping Oliver, but all guardmembers who lend a hand in emergencies like this one.

January 17, 2009 found Mamoyac at a milestone on his



Mamoyac's father, Steve, (right), and Pfc. Jeb Oliver of the Oregon National Guard (left), watch as Mamoyac endures a physical therapy session at a clinic in Corvallis, Ore. Mamoyac sustained a broken right ankle in a fall while climbing Mount Adams, Oct. 12, 2008.

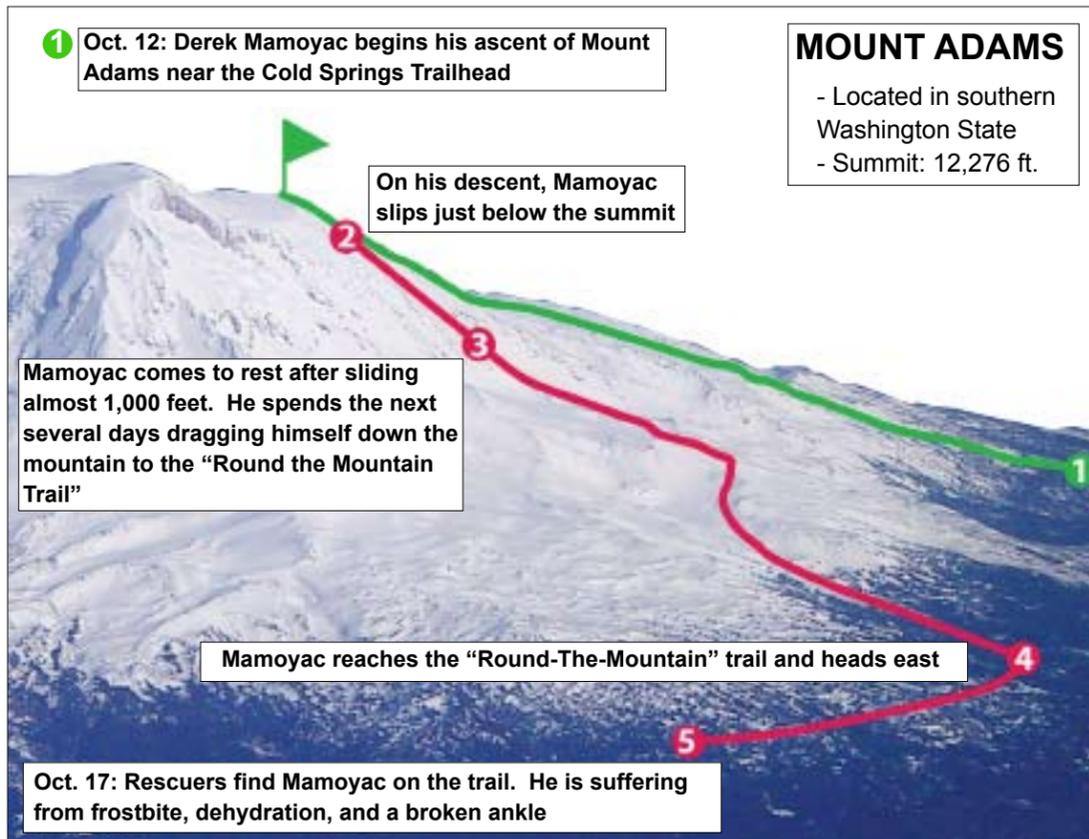
Top: Derek Mamoyac grimaces as he puts weight on his injured right ankle during physical therapy.

path to recovery. It was the first day he was able to support his own weight on his injured ankle.

"Today's a great day, we've been waiting for this day," said Michael Gray, a physical therapist. He added that because of significant atrophy and the extent of the injuries Mamoyac is really learning to walk all over again.

As his father and the guardsman-turned-rescuer look on, Mamoyac takes one step after another toward a full recovery.

At one point Oliver looks over at him and asks if he's ready for a hike. Mamoyac who has grimaced through most of the physical therapy session breaks into a grin and responds, "maybe this summer."



Mamoyac's father grateful to Oregon Guard for helping rescue his son

On Dec. 20, as his son recovered from injuries sustained in a fall while climbing on Mount Adams, Steve Mamoyac wrote a letter to Maj. Gen. Raymond F. Rees, Oregon National Guard's Adjutant General, thanking the Oregon Guard for helping to save his son.

Dear Major General Rees,

I would like to acknowledge the outstanding contributions of Oregon Army National Guard soldier, Jeb Oliver, made during a recent event involving one of my close family members. Jeb is currently with Bravo Company 2nd of the 162nd Infantry. I firmly believe that Jeb's participation in the National Guard was a primary contributing factor to his ability to contribute effectively in

the subject event.

