Oregon aviation unit deploys to Afghanistan

Det. 1, B-Co., 168 Aviation will spend 10 months on combat support mission

Members of the Oregon Army National Guard’s Detachment 1, B-Co., 168 Aviation, conducted a mobilization ceremony June 5, at the Army Aviation Support Facility #2 in Pendleton, Ore. Seventy-three Soldiers from the unit will soon depart for training at Fort Hood, Texas, before continuing on to Afghanistan for 10 months. The Soldiers will transport personnel and equipment throughout the country in support of Operation Enduring Freedom. See full story on page 4.

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

Job training a way of life on Oregon Coast

Senior Master Sgt. Homer Walden, 116 ACS Weapons and Tactics NCOIC, providing weapons control to aircraft participating in Fleet Synthetic Training Joint exercises – a mission working with virtual and live ships from San Diego Calif., Australia and Japan. (Photo by Tech. Sgt. Chris Crocker)

Story contributed by 116th Air Control Squadron

WARRENTON, Ore.—Over the past year, the Oregon Air National Guard’s 116th Air Control Squadron has supported multiple U.S. Navy Fleet Synthetic Training Joint exercises.

According to exercise organizers, these training simulations prepare fleet personnel, elements of the U.S. Army, and coalition allies for worldwide operations through scenario-based training.

The 116 ACS, based at Camp Rilea in Warrenton, Ore., is a Control and Reporting Center (CRC).

CRC’s support theater air operations with fleet personnel, elements of the U.S. Army, and coalition allies for worldwide operations through scenario-based training.

See AIR GUARD on PAGE 8

116 Cavalry Brigade prepares for Iraq deployment

Story by Staff Sgt. April Davis,
116 Cavalry Brigade Combat Team

GOWEN FIELD, Boise, Idaho - The 116th Cavalry Brigade Combat Team trained and certified more than 700 gun-truck crews in preparation for convoy security and force protection missions in Iraq next year.

Battalions in the brigade began rotating through gunnery qualification tables on May 11, at Gowen Field Training Area south of Boise, Idaho, with the exception of the 1-163 Combined Arms Battalion which conducted gunnery in August at Limestone Hills Training Area west of Townsend, Mont.

The 3-116 Combined Arms Battalion, Oregon Army National Guard, rotated nearly 140 gun crews through gunnery qualification, June 8-21.

“We bring the units in on a staggered schedule so we can cover their equipment needs and limit the time they have to wait to get on the ranges,” said Master Sgt. Todd Trahan, who oversees the training as the brigade master gunner. “The units arrive, draw their equipment and ammunition, and roll through each phase of qualification in a natural progression.”

Gun-truck crews must certify on either the M-2 .50 caliber or the M240B machine gun while mounted in a vehicle. Every gunner and vehicle commander has to certify with their assigned weapon system, while the drivers only require familiarization training.

“The driver has to know the weapons system enough to survive in an emergency, but otherwise the driver just has to drive,” said Trahan.

The crews must qualify in both day and night firing, and also qualify while wearing chemical protective masks. The crews must also become proficient in working together as a team, communicating fire commands, and sending radio reports to higher command.

See OREGON on PAGE 6
As we approach the new training/fiscal year, we need to recognize the great service of the ORNG in the past 12 months and begin to look to the goals for the next year. Most notable was the great success of the 41st Infantry Brigade Combat Team as they prepare for their Warrant Officer Candidate tabs and the Federal Recognition Board. They pinned 11 new warrant officers the key to Oregon National Guard future

Events showcase true nature of Oregon's Soldiers & Airmen

Kudos to Oregon Guard as we prepare for next fiscal year
You can make a difference as a family resource group volunteer

Like any non-profit organization or support group, the success of any Family Readiness Group (FRG) relies on the commitment of its volunteers. This group is an essential part of any unit and has a direct impact on a unit’s readiness and ability to accomplish its wartime mission.

To become a FRG volunteer, a person must be committed to this, and must have already taken a personal inventory of his or her life to ensure enough time exists to accomplish personal tasks before undertaking any volunteer role. If you want to volunteer, approach your unit commander or FGR leader and explain in detail their expectations.

The leadership will set up an interview and explain in detail their expectations. There are no specific skills needed to be a volunteer—just the willingness to follow through with the commitment.

