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41 Infantry Brigade Combat Team • 142 Fighter Wing • 82 Brigade • 173 Fighter Wing • Joint-Force Headquarters • Combat Operations Group

41st Brigade mobilizes at ceremonies across state



Photos by Tech. Sgt. Nick Choy, Oregon Military Department

Members of the Oregon Army National Guard's 41st Infantry Brigade Combat Team stand in formation during the unit's mobilization ceremony at the Portland Coliseum May 2. Nearly 2,700 soldiers mobilized in cities around the state, giving residents of Bend, Medford, Eugene and Portland communities, a chance to send off Oregon's soldiers in what is the largest deployment of Oregonians since World War II.

2,700 Oregon soldiers ready for duty in Iraq during first week of May

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

PORTLAND, Ore. -- The Oregon National Guard's 41st Infantry Brigade Combat Team hosted four mobilization ceremonies in Portland, Bend, Eugene and Medford the first week of May.

Nearly 2,700 soldiers departed during the week in preparation for training at Fort Stewart, Ga., prior to leaving for Iraq.

Well-wishers, and soldiers' family and friends joined representatives from federal, state, and local government at each of the ceremonies.

At a ceremony held May 2 at the Portland Coliseum Oregon Governor Theodore Kulongoski told the assembled soldiers they could focus on their mission abroad because Oregonians would look after their loved ones at home.

United States Senator from Oregon, Ron Wyden, echoed the governor's support, but added that soldiers returning from the deployment would be well cared for.

"We will not have you go from the front

line to the unemployment line," Wyden said to the crowd, who responded with applause.

For many Oregon National Guard soldiers, this deployment marks a second, or even third trip to the Middle East. But for some soldiers like Spc. Susan Maxwell of Seaside, Ore., mobilizing for her first deployment is full of mixed emotions.

"I'd be lying if I said I wasn't scared," said Maxwell, who is with the 141st Brigade Support Battalion. "But at the same time, I'm really looking forward to going."

Other soldiers like Staff Sgt. Brandy Mortenson, of Portland, Ore., have de-

ployed multiple times. This trip marks her third deployment to the Middle East—the other two were with the active duty Army.

"I'm looking forward to the adventure," Mortenson said. "My family is a little sad, but they understand I serve my country."

For Staff Sgt. David Gowan, who is with 2nd Battalion, 218th Field Artillery, says while this deployment is his first, he hopes to employ his many years as an artillery fire direction section chief to help mentor his teammates.

"For me (my goal) is going to be taking care of the guys," he said. "Watching them grow and mentoring and teaching them, is

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Pendleton aviation facility hosts annual community open house



Photo by Sgt. Eric A. Rutherford, Oregon Military Department

An Oregon Army National Guard CH-47 Chinook helicopter sling-lifts two humvees during the Community Appreciation Open House hosted by the Army Aviation Support Facility #2 in Pendleton, Ore., April 23. The air crews with the 2nd Battalion, 641st Aviation Regiment, demonstrated the Chinook's heavy lift capabilities and versatility by sling-loading the two vehicles around the air field. Students from area schools and community members were invited to the AASF#2 for a day of interacting with Guard members and getting 'hands-on' experience with some of the Guard's equipment.

See **Pendleton** on **PAGE 7**

Brigade soldiers celebrate ANZAC day

Story by Spc. BZ Zeller
115th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

CAMP ROBERTS, Calif. -- Before the morning sun peered over the Santa Lucia Coastal Mountains, the 41st Infantry Brigade Combat Team's 2,700 soldiers descended in task force formations to the base of Camp Roberts' historic Soldier's Bowl.

The soldiers and distinguished guests were in attendance to commemorate the Australia and New Zealand Army Corps Day. The ceremony marked the 17th annual observation of the event, remembering the shared historical efforts of Australia, New Zealand and the United States, stemming from World War II.

The acronym ANZAC represents the Australia and New Zealand Army Corps, whose soldiers were known as Anzacs. The only volunteer army on either side of the war, the Anzacs landed at Gallipoli [on the Turkish Peninsula], April 25, 1914, and met fierce resistance from the Turkish defenders. Originally planned as a bold strike to hammer Turkey out of the war, the attack ground to a standstill and resulted in an eight-month campaign.

Lt. Col. Laura Garren said she was overwhelmed by the troop procession just prior to sunrise.

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COMMAND

Salute to 41st IBCT in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom



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

The mobilization of the 41st Infantry Brigade Combat Team is well underway. This mighty brigade has successfully completed an arduous training session at Camp Roberts, Calif. and four mobilization ceremonies from Portland to Central Point. The brigade is now transitioning to Fort Stewart, Ga., and is undergoing its final tune-up before heading overseas.

Col. Dan Hokanson and Command Sgt. Maj. Michael Storm have a great team of veterans and first-time deployers. The leadership from brigade commander to squad leader is as strong and accomplished as I

National Guard of Delaware, Nebraska, New Mexico and

have seen in my four decades of service.

Annual training in California enabled the Junglers to iron out relationships created by moving from rear organization to that required in Iraq. It also helped before deployment by integrating five companies from the

by the professional manner in which today's heroes honored those of the past.

This is not only the success of the 41st but of a host of dedicated elements. Oregon Joint Force Headquarters, the California Guard, active duty advisors and trainers, Oregon Air Guard and 82nd Brigade personnel all contributed to this world-class training.

Logisticians labored twenty-four hours a day to support the troops. Trainers provided extraordinary experience on tactics, techniques, and procedures that

Brigade for sending over 200 volunteers to help fill the 41st Brigade. Additionally, I want to thank Col. Robert Mouw and his logisticians man the "best seen to date" rapid fielding initiative issue sites. Col. Michael Dunn and Col. William Gutheim also managed MEDCOM elements spectacularly in facing myriad medical readiness issues.

We can all be proud of this team effort. The 41st IBCT will represent us well. We wish them Godspeed. But now, we must turn to each other; Army and Air Guard, officer, warrant, and NCO and face the fact that we have many important tasks before us here in Oregon. Now, more than ever, every Oregon National Guard member here at home must be personally and professionally ready because 2,700 of our finest won't be in our borders until April 2010. Link arms and lean into the wind.

Thanks for our past success. Thanks for the confidence and courage you demonstrate as we deal with the challenges of the next 12 months.

Raymond F. Rees

"The leadership from brigade commander to squad leader is as strong and accomplished as I have seen in my four decades of service."

— Maj. Gen. Raymond F. Rees

Suicide awareness and prevention are paramount to Guard success



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

This month I want to address a topic critical to protecting our troops: Suicide Awareness.