On October 12, 2008 my son, Derek Mamoyac, embarked on an ascent of Mount Adams in south central Washington State. During his descent he fell and slid approximately 1,000 feet, breaking and dislocating his ankle in the process. He spent the next five nights and six days alone on the mountain, exposed to the elements with virtually no food and little water, before being rescued by a canine search and rescue team on the afternoon of October 17. Search participants included approximately 18 volunteer search and rescue (SAR) organizations from Washington and Oregon, law enforcement officials, family members, and friends. While Derek's survival has been characterized as miraculous it was only made possible through the generosity of the many volunteers that selflessly

gave of their time, energy, and resources to assist a fellow human being (and his family) in a position of dire need.

Jeb joined the rescue effort on October 14. Upon his arrival at the search base camp he immediately sought out the Yakima County Sheriff Incident Commander (IC) to introduce himself and offer assistance. He proceeded to work closely with IC and SAR support staff to develop a plan for searching area road networks. In addition to assuming an immediate leadership role he also employed impressive skills during a search of a specific geographic target area later that evening.

It quickly became apparent to me that Jeb possessed a suite of skills and personal attributes that would be directly applicable to virtually any SAR situation.

Evidently, the IC concurred with this assessment as demonstrated by his appointment of Jeb and his father, Anthony Oliver, as lead of the official search team of "Ranger I" on Oct. 16. In this official capacity, Jeb and the other members of Ranger I coordinated directly with the IC during the conduct of specific SAR operations. They maintained their own, fully self sustained, satellite base camp throughout the week at a strategically-sited location and communicated regularly with the IC via officially-issued radio/frequency. Jeb and the other members of Ranger I expended considerable time and energy in their search for my son. Their commitment, positive attitude, and tireless effort provided inspiration to myself and others and earned them immeasurable admiration, respect, and gratitude from all concerned.

The initiative and leadership qualities that Jeb consistently displayed throughout the week were complimented by his positive attitude, compassion, empathy, and sense of humor. The fact that he is in excellent physical condition also did not go unnoticed. He covered many miles of rough terrain during that week.

I am cognizant of the fact that the Army National Guard gave Jeb many (if not all) of the aforementioned skills and personal attributes which Jeb so amply demonstrated during that critical week in October. I would therefore like to compliment, and thank, the National Guard for providing young men like Jeb with the training that directly benefits families in situations like ours.

Sincerely,
Steve Mamoyac

FINANCE

Financial Crisis: Some agencies lend a helping hand to Guard



Photo by C. Todd Lopez, National Guard Bureau

Military to see pay increase in 2009

WASHINGTON -- There is something extra in everybody's paycheck this year.

Active-duty personnel drew an across-the-board 3.9 percent pay raise beginning Jan. 1. A sergeant with five years of service, for instance, gets an increase in monthly base salary of about \$88 dollars. A captain with nine years of service gets nearly \$200 per month extra.

The 2009 military pay tables can be found at: <http://www.dfas.mil/militarypay/militarypaytables/2009MilitaryPayTables.pdf>.

Pay raises aren't limited to military personnel, however. Civilian employees under both the General

Schedule and National Security Personnel System pay plans are also receiving pay raises.

Civilians under the GS system get an across-the-board pay raise of 2.9 percent in 2009. Civilians under the NSPS pay system get an increase of 1.74 percent and can earn additional performance-based salary increases through the NSPS "pay pool" process.

Additionally, all civilian employees rate a locality pay, which is based on the cost-of-living in their employment market. Locality pay rates for 2009 range from about 13.86 percent to 34.35 percent of an employee's base pay.

Disney offers free admission to theme parks

Story courtesy,
National Guard Bureau
Public Affairs

As Disney Parks ask "What Will You Celebrate?" and invite guests to turn their personal milestones into magical family vacations in 2009, America's military personnel will have one more reason to celebrate: Free multi-day admission to Disney's U.S. theme parks.

With the "Disney's Armed Forces Salute" offer, active and retired U.S. military personnel, including active and retired members of the United States Coast Guard and activated members of the National Guard or Reservists, can enjoy complimentary, multi-day admission into Disney's U.S. theme parks, great rates at select Walt Disney World Resort and Disneyland Resort hotels, and additional special ticket offers for family members and friends.

"For so many of the men and women who serve in our U.S. military, time together with their families is cause enough for celebration," said Jay Rasulo, chairman of Walt Disney Parks and Resorts. "We are grateful for their service

and hope 'Disney's Armed Forces Salute' will allow our troops to create wonderful, magical memories with their family and friends."

At the Disneyland Resort in Southern California:

Through June 12, 2009, each active or retired member of the U.S. military can receive one complimentary three-day "Disney's Armed Forces Salute" Park Hopper ticket valid for admission to both Disneyland and Disney's California Adventure parks. During the offer period, active or retired U.S. military personnel also may make a one-time purchase of an adult or child three-day "Disney's Armed Forces Salute Companion" Park Hopper ticket for up to five family members (including spouse) or friends for the price of an adult 1-Day Park Hopper ticket.

Disneyland Resort hotels are also offering special room rates for active or retired military personnel.

