The National Guard celebrates 367 years of citizen soldiering

On December 13th, ceremonies and events across the country marked the occasion; ranging from parades and flyovers in various states, to a two-mile fun run and walk in Washington D.C. organized by the chief of the National Guard Bureau, Lt. Gen. H. Steven Blum as a way to say thank you to National Guard troops.

In Oregon, ceremonies marking the occasion come on the heels of a special marketing campaign launched by Army National Guard recruiters. “We are taking this opportunity to remind the citizens of Oregon that their National Guard stands ready to defend and protect our communities, state, and nation,” said Sgt. 1st Class Guy Britnell, state Marketing NCOIC.

The National Guard can trace its origins to the Massachusetts Bay Colony Militia, formed in 1636, when about 1,500 members of the militia were first mustered as the North, South, and East Regiments. The colonists adopted the English militia system, obligating all males between the ages of 16 and 60 to take up arms in defense of the community. The early militia drilled once a week, and provided guard details each evening to sound the alarm in case of attack by the Pequot Indians, who frequently ransacked the Massachusetts Bay Colony.

While many of this early militia regiments were made up of loosely organized citizen soldiers, a highly effective army was organized by the mid 1700s by Gen. George Washington, and the militia’s duties expanded to include defensive and offensive maneuvers, employing successful guerrilla warfare tactics against King George’s Army during the Revolutionary War.

The National Guard is the only component of the military specifically mentioned in the U.S. Constitution. The Guard is made up of nearly 466,000 men and women, comprise the Oregon National Guard, in both air and land components.

Mares completes jump school at 56

By Kay F. Fridstad
State Public Affairs Office

While most people approaching age 60 look forward to retirement and senior discounts, Spec. 1st Class Luther Mares was looking forward to graduation from U.S. Army Jump School.

At age 56, Mares is the oldest person to complete the U.S. Army Basic Parachutist Course (Airborne), otherwise known as “Jump School”. And if that wasn’t enough, he graduated with honors.

“I wanted to go to Airborne (U.S. Army Basic Parachutist Course) a long, long time ago, but didn’t have the opportunity,” said Mares. “I brought this to the attention of the NCOIC, who found a slot [for me]. The catch was that I had to qualify on the Army Physical Fitness Test (APFT) at the 17-21 level scoring at least 60 points to earn a passing score”.

Mares, an instructor at the Regional Training Institute (RTI) in Monmouth, Ore., was called to active duty on March 1st 2003 in support of Operation Enduring Freedom. He was transferred to Ft. Benning, Ga., “Home of the Infantry”, to train soldiers from the Individual Ready Reserve who have been called back to active duty. Mares is also an instructor for Phase I and II of the Advanced Non-Commissioned Officer Course (ANOC).

Mares was an active duty soldier from 1967 to 1970, serving one year in Vietnam. His dream was always to go to Airborne. At Ft. Benning, the Non-Commissioned Officer Academy provides the opportunity for soldiers to receive additional training as long as it does not interfere with the training cycle of the class they teach. “Ground Week” begins an intensive program of instruction to build individual airborne skills, which Mares, page 7

The legacy of freedom

Photo by Tech. Sgt. Nick Choy, State Public Affairs Office

Lt. Col. Sandra Murray, playing the part of Harriet Tubman, visited with students at the middle school named in Tubman’s honor, in North Portland November 19th. Murray was accompanied by Brig. Gen. Raymond C. Byrne, acting adjutant general of Oregon, Lt. Col. Leah Sundquist, Col. Earnest Smith, and Staff Sgt. Irene Guerra.
During the holidays, families gather to share in the celebrations of the season. Our Oregon National Guard family is unique—among us, we share a special bond, a common understanding of the inherent sacrifices of being an Army family. So we are additionally blessed to be able to celebrate our special heritage—our history. As Citizen-Soldiers and Citizen-Airmen represent to our State and the Nation.

As the Holiday season approaches, our soldiers continue to be on duty around the world, preserving our nation’s security. The hard work and sacrifice of our men and women in uniform help ensure all Americans continue to live in peace, freedom and safety. The Christmas season is one of the most important we have ever undertaken. We cannot afford to lose even one soldier due to accidents and injuries. Winter and the Holiday season pose particular challenges in our mission of ensuring the safety of our National Guard family.

Privately owned vehicle (POV) accidents remain a concern. Winter driving hazards, coupled with increased accident exposure during peak Holiday travel periods require additional vigilance and caution by all guard members. Ensure your vehicle is ready for the seasonal change by undertaking a winterizing regimen. Performing the basic automotive maintenance schedule, i.e., checking fluid levels, spark plugs, battery, brakes, and tires, can all help to prevent breakdowns.

Make sure to check the weather forecast prior to departing on a trip, and when precipitation is present clear all window and vehicle lights of snow, sleet and frost. This could mean the difference between arriving safely, or not arriving at all.

One of the simplest things you can do to increase your chance of surviving an accident is to wear your seat belt. This year, 16 of the 19 National Guard fatalities, were from POV accidents, and the lack of seat belt usage may have contributed to the fatality. All drivers and passengers are required to wear their seat belts in military vehicles and POVs. Also remember to seat children in approved vehicle safety seats in the back seat of the vehicle, and ensure their safety seats are properly secured in your POV.

The winter holidays are a time for celebration, and that means more cooking, home decorating, entertaining, and an increased risk of fire due to equipment. Fires are one of the leading causes of accidents during the holidays. Remember to keep an eye on the kitchen when cooking. Never leave cooking food unattended. Use caution with holiday decorations and choose flame-resistant and flame-retