OR Airmen travel to Haiti, assist in relief efforts

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

PORTLAND, Ore. -- Early on a Tuesday morning, Mark Gibson did what many travelers do before boarding their flight—kissed his wife Leah goodbye, then walked through the security checkpoint. But instead of removing his shoes for the security check, he took off his combat boots.

2nd Lt. Mark Gibson is part of a four-man team from the 123rd Weather Flight—a tenant unit of Oregon Air National Guard’s 142nd Fighter Wing, and an integral part of the Combat Operations Group.

The team left for Port-au-Prince, Haiti, Feb. 2, to help with the ongoing relief efforts there. They will spend six months providing weather operations support for the Joint Task Force already in place.

“It (the mission) shows we always have to be prepared,” Gibson said.

Team leader, Master Sgt. Ken Campbell said it took a while to get the necessary clearances for the team to enter Haiti, but he credited the help of key individuals who expedited the mission request—especially Maj. Gen. Raymond F. Rees, the Adjutant General, Oregon National Guard.

“General Rees approved the request within five minutes of it landing on his desk,” Campbell said. “The person who made this all come together was Master Sgt. Pam Pitman.”

Pitman, who works full-time at the Portland Air National Guard Base, handled the logistical planning for the team, put together their orders, and obtained the necessary country clearances.

“Without her, we wouldn’t be leaving today,” Campbell said.

While Campbell coordinated checking in the gear boxes and luggage, Gibson waited for his boarding pass. He hefted large gear boxes onto the scales, while United Airlines employees watched.

While the Task Force in Haiti is already assisting with post-earthquake relief efforts, an official weather base has yet to be set up, Campbell said.

“We will meet with the Joint Meteorological Officer already there to get our tasking,” Campbell said.

Campbell said while individuals from the 123rd Weather Flight deploy all the time, this is the first time they have responded to an international disaster.

As the airmen made their way to the airport security check point, Gibson’s wife Leah said even though this particular deployment came unexpectedly, she hopes her husband and the rest of the team members can help make a difference in Haiti.

“It’s going to be beneficial to everyone,” she said. “I hope they can get a lot accomplished.”

See also, OREGON on PAGE 5

Oregonians welcome home aviation unit

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

SALEM, Ore. -- The Oregon Army National Guard welcomed members of one of their aviation units home during an official demobilization ceremony Jan. 25, 2010, in Salem, Ore.

More than 100 soldiers of Charlie Company, 7-158 Aviation were present for the ceremony held at the Army Aviation Support Facility, after spending nearly a year in Iraq flying MEDEVAC missions.

Oregon’s Governor, Theodore R. Kulongoski, and Maj. Gen. Raymond F. Rees, the Adjutant General, Oregon National Guard, presided over the ceremony attended by more than 300 friends, family members and fellow Oregon Guard members.

“The Governor and Rees personally thanked each soldier following the official ceremony and presented each soldier with the Governor’s coin and the Oregon National Guard coin.”

Family members join Oregon National Guard members at the Army Aviation Support Facility in Salem, Ore., to welcome home more than 100 soldiers of the Oregon Army National Guard’s Charlie Company, 7-158 Aviation unit, who deployed to Iraq for one year.
As we recently welcomed home our Army Guard Charlie Company, 7-158th Aviation National Guard, from a successful deployment supporting Operation Iraqi Freedom, members from the Air Guard mobilized to provide support in Haiti. Citizen-soldiers and airmen continually dig the mouths we were needed, we are. Just as we have in the past. In January, we said goodbye to an amazing individual, Brig. Gen. Fred Rosenbaum.

I have often been quoted to say General George Patton who said after hearing of casualties in WWII – “It is wrong to grieve that these men died, rather we should thank God that such men lived.” As I reflect on this quote, I thank God that such a man as Fred Rosenbaum lived.

It is hard to condone or encapsulate such a rich and giving life.

It is my sincere belief this man lived from Nazi persecution, became a citizen of the United States, enthusiastically embraced the opportunity to serve to first in the Army in WWII, then in the Oregon Army National Guard, and finally in the Oregon Air National Guard where he finished his career.

He went on to serve our nation and state in uniform for 42 years, while also working to better his community and the public service.

I am confident many individuals have stories about Fred Rosenbaum and how their lives were touched or enriched by his leadership, his energy, his vision, his compassion, and his genuine and desire to make our community, state and nation better every day.

Let me talk about this in terms of the citizen-soldier ideal that is really at the heart of our Oregon National Guard.

You have often seen snapshots of the minute-man, a colonial militia man in a tri-corn hat, with a musket in hand, but many do not see that the other hand rests on a plow. This is the citizen who turns from his civilian responsibilities and responses to the needs of his community, and volunteers his service, to defend the liberty and freedom of all.