Suicide currently claims fewer deaths than accidents and I believe that is due to overall awareness and understanding of the help available to those who are struggling with thoughts of suicide. That said, every year approximately 30,000 people die by suicide in the United States, and approximately 650,000 people yearly receive emergency treatment after attempting suicide in the

United States. It is the third leading cause of death among American youths. Our soldiers are not immune to these statistics.

Oregon has a top-notch reintegration team and they are available around the clock at (888) 688-2264. I encourage anyone who is struggling with this issue to call the above number regardless of deployment status. The most important thing to know about suicide is that it is preventable.

As we leave winter behind and enter spring we are at the time of the year where suicides tend to increase. This season more than any other can make individuals feel hopeless and desperate. Financial stressors surge in the months following the holidays as charge card bills, taxes, and other expenses, pile up.

We are afforded an opportunity to utilize these next few months to educate our citizen-soldiers and airmen in hopes that we can eliminate suicides, attempted or otherwise.

I ask that we take a moment to reflect on the lives of our Guard members lost to suicide in Oregon in the past year. Let's put extra emphasis on suicide prevention in an effort to ensure our military members and their families know the warning signs and

risk factors for suicide.

If any soldier or airman indicates any of the following they should be seen immediately by a healthcare professional: if they talk or hint about suicide, formulate a plan to include acquiring the means to kill themselves, express a desire to die, talk about death, finalize their personal affairs and perhaps begin giving away personal possessions, then they are at risk.

The risk of suicide is highest when the person sees no way out and fears things may get worse, predominant emotions are hopelessness and helplessness and thinking is constricted with a tendency to perceive his or her situation as all bad. Many times the situation is complicated by the use of alcohol or other substances.

The Suicide Prevention Hotline is 1-800-273-TALK (8255). If you need assistance, it is available. You, the men and women of the Oregon National Guard, are what make this organization a success. The Oregon Guard, your community and your nation needs each and every one of you. Each of you is a warrior, take advantage of the programs that are available if and when you need help.

Current Guard members should take the time to thank veterans from wars

Fellow Warrants:

I stated in my last article that I would be discussing some of the current trends and new workshops that we will host here in Oregon.

Those issues are important and will be addressed, but with the 41st Infantry Brigade Combat Team leaving there are other items that seem more appropriate.

In the past months I have personally heard soldiers complain about standing in formal formations and going through deployment ceremonies. They felt it was a waste of time.

The following story is true: In the sixties and part of the seventies all service members who flew had to do so in either Class A or B uniforms. Having a layover in San Francisco was not a pleasant experience. Members of the Armed Forces were told to head straight to the USO and wait until the last minute to board the plane due to animosity toward military members.

While waiting for a flight to from Los Angeles to Portland, a young marine returning from Southeast Asia was writing postcards using the corner of a rental car booth. The

marine was approached by several angry members of the agency and asked to leave because his presence in uniform was 'bad for business.' Without really understanding why, he quietly left.

In this environment veterans learned very quickly not to mention they were back from war, especially if they were attending a university.

Today, because of the sacrifices of servicemembers, attitudes have changed, especially within the military itself. Now, younger vets are being thanked for their service. That is something we as current servicemembers should take to heart and resolve to thank veterans from previous wars when we have the opportunity. They have earned our gratitude for what they went through. They have paved the way for today's soldiers who do not have to deal with the amount of animosity displayed in years past.

One of the reasons for this is the formation of the family readiness groups. Members of the family readiness groups have invested a great deal of time and energy to help



Chief Warrant Officer 5 Michael Zagya,
Command Chief
Warrant Officer,
Oregon National
Guard

communities support the deploying soldier. That was not the case years ago. Now, our senior leaders work hard to take care of the soldiers down range. As warrants it is part of our job to support those soldiers as well.

I want to wrap this up by returning to my first point; that of soldiers complaining because they are standing in mobilization formation. Let's remember back to the years I have just described and be grateful for the opportunity to stand at attention as grateful communities wish us well and extend their thoughts and prayers to our families.

NEWS

Former Oregon Soldier returns to Camp Roberts 52 years after basic training

Story by Spc. BZ Zeller

115th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

CAMP ROBERTS, Calif. -- For Multnomah County Sheriff Robert 'Bob' Skipper, visiting Camp Roberts, as part of the Oregon Employer Support for the Guard and Reserve 'Boss Lift' event on April 14, turned out to be a stroll down memory lane.

Skipper, who still has his original National Guard uniform issue stuffed into a duffel bag in the attic of his Gresham home, was at Camp Roberts, in central California once before, under very different circumstances. The year was 1957 and he was going through basic training.

"It was quite an experience," Skipper said. "To be honest, I could have spent a couple days down there and been interested the entire time."

Skipper was part of the event sponsored by the 41st Infantry Brigade Combat Team. The Boss Lift allows civilian employers of National Guard members to visit with their employees while they are training. In this case, Skipper and a group of other employers were flown to Paso Robles, Calif., and then escorted to Camp Roberts, located just south of San Francisco.

The guests toured several training locations and visited their respective employees, who are deploying to Iraq for one year. Skipper spent the afternoon with 1st Lt. Troy Hakala, one of his deputy sheriffs. Hakala, also from Gresham, Ore., is assigned to Bravo Company, 141st Brigade Support Battalion.

Skipper said he liked the current clothing issue, equipment and training for soldiers at Camp Roberts.

"I was really impressed about the gear they are getting now," Skipper said. "I was honestly concerned about the cold weather, but the gear they're getting for Iraq really impressed me. Even the bandages that they have now are fantastic and the medical training they do is top notch. Basically, they are making paramedics out of every officer."

Skipper enlisted two days before his 18th birthday in March 1957. Following his graduation from Sandy High School, Skipper was stationed at Camp Roberts and Fort Ord, Calif., and in Yakima, Wash.

Skipper said when he attended high school his classmates all knew they were going to join the military.

"A bunch of guys went in the Navy, but I wasn't ready for that," he said. "There was a competition between Estacada High School and Sandy to see which school could enlist the most students and it was about a tossup. I stayed in about six and a half years, or so."

Skipper said he ended his service in the Guard after the start of his law enforcement career and the birth of his daughter.

"I was gone for three weeks during a summer when my little girl was only a one-year old," Skipper said. "She was used to me playing with her every night



Photo by Spc. BZ Zeller, 115th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

1st Lt. Troy Hakala, with Bravo Company, 141 Brigade Support Battalion, listens as Multnomah County Sheriff Robert Skipper speaks about his basic training experience 52 years ago at Camp Roberts, Calif., April 14. Skipper, of Portland, visited Camp Roberts to observe the training of the 41st Infantry Brigade Combat Team, including Hakala, of Gresham, Ore., who is also a Multnomah County Deputy.

and when I came back home, she looked at me like, 'who are you?'"