For information regarding "Disney's Armed Forces Salute" at the Disneyland Resort, or to make reservations, military personnel may call (714) 956-6424.

At Walt Disney World Resort in Florida: Through Dec. 23, 2009, each active

or retired member of the U.S. military may obtain one complimentary 5-day "Disney's Armed Forces Salute" ticket with Park Hopper and Water Park Fun & More options. This ticket is valid for five days of admission into the four Walt Disney World theme parks, plus a total of five visits to a choice of a Disney water park, DisneyQuest Indoor Interactive Theme Park or certain other attractions. During this offer period, active or retired U.S. military personnel may also make a one-time purchase of up to a maximum of five 5-Day "Disney's Armed Forces Salute Companion" tickets (one theme park per day) for \$99 per ticket, plus tax, for family members (including spouse) or friends. Although this ticket for family members and friends does not include either the Park Hopper or Water Park Fun & More options, this ticket can be upgraded to add either such option, or both, for an additional \$25, plus tax, per option. All tickets and options are non-transferable and must be used by Dec. 23, 2009.

Information about "Disney's Armed Forces Salute" offer at Walt Disney World Resort is also available at www.disneyworld.com/military.

Earned Income Credit available

Many members of the U.S. Armed Forces are eligible for the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC).

The EITC is a refundable federal tax credit intended to offset taxes paid by low-income workers. It is one of the most successful tax credit programs, helping lift millions of working Americans above the poverty level.

The Working Families Tax Relief Act of 2004 and the Gulf Opportunity Zone Act of 2005 give soldiers the option of treating excludable combat pay, but not the basic allowance for housing or basic allowance for subsistence, as earned income for purposes of the EITC.

This could help military personnel avoid a situation in which the military pay exclusion leaves them with no earned income and thus no EITC. Under this provision, military personnel may opt to include all or none of their combat pay when calculating their EITC.

Scholarship available to children of military families



The Military Officers Association of America (MOAA) Scholarship Fund was established in 1948 to provide educational assistance for children of military families. It is based on one of the Association's founding principals that "education is the cornerstone of a strong Democracy". It is supported by donations and bequests from MOAA chapters, members, corporations, and others.

The Interest-Free Loan and Grant Program provides loans and grants to students (under age 24) who are children of former, currently serving, or retired commissioned or warrant officers (Regular, Reserve or Guard) and to

children of currently serving or retired enlisted military personnel (Regular, Reserve or Guard), for up to five years of undergraduate education at an accredited two or four-year college or university of their choice.

The American Patriot Scholarship provides grants to students (under age 24) whose military parent - officer or enlisted - died while in active service (Regular, Reserve or Guard) to our nation, for up to five years of undergraduate education at an accredited two or four-year college or university of their choice.

We also offer a Base/Post Scholarship which provides a \$1,000 grant to selected students from active duty families for one year of undergraduate education at an accredited two or four-year college or university.

For more information go to the website located at: http://moaa.org/serv/serv_education/index.htm.

ODVA offers zero-interest small business loan to vets



SALEM, Ore. -- With the goal of helping veterans whose businesses suffered setbacks during their deployment, the Oregon Department of Veterans' Affairs (ODVA) is offering a zero-interest Small Business Repair Loan to help veterans get their businesses back on track.

"This program is aimed at our National Guard and Reserve veterans," ODVA Director Jim Willis explained. "If they are business owners, a long deployment - months away from their business - seriously affects the ability of their company to survive. We want to help these veterans recover their businesses when they get home so they are employed and can employ others."

The Small Business Repair Loan program offers a zero-percent interest rate and loans up to \$20,000. Applicants must be an honorably discharged veteran, own 51 percent of

their business, and the business must have had a setback while the veteran was deployed. The veteran must apply for this loan within one year of returning from deployment.

"The commitment of members of the Guard and Reserve is unquestionable," Willis said. "We need to do all we can to support them when they come home, and giving them a hand-up to restore a business is the least we can do."

For more information regarding the Small Business Repair Loan, please contact ODVA at (888) 673-8387 or (503) 373-2070.

IRS offers Free File to Service members home or abroad

WASHINGTON -- The Internal Revenue Service reminds members of the military to take advantage of Free File, which allows taxpayers to prepare and e-file their federal income tax return online for free. Taxpayers who have an adjusted gross income of \$56,000 or less in 2008 are eligible.

Available only through www.irs.gov/efile/article/0,,id=118986,00.html,

Free File is available in English and Spanish. The program can be accessed from any computer that is connected to the Internet, making it especially convenient for those stationed abroad. It can be accessed 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Free File returns are transmitted using secure technologies.

The IRS automatically extends the deadline for filing tax returns, paying taxes, filing claims for

refunds and taking other actions related to federal income tax for U.S. Armed Forces personnel serving in a combat zone.

The IRS also extends the deadline for those in the U.S. Armed Forces deployed overseas away from their permanent duty station in support of operations in a qualified hazardous duty area but who are outside that area.