Leadership: a good description of ORNG Warrant Officers

Prior to working full time at the Military Department I was a middle school principal. Since retiring from the school district I became an adjunct professor at a Portland university. I was contacted last week to teach some online courses, one being, “The Ethics and Character of Leadership.” I readily accepted.

The curriculum reminded me that the basics of leadership are essentially the same no matter the profession. The military is a “top-down” organization. Our culture is designed to be one of direct action, clear mission focus and an appreciation for the work of our soldiers.

If you study successful military commanders, many common traits emerge. They include: confidence in their decisions, vision, regard for the good of the organization over that of themselves, and support of subordinates with the ability to follow through on recommendations from subject matter experts. Granted, there are many more traits, but this should be the basic description of all supervisors.

What can do in make sure it describes the warrant officer corps in Oregon. The ethics and character of leadership abilities need to be stellar. The leadership face of the Oregon Army National Guard Warrant Officer is changing.

We now more applications than positions available. As a result, we are tracking we will reach, if not surpass that goal. With the help of retired Chief Warrant Officer 5 Floyd Bard, “the Oregon Trail” chapter of the USWOA is now active. Warrant officers are seeing the need to take part in the Oregon National Guard Association of the United States along with USWOA. Our chief warrant officer 5s are taking charge, actively mentor and engaging younger warrants. Our warrants understand that we are not just commissioned officers and are staying out of their lane. The warrant officer’s image is inappropriate and shows a clear lack of under-standing regarding younger warrants. For example, aviation warrant officers are the primary pilots within an aviation unit. Senior warrants have more flight time than their commanders. They are trained as instructional pilots, safety officers, standardization pilots and flight warrants. We wear “dual hats.” We are the technical experts of the Army and commissioned officers. We must maintain the standard of leadership and “esprit de corps” warrant officers.

For the next nine weeks Warrant Officer 1 Landwer, will be the Warrant Officer Basic Course. Former Commanding Chief Warrant Officer 5 Jim Powell has been hired to replace her for that time period. Welcome back Mr. Powell and good luck Ms. Lindwell.

We would like to welcome into the Oregon Guard our newest aviation warrant officer, 1st Warrant Officer 5 Donald Whitehead. Sgt. 1st Class Ross Rappe has been approved by the Oregon National Guard for his involvement. Chief Warrant Officer Candidates Jonathan Tryggest and Tom Golden this spring. Best of Luck to all!

Polar Plunge presents Portland wing with charity opportunity

It was cold and aszizzled as a massive group of Redhawks from the 142nd Fighter Wing plunged into the frigid water of the Columbia River Jan. 30. But none of us were feeling any pain or discomfort, as we were following through on a noble promise.

In return for jumping in, sponsors had pledged money for the Oregon Special Olympics. Last year was the initial year for this so-called Polar Plunge. And through the encouragement of Staff Sgt. Jarrod Johnson and Master Sgt. Matt Kochosky, about 15 of us from the Wing were brave enough to submerge ourselves into the icy river.

This year, with Kochosky off at Senior NCO Academy for the next nine weeks, the team coalesced. As a result, close to 50 of us took part.

Members of the Redhawk team collected almost $12,000 in pledges, more than any other team.

Most significantly, this Polar Plunge fits right in with the core values of the Air Force and the priorities of our Oregon Air Guard Command, Brig. Gen. Bruce Prunk.

The second core value is Service before Self and we were certainly thinking of others before ourselves. Otherwise, there would be no event in the Columbia with skin the color of a cooked lobster would have felt less than invigorating.

Our Commander, Gen. Prunk, has impressed upon us on numerous occasions that our organization needs to focus on People, Readiness, and Community Service.

The Polar Plunge is clearly one of the visible ways that we take care of our communities.

Other examples include our work with the Sunshine Division in Portland, our involvement in the Hood-to-Coast Relay (a fund-raiser for the American Red Cross) and our commitment to Camp Rosenbaum. The latter, thanks to the vision of retired and recently deceased Brig. Gen. Fred Rosenbaum, will be celebrating its 40th anniversary this year of bringing 165 disadvantaged kids to the Oregon Coast for a week of character education and fun.

Certainly, raising money for the Special Olympics is the right thing to do. However, it would maintain that it also a blast. Jumping into the chilly channel creates a bond with the other folks on your team. Fred Rosenbaum’s camardrerie carries over into the military workplace.