Starting as a deputy in 1960, Skipper said he worked up through the ranks including positions with narcotics and as a detective. He was first appointed sheriff in 1989 and then elected later that year. Skipper retired in 1994, but after more than 13 years away from office, he agreed to serve as the interim sheriff in 2008. In November 2008, he ran for re-election and was voted back to the helm.

Skipper said he has not made a decision regarding his future, following the conclusion of his term next November.

"I'm 70, so you have to decide to keep going or step aside for somebody younger," Skipper said.

2,700 Oregon soldiers honor Australia, New Zealand forces

ANZAC from front

"When I first saw the soldiers coming down off the hill, it was a very powerful moment," she said. "To see 2,700 soldiers come together so well gave me an awesome feeling as a member of the Oregon National Guard."

By the end of 1915, more than 8,000 Australian and 2,700 New Zealand soldiers died in battle before allied forces were evacuated. Anzac Day, April 25, quickly became the date on which the countries remembered the sacrifice of their fallen men.

A strong bond between the Australians and the United States was formed when the 41st Infantry Division deployed to the Pacific as the U.S. entered World War II.

Soldiers from the 41st Infantry Division comprised of National Guard units from Oregon and four other western states, sailed from ports on the east and west coast and landed at Sydney and Melbourne, Australia in 1942. The division was instrumental in the capture of Hollandia, and thus earned the nickname "The Bloody Butcher."

The division was later tasked to take the island of Biak, which resulted in the bloodiest battle that the division fought during World War II. Faulty intelligence had led the division to expect 2,000 Japanese soldiers, but they encountered 10,000 entrenched Japanese at Biak which were soon reinforced with another 2,000 Japanese soldiers. The 41st slowly and painfully worked to clear the island to capture the bomber airstrip that Gen. Douglas MacArthur needed.

The 41st Division participated in the liberation of the Philippine islands and then went on to post-war occupation duties in Japan. The 41st soldiers commemorated the sunrise ceremony to show mutual respect and their bond with the Anzacs that was forged in battle.

"It is fantastic that we are able to commemorate our brotherhood and what was mutually accomplished" said Maj. Mike Braibish, the Oregon Military Department public affairs officer. "We are honored to take part."

Patriotism runs in the family



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

Lebanon, Ore. -- During a farewell to the soldiers of A troop, 1st Battalion, 82nd Cavalry Regiment, members of the extended Fox family gathered for well-wishes and fellowship. Of the extended family, three soldiers mobilized for deployment in May including 1st Sgt. Kim Fox (fourth from right), Pfc. Matthew Fox (not pictured), Spc. Paul Bancroft who is married to the daughter of Staff Sgt. Tim and Carrie Fox and Pfc. Michael Brunner (not pictured) who is Staff Sgt. Tim Fox's cousin. "Today we are having an open house for the community to come

and say farewell, to let the soldiers know that they're behind them and grateful for their service," said Carrie Fox who in addition to being a member of the family is also a brigade family readiness support assistant. From right to left those pictured are: Pfc. Luke Fox, Spc. Caleb Gay holding daughter Riley and next to wife Amanda; 1st Sgt. Kim Fox with wife Natalie; Carrie Fox holding granddaughter Elianna Bancroft; Staff Sgt. Tim Fox; Krystal Bancroft holding son Elijah and standing next to husband Spc. Paul Bancroft who holds their son Timmy.

Central Oregon military training center gets new firearms simulator

Story by Spc. Kirby Rider

115th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

REDMOND, Ore. -- Oregon Army National Guard soldiers and civilian law enforcement agencies received a new system to help with firearms training at the Biak training facility, near Redmond in March.

The Engagement Skills Trainer, or EST system, was installed at Biak to help train soldiers preparing for deployments to Iraq and Afghanistan and civilian law enforcement agencies. The EST system is similar to the firearms training simulator, or FATS system, that previously occupied the building. This new system uses real weapons to fire a laser beam at a screen projecting the image of a specified terrain and enemy forces, and uses pneumatic cylinders to give the

weapon recoil.

"One nice thing about this system is the recoil is very similar to the actual weapons," said Spc. Megan Bowman, a range control technician with 821st Headquarters and Headquarters Detachment. "This is a more cost-effective way to teach marksmanship and doesn't require the ammo or range time."

The system is capable of handling almost every weapon in the military inventory, including M-4 carbines, M-16 rifles, M-249 squad automatic weapons, M-240B machine guns, AT-4 anti-tank rockets, shotguns, .50 caliber machine guns and M-9 handguns.

"The EST is more realistic [than the old FATS system] because it uses more advanced graphics

to display the terrain and enemy targets," Bowman said. "This system does not look like a video game, where the old one did."

Up to 10 individuals can use the system that cost about \$1.1 million. The old system was replaced due to frequent problems, and because the new system is easier for technicians and trainees to use.

The EST system has the option of a simulating desert terrain, multiple urban-growth terrains or multiple wooded terrains to engage five to 50 enemy forces. The system can also program weapon problems, like a round becoming stuck in the weapon or a dud-round.

Other agencies using the EST system include Oregon Army National Guard units and local and state police agencies.



Photo by Spc. Kirby Rider, 115th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

Soldiers from 2nd Platoon, Company B, 3rd Battalion, 116th Cavalry Regiment, stationed at Gowen Field, Idaho, practice marksmanship and team building on the new Engagement Skills Trainer at the Biak training facility, near Redmond, Ore., April 4.

THE ROAD TO IRAQ:

41ST INFANTRY BRIGADE COMBAT TEAM PREPARES

STORIES AND PHOTOS BY SPC. BZ ZELLER, 115TH MOBILE PUBLIC AFFAIRS DETACHMENT

CAMP ROBERTS, Calif. -- Soldiers of the 41st Infantry Brigade Combat Team traveled in April to Camp Roberts, Calif., for 28 days of accelerated training to better prepare them for deployment to Iraq.

According to Command Sgt. Maj. Michael Storm, what was expected at Camp Roberts,

Calif., was accomplished and the training goals that were set were exceeded. The highest-ranking enlisted soldier of the 41st Infantry Brigade Combat Team said the latest preparatory exercises for deployment were a resounding success.

Storm, of Dallas, Ore., said that 100 percent of the brigade earned a qualification in Combat Life Saver and that soldiers were able to increase their proficiency in every weapon they may fire in Iraq.