There will be meetings to attend and training to participate in, along with some deadlines to meet. But in the end, everything you do as a volunteer is part of the puzzle that makes the unit better.

The activities performed by the FRG help maintain clear lines of communication between the families and the unit during critical times. The benefits of becoming a volunteer often cannot be measured in tangible ways, but the fact that you find yourself playing a vital role in the unit’s success is one of these.

There is also the fact that you are part of the people that are working to improve the organization and you have a hand in the final product. Volunteers from other non-profit organizations would state that they feel fulfilled and even healthier. So these are some of the reasons that you should volunteer with your FRG. You are not only helping the unit achieve their goals and accomplish their mission, but you are also helping your neighbor with moral support so they can get through a challenging situation. You may be the reason they feel better, and that they are truly part of a new family.

To become a Family Readiness Group volunteer, contact Luis Osorio at luis.osorio@us.army.mil or via telephone at 503-983-2324.

Oregon Partnership launches Military Helpline, new website

Story by Sentinel Staff

Soldiers, Airmen, veterans and their family members can receive immediate help from mental health professionals by contacting the Oregon Partnership’s new Military Helpline.

The toll-free number is 888-HLP-4-VET (888-457-4838). More information is available at www.MilitaryHelpline.org.

Available 24 hours a day, seven days a week, the Military Helpline provides compassionate and confidential advice, and crisis intervention free of charge for persons throughout the military community, including family members.

Oregon Partnership worked closely with the Oregon Military Department in establishing the Military Helpline, and forged a strong relationship with the Oregon Military Department’s Family Support Program. The Helpline utilizes Oregon Partnership’s longstanding intervention and referral services, which the non-profit has provided for nearly three decades.

“This resource is important to our Soldiers and their families, given the number and scope of deployments for Oregon Guard units,” said State Command Sgt. Maj. Brunk Conley. “It’s a way for us to close the loop on the deployment process.”

The Helpline is staffed by trained volunteers—many of whom have a military background. All possess a strong understanding of serious issues that impact service members and their families, including job loss, family issues, financial challenges, and post-traumatic stress disorder and other deployment related mental health issues.

“Even though Oregon’s citizen-Airmen don’t deploy as often, or in the same numbers as Oregon’s Soldiers, they often still face the same challenges and issues,” said State Command Chief Master Sgt. Mark Russell.

Following initial contact and triage, Helpline volunteers ensure the safety of Soldiers, Airmen, veterans and their family members can receive immediate support and resources if needed.

Have you done your homework?

How many times have we heard or said the phrase “Have you done your homework?”

As we settle into summer, this may be a good time for reflection back to the past year and look forward to how we will approach the upcoming year in regards to our own education and homework.

It has been said there are two types of people in the world. There are those who go through life, and those who go through life and make a difference. As service members we are all making a difference in our communities, state, and our great nation. However, are we making the same difference in our families by setting the example and doing our homework?

When a baby is born, that baby requires attention at all times in order for it to exist. As the baby grows into a young child, the child then needs to be trained in every aspect of his or her life. As they progress from childhood into their teenage years they need to be guided into adulthood. Once they reach adulthood they want to be followed.

The question that comes to mind is, if our children saw us doing our homework would they be more willing to sit down and do their homework without being told—seeing the example of their parents and seeing the benefits their parents are reaping from going to college? Making homework a family affair would be more enjoyable and beneficial to all family members.

I want to say a huge congratulations to Capt. Samuel Hernandez, as he received his doctorate degree in June 2010. He has sent the below message to encourage every family to take advantage of this opportunity. We all have the power to educate our children.

Knowledge is power. The military provides opportunities to learn, grow, and achieve. Within the traditional framework, the Army provides to its service members the training to become experts in a particular field: Infantry, aviation, administrative, among others.

That training helps Soldiers become a part of the professional organization—the U.S. Army. Within that same organization Soldiers are given the ability, I would argue the responsibility, to become leaders.

As Soldiers, and thus future leaders, service members learn how to achieve the goals of the organization, and perhaps more importantly their own personal goals. Those same opportunities are augmented by the educational benefits offered to every Soldier who chooses to utilize them. I am one of those Soldiers.

I joined the Oregon National Guard in 1999, which seems like a lifetime ago. I would be remiss if I were to say that educational benefits were not part of the reason I joined. In fact, it was one of the most alluring factors.