NEWS

Federal report concludes: Gulf War Illness is real

Story by
Tom Mann

Oregon Dept. of Veteran's Affairs

A federal report released Nov. 17 concludes that Gulf War illness is real and that roughly one in four of the 697,000 U.S. Veterans who served in the Persian Gulf War suffer from the illness.

According to the Research Advisory Committee on Gulf War Veterans' Illnesses, two chemicals cause Gulf War illness: the drug pyridostigmine bromide (PB pills) given to troops to protect against nerve gas, and pesticides that were

widely used – and overused – to protect against sand flies and other pests.

The 452-page report compiled by a panel of scientific experts and veterans serving on the Committee confirms that, “scientific evidence leaves no question that Gulf War illness is a real condition with real causes and serious consequences for affected veterans.” In combination, these undiagnosed illnesses have been termed Gulf War Syndrome. The report also notes a higher than average occurrence of Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis (ALS), often referred to as “Lou Gehrig’s Disease.”

“This is a bittersweet victory, (because) this is what Gulf War veterans have been saying all along,” Committee member Anthony Hardie said. “Years were squandered by the federal government... trying to disprove that anything could be wrong with Gulf War veterans.”

Several previous reports issued by the Institute of Medicine, an arm of the National Academy of Sciences, had concluded that there was little evidence to support Gulf War Syndrome. However, the Committee’s report concludes the previous reports were inappropriately constrained by the VA. According to the panel, the VA ordered the Institute to consider only limited human studies and not extensive animal research, thus



Photo courtesy, U.S. Navy Visual News Service

skewing the earlier studies.

The Committee’s report, titled “Gulf War Illness and the Health of Gulf War Veterans” was officially presented to the Secretary of Veterans Affairs Dr. James Peake. The report states that the illness comes as a result of multiple “biological alterations” affecting the brain and nervous system.

The report does not rule out other contributing factors, but notes there is no clear link between Gulf War Syndrome and oil well fires, depleted uranium or the anthrax vaccination. The suspect nerve agent pills and pesticides no longer are used in the military. To view the entire report, go to www.oregon.gov/odva/gulfwar.shtml.

According to 38 United States Code 1117, Persian Gulf War veterans may experience signs or symptoms of undiagnosed illness or a chronic multi-symptom illness that includes:

- Fatigue
- Unexplained rashes or other dermatological signs or symptoms
- Headache
- Muscle pain
- Joint pain
- Neurological signs and symptoms
- Signs or symptoms involving the upper or lower respiratory system
- Sleep disturbances
- Gastrointestinal signs or symptoms
- Abnormal weight loss
- Menstrual disorders

Guard contacting soldiers possibly exposed to toxic chemical

Story by

Maj. Michael S. Braibish
State Public Affairs Officer
Oregon Military Dept.

SALEM, Ore. -- The Oregon National Guard is reaching out in February to hundreds of soldiers possibly exposed to a hazardous chemical during a deployment to Iraq in 2003.

Based on records from the deployment, the ORNG believes more than 50 soldiers may have worked in an area with sodium dichromate, an anti-corrosive agent that poses health risks.

Strict regulations and policies govern the use of the potentially carcinogenic chemical in the U.S.; however, officials are concerned soldiers had exposure to mishandled sodium dichromate in the aftermath of initial U.S. operations.

Oregon’s 1st Battalion, 162nd Infantry sent more than 433 soldiers to the Middle East, with one company stationed in Saudi Arabia and two companies stationed in Kuwait, in March, 2003.

Some of the soldiers stationed in Kuwait entered Iraq to provide



Photo courtesy of dvidshub.net

security for civilian contractors at the Qarmat Ali water treatment facility where the exposure may have occurred.

deployment to have awareness of the situation because they may have had incidental exposure when soldiers returned from their

“Soldiers of 1st Bn., 162nd Inf. were assigned personal security details throughout southern Iraq to Kellogg, Brown and Root or workers restoring the oil infrastructure for the nation of Iraq,” said Lt. Col. B. J. Prendergast, who deployed as the 1st Bn. 2nd Inf. executive officer. “This duty was done during daylight hours and covered many oil infrastructure sites in Southern Iraq.”

Though about fifty soldiers possibly had direct exposure, the ORNG wants all soldiers on the

missions at Qarmat Ali.

“We want the entire group to be aware they were potentially exposed,” said Col. Michael Dunn, the Oregon Army National Guard State Surgeon. “It’s possible they could have had secondary exposure in the living area from the soldiers who worked at the facility.”

The notification process by the state is a personal concern for Lt. Col. Prendergast. He is one of the soldiers who went to the water treatment facility.

“My concern is identifying those soldiers that had a possible exposure and ensuring they understand the process and points of contact in case they need additional support or guidance,” said Lt. Col. Prendergast.

Oregon provided security for KBR employees and contractors until the Indiana National Guard took over the mission in May of 2003. The soldiers from Indiana conducted the mission until September 2003.