With the next Polar Plunge coming up in just eleven months, I am looking for our participation trend to continue. If we once again triple the number of Redhawks taking part, we will have close to 150 who step up to the challenge next year. 1, for one, have already signed up. I am all in! Bring it on!
SALEM, Ore. -- Before you attend college, you need to be proactive in applying for your college benefits, such as your MGIB, Federal Tuition Assistance, grants and scholarships—the benefits don’t just happen automatically. In the case of the MGIB, many soldiers are eligible for more than one program, but you can only use one at a time, so you need to decide which MGIB will provide the maximum benefit to you before you apply.

Soldiers just starting college often do not know which MGIB they are eligible for or how to apply. The VA website at www.gibill.va.gov does a great job of explaining the various MGIB programs, but does not cover the advantages or disadvantages when used in combination with Federal Tuition Assistance.

Many of you have completed at least one deployment since September 2001 while serving in the ARNG which makes you eligible for at least two MGIB programs, the Chapter 33, also known as the Post 9/11, and Chapter 30, also known as REAP, both of which are based on the total number of months deployed. Some of you are also eligible for the Chapter 30 MGIB if you ever served on active duty and paid the $1,200 to accept the benefit. Those that have not completed a deployment or served on Title 10 orders, but incurred a 6 year obligation in the ARNG and completed IADT are eligible for the Chapter 33 MGIB.

Each MGIB is good for 36 months of full time benefit. You can use more than one MGIB at the same time and not for more than a total of 48 months. For soldiers that are eligible for both the Chapter 33 and Chapter 33 MGIB programs and plan on attending a community college, I suggest you apply for the Chapter 1607 MGIB instead of the Chapter 33. Soldiers are paid direct deposit for the Chapter 1607, and if requested, can also receive Federal Tuition Assistance to cover tuition and fees. Soldiers attending a trade school must apply for the Chapter 1607 or Chapter 1606 since the Chapter 33 does not cover trade schools, only degree granting colleges.

Given the choice between Chapter 1607 and Chapter 33 when attending a state or a private college, you will receive more benefit by applying for the Chapter 33 MGIB.

My advice—don’t use the duplicate payment of the Chapter 33 and Federal Tuition Assistance, but they can take one or the other. With the Chapter 33, you also receive a book stipend and interest bearing allowance, depending on the total number of qualifying months of active duty. One disadvantage to select the Chapter 33 MGIB, you can’t switch back to a different MGIB, so you need to know what you are doing before you apply for the Chapter 33 MGIB.

In most cases, soldiers that have the Chapter 30 MGIB should first use all 36 months of the Chapter 30, and only apply for the Chapter 33 for the additional 12 months. Soldiers with the Chapter 30 receive the MGIB payments direct deposit, and may also receive Federal Tuition Assistance to cover their tuition and fees if not on active duty status. Apply for your MGIB by submitting a VA-22-1990 through the VA website at www.gibill.va.gov at least two months prior to the term starting.

Submit an online request for Federal Tuition Assistance through the ARNG website at https://minuteman.ngb.army.mil/benefits/. TA is not a contracted benefit, it is based on funds available, so you should request early. You can request TA as early as 3 months before the term begins, but no later than 10 days after the term begins. Federal Tuition Assistance provides 100 percent of tuition costs up to $2,500 per semester hour or $167 per quarter hour, but no more than $4,500 per fiscal year including fees. If you have questions concerning your education benefits, contact me at: diane.beach@us.army.mil

Photo courtesy Army.mil

SALEM, Ore. -- Let me take a moment to thank all of you who have written, called or stopped by with your encouragement and thoughts surrounding the monthly article. I am pleased to hear it is becoming a tool to assist in making your educational decisions.

The following article has equal value in helping one think about why making a decision to attend college is an important life goal and not a monetary goal.

College is work, and like many jobs it pays dividends when completed. When making your decision to attend college, ask yourself why? Is it for a better future for myself and family? Perhaps to set yourself up for better opportunities in the work force? Ask yourself why you chose a particular school. You must determine if it will meet your needs. Does it offer the degree plan or area of study to wish to focus on? After all you will most likely be attending that institutional for a minimum of two years or up to four years depending on the degree you are pursuing.

I would like take this opportunity to address another reason why this focus I’ve been writing about is so important. Many veterans are using their new Post 9/11 GI Bill without due consideration. They enter a degree plan seemingly more for the stipends than for the education, and seem to forget there is a tremendous amount of work associated with a earning your degree. When they are unable to complete the work many of the students are forced to drop out, and this often requires them to repay entirely, the money paid them by the VA.

When you read this article please keep in mind I reference two examples to make sure vets are ready and focused before they head to school.

Thousands of veterans have headed to school. Many have never considered college before the advent of the Post-9/11 GI Bill. On balance, this is a great thing – if they are going to school for the right reasons.