My parents did not have money to pay for my college education; therefore, I had to find alternate funding. I had always wanted to join the military and ultimately decided to join the ORANG because it would give me the opportunities already mentioned while at the same time give me the time and flexibility to attend college.

So I did.

I started out attending Portland Community College, later Portland State University, and finally Lewis & Clark Law School. By the time May of 2010 comes around I will have attained two Associate degrees, a Bachelors of Science, and a Jurist Doctor. Yes, I will be a lawyer.

I used my GI Bill and Federal Tuition Assistance to help get me where I am today. Both of my Associate degrees are paid for as well as my Bachelors. The GI Bill got me through my first two years of law school, but by the time I got to my third I had exhausted all my GI Benefits, fortunately I still have tuition assistance.

It is without a doubt that the opportunities afforded to me and the education I have received have opened doors that would have otherwise remained closed.

Because of my education, for instance, I was able to become an officer within the organization and will soon be an attorney.

Call to action—take advantage of the opportunities that are given and the education benefits that are provided because knowledge does indeed equal power.

-- Samuel Hernandez, CPT, JD

Golfers raise money for USA
Pendleton’s citizen-Soldiers head to Afghanistan

**Story by Spc. Kirby Rider,**
115 Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

PENDLETON, Ore. — Soldiers from the Oregon Army National Guard’s Detachment 1, B-Company, 168 Aviation, participated in a mobilization ceremony at the Army Aviation Support Facility #2, June 5.

Seventy-three Soldiers from the unit will depart for pre-mobilization training at Fort Hood, Texas, before continuing on to Afghanistan for the 10-month deployment. They will team up with 64 Soldiers from the Washington Army National Guard, and fall under the command of the U.S. Army’s 3rd Infantry Division. The unit will provide combat mission support in Afghanistan as part of Operation Enduring Freedom.

More than 200 community and family members attended the ceremony, which was followed by a free barbeque hosted by the Community Christian Church.

“We will be providing combat support in Afghanistan,” said Capt. John Hoffman, Commanding Officer. “This mobilization ceremony will allow all a lot of pressure on the ground units to transport personnel and equipment where there are few roads.”

Oregon Governor Ted Kulongoski; Maj. Gen. Raymond F. Rees, The Adjutant General, Oregon National Guard; Mr. Larry Scott, Civilian Aide to the Secretary of the Army, all attended the 90-minute ceremony.

Afton community and family support of the Soldiers and their families, highlighting the financial and emotional burden each family may face during the deployment. They also reminded the group to keep their motivation high and to help each other during the tour.

“We have a young group of guys, although they all have an encouraging and positive attitude,” Hoffman said. “I am sure this deployment is scarier for the new guys, not knowing what to expect when we get over there.”

This is the second deployment for many Soldiers, with some having had tours during Operation Enduring Freedom VI in January 2005.

“I’ve had the opportunity to do this ceremony and the one in 2005 and I know Soldiers and family with both deployments,” said Mayor Houk. “It is very emotional for the Soldiers to be leaving their community and loved ones.”

During his speech, Houk reminded the Soldiers of the importance of family, and encouraged them to remain in close contact with loved ones. He also said the city of Pendleton is very proud of their citizen-Soldiers.

“The army concludes that the work Pendleton has done with the National Guard,” he said. “We are looking forward to having them home as soon as possible.”

Yellow Ribbon event helps with soldiers, families transition

**Story by Kimberly Lippert,**
Oregon National Guard Public Affairs

PORTLAND, Ore.—More than 200 employers from Oregon and Southwest Washington gathered at the Portland Air National Guard Base for an event aimed to help returning Oregon veterans find jobs.

The June 4 event served as a “call to action,” said Jim Linkous, Regional Vice President of ViaWest, who organized the event as a way to honor all those who serve in uniform.

“I am passionate about helping the men and women that serve. This event builds awareness and gets the need out there so people are educated and realize it is our responsibility to give back,” said Linkous.

More than 2,700 Oregon Army National Guard Soldiers from the 41 Infantry Brigade Combat Team returned from a one-year deployment to Iraq in April. According to the Oregon National Guard Reintegration team, 80 percent of them are currently unemployed.

Oregon Governor Ted Kulongoski, a keynote speaker at the event, spoke to the importance of helping Oregon troops make the transition back into civilian life.