The possible exposure first came to light after KBR employees testified before a Senate Committee in June 2008 during a hearing chaired by North Dakota

Sen. Byron Dorgan.

According to published senate reports, KBR employees who worked at the Qarmat Ali plant testified their work exposed them to sodium dichromate, and they testified Indiana soldiers had similar exposure.

It later came to light that Oregon preceded Indiana on the security mission as Indiana Senator Evan Bayh called for a more detailed review from the Department of the Army of what actually happened.

All potentially exposed veterans can receive a comprehensive Gulf War Registry examination at their nearest Veterans Administration medical center. Health care providers at VA hospitals are trained to respond to environmental health issues perform these exams.

According to ORNG officials, current and former soldiers of 1st Bn., 162nd Inf. should receive a letter this month.

For more information, soldiers should contact their chain of command or the project officer, Staff Sgt. Jerry Jepson at (503) 584-2296.

OREGON NATIONAL GUARD POST DEPLOYMENT ASSISTANCE (Reintegration Program)

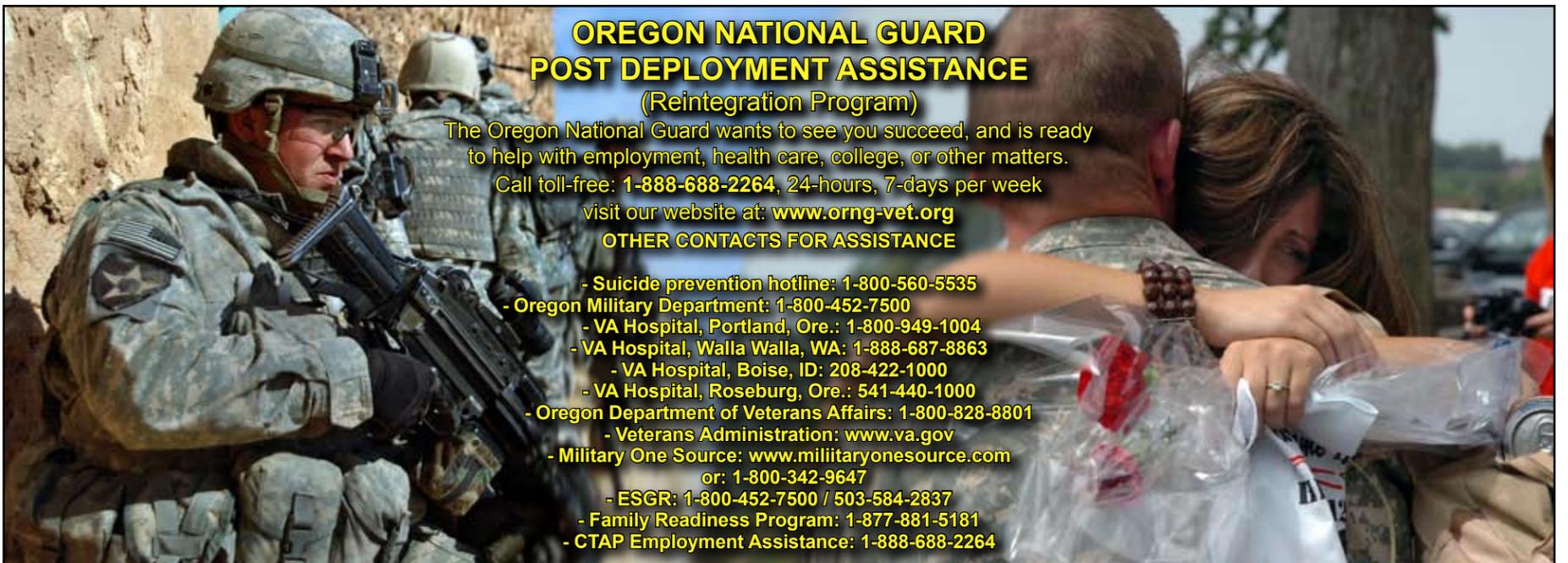
The Oregon National Guard wants to see you succeed, and is ready to help with employment, health care, college, or other matters.

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

visit our website at: www.orng-vet.org

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
- Family Readiness Program: 1-877-881-5181
- CTAP Employment Assistance: 1-888-688-2264



NEWS

Montana Guard rancher ropes in Army's top warrior title

Story by
Master Sgt. Mike R. Smith
National Guard Bureau

ARLINGTON, Va. -- A Montana National Guard combat veteran and cattle rancher, who recently achieved "Noncommissioned Officer (NCO) of the Year" for the Army Guard competed for the U.S. Army's "2008 Best Warrior" title, and won.

Staff Sgt. Michael Noyce Merino was named the Army's "Best Warrior" and "NCO of the Year" Oct. 6 at the Association of the U.S. Army's annual meeting and exposition in Washington.

"I knew I would face stiff competition as I went up against competitors from the state, the region and the nation," he said.