There has been a somewhat alarming trend happening – veterans going to school lured by the promise of great benefits and cash in their pockets – not for the promise of an education. Who can blame them, some veterans are being offered as much as $2,800 a month for attending traditional classroom studies. The concern is that vets, motivated to go to school for the stipends, may find pursuing a college degree more demanding than they expect and realize they’ve gotten in over their heads. The fact is, some schools have already seen a number of veteran students drop classes. The downside of this is that when they drop classes, or worse, drop out entirely, they find themselves in debt to the VA and even the school.


Vets should take advantage of the Post-9/11 GI Bill, or any GI Bill program for that matter, but they need to assess their motives. Going to school for the living stipend may lead to choosing a school that doesn’t fit their needs. To get the living stipend vets must take traditional college courses, unlike online or distance learning, traditional classroom courses don’t offer the flexibility some veterans need.

If veterans select a school based on their needs instead of the cash incentive, many could see a greater chance of success.

Veterans who want to improve their employment opportunities, open new doors, or improve their lives through education, need to select the degree, school, and program that best fits their needs. Vets that do this may not find the school or program that “maximizes” their cash benefit, but maximizes their chances of success.

My advice – don’t use the GI Bill for the immediate cash benefit, use it to pay for the college degree.
ORANGE COUNTY National Guard Bureau

ATTENTION ARNG SOLDIERS!

FREE DENTAL CARE is now available for Class 3 and 4 Conditions!

GO TO www.argndental.com NOW!

Class 1 or 2 ARNG Soldiers, don’t become a Class 4. Maintain your readiness by getting a FREE annual exam. Call: 1-888-901-6009 and select Option 3 to schedule a dental appointment if you do not have a dentist. GO TO www.argndental.com NOW for more information.

WASHINGTON -- Green is an action color, usually meaning “Go!” - traffic lights, ready lights for speakers, getting the “green light” from your boss. The Army has a need for soldiers to “go green” when it comes to readiness. That includes gaining and maintaining Dental Fitness Class (DFC) 1 or 2, which is the absence of DFC 3 conditions that could cause a dental emergency within a year. Emergency conditions can compromise mission accomplishment and negatively impact overall health while causing pain and discomfort. Dental fitness is a key force protection initiative!

Class 1: Worldwide Deployable with non-deployable status when the unit is alerted

Class 2: Worldwide Deployable with worldwide deployable status when the unit is alerted

Class 3: Nondeployable without treatment during alert status

Class 4: Nondeployable with no examination documented within the past 12 months.


To assist Selected Reserve (SELRES) Soldiers - SERVING with突出的水平的care and customer service, the Department of Defense recently presented TriWest with the 2009 national Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve (ESGR) Freedom Award—the highest recognition given to employers for their support of their employees who also serve in the National Guard and Reserve. Visit www.triwest.com for more information.

Oregon Military Department Yearbooks are on sale now!

Get your copy at www.myyear.com. Enter “Oregon”, “Salem”, and then select “Oregon National Guard”. This beautiful leather bound 300 plus page yearbook can be yours for $40.00. Your keepsake looks back over 150 years and includes a glimpse into the future. See your unit photos, plenty of action and lots of fantastic pictures of our Oregon National Guard doing what they do best!

Through the TDP soldiers can achieve:

Class 1: Dental fitness status and the absence of dental disease. Visit www.tricaredentalt Program.com to see if you are eligible for National Guard-specific TRICARE Dental Program information. Free oral health education outreach provided by ARNG Dental Bytes electronic newsletters is available 24/7 to all USAR/ARNG soldiers and their families at www.army Dentalbytes.com year round. These electronic newsletters provide a collection of news items and helpful information to assist soldiers and their families in making wise choices on diet, dental hygiene practices, regular professional care, and avoidance of harmful habits. The combination of ASDRS, TDP, and ARNG Dental Bytes fostered by concerned leaders and members of the Army Dental Care System of all components is creating the highest level of dental fitness in SELRES soldiers ever. ARNG soldiers can receive more information on ASDRS by contacting their Unit Readiness NCO, or their Brigade or Battalion Medical Readiness NCO.

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Story courtesy of TriWest Healthcare Alliance

PHOENIX, Ariz. -- In honor of National Doctors’ Day on March 30, TriWest is offering an opportunity for service members and their families to say “thanks” to the TRICARE doctors who’ve made a positive difference in their lives by visiting www.triwest.com/TriDay or the Facebook page “Salute Your TRICARE Doctor 2010.”