Higher temperatures were yet another element at Camp Roberts in which soldiers were better able to prepare themselves for

deployment. The 41st IBCT endured three consecutive days of 102 degrees. The heat will help the soldiers acclimate to ensuing Georgia, Kuwait and Iraq weather.

Not yet to full strength, Storm said the 41st will receive troops from other states, as well as, soldiers who are expected to complete Basic and Advanced Individual Training in time to be integrated by November. Storm said currently 2,700 soldiers are set for



Staff Sgt. Michael Sissel, of Florence, Ore., shouts out commands during Warrior Task training April 18 at Camp Roberts, Calif. Sissel is squad leader for 1st squad, 1st platoon, Alpha Troop, 1st Squadron, 82nd Cavalry.

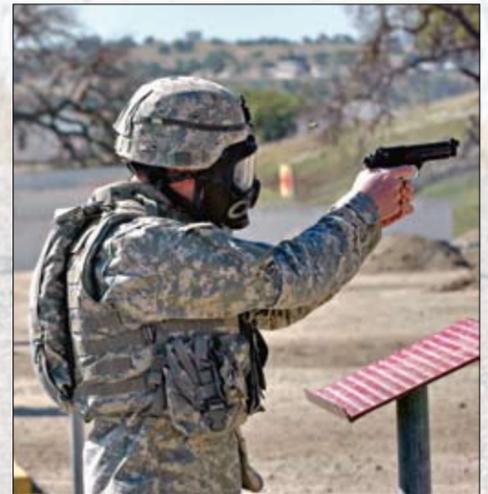
deployment and the brigade may swell to 3,500. The additional soldiers will fuse with the brigade at Fort Stewart, Ga., in a warrior platoon. 41st IBCT is set to deploy to Iraq in early July.



Above: Sgt. 1st Class Taylor Starr, of Redmond Ore., hurls himself over an obstacle April 17, at Warrior Task 14 on Camp Roberts, Calif. Task 14 is to move over through or around obstacles (except mine fields) while under enemy fire.



Pvt. Doug Bornemann, of Medford, Ore., qualifies for record using a Mark 19, Modification 4, April 17 at Camp Roberts, Calif. Bornemann is assisted by Pvt. Joshua Macdonald, also of Medford. The soldiers were launching 40mm machine gun grenades with their respective unit, Alpha Company, 1st Battalion, 186th Infantry Regiment.



Staff Sgt. Ben Hussey, of Keizer, Ore., fires a 9mm pistol while wearing his protective mask April 15, at Camp Roberts, Calif.



Staff Sgt. Kenneth Helton, of Keizer, Ore., fires a 9mm while wearing his protective mask April 15, on a firing range at Camp Roberts, Calif.



Pfc. Jacob Olson, of Prineville, Ore., maneuvers himself under a web of concertina wire April 17 at Camp Roberts, Calif. The light-wheel mechanic is assigned to Charlie Troop, 1st Squadron, 82nd Cavalry Regiment.

SOLDIERS FOR DEPLOYMENT AT CAMP ROBERTS

Soldier carries on family tradition of service, honor

If 'high-speed' describes a squared-away soldier, then one Alpha Company, 1st Battalion, 186th Infantry Regiment truck gunner who mobilized for deployment to Iraq is a blur of action.

Pfc. Devon Zeller completed Air Assault, Airborne and Level 1 Combative courses, following his graduation with honors from basic training. He has served in more than 300 Oregon Honor Guard ceremonies, including one in which he performed every position from playing taps on a bugle to folding the flag as a solo element. He said his next honor will be to serve his country while deploying to Iraq with the 41st Infantry Brigade Combat Team.

Zeller is 21 years old. He aspires to become a member of the Army's elite Special Forces, earn a degree in criminology and to one day retire from the Guard as a commissioned officer.

"He's a quick learner, scores 300s on his APFTs (Army Physical Fitness Test), is a great team player and overall everyone loves him," said Staff Sgt. Steven Luthi, Zeller's squad leader.

Zeller attributes his passion for the military to his father, Staff Sgt. Allen Zeller, a 33-year veteran, and his mother, Sue, who was his Boy Scout Troop Leader.

"My dad was always my superhero, it wasn't Spider Man or Batman," Zeller said. "I joined the Guard because I want to serve my county, my family and my friends. My mom was also a huge influence in my life. It was through Boy Scouts that I first learned to hike, survive outdoors and earn badges."

The elder Zeller's service spans time in the Marine Corps, the Air Guard and now the Army Guard where he drills at the Medford Armory with his son Devon.

Devon Zeller said more than his father's patriotism has rubbed off him.

"My dad is a high school music teacher and has spent most of his military career with music bands," said Zeller. "He can play any instrument. I learned to

play the drums at 2-years old. I can play bugle, piano, and I'm learning guitar."

The young Eagle Point, Ore., soldier who drills with his unit in nearby Medford, said the Infantry is his military calling.

"I love doing MOUT [Military Operations in Urban Terrain], land navigation and especially firing all the different weapons," Zeller said. "I really love the Infantry and, honestly, love being a grunt."

Zeller is an expert marksman and is proficient with his main gun, the M-240 Bravo, the SAW, the 50 caliber machine gun, the Mark 19 and the standard issue M-4.

While at Ft. Benning, Ga., he scored a recorded 109 pushups, 110 sit-ups and eclipsed the 12-minute mark in the 2-mile run. One factor that contributed to Zeller's APFT prowess was his mixed-martial arts training. Zeller said he trained for a cage fight at the Medford Armory for a year against an opponent that outweighed him 155 to 142 pounds.

However, his fighting career lasted just 42 seconds.

"I had my opponent in a rear-naked-choke

hold with my back against the cage and then I went for the Kimora [a guard, locking maneuver]," Zeller said. "We both ended up spinning in the air, but when we came down; his face slammed against the mat and he went unconscious for two minutes."

Zeller said seeing the spoils of his defeated opponent outweighed his thrill of victory.

"I trained hard for the fight, often running 10 or 12 miles a day," Zeller said. "I took it very seriously. But, when I saw him go limp, I decided I didn't need the ego boost ... I already know I can defend myself."

Already eyeing his future after his deployment, Zeller said he's planning on a major purchase next year.

"I want to save my money from the deployment and buy my first home," Zeller said smiling "A home with property, I'm a country boy."



Pfc. Devon Zeller displays weapons he may have to use in Iraq.

Brigade mobilizes at ceremonies around state, leaves for Iraq

MOBILIZATION from front

what I'm going to concentrate on."