Noyce Merino won the Army Guard's final competition in mid-August at Fort Benning, Ga. That achievement allowed him to match his skill and knowledge – characteristic of 360,000 Army Guard soldiers – against 12 soldiers representing the Army's other major commands for a final Best Warrior competition at Fort Lee, Va., Sept. 30 to Oct. 3.

He won the Army's competition to his great surprise, he said.

"I'm equally proud of winning [both competitions]," Noyce Merino said. "They



Photo by Staff Sgt. Jon Soucy, National Guard Bureau

Staff Sgt. Michael Noyce Merino, of B Troop, 1st Squadron, 163rd Cavalry Regiment, negotiates an obstacle during the obstacle course portion of the Best Warrior Competition, Monday, Aug. 11, 2008 at Fort Benning, Ga.

"I don't consider myself to be the best... I'm an example of what it takes to be one of the best."

— Staff Sgt. Noyce Merino

Noyce Merino is the first Guardsman to achieve the title and will represent the Army and the Army Guard at pre-eminent soldier events throughout 2009.

"We couldn't be prouder," said Lt. Gen. Clyde Vaughn, the director of the Army Guard. "What a huge event and something that our force will look at with so much pride, and across the components there's an enormous spirit of competition. That's what it's all about."

After first competing for the Montana Guard's 163rd Cavalry Regiment NCO of the Year, Noyce Merino said he quickly learned he would face serious competitors from other Guard and active duty units.

were both difficult in their own way."

Noyce Merino explained that the Guard's competition was more physical with its 12-mile road march and land navigation events, while the Best Warrior competition challenged his marksmanship and ability to think under pressure.

"We just feel fortunate," said Vaughn. "We're fortunate to have all those soldiers – regardless of component – compete. Those are the best of the best. It's a big moment for the Guard, and it's also a big moment for the Army."

In the coming year, he will leave his cattle ranch duties to his sister while he serves as a spokesman for the Army and

Army Guard.

"I could not do any of this without my wife's support and my sister's support and the belief, faith and prayers from my family," Noyce Merino said.

Noyce Merino returned to Montana and joined the Guard after his release from active duty in 2007. There, his family runs a 21,000-acre cattle ranch. He also works as a shipping supervisor for United Parcel Service, and he praises that company for their support of his service.

"Now that we have settled down on the ranch, we hope to start a family," he said. "Right now we are building the operation and developing a functioning [cattle] business."

Noyce Merino was home-schooled and grew up on the ranch. "It's what I knew and loved until I joined the Army," he said.

His 2001 active-duty enlistment took him immediately to battlefields in Afghanistan. "I was in basic training when the 9/11 attacks happened," he said. "So right away I knew I was going into combat."

He attended airborne school, was assigned to the 82nd Airborne Division and deployed for six months. He returned home only to deploy to Iraq for eight months.

"After that, I re-enlisted into the 4th Infantry Division at Fort Hood, [Texas,]" he said. He returned again to Iraq with the 4th ID for an additional 12 months.

"I'm very proud of my service," he said.

On one patrol, Noyce Merino used his combat lifesaver skills to apply two

tourniquets to a fellow soldier after a mortar attack in Baghdad.

"He had extensive shrapnel wounds and arterial bleeding in both legs and was going in and out of consciousness," he said.

The patrol transported the soldier to an aid station within nine minutes and was credited with saving his life.

During the recent Best Warrior competition, Noyce Merino said he faced a similar medical scenario that required treating a wounded leg.

"Those who had not been in that situation saw what it was like to treat a casualty under fire," he said.

He added that the competition simulated battlefield conditions well. "The Army and the Guard should do as much of that as they possibly can."

Fortunately, the competition did not recall his combat stress from real-world events, he said.

He explained that "Military One Source" provided him free sessions with a counselor after his deployments and following his active-duty service. "That really helped me," he said.

He added that a "Best Warrior" is also one who knows when to treat himself.

"I don't consider myself to be the best," Noyce Merino said. "There are a lot of soldiers and sergeants right now who are deployed, who are serving, and their duty prevents them from competing."

"I'm more of a representative of all NCOs and all soldiers in the Army. I'm an example of what it takes to be one of the best," he added.



Photo by C. Todd Lopez, National Guard Bureau

Vice Chief of Staff of the Army Gen. Peter W. Chiarelli, Staff Sgt. Michael Noyce Merino, Army National Guard, and Sgt. Maj. of the Army Kenneth O. Preston were on stage Oct. 6 at the 2008 Association of the U.S. Army annual meeting and exposition to announce the 2008 Army Best Warriors, for the active-duty component. Noyce Merino was also named the Army's Noncommissioned Officer of the Year for 2008.

Families and friends gather to wish air crews well for deployment

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

He noted that many of the SAR operations in Oregon give crews more experience with hoist operations than they might otherwise gain through programmed training.

In addition to their experience with SAR in Oregon, many of the soldiers will rely on prior experience in theater. This will be a second deployment for more than half of the soldiers.