“These Soldiers come back from combat and are back in their community in 15 days, I can’t tell you how difficult that is,” the governor said.

“Nothing is more important to them than having a job.”

Oregones lacks a full time military base, and because Soldiers return to their hometowns very quickly after returning from deployment, a number of challenges arise—ones of them being a support system which helps returning citizen-Soldiers find full-time jobs.


“Getting our Soldiers and airmen back to work; that is truly successful reintegration,” Rees said.

Harvey Platt, President of Platt Electric, has long been leading the charge to hire Oregon veterans. Out of more than 800 employers, 100 have served, or are currently serving in the military.

“We say you need two things to work at Platt Electric—a great attitude and a willingness to learn,” Platt said.

“Our veterans bring us that and much more every day.”

Cross-cultural exchange enhances joint exercise

**Story by Spc. John T. Dowd,**
115 Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

WAIMANALO, Hawaii — In this fast paced world where technology and social networking bring people from around the world together, the United States is tapping into the same concept to drive modern warfare training.

Facebook and Twitter may be household expressions, but these same social media concepts are helping the U.S. and Singapore forces connect, interact, and apply the most current tactics, techniques, and procedures on how to do stability operations, cultural exchange was another major benefit to U.S. and Singapore Forces working to meet with potential employers, military service benefits providers, and education representatives.

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Cross-cultural exchange enhances joint exercise
WARRENTON, Ore.—Approximately 100 Soldiers and airmen arrived at Camp Rilea to compete in the 2010 Oregon National Guard’s Best Warrior Challenge, May 21-23.

This year’s challenge consisted of four different events, the Best Warrior Challenge, The Adjutant General’s Match, an Army Combatives tournament, and the Squad Challenge for the Recruit Sustainment Program.


“Even though they are competing against each other, I have noticed a real camaraderie amongst the Soldiers and competitors. They want to win, but not at the expense of someone else. They want to win because of their great performance.”

The Best Warrior Competition is a grueling competition between the best Oregon National Guard Soldiers, consisting of seven different events ranging from land navigation to combatives, to win the prestigious honor of Oregon Soldier and Non-Commissioned Officer of the Year.

“Everything that is done here this weekend is a soldier skill,” said Master Sgt. Manuel Martinez, Competitive Sports Coordinator from Joint Force Headquarters, Salem, Ore. “We are just honing that skill and sharpening those skills.”

Sgt. Donald Snyder, from Recruiting and Retention Command, LaGrande, Ore., winner of last year’s Soldier of the Year and recently promoted, said “I am going up against a lot of motivated people who want to win, and this year’s competition is more physically demanding.”

“I have a lot of respect for these Soldiers because for the most part they are traditional guardians who have to study on their own time,” said 1st Sgt. Seven Richmond, Ohio, from 249 Regional Training Institute, Monmouth, Ore., “It just shows a lot of dedication.”

Winners of the Best Warrior Challenge will compete in the regional Soldier and NCO of the Year in Alaska, early June.

The Adjutant General’s Match, an annual marksmanship match of the best shooters in the Oregon National Guard, is comprised of both individual and team matches. Competitors get to use a variety of weapons ranging from an M&P pistol to an M-240B machine gun at different ranges to test their shooting abilities.

“It’s pretty awesome because I am getting paid to shoot,” said Sgt. John McCully from Charlie Company, 7th Battalion 158 Aviation, Salem, Ore., “There is a lot of knowledge here and I have learned many techniques that I can bring back with me to my unit.”

The Combatives tournament, another event in the challenge, is a hand to hand combat competition with four different weight classes for Soldiers to fight in ranging from Lightweight to Welterweight.

Sgt. 1st Class Dave Hague, State Combatives Instructor with 249 Regional Training Institute, Monmouth, Ore., said combatives is as much a part of warrior training as shooting a weapon.

“Ultimately the potential of getting into hand-to-hand combat is fairly great,” Hague said.

“Most Soldiers have never been punched in the face, and the Army Combative System gives them the ability (and confidence) to say that they could fight back against a threat that they were being attacked with.”

The winners for the combative tournament will represent Oregon in the National Combatives tournament at Fort Benning, Ga., next year.

“I am currently serving over in Afghanistan,” said Sgt. Robert Krause, respectively.

“I am very excited because the Soldiers on the range at Camp Rilea. If you have an answer for,” said Maries.