TriWest is accepting submissions through March 12, 2010. From annual exams and immunizations, to surgical care and condition management, TriWest Healthcare Alliance’s network of more than 150,000 doctors provide 2.7 million TRICARE West Region service members, retirees and their families with exceptional healthcare.

As the nation prepares to commemorate Doctors’ Day on Tuesday, March 30, TriWest joins its TRICARE beneficiaries in thanking and showing appreciation to the men and women who don scrubs or white coats to care for our military community. “Soldiers, sailors, airmen and Marines can remain focused on their job at hand because they trust that TRICARE providers stand ready to take care of their families and loved ones,” TriWest President and CEO David J. McIntyre, Jr. said. “Doctors’ Day is a great opportunity to show appreciation for those who care for the families of those who defend our nation. They are truly heroes serving heroes!”

TRICARE providers must undergo stringent credentialing to ensure beneficiaries receive the highest quality of care they are entitled to receive. This also means more flexibility for beneficiaries in receiving the care when and where they need it and an exceptional level of care and customer service.

Doctors’ Day was first observed March 30, 1931, the anniversary of the first use of a general anesthetic in surgery. In 1991, President George H.W. Bush signed legislation establishing National Doctors’ Day.

About TriWest:

TriWest Healthcare Alliance partners with the Department of Defense to do “Whatever It Takes” to support the healthcare needs of 2.7 million members of America’s military families. A Phoenix-based corporation, TriWest provides access to cost-effective, high-quality health care in the 21-state TRICARE West Region. The Department of Defense recently presented TriWest with the 2009 national Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve (ESGR) Freedom Award—the highest recognition given to employers for their support of their employees who also serve in the National Guard and Reserve. Visit www.triwest.com for more information.
Demobilization welcomes OR soldiers home

CONTINUED FROM FRONT PAGE

Adjudant General’s coin.

Nine soldiers received the Order of Saint Michael—named after two military saints; Saint Michael and George. Recipients must have demonstrated significant contributions in support of an Army aviation unit.

During deployment, Charlie Company, 7-158 Aviation, flew 375 life saving missions, moving over 800 patients and flying 125 blood transport missions to hospitals in need.

Additionally, they flew 240 training, administrative and maintenance test flights, and logged a total of more than 3,000 flight hours.

While in Iraq, the unit assisted several units in Talil and Joint Base Balad. The flight medics conducted MEDEVAC 101, which provided training for approximately 370 soldiers and Marines in Al Asad, 150 soldiers at Forward Operating Base Normandy, and 400 at Joint Base Balad.

This training led to three joint training exercises, two of which were in Balad, and 400 at Joint Base Balad. The rest of the exercises, two of which were in Balad, and 400 at Joint Base Balad. The unit provided training for approximately 370 soldiers and Marines in Al Asad, 150 soldiers at Forward Operating Base Normandy, and 400 at Joint Base Balad.

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Salem-Based Kettle Foods makes donation to support deployed troops in Afghanistan

Kettle foods “chips in”

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

SALEM, Ore. -- One Oregon business is working to make Oregon National Guard troops deployed to Afghanistan feel more at home.

Kettle Chips is sending 10 boxes of assorted potato chips to members of the 162 Engineer Company over the next ten months.

When Lt. Col. Kevin Dial, 1249 Engineer Battalion Commander, ran into company president Tim Fallon, who he knew from his days as an executive delivery driver, it was natural for them to discuss the Oregon National Guard, said According to the Jim Green, the official Kettle Foods Ambassador. When Fallon learned of the 162 Engineer Co.’s deployment to Afghanistan, he decided that Kettle Foods would send them a

taste of home, Green added. Those guys are over there doing some pretty rough duty and we think this is the least we can do,” Green said.

“We’re born and raised in Salem, since 1978 and we just feel like this city has been really good to us,” Green continued.

“So we spend a lot of time giving back to our community and this is part of it.”

The company originally planned to send one large shipment to Oregon soldiers in Afghanistan, but after Dial warned Green about “overloading the system”, Kettle Chips decided to break up the shipment over the next ten months.

The first shipment left Salem, Ore. Feb. 3, bound for Oregon soldiers deployed to Afghanistan.

The 162 Engineer Company is tasked with route clearance in Afghanistan, and is scheduled to return to Oregon in early 2011. OR National Guard receives environmental award

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

SALEM, Ore. -- The National Guard Bureau recognized the Oregon National Guard for its leadership in environmental stewardship. Camp Withycombe in Clackamas, Ore. was selected as the Environmental Restoration Installation of the Year.

This award recognizes efforts to protect human health and the environment by cleaning up identified sites in a timely, cost efficient and responsive manner.