"I think we're ready and everyone is ready to get started and get done," said Hill.

One of the soldiers deploying is 1st Lt. Sabrina Vasquez, a female pilot. Vasquez said there is nothing special about flying with female crew members, but she does acknowledge the significance of being a female pilot and offers this advice to those with similar aspirations.



Photo by Kay Fristad

A UH-60 Blackhawk helicopter waits on the tarmac at McNary Field in Salem, Ore., Jan. 31, to be piloted to Fort Sill, Okla. The helicopter belongs to Charlie Company, 7-158 Aviation, which is deploying to Iraq for a year to provide aeromedical missions.

"Never give up; there are several females who wanted to fly, and they just gave up when it got a little too hard," said Vasquez. "You have to keep pushing forward."

At 25-years-old, this will be the first deployment for Vasquez.

"It's a fun job," she added.

Vasquez will have experienced

veterans by her side, including Sgt. Tracy Braeme, a crew chief who will deploy for a third time.

"The potential of having a female crew is there, whether it will transpire, I don't know," said Braeme. "it's kind of exciting that there is that possibility because it's a male-dominated army."

The unit originally formed as the 1042nd Medical Company Air Ambulance in 1996 but adopted its new unit designation in September 2007.

Their first deployment came in 2002 as the soldiers supported the Stabilization Force 7 rotation in Bosnia.

From May 2002 to September 2003 the 1042nd Med. Co. deployed to several operating locations in Afghanistan, Kuwait and Saudi Arabia while supporting Operation Enduring Freedom.

During the most recent

deployment, from July 2005 to May 2006, the unit once again provided MEDEVAC support in Afghanistan for OEF.

On previous deployments, the state retained some of the helicopters for domestic use. On this deployment, the soldiers will take all 12 of the Oregon Guard's UH-60 Blackhawks.

To mitigate the impact of the aircraft leaving the state, one Blackhawk from Idaho will be in Oregon through March. Two helicopters from Indiana will then meet the need until the soldiers return. Oregon crews will fly these helicopters.

In addition to the airframes on loan from the other states, the Oregon Guard will continue to fly four OH-58 Kiowa observation helicopters and five CH-47 Chinook cargo helicopters that also have a role in SAR operations.



Photo by Kay Fristad

Kelley Rush and her sons, Myles (right) and Kelton watch as her husband, Chief Warrant Officer 3 Grant Rush flies out of McNary Field in Salem, Jan. 31, for Fort Sill, Okla., for training prior to the unit's deployment to Iraq. Rush, of Lyons, Ore., is a UH-60 Blackhawk pilot with Charlie Co., 7th Bn., 158th Avn.

AIR GUARD NEWS

Albany airman takes his work, life 'To the Max'

By Jennifer Moody
Albany Democrat Herald
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Whether teaching, coaching or running, Max White is committed to seeing potential fulfilled.

He has a sign in his classroom at West Albany High School which reads: "If you don't have time to do it right, you must have time to do it over."

Whatever "it" may be, the 57-year-old math teacher is determined to make sure he always has the time to do it right. That goes for teaching, volunteering, keeping himself healthy and improving himself and the world around him in any way he can.

Sometimes, White gets public notice for doing it right, such as his promotion in August 2008 to chief master sergeant, the highest enlisted rank in the Air Force. The promotion makes White only the 166th individual ever to be promoted to that rank in the Oregon Air National Guard. But while he's proud of his new rank, he said it doesn't change his central mission.

"If I can help people fulfill their potential, that's enough for me," he said.

White's promotion is an indication of his efforts to fulfill his own potential any way he can. Instead of going for the occasional jog to stay in shape, he runs marathons — 102 at last count.

Instead of lounging poolside for a vacation with Diane, his wife of 25 years, and their dog, a 5-year-old Schipperke named Sparky, he spent last summer volunteering at a coastal camp for disabled children and training for certification in forest fire fighting.

And instead of just teaching at West Albany, White keeps looking for new ways to reach out to his students. Had snowy weather not canceled school Friday, Dec. 19, White, who is Jewish, would have held a microphone at the high school's winter assembly and belted out comedian Adam Sandler's "The Chanukah Song".

"It's stepping a little out of my comfort zone, so students can see a different side of me," he said.

White has taught algebra, geometry and other math classes at West Albany for the past 11 years. Before that, he taught for 11 years at South Albany High School. He has also taught economics and middle school science and has worked in both public and



Photo by Tech. Sgt. Jefferson Thompson, Oregon Military Dept.

Citizen-airman Max White teaches math to a group of students at West Albany High School. He was recently promoted to the highest enlisted grade that of chief master sergeant which required an age waiver from National Guard Bureau in Washington D.C. When White is not teaching he can be found managing human resources, for the fighter wing at Portland Air National Guard Base which is near Portland International Airport.

private schools.