“But becoming a better Soldier in the end,” said Conley.

The winners for the Oregon Soldier and NCO of the Year were Sgt. Jared Burgham and Sgt. Robert Krause, respectively.

Winners for TAG Match were: Senior Master Sgt. Mike Shepherd for the individual section. Winner and runner up for open class were Tech Sgt. Jeffrey Jones and Tech Sgt. Daniel Silva, and for novice were: Cpl. Darly Hager and Spc. Lee Sweet.

For teams, the winners were: the Kingsley Eagles with team captain Senior Master Sgt. Mike Shepherd and shooters, Tech Sgt. Jeffrey Jones, Staff Sgt. Buck Dugger, and Senior Airman Daniel Gardner. Runner up for teams were: the Kingsley Phantoms with the team captain Tech Sgt. Daniel Silva and shooters Tech Sgt. Michael Krouse, Master Sgt. Michael Loomis, and Tech Sgt. Isaac Nunn.

The team challenge cup winner was the Kingsley Phantoms. The winner of the Brent McGregor Unit Achievement award was 173rd Fighter Wing, Kingsley Field. The winners for the light weight class was Sgt. Trevor Wesly, Cruiserweight was Sgt. 1st Class Tommy Gragio, Middleweight was Staff Sgt. Jeremy Caver, and Welterweight was Pvt. 1st Class Adam Jordan.

The RSP Squad Challenge winners were squad Southern Comfort consisting of Pvt. 1st Class Livingston, Pvt. 1st Class Bartlett, Pvt. 1st Class Green, Pvt. Rahimtav, and Pvt. Huna.

Oregon’s ‘top shot’ humble, in spite of national recognition, accolades

Photo by Shamin Zhumatov, Reuters News Agency

162 Engineer Company continues with mission in Afghanistan

Story and photo by Spc. John Dowd, 115 Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

CAMP RILEA, Ore. - Some may say genetics play a role in the skills we acquire throughout our lives. Others may say that with hard work and dedication any skill can be learned.

With regard to Staff Sgt. Allen Spiker, of Joint Force Headquarters in Salem, Ore., his shooting skills may be a product of both.

Spiker has been in the Army National Guard for 11 years and has been shooting competitively since 1984.

His first competition was the Adjutant General’s Match, a competition held annually at Camp Rilea, where the best shooters in the Oregon National Guard compete. In 2002, he was placed in charge of range operations for TAG Match and has been in charge ever since. Spiker has won many competitions, but he says three awards stand out.

In 1997, Spiker reached the goal of earning a Distinguished Pistol Shot Badge and in 2000 went on to win a Distinguished Rimfire Badge.

The Distinguished Rimfire and Distinguished Pistol Shot Badges are the highest honor that most military and civilian rifle and pistol shooters can aspire to earn.

“He has never struck me as the kind of person that goes in a match with the thought in his mind that he was going to beat someone or was going to be number one,” said Sgt. 1st Class Kevin Maries, JFHQ, a member of the Small Arms Readiness Team. “It’s all about improving himself.”

In 2001, Spiker received the President’s Hundred Tab. The tab is awarded to soldiers for shooting exceptionally well with either the service pistol or rifle during the President’s Hundred Match, an event that is held annually at Camp Perry.

The event is open to all Service members, as well as civilians and law enforcement personnel.

Approximately 1,600 people compete and only the top 100 win the tab and a signed letter from the President of the United States.

Anybody can learn to shoot really well if they are willing to learn, give it time for training, and understanding what they have to do to correct any bad habits,” said Spiker.

“I can take poor shooters that want to learn and within a few hours can make a fairly big difference in the way they shoot.”

Spiker is very approachable and his relaxed mannerisms allow people to open up making them more likely to come to him with questions until they completely understand, Maries said.

“He is a walking encyclopedia of shooting, and I don’t think that there’s a single question that you could ask him that he wouldn’t have an answer for,” said Maries.
**Oregon, Idaho citizen-soldiers prep for deployment**

Trahan said the 116 Cavalry Brigade Combat Team is breaking new ground for mobilizing National Guard units with this gunnery certification training.

"We are the first unit to attempt gunnery qualification using our own facilities at home," said Trahan. "Deploying units usually do their gunnery qualification at the [mobilization] station."