Gowan, who now resides in Portland with his wife and young daughter, is originally from Ukiah, Calif. He said his other goal is to make sure everyone makes it home safe—a sentiment echoed by many of the soldiers.

"We need to make sure we look out for everyone's mental well-being too," Gowan said.

According to Oregon Guard officials, the ceremonies in Portland, Bend, Eugene, and Medford gave local communities an opportunity to personally send off the soldiers as they depart on what is the largest deployment of the Oregon National Guard since World War II.

Nearly 2,700 soldiers from Oregon and five companies of soldiers totaling 700 personnel from Delaware, Massachusetts, Nebraska and New Mexico will spend about two months training at Fort Stewart, Ga. Prior to their ten-month deployment to Iraq.



Spc. Asia Jones, of Portland, Ore., plays the part of the enemy during a training scenario on Camp Roberts, Calif. She's training with the rest of Bravo Company, 141st Brigade Support Battalion while supporting the Oregon National Guard's 41st Infantry Brigade Support Battalion during their pre-mobilization training for their deployment to Iraq.



Staff Sgt. Kenneth Helton from Keizer, Ore., dons his protective mask prior to firing a 9mm pistol at the live range April 15 at Camp Roberts, Calif. Helton is the 1st squad leader of 2nd platoon, Golf (Field Artillery Forward Support Company) 141st Brigade Support Battalion



NEWS

Local racehorse wins for Oregon Guard

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

PORTLAND, Ore. -- Although Mystacallie didn't win in her final race at Portland Meadows on March 23, her 2008-2009 race season was a windfall for the Oregon National Guard.

While Mystacallie paced anxiously in front of officials from Portland Meadows, Guard representatives and local sports radio station, 95.5 FM "The Game," presented a check for \$30,574 to the Oregon Guard's Emergency Relief Fund.

The presentation followed Mystacallie's participation in her final race of the season—the \$18,000 Donna Jensen Handicap. Although she finished in a respectable third-place, Mystacallie's entire race season—and the donation to the Guard as a result of her winnings—came as an unexpected surprise to many.

Staff Sgt. Richard Wirfs, the vice president of the Emergency Relief Fund, said his initial impression of the then little-known race horse did not match the filly's season finish. "No one knew it was going to get this big, but once she started racing, it was win after win after win."

Horse owner and trainer Ben Root originally figured Mystacallie would win one or two races, and perhaps take a total race season purse of \$3,000 to \$5,000, but Mystacallie surprised everyone.

"She's been an unbelievable success story," said Portland Meadows General Manager, Will Alempijevic. "Mystacallie has turned into the darling of northwest horse racing. I couldn't be happier with the way things turned out."

Indeed, she ended up one of the winningest horses at Portland Meadows, racking up seven out of 11 first place finishes, netting her owners \$30,574.50—the same amount written on the large check presented to Wirfs trackside following race number six.

With dwindling track attendance, Alempijevic and Portland Meadows' trackside announcer, Jason Beem, collaborated with 95.5 FM "The Game" on an innovative promotion to lure horse lovers and casual



Above: Mystacallie (right) starts out her last race of the 2008-2009 season in the lead at Portland Meadows, March 23. Although she finished third-place in this particular race, her season's winnings—just over \$30,000, were donated to the Oregon National Guard Emergency Relief Fund—an organization which helps families of deployed Oregon soldiers and airmen.

observers of horse racing back to the track. In early 2008, their idea was to designate a horse as "The People's Horse," where honorary owners would have access to the trainers and riders, and be able to take pictures in the winner's circle if their horse won.

Portland Meadows pledged to match any winnings of this horse, with proceeds going to the radio station's charity of choice. They chose a lightly-raced and little known Oregon filly named Mystacallie, and the station chose the Guard's Emergency Relief Fund.

Wirfs said the donation comes at an opportune time as more than 3,000 Oregon citizen-soldiers are set to deploy to Iraq for a year—the single largest deployment of Oregon's soldiers since World War II.

With the bulk of requests for assistance coming from families of deployed soldiers facing temporary financial difficulties, Wirfs said the money is a welcome relief, especially in light of the ongoing econom-



From left: Portland Meadows' General Manager, Will Alempijevic, Sgt. Richard Wirfs, Sgt. Dustin Clevenger and Capt. Greg Fernandez pause in the winner's circle during a presentation ceremony for a \$30,574.50 check at Portland Meadows.

ic downturn and increasing job layoffs.

"We're getting more and more requests as the brigade gets ready to deploy," he said. "This donation will potentially help families who otherwise may have nowhere else to turn. The amount of interest and support for this, and how everything worked out quite frankly has been overwhelming."

"Everyone knew the money was going to the Oregon Guard," Alempijevic said. "I don't think people would have followed if it wasn't going to such a great cause."

Wirfs is grateful things worked out for everyone. The fact that The Game chose the Oregon National Guard, Mystacallie had a successful race season, and Portland Meadows agreed to match her winnings, were a true blessing, he said.

Veterans Affairs accepting post-9/11 GI Bill applications

Story by Rick Maze &
William McMichael,
Army Times

WASHINGTON -- Applications for the new Post-9/11 GI Bill will be accepted by the Veterans Affairs Department beginning May 1, according to the VA and Defense Department officials.

The application process for the new program that takes effect Aug. 1 will be fully electronic over a secure Internet connection that can be accessed through VA's education benefits Web site.

Early enrollments will allow VA to work out kinks in a process that is expected to have more than 450,000 people apply for college benefits in the first year of the program. Calculating payments will be complicated by factors such as the length of active military service since Sept. 11, 2001, the number of credits, the location of the institution of higher learning, and in the case of private institutions, whether the college or university is taking part in a tuition-reduction program.

Stakes are high for VA to implement the new program that promises to cover full tuition and fees for attending public colleges and universities, plus provide a monthly living expense, book allowance and other benefits. Congress, veterans' service organizations and people wanting to use the new benefits program are all concerned after VA warned of the difficulty of launching such a sweeping program less than one year after it was signed into law. The VA had about three years to fully implement the Montgomery GI Bill, the last major change in veterans educa-

tion benefits that took effect in 1986.

VA officials, including Keith Wilson, who heads the department's education service, have expressed confidence that the program will launch successfully. "I am personally committed to ensuring the success of this program, as is every employee working tirelessly on this project," Wilson said March 25 at a Senate Veterans' Affairs Committee hearing.

Being pre-certified as eligible for the Post-9/11 GI Bill would make it easier to complete the enrollment process later this summer when the program is fully launched.

While applications are being accepted, some details of the new program remain un-

known. The Defense Department has yet to announce how servicemembers will qualify for a key part of the new bill, transferring unused benefits to a spouse or children.