He joined the Oregon Air National Guard at age 33, and is currently human resources adviser for the 142nd Fighter Wing in Portland. There, he advises the wing commander on the climate of the organization and over-

subject. He turned instead to teaching and coaching.

The brother he looked up to was a sprinter on his high school track team, which drew White into running. He figured he was more of an endurance guy, which led to the marathons — and also brought him to Oregon.

White qualified for the Olympic Trials in 1972 and 1976, both of which were held in Oregon. When he came back again in 1980 to observe, "I

decided I better move here, I liked it so much."

He was living in Eugene when he decided to join the Oregon Air National Guard. It was a decision made "strictly out of patriotic duty," he said, something he'd always meant to do and figured he was running out of time to do it.

He was 34 when he got to boot camp — "All the other trainees were calling me 'Grandpa'" — but took to it with character-

istic determination, continuing to make the all-Guard marathon team for which he'd qualified even before joining.

He now spends time teaching classes for the military and writing stories for its official publication, the Oregon Sentinel, in addition to his regular duties.

The Oregon Air Guard has appreciated his service so much, it even applied for a special waiver in order to give him this most recent promotion, for "exceptional service."

The promotion isn't awarded unless the service member has three years of retainability, and White had just a little over two left before his 60th birthday and the end of his eligibility. But, officials in Washington, D.C., ultimately granted the extension that allowed the promotion.

White expects to continue giving the job his all. He's an acknowledged perfectionist, but says it's also how he relaxes — knowing he has worked as hard as he knows how to do it right.

"It's a matter of focus and discipline," he said, adding: "It's about doing my best, and also staying a wholesome and proper example for others."

"If you don't have time to do it right, you must have time to do it over."

— Sign hanging in White's classroom

sees the mentoring and diversity programs at the Portland Air National Guard Base.

But neither education nor the military was White's first choice of career. Growing up in Belmont, Mass., with a grandfather and older brother who both practiced law, the young White thought about following in their footsteps.

He studied economics at Princeton University and law at the University of Virginia, but decided his strengths lay in neither

Oregon Air National Guard State Command Chief retires

Story by
Tech. Sgt. Nick Choy
Oregon Military Department
Public Affairs Office

The Oregon Air National Guard said goodbye to its former command chief master sergeant, and welcomed his replacement during separate ceremonies held at the Anderson Readiness Center in Salem, Jan. 11.

State Command Chief Master Sgt. Mark D. Russell assumed authority of the state's highest enlisted position from outgoing State Command Chief Master Sgt. Rodney R. Smith as family, friends and coworkers looked on.

Maj. Gen. Raymond F. Rees, The Adjutant General, Oregon National Guard, lauded Chief Master Sgt. Smith's accomplishments, calling attention to a long, distinguished military career dating back to 1971, and including a tour as an Army Soldier in Vietnam.

Chief Smith, a resident of Battle Ground, Wash., was the Oregon Air National Guard's 14th senior enlisted advisor, and



Photo by Tech. Sgt. Nick Choy

Oregon Air National Guard State Command Chief Master Sgt. Mark D. Russell (right), receives the command flag from Brig. Gen. Bruce W. Prunk, commander of the Oregon Air National Guard (left), during the Change of Authority ceremony held at the Anderson Readiness Center in Salem, Jan. 11.

the third person to hold the title of State Command Chief.

Chief Smith served in several supervisory positions throughout the Oregon Air Guard since 1980, when he became a full-time technician working with the munitions branch of the 142nd

Fighter Wing in Portland.

During his retirement ceremony held later that day, Chief Smith thanked the many mentors, coworkers, and supervisors he came to know during his military career. He also called attention to the new, closer working

relationship between Oregon's citizen-airmen and citizen-soldiers, a plan he developed with former State Command Sgt. Maj. Thomas Moe.

"It's been an awesome career and I'm going to miss everyone," Chief Smith said. "The Oregon Guard has some fantastic people, and they're going to go places."

Chief Master Sgt. Russell thanked Chief Smith for his guidance, and for laying the foundation for a closer collaboration between Oregon's two military services. He also thanked Maj. Gen. Rees and Oregon Air Guard commanders for the opportunity to serve in his new role.

Chief Russell's military career began in 1980 when he joined the United States Marine Corps. As a former Chief Master Sergeant with the Combat Operations Group, he has served in various supervisory and superintendent roles throughout the Oregon Air Guard since joining in 1997.

As the Command Chief Master Sergeant, Russell will support over 2,100 Airmen in the state.

ORANG changes at command level

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Prunk has held several positions during his 28-year career with the Portland Police Bureau. He served as Deputy Police Chief, before retiring from the bureau in 2008. As the commander of the Oregon Air National Guard, Brig. Gen. Prunk will oversee the organization and training for more than 2,100 personnel throughout the state.

With the upcoming deployment of the Oregon Army National Guard's 41st Infantry Brigade Combat Team this year, the state will turn to the Oregon Air National Guard to support many of the emergency response needs that have historically been filled by Oregon the Army National Guard.