“It’s very rewarding to have the Oregon National Guard recognized by receiving this award,” said Jim Arnold, who oversaw the project for the Oregon National Guard Department. Camp Withycombe is the site of the Oregon Army National Guard’s largest restoration project, involving the remediation of six former small arms training ranges in preparation for a major Oregon Department of Transportation highway development project.

The Oregon Guard implemented a cleanup strategy that used natural resources and energy efficiently, thus reducing negative impacts on the environment, minimizing or eliminating pollution at its source and reducing waste to the greatest possible extent.

“One of the big factors for the award was that we took equipment from the gravel and mining industry and the waste water treatment industry and reengineered it to fit into our treatment system,” said Arnold. “It was hugely successful.”

He added that there were 30,000 tons of hazardous waste soil and they were able to successfully treat over 90 percent of, for a total cost savings of five million dollars.

He said the project at Camp Withycombe now serves as a model for the nation.

“We are working with others in the military community to transfer the technology,” said Arnold.

The Secretary of the Army said the Army Environmental Awards represent the highest honor in the field of environmental science and sustainability conferred by the Army.

“The Army recognizes successes that demonstrate mission driven solutions that protect the environment at installations here and overseas. Whatever we do needs to revolve around supporting the mission, taking care of our soldiers, civilians, and families,” said Tad Davis, deputy assistant secretary of the Army for the Environment, Safety and Occupational Health.

Eight Oregon soldiers re-enlist in Iraq

Story by
Spc. Anita VanderMolen,
41 Infantry Brigade
Combat Team

TALLIL, Iraq -- Eight soldiers of 2-162 Infantry, 41 Infantry Brigade Combat Team, Oregon Army National Guard, took re-enlistment vows on the steps of the Zaggurat of Ur, Jan. 30, at Camp Adder in Tallil, Iraq.


Lt. Col. William Edwards, the Battalion Commander, conducted the ceremony.

Stationed in Tallil, TF Volunteer’s mission is convoy security and base defense.

Above: Potatoes, fresh from a scrubber, trundle along a conveyer belt on their way to a slicer and then into hot oil where they become crispy. Kettle Foods has decided to donate as many as 10 shipments of their signature chips to troops deployed with 162 Engineer Company in Afghanistan. The first of those shipments left Feb. 3, 2010.

Right: A worker packs bags of Kettle Chips into a shipping box, several of which were sent to the troops of 162 Engineer Company this very day. Feb. 3, 2010. The shipment is the first of 10 or so planned in 2010.

TRICARE provides healthcare options to servicemembers

Story by
Kim L. Lippert
Oregon Military Department
Public Affairs Office

SALEM, Ore. -- TRICARE provides health care to military service members and their families through a variety of health care plans.

The various options include TRICARE Prime, TRICARE Standard and Extra, TRICARE Reserve Select, and TRICARE Prime.

Expanded access to services is available for TRICARE enrolled Soldiers. However, there may be additional out-of-pocket expenses for Soldiers using non-network providers.

It’s important to note that cost of service may differ based on whether you see a participating or non-participating provider.

According to the Tricare website www.tricare.mil participating providers have agreed to file claims for you, to accept payment directly from TRICARE and to accept the TRICARE allowable charge, less any applicable cost shares paid to you, as payment in full for their services.

Non-participating providers have not agreed to accept the TRICARE allowable charge or file your claims.

Non-participating providers may charge up to 15 percent above the TRICARE allowable charge for services, in addition to your regular cost shares.

This amount is your responsibility and will not be shared by TRICARE. Lastly, you may have to pay the provider first and file a claim with TRICARE for reimbursement.

Be sure to check with the provider to see if he or she is a participating or non-participating provider. They may decide to participate on a claim-by-claim basis.
MOAA looking to boost membership

The Willamette Chapter of the Military Officers Association of America (MOAA) invites you to join a local chapter and get involved with fellow MOAA officers and other veterans groups members in a variety of activities and events.

Chapter members can connect with other members who are making a difference in their communities. Activities can include:
- Shaping and supporting legislation
- Scheduling speakers
- Funding local JROTC scholarships
- Supporting North Salem High School’s JROTC Color Guard
- Participate in Salem Toys for Kids/Salvation Army Christmas Toy Drive
- Conventions and conferences

For more information about joining MOAA, please contact Willamette Chapter, MOAA, PO Box 2004 Salem, OR 97308-2004.

Free website for military members

PORTLAND, Ore. -- Amid a 30-point blow-out victory over the Minnesota Timberwolves, the Portland Trail Blazers took time to honor all veterans, current active duty, Guard and Reserve members as well as their families and friends, Nov. 21, 2009, at the Rose Garden.