VA sources, speaking on the condition of anonymity, said they had hoped transferability rules would be announced before the application process began so active-duty service members would know even if they were not personally going to use their benefits in the fall.

Defense Department sources said transfer rights rules have been approved by the services but final approval has not been received from the White House's Office of Management and Budget, which reviews regulations.



Local company donates to Guard emergency relief

Mr. Scott Kranz, Senior Program Manager with AMEC, (left), presents a check for \$10,000 to retired Oregon Army National Guard Col. Don Bond, Joint Chief of Staff-Army, on behalf of the Emergency Relief Fund, April 7, at the Joint Forces Headquarters in Salem, Ore. The Oregon Guard worked with AMEC on such high-profile environmental remediation projects such as Camp Rilea in Warrenton, and Camp Withycombe in Clackamas. The Oregon National Guard Emergency Relief Fund is a non-profit group which assists families of soldiers and airmen who face economic challenges.

Photo by Tech. Sgt. Nick Choy,

Homefront Heroes in Oregon Kicks off

A new program sponsored by the Oregon National Guard works to help the children of deployed soldiers and airmen get connected.

Story by Kim Lippert,
Oregon Military Department
Public Affairs Office

The Oregon National Guard is launching a new program to help Oregon children of service-members deal with their parents' deployments.

The program, called Homefront Heroes in Oregon (H2O), will bring military dependant children together to socialize and have fun. The first event is scheduled for Saturday May 16, from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. at North Salem High School: 765 14th St. N.E., Salem.

Military kids of all ages and their parents are welcome. Activities will include a rock climbing wall, video games, storytelling, fire demos, arts and crafts, archery, sports games and military and emergency vehicle displays.

The program is the brainchild of Laura Conley, spouse of Oregon State Command Sgt. Major, Brunk Conley. Mrs. Conley said while her family for the most part coped well with her husband's deployment, her middle son struggled with the absence of his father.

"My middle son was more on his own to deal with the absence of his dad," she said. "Of course we talked and worked through the issues, but as a teenager going through many changes, and not always wanting to confide in his mother, he had a rough go of it."

Conley said her middle son is now in college and doing well, but the experience has made her want to help others who face similar situations.

"They don't wear a sign that says, 'my dad is in Iraq' or 'my mom is in Afghanistan,'" she said. "We want to get these children together and let them see and talk to others of their age who are experiencing the same issues."

With more than 3,000 Oregon National Guard soldiers set to deploy to Iraq, there will be more kids statewide with deployed parents than at any time since World War II.

The Homefront Heroes event at North Salem High School in May will be the first of many events planned around the state helping military kids connect with one another.

Several organizations have joined together to make Homefront Heroes possible including Boy Scouts of America, Salem Police and Fire Departments, Salem Public Library, Salem Public Schools, North Salem High School Army JROTC, Oregon State Police, American Red Cross, Operation Military Kids and the Association of the United States Army.

NEWS

Pendleton aviation unit hosts community open house



Photo by Sgt. Eric A. Rutherford, Oregon Military Department

Tech. Sgt. Derrick Brooks, a pararescue jumper with the 304th Rescue Squadron, Air Force Reserve, back flips from an Oregon Army National Guard CH-47 Chinook helicopter at 7,200 feet, during a joint operation High Altitude-Low Open jump demonstration for the Community Appreciation Open House hosted by the Army Aviation Support Facility #2 in Pendleton, Ore., April 23.

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

The Oregon National Guard held a community open house at their Army Aviation Support Facility #2 in Pendleton, Ore., April 23.

The annual event showcased the capabilities of their aviation unit, which flies the CH-47 Chinook helicopter—often called the workhorse of the Army.

The unit supports a variety of state missions, including search and rescue, forest fire fighting and cargo and personnel transport.

Event attendees enjoyed a day of flight operation demonstrations, static displays by various Oregon National Guard units, a rock climbing wall and a parachute demonstration by the Air Force Reserve.

According to Maj. Alan Gronewold, the executive officer for 2-641 Aviation, the highlight of the day was an aircraft demonstration where a CH-47 Chinook lifted two humvees high above the crowd in an operation called a sling-load.

The event is designed to let the surrounding community know about Oregon Guard units who are in their areas, said Gronewold.

“It’s important to let the community members know there are Guardsmen in their hometown and show them what we do,” Gronewold said.

The unit is scheduled to deploy to Afghanistan in 2010.

Former ORANG commander shares personal Holocaust experiences

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

PORTLAND, Ore. -- A prominent Portland businessman, philanthropist and former commander of the Oregon Air National Guard recounted his experiences during the Holocaust at an event at the Portland Air National Guard Base, April 18.

Retired Brig. Gen. Fred M. Rosenbaum, a Jewish-American who served almost 40 years in the ORANG, talked to airmen about his experiences during the event sponsored by the 142nd Fighter Wing’s Diversity Council as part of their Holocaust Remembrance observances.

About 80 airmen attended the presentation during the unit’s monthly training assembly to hear Rosenbaum discuss how the advent of the war affected his life. Born in Austria more than a decade before the start of World War II, Rosenbaum recalled how quick his life was changed forever.

“German soldiers marched past my father’s business, and the skies were filled with German planes,” Rosenbaum said of the Nazi invasion of Austria in the latter part of 1938. “The entire country changed in the span of 24 hours,” he said.

“Imagine waking up one day and people are trying to kill you,” he said.

After facing months of persecution and rising threats of violence, Rosenbaum said one day he and other Jewish students were herded into their school basement by Hitler Youth members who beat them with riding crops and belts. Rosenbaum climbed out a window and ran straight home.

“That was the last time I ever saw that school,” he said.

Within days, then 12-year old Rosenbaum was on a train headed to London, England. His immediate family would join him 18 months later. The Rosenbaum’s would eventually move to the Pa-



Photo by Staff Sgt. John Hughel, 142nd Fighter Wing Public Affairs

Retired Oregon Air National Guard Brig. Gen. Fred M. Rosenbaum, meets with Col. John Kent, commander of the 142nd FW following Rosenbaum’s presentation on his personal experiences during the Holocaust; the focus of the wing’s Diversity Council observances for Holocaust Remembrance Month.

cific Northwest, where they settled in Portland, Ore. Rosenbaum was soon admitted to Reed College.

During the presentation, Rosenbaum showed the audience his German passport, which was stamped with a large red “J”. The letter designated him as a Jew, he added.

“Whenever life gets me down, I pull out this passport and look at it,” he said. “Then I think, ‘life ain’t that bad.’”