Trahan said the brigade wanted to use the ranges at Gowen Field Training Area for gunnery qualifications in order to assess the manpower and resources it would take to host pre-mobilization qualification for other units deploying in the future.

"There is a lot of moving pieces involved, but overall I think it has been very well orchestrated," he said.

The most important piece is inputting all the scorecards into the TORTS tracking system so our training can be validated.

When the gunnery tables were completed on June 25, nearly 2,100 Soldiers went through the training, expending more than three million rounds of ammunition.

In addition to certifying gun crews, every Soldier in the brigade also completed Individual Weapons Qualification with the M-4 carbine rifle or the M-9 pistol they will carry while in-theater. Individual Weapons Qualification will take place at Gowen Field Training Area during the brigade’s Annual Training in August. The brigade also conducted other pre-mob training validation during their annual training, such as reacting to improvised explosive devices, convoy operations, and other Army Battle Drills.

Following AF, the brigade departed for Camp Shelby, Miss., for more training before heading to Iraq in the fall.

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**Oregon Air Guard general inspires 5th graders at Tyndall elementary school**

During a speech to Tyndall Elementary students, Maj. Gen Garry C. Dean, Commander of First Air Force, recently recalled his days as a student at Fort Bliss Elementary School in El Paso, Texas, where his father was stationed as an Army warrant officer.

"I can name every single one of my elementary school teachers," said General Dean. "They had such a powerful impact on me and played a crucial role in my formative years."
Change in TRICARE early eligibility

TRICARE early eligibility has doubled, from 90 to 180 days. Soldiers now have twice as long to take advantage of benefits before their active duty tours end.

To qualify, soldiers must have a date of separation or discharge from active duty on or after October 28, 2009, for their issued active duty orders. For more information, call Chief Warrant Officer 3 Doug Finitstal, at 703-601-6910 or via email at doug.finitstad@us.army.mil.

Free Health Fair set for October 6

The Oregon Military Department is hosting a Health/Wellness and Safety Fair at the Salem Auditorium on Oct. 6, 2010, from 11:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. The address for the event is 2310 17th ST NE, Salem. The event will run from 8:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. The event is free and open to the public.

More to come on this event in the near future. If you have questions or comments, please contact Robin Webb at 503-584-3581 or by email at robin.m.webb@mil.state.or.us.

Changes set for Warrior Transition

Changes are coming in the widely acclaimed community-based warrior transition unit, which allows members to convalesce at home under the supervision of a regional CBWTU.

According to the National Guard Bureau, these units will be renamed remote care companies and supervision will shift to the Warrior Transition Units.

Remote care companies will provide care management for four years and those who continue to be placed in their states for treatment provided the remote care company with regional jurisdiction has the capacity.

Wounded members unable to be assigned to remote care companies over capacity will be assigned to the regional WTUs. WTUs, however, have been the subject of criticism for allowing members to languish away from home in a disciplinary environment without attentive care management.

Senators support non-dual status

Led by Sen. Joe Lieberman, I-Conn., and Sen. Scott Brown, R-Mass., 51 senators signed a letter to Defense Secretary Robert M. Gates expressing their support for the president’s request to increase the cap on Army National Guard nontotal-status technicians, or fulltime civilian employees.

Sen. Patrick Leahy, D-Vt., and Sen. Kit Bond, R-Mo., co-chairmen of the Senate Guard Caucus, were among the first senators to sign the letter.

The president’s budget request for fiscal 2011 included a much needed increase in the number of nontotal-status technicians for the Army Guard. The request sent to Congress would raise the cap from 1,600 to 2,520 personnel.

The House version of the fiscal 2011 defense authorization bill increased the Order of the Minuteman to 2,500. However, the Senate Armed Services Committee did not take similar action when marking up the Senate version of the bill.

To read the senators’ letter, visit: http://images.magnetmail.net/images/templete/NGAUS/newsletter/divider.png.

Commissary sale dates set

The upcoming Commissary Sale dates and times are set for the Deschutes County Fair & Expo Center, in Redmond, Ore., Oct. 1-3, from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.

The sale is open to all military card holders and their dependents.

Corrections

In the May/June 2010 issue of the Oregon Sentinel (Governor honored with Order of the Minuteman) we incorrectly reported that Governor Ted Kulongoski is the first recipient of the Order of the Minuteman who was not himself a member of the Oregon National Guard.