During the half-time festivities, the Blazers’ organization held a special ceremony including active duty, Guard and Reserve members in a variety of activities and events. Chapter members can connect with other members who are making a difference in their communities.

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- Conventions and conferences

For more information about joining MOAA, please contact Willamette Chapter, MOAA, PO Box 2004 Salem, OR 97308-2004.

WASHINGTON -- Military families now have free access to an online network of quality caregivers who can assist with everything from babysitting to dog walking. Sittercity is the nation’s largest online source for local babysitters, nannies, elder care providers, dog walkers, housekeepers and tutors, and contains more than a million caregiver profiles, officials said.

The Sittercity Corporate Program, funded by the Defense Department, offers military families -- including active duty, Guard and Reserve -- a way to ensure high-quality care for their families. The program allows military families to search for and contact caregivers who meet their unique needs.

Story and photo courtesy of Oregon Department of Veterans Affairs

PDX Trail Blazers Honor Veterans, Families--A Tradition of Giving Honor

With the passing of the guidon symbolizes the relinquishing of the outgoing commander’s tenure of command and the assumption of command for the new commander. Other traditions may be less acknowledged among the members of an organization but they continue to gain recognition for their importance. The Oregon National Guard’s Labor Management Partnership is one tradition that is increasingly being recognized inside and outside our organization. It has gradually and methodically become better known and practiced throughout all corners of the Oregon National Guard Technical Command.

In October 1993 U.S. President William J. Clinton signed Executive Order (EO) 12871 mandating the establishment of Labor-Management Partnership Councils (LMPC) in every federal agency. These councils were to be established at all levels of the executive branch of the Federal Government. Furthermore, EO 12871 directed management and their labor representatives to:

a- Create labor-management partnerships by forming labor-management committees or similar appropriate levels to help reform government.
b- Involve employees and their union representatives as full partners with management representatives to identify problems and craft solutions that would better serve the agency’s customers and mission.
c- Provide systematic training of appropriate agency employees (including line managers, first line supervisors, and union representatives who are Federal employees) in consensus methods of dispute resolution, such as alternative dispute resolution techniques and interest-based bargaining approaches.
d- Negotiate over the subject set forth in 5 U.S.C. 7106(b)(1), (the numbers, types, and grades of employees or positions assigned to any organizational subdivision, work project, or tour of duty, or on the technology, methods, and means of performing work) and instruct subordinates to do the same.
e- Encourage the formal and informal improvements in organizational performance resulting from the labor-management partnerships.

Following the signing of this executive order, the Oregon National Guard began working with the American Federation of Government Employees (AFGE) Local 2986 to facilitate the formation of our first partnership. In February 1995 Ad- jutant General, MG Raymond F. Rees and AFGE Local President, Terry S. Swawrout, signed the first State Labor-Management Partnership. The goal of the partnership was to expand the opportunities we have to provide high-quality care for our families.

The Oregon National Guard’s Labor Management Partnership is one tradition that is increasingly being recognized inside and outside our organization. It has gradually and methodically become better known and practiced throughout all corners of the Oregon National Guard Technical Command. Therefore, Maj. Gen. Alexander H. Burgin, the current Oregon National Guard, and Maj. Gen. Mark Buteau signed a “renewed” partnership agreement recognizing the value of the partnership process. In August of 2005, Maj. Gen. Raymond F. Rees, the current Oregon Adjutant General and current AFGE Local President, John Peterson renewed the partnership agreement for the third time, electing to continue a process that has been very successful for the ORNG. With the December 2009 signing and publishing of EO 13522 Creating Labor-Management Forums to Improve the Delivery of Governance Services, the Oregon National Guard and AFGE Local 2986 are poised to remain well ahead of the power curve implementing the new Partnership EO.

Oregon’s Labor Management Partnership Councils have expanded to a comprehensive network of 33 LMPCs in 1995 to include eleven “Local” LMPCs that cover the vast majority of the state. LMPC’s tackle many work related issues at the local level attempting to co-develop solutions to workflow problems at the same time helping to prevent these issues from escalating and becoming larger more adversarial issues. The state and local Labor Management Partnership Councils continue to partner on issues covering a multitude of topics. The topics range from negotiating the Collective Bargaining Agreements (CBA’s) to the developing the Merit Placement Plan, our agency’s procedural guidance when selecting and promoting employees.

The “Partnership” approach has been applied successfully outside of the actual formal LMPC process as well. The Monday Blue Uniform Uniforms, or月中 Blue Uniform Uniforms, is one instance where the Partnership approach was applied with great success. The issue was initially raised as a grievance (per the CBA) and evolved into a chance to partner to achieve a win-win situation for the ORNG. The Air Force policy required all personnel to wear the class B uniform each Monday. That policy was modified through Partnership to account for maintenance, pro-gressive and other employees engaged in activities which would have been limited by the class C uniform or detrimental to the class B uniform itself.