Rosenbaum joined the Army in 1944, where he hoped to be sent to Europe so he could fight the Nazis, but instead served as a paratrooper with the 11th Airborne Division in the Pacific Theater. After leaving the Army in 1948, he would join the Oregon Air National Guard.

He received his commission in 1953, and progressed through several leadership positions in the ORANG before finally being selected as the Assistant Adjutant General (Air) in 1980. He retired from the military in 1986.

“I never knew that I would achieve what I did in the United States,” Rosenbaum said. “The military certainly had a large part of that.”

Rosenbaum said while he had personally faced adversity and challenges, other family members had not been so lucky. On a business trip to Austria in 1999, he inquired through a friend as to the fate of his grandparents.

He eventually learned they had been detained and sent to Minsk, Poland, where they were executed on the way to a Nazi concentration camp in November, 1941.

“To have this life in the United States on one hand, and the life and death in Vienna on the other hand—to say that was night and day doesn’t even come close,” Rosenbaum said.

“The greatest blessing,” he continued, “is to come to this country and take advantage of citizenship and the opportunity to help others.”

Rosenbaum is known for his many civic contributions including the creation of an annual at-risk youth camp which bears his name, Camp Rosenbaum. Celebrating its 39th year, the nationally-recognized camp is a model for other states’ efforts for early-intervention youth programs.

Highlighting the Year of the NCO



Sgt. 1st Class James Lindseth
Platoon Sergeant



This individual was selected for the monthly submission for the 2009 Year of the NCO by his unit, 1st platoon, Golf (Field Artillery Forward Support Company) 141 Brigade Support Battalion, 41st Infantry Brigade Combat Team. We have included their words to honor of his accomplishments. ~Ed.

“Sgt. 1st Class James Lindseth has been a pillar of leadership for his unit during the mobilization process for the 41st Infantry Brigade Combat Team. He is a leader of leaders.

All those know him have learned from his leadership style. He personally took charge of every aspect of preparing his platoon’s personnel files, training packets, and mentoring subordinate leaders.

In short, he ensured that his subordinate leaders prepared their subordinates for success for the up coming deployment. He exemplifies the true meaning of “live the Army Values” through his every day actions.

Sgt. 1st Class Lindseth is a NCO of NCOs, because he takes great pride in the privilege of leading Soldiers.”

NEWS BRIEFS

Military Veterans are Invited to the Ballpark for 9th annual Disabled American Veteran day

The Oregon Department of Disabled American Veterans (DAV) will host DAV Day at the Ballpark on May 23 when the Portland Beavers baseball team hosts the Nashville Sounds. The date coincides with Military Appreciation Night. As such, the first 1903 fans through the door will receive Military Caps.

DAV Day at the Ballpark is now in the 9th year. The program provides veterans from VA Medical Centers and Nursing Homes the opportunity to attend a ball game. Over 54 cities across America participated in the event last year. Director Jim Willis of the Oregon Department of Veterans’ Affairs (ODVA) extended appreciation to the Portland Beavers by stating, “America’s game showcases the fighting spirit that forever lives within our veterans. My deepest appreciation is extended to those that provide a patriotic observance of those that wore the uniform.”

Major League Baseball (MLB)

fans from the Pacific Northwest can catch-up with DAV Day at the Ballpark in Seattle on April 18 when the Mariners host the Detroit Tigers. The Mariners-Tigers game is scheduled as Veterans Appreciation Day.

On July 11, the Mariners will also host the Texas Rangers. The Portland Beavers are the Triple-A Minor League baseball club for the San Diego Padres. Portland will play host to the Minor League All-Star Game, July 15 with a weekend of fan fest events beginning July 11. Willis added, “Head out to the ballpark this summer and get involved. Attending community events is important and veteran involvement is significant.”

To learn more about DAV Day at the Ballpark go online at www.dav.org/news/MLB.aspx.

For more information, call Alison Mathes of the Portland Beavers at (503) 553-5443 or email ticketsales@pgepark.com or call the ticket office and say you are a DAV member.

Rose Festival creates new tradition for Military

Join the Portland Rose Festival as they create a new community tradition at Waterfront Village. Over Memorial Day weekend, celebrate the American spirit and tradition of community pride and service, as they honor local and national heroes who have given so much for our freedom.

All current and former U.S. military members and their families will receive free admission (with proof of service) to Waterfront Village beginning Friday May 22 through Monday, May 25, 2009. Memorial Day festivities include a parade, patriotic songs, guest speakers, marching band music, special memorial services, and other exciting displays showcasing our collective patriotic spirit.

This event has received official sanctioning from the Oregon Department of Veterans’ Affairs!

For more information visit the following web site: www.rosefestival.org

NEWS

Oregon, Washington airmen train in Puerto Rico hospital

Story and photo by
Tech. Sgt. Jennifer Shirar
173rd Fighter Wing
Public Affairs Office

SAN JUAN, Puerto Rico -- Members of the 173rd Medical Group from Kingsley Field, the 142nd Medical Group at Portland Air Base, and the 194th Medical Group based at Camp Murray, Wash., participated in hands-on medical training during their two-week deployment to Puerto Rico from March 25 to April 9.

The Puerto Rico Aeromedical Trauma Training Center of Excellence, also known as PRATT-COE, gave Oregon and Washington military medical personnel the opportunity to treat real-world trauma such as gunshot wounds, stabbings and severe motor vehicle accidents.

The Airmen worked alongside local medical staff during their two-week training, "with exposure to medical emergencies they may not always see," said Master Sgt. Jerod Taylor, a 173rd Medical Group medical technician.

Centro Medico is the central trauma medical care facility of the entire Northeastern Caribbean. Dr. Saul Irizarry, the head trauma physician for the hospital said there are approximately 50,000 emergency room visits per year and 120 trauma admissions every month at the facility. He went on to say that with such a high volume of severe trauma admissions to Centro Medico, the Airmen could take part in nearly continuous clinical opportunities at PRATT-COE.

Deployment organizers say PRATT-COE was developed so that Aeromedical Evacuation units and Medical Groups could sharpen and maintain the essential trauma and critical care skills needed to support Homeland Defense Operations. The training is designed to prepare military medical personnel for the demanding high stress scenarios and severe traumatic casualties encountered today in combat zones, officials said.

Guard members assisted in procedures ranging from

suturing or stitching wounds to implanting chest tubes, which are inserted between a patient's ribs to allow fluid or air to drain from around the lungs. They were also instructed in patient resuscitation--a clinical description of heroic efforts used to save a person who is literally dying on the spot.