In fact, Kulongoski is the second non-Oregon National Guard member to receive the award. Former Oregon Governor Mark O. Hatfield received the award in 1996. Hatfield also served as a two-term governor of Oregon from 1959-1967.

For more information, the remaining

Family members of Oregon National Guard soldiers may be eligible for back pay via PDMRA compensation

Story courtesy of National Guard Bureau

The Army National Guard has been very successful in tracking down the thousands of Soldiers, including those who have retired or separated, who were eligible to apply for Post Deployment Mobilization Respite Assistance (PDMRA) compensation for serving long overseas deployments.

More than 10,000 of the 14,000 eligible Soldiers have submitted packets to the Defense Finance and Accounting Service, but “…there’s more work to do,” said Army Maj. Gen. Raymond Carpenter, the acting director of the Army National Guard.

The Department of Defense developed PDMRA for service members who were deployed outside their National Guard states. For reserve component service members that dwell ratio is one year deployed for every five years at home station.

If you have a tour ending today, you look back 72 months and if you were deployed for more than 12 months out of that 72 months, you may be eligible for PDMRA benefits,” said Army Col. Dennis Chapman, the chief of the Army Guard’s Personnel Policy and Readiness Division.

Initially, PDMRA allowed Soldiers to earn additional leave days for the additional time spent deployed.

However, Soldiers must be in Title 10 status to use those leave days. That meant that once Army Guard Soldiers returned to Title 32 status, they were ineligible to use those days, said Chapman.

As a stop gap measure the policy was revised and allowed eligible Soldiers to apply those leave days to their next deployment. But for those who left the service or don’t deploy again, that effectively meant they couldn’t take advantage of the benefit, said Chapman.

Congress passed a law in the most recent National Defense Authorization Act, authorizing the services to pay Soldiers at a rate of up to $200 a day for any PDMRA days they earned … but were not able to take,” said Chapman.

Primarily, those who may have earned days under the program, but were not able to use them, are those Guard Soldiers serving on active duty between the signing of the initial policy on Jan. 19, 2007, and when implementation guidelines were published by the Army on Aug. 18, 2007, said Chap-

man. However, other laws and policies may affect a Soldier’s eligibility.

Typically, a Guard Soldier who serves longer than 12 months during the most recent 72 months gets one PDMRA day for each additional month or fraction of a month.

The number of PDMRA days awarded increases after 18 months and again after 24 months served.

He added that plans are in place to set up the program in each state and territory later this year.

“Not only are we trying to make them proficient and prepared for basic training and Advanced Individual Training, but also to have the life skills and the coping skills to do better,” said Barnes. “Part of this package is resiliency. Resiliency is the ability to bounce back from different stressors, life events and traumas when they come into our lives.”

Barnes said he sees this program as a holistic approach to training and readiness.

“For so long, we focused on the physical part, the AFPT (Army Physical Fitness Test). We focused on someone being proficient in whatever weapon or equipment they operate. Now, we get to focus on the individual a little bit more,” he said.

“Now, we have the complete package of mind, body and soul – for lack of a better word. Now, we have a complete Soldier, and a more holistic approach, as far as how we address Soldiers and how we take care of them.”

The focus on building resiliency starts with new recruits, but soon it will be incorporated into leadership courses and other training.

“It’s a lifestyle,” said Barnes. “It’s not only for our new recruits, but eventually it’s going to be in the officer education system, the noncommissioned officer education system – any kind of training we get.”

National Guard soldiers may be eligible for back pay via PDMRA compensation

Army: Soldier Resiliency starts early

Story by Sgt. 1st Class Jon Soucy, National Guard Bureau Public Affairs

LAUGHLIN, Nev., Building resiliency among Army National Guard members starts even before a new recruit is sent to basic training.

About a decade ago, the Army Guard established the Recruit Preparation Program as a way to better prepare new enlistees for the rigors of basic training.

The program focuses on introducing recruits to physical training, map reading, drill and ceremony, the rank structure and other skills they would be exposed to in basic training.

Now, that program also focuses on building coping mechanisms and resiliency skills among new recruits.

“The Army National Guard, I think, is at the forefront as far as trying to work with Soldiers and make sure they have a good quality of life while they serve and beyond that,” said Army Maj. Reginald Barnes, chief of the Resiliency and Risk Reduction Branch here at the ARNG Readiness Center.