In this instance and many others the cooperative ability and shared responsibility among everyone involved has significantly achieved a much better outcome for the Oregon National Guard, and our federal employees.

Labor Management Partnership Councils have evolved from a mandate in 1993 to a mature, mutually beneficial relationship. For the good of the organization and its employees we will continue to partner our partnership process into the future. It has worked exceptionally well for Oregon. Is it the right thing to do?
PORTLAND, Ore. — Braving frigid waters and cool air temperatures, members from the Oregon Air National Guard’s 142nd Fighter Wing “Redhawks” made a difference in a local charity event in Portland today.

Fifty-two airmen from the Portland Air National Guard Base took part in today’s Polar Plunge—an event which benefits the Special Olympics.

In 2009, a group of Oregon airmen came to the event, but only 15 Redhawks made the plunge. This year, thanks in part to the efforts of Oregon Air National Guard and plunge team captain, Staff Sgt. Jared Johnson, the number of plungers tripled, while the amount of donations doubled.

“It was pretty easy to recruit plungers,” Johnson said. “A lot of people are community service oriented, so it wasn’t too hard to get them to jump in a freezing river.”

Oregon Air National Guard Staff Sgt. Jared Johnson, of the 142nd Security Forces Squadron, following his ‘plunge’ to benefit Special Olympics. Johnson got involved with Special Olympics when he helped hand out medals to the athletes involved with Special Olympics when he helped hand out medals to the athletes years ago. He said the experience changed him forever.

“It’s very humbling seeing the athletes and their parents and the level of dedication,” he said. “It changes your perspective on a lot of things.”

Near the Columbia River, under gray skies, the large crowd of ‘plungers’ and their supporters made their way to Broughton Beach, located just off NE Marine Drive, near NE 33rd Ave. The event took on a festive nature, in spite of the light rain, overcast skies, and 40-degree air temperatures.

Rescue swimmers patrolled the river next to a Multnomah County Sheriff’s rescue boat, next to a floating boundary located about 30 feet from the water’s edge. A Portland Fire Department fire boat sprayed water from its hoses out in the edge. A Portland Police Chief Rosie Sizer, the large group, dressed in police working uniforms, charged the water with reckless abandon. Some made their way out to their colleagues in the deeper water. The airmen were next. Wearing various types of shirts, the Redhawk team was easily distinguished by their Airmen Battle Uniform pants. As Carney introduced the team, another cheer arose from the crowd of onlookers. Photographers snapped pictures as the countdown began.

“Three…Two…One!” Carney screamed into his microphone.

In a flurry of yelling, flying sand, and splashing water, the airmen sprinted into the freezing Columbia as a group. Some made it only to waist-level, while others negotiated the sandy bottom to make it out to the rescue swimmers near the boat. They wanted to meet the challenge issued by the previous group of plungers.

When it was all said and done, Tech. Sgt. Misty Gremaud said she wished she had not worn her ABU pants. “They got really heavy and it was hard to move,” she said with a laugh. “Next year, I’m wearing shorts!”

Oregon Air National Guard Chief Master Sgt. Max White, 142nd Fighter Wing Command Chief, makes his way out of the frigid Columbia River, following the “Redhawk” team’s Polar Plunge, an event which benefits the Special Olympics, at Broughton Beach, Jan. 30.

Chief Master Sgt. Max White, 142nd Fighter Wing Command Chief, said he hopes to see an even bigger turn-out next year.

“Sign me up right now for next year,” White said as he towed off. Just over $11,000 was raised by the Oregon Air National Guard members for Special Olympics, Johnson said.

Chief, said the 40-degree waters of the Columbia River didn’t really seem that cold. “In Germany, they would say the water was ‘frisch!’” he said.

Greek said she was looking forward to next year’s plunge.

“It was very exciting,” she said. “I loved the frenzy of it all!”

Johnson, who serves on the Law Enforcement Torch Run Executive Council, said he hopes to see an even bigger turnout next year.

“The (fighter) wing gets involved because of Security Forces being involved and the connections to law enforcement,” Johnson said. “But I really think the entire fighter wing needs to get involved in the future.

Johnson hopes to see 100 or more plungers representing the fighter wing next year, in addition to all the supervisors and commanders providing support. One thing is for sure—White will be there. With the water from this year’s plunge still wet on his body, he’s already started planning for next year.

“Sign me up right now for next year,” White said as he towed off.

For more information on the Special Olympics Polar Plunge, visit: www.sosoregon.org/plunge/