"We don't see or do these types of procedures every day," said Senior Airman Tristan Threlkeld, a medic from the 194th Medical Group. "It has been a great opportunity for me."

PRATT-COE is mutually beneficial for both the participants and the hospital staff at Centro Medico said Senior Master Sgt. Roberto Davilla, PRATT-COE Program Director and deployment coordinator. "Military medical personnel are given the chance to work directly on high trauma cases, an important preparation for them as they prepare to deploy in support of Homeland Defense Operations."

"Here you can get your hands in there, where as back in the



Senior Airmen Tristan Threlkeld, 194th Medical Dental Group Independent duty Medical Technician, (center), assists Capt. Laina Holland, 173rd Medical Group Nurse practitioner, (right), tend to a patient with a broken leg in the trauma center at Centro Medico, San Juan, Puerto Rico March 29. Members of the 173rd Medical Group from Klamath Falls, Ore., the 142nd Medical Group from Portland, Ore. and the 194th Medical Dental Group based at Camp Murray, Wash., participated in a two week hands-on training exercise in Puerto Rico.

United States you are just standing there and watching," Taylor said.

"This experience will help airmen prepare for a deployment," said Staff Sgt. Anna Hawkins, a 173rd Medical Group cardio

pulmonary technician. "Here I am being exposed to trauma that is similar to the injuries seen in a combat-zone, such as Iraq."

Irizarry added that because of the heavy workload the additional help is always welcome.

Newest Redhawks welcomed with first-ever student flight



Photo by Staff Sgt. John Hughel

Staff Sgt. Joe King, the 142nd Fighter Wing Student Flight Fitness Director, readies members of the newly formed student flight for Oregon Air National Guard fitness standards. The students completed the Air Force fitness test which consists of a 1.5-mile run, push-ups and sit-ups test, and a flexibility test at Portland Air National Guard Base, April 19.

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

PORTLAND, Ore. -- A group of new Redhawks attended the first 142nd Fighter Wing Student Flight meeting at the Portland Air National Guard Base, April 18.

The student flight is made up of new recruits and prior service members wait-

ing to attend U.S. Air Force Basic Military Training and technical schools. The group of about 30 individuals met during the fighter wing's Unit Training Assembly.

While the student flight's course work on UTA weekends might be review for some, for others, the military culture, customs and courtesies, and rank recognition is brand new, said student flight officer in charge, Capt.

Lisa Scott.

The aim of the program is to mentor incoming airmen about the rigors of Basic Military Training and technical schools, Scott said.

"It's critical that we take care of our airmen from the very beginning," she added.

According to the curriculum plan, participants will memorize Air Force core

values and study Air Force regulations. Periodic meetings and presentations from section first sergeants and chiefs, in addition to instruction on military acronyms and watching safety videos will be the norm. Scott said the students will have 'homework' that aims help them transition into becoming Redhawks.

Students will also participate in a regular physical fitness program, headed up by Staff Sgt. Joe King, of the 142nd Fighter Wing Aircraft Maintenance Group.

"Even though they haven't been formally trained in the military, they can still acquire knowledge that'll help them be successful in their careers," Scott added.

Senior Master Sgt. Kirk Robinson, Oregon Air National Guard Recruiting and Retention Superintendent, said the student flight provides a basic transition into military culture.

"What are the standards? What are the expectations we have of them?" Robinson asks. "If they're going to look like airmen, they need to act like airmen."

Robinson, who isn't a regular cadre member, but mentors and advises the

team, said part of the impetus behind the new student flight is the success he and others experienced after starting a similar group at the Oregon Air National Guard's other wing in Klamath Falls.

The goal of cadre members, says Robinson, is to make the students' time before BMT, or the transition from BMT to formal technical schools meaningful, which will relieve some of their stress when they get there. He added that he would personally like to see more of them achieve honor graduate status, and programs like the student flight will help toward that goal.

"Their success is our success," he said.

Scott's motivation is similar. She and the other cadre members hope to convey their personal passion for service and sacrifice.

"Our staff shares a passion for not only serving our country, but also for mentoring the future of our military," she said.

For more information about the 142nd FW Student Flight, contact Capt. Lisa Scott at (503) 335-4072.

Oregon airmen travel to Jamaica for training exercise

Story and photo by
Master Sgt. Jon Dyer
142nd Fighter Wing
Public Affairs Office

KINGSTON, Jamaica-- Members of the Oregon Air National Guard's 142nd Civil Engineer Squadron, based at Portland Air Base, became the first American military unit to participate in a multi-national construction training exercise, March 21-30.

The "Tropical Hammer" exercise was hosted by the Canadian military, in cooperation with the Jamaican Defense Force (JDF). According to organizers, the integrated, joint- and multi-national force worked and trained on construction projects, which will help deployed military members into joint military theaters like Iraq or Afghanistan.

"It was a seamless integration, a high degree of interoperability," said Maj. Ron Carriere, Canadian Exercise Commander. He praised the work of the men and women of Oregon's 142nd CES.

Maj. Frank Page, of the ORANG's 142nd Security Forces Squadron, oversaw 31 unit members who spent two weeks in Kingston working on two construction sites. Unit members transformed metal shipping containers, known as Conex boxes, into classrooms for a trade school and a counter terrorism school.

The Oregon Airmen were joined by members of multiple Canadian military units, in addition to several members of the 558th Special Engineering Squadron, based in Nottingham, England. In all, four countries participated throughout the two weeks.

"This started as a cooperative effort between the Canadians and the Jamaicans, including the Americans and Britons has added a whole new dimension to the exercise," Carriere said.

For 10 days, the members of the 142nd CES, along with Canadian and British military forces, spent morning, noon and night building camaraderie, and



Senior Airman Mike French, a 142nd Civil Engineer from Portland, Ore. lends a hand on one of several construction projects during exercise Tropical Thunder in Kingston, Jamaica in March. The members of the 142nd CES were the first Americans to participate in the exercise alongside Canadians, Jamaicans, and United Kingdom military engineers. The exercise is designed to facilitate construction projects in multi-national environments.

as a team they focused on the mission at hand. "What you had was four countries, separated by a common language," said Chief Master Sgt. Jeff Roy, deployment superintendent. "But in the end, we delivered a quality product."

Being the first American mili-

tary unit to participate in a multi-national in Jamaica, the anticipation of successful integration was high. The general consensus of 142nd CES members was that they had succeeded beyond expectation. "It went by too quickly," Carriere said. "Over-

all a wonderful experience, (the Americans) molded very well into the Canadian Construct--they rolled in flawlessly."

"Everywhere we go, we don't meet the standards, we set them," Roy added.