The goal, said Barnes, is to give recruits the skills needed to bounce back from stressful or traumatic situations.

“Some Soldiers come to us with all those skills and dimensions already taken care of,” he said. “But then, you have the few that don’t have that kind of support or skills already in place. Those who have it already, it enhances what they already have, and those who are coming to us to whom don’t already have it … develop this and are ready, not only for basic training, but also for life in general.”

Though the program hasn’t been fully implemented in each state yet, Barnes said that in the states where the program is being run the response has been “very positive.”

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The number of PDMRA days awarded increases after 18 months and again after 24 months served.

He added that plans are in place to set up the program in each state and territory later this year.

“Not only are we trying to make them proficient and prepared for basic training and Advanced Individual Training, but also to have the life skills and the coping skills to do better,” said Barnes. “Part of this package is resiliency. Resiliency is the ability to bounce back from different stressors, life events and traumas when they come into our lives.”

Barnes said he sees this program as a holistic approach to training and readiness.

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The focus on building resiliency starts with new recruits, but soon it will be incorporated into leadership courses and other training.

“It’s a lifestyle,” said Barnes. “It’s not only for our new recruits, but eventually it’s going to be in the officer education system, the noncommissioned officer education system – any kind of training we get.”
Port of Portland, Oregon Air Guard leaders meet with counterparts in Dhaka City

The people were very hospitable and grateful for the work that we were doing,” Crosby said. The group toured the airport, noting changes and improvements to security procedures, passenger screening and airport infrastructure, based on a 12-point work plan developed during an April 2010 workshop in Portland.

Enhanced security and safety at the airport is a priority for the Bangladeshi government in order to secure direct flights between the country and the United States, utilizing their national airline, Biman Airlines.

Changes there were a direct result of a visit to Portland International Airport earlier this year by the Civil Aviation Authority of Bangladesh, which is an arm of the country’s Ministry of Civil Aviation and Tourism, Crosby added.

“Bangladesh is very interested in learning best practices for military assistance to other countries) is necessary,” he added. “The main focus of each FST-J is to create a joint environment that is as realistic – and complex – as real world operations in order certify U.S. Navy carrier task force pre-deployment readiness.


This was also an excellent opportunity for the medical personnel to experience firsthand the local culture and to develop stronger personal relationships between both partners’ militaries.

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This joint opportunity is a win-win for all of us,” Leist said. “You simply cannot find this kind of training anywhere else.”

Story by Tech. Sgt. Jennifer Shirar, 173rd Fighter Wing Public Affairs

116 ACS: Joint exercises lead to ‘great partnerships’ with other services

CONTINUED FROM FRONT PAGE

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Story by Tech. Sgt. Jennifer Shirar, 173rd Fighter Wing Public Affairs

PUERTO BARRIOS, Guatemala—Twenty-three personnel from the 173rd Medical Group deployed to Puerto Barrios, Guatemala in support of “Beyond the Horizons” (BTH) Guatemala April 10 – 24, 2010.

According to U.S. Southern Command, BTH is a joint service, interagency Combined Field Training Exercise, which began in 2008. It allows troops specializing in engineering, construction, and health care to provide vital services to communities in need while receiving valuable deployment training and building important relationships with partners.

“It was a very rewarding experience,” said Master Sgt Neisner. “Many of the people were very hospitable and grateful for the work that we were doing.”

Klamath Falls Airmen were able to provide medical, dental and veterinary care to more than 3,000 Guatemalan people, and more than 700 pairs of glasses, 800 dental extractions, and over 4,000 prescriptions to patients who would not be able to afford this care.

This was also an excellent opportunity for the medical personnel to experience firsthand the local culture and heritage, the participants said.

“Many of the sites that we went to was a rural Mayan village,” Neisner said. “This village has remained unchanged for quite some time… there we had the opportunity to treat a 107 year old lady. It was an amazing experience.”

One of the main goals of BTH is to help improve the quality of life for the people living in rural areas while at the same time improving the partner nation’s capability and providing opportunities for U.S. personnel to refine engineering, medical, mobilization, and deployment skills.

“I have never worked such a joint operation like this,” said Lt. Col. Ed Tuhy, 173 MDG optometrist. “It was a good mission—a very eye-opening experience.”

According to 173 Medical Group leadership, the unit may participate in a similar mission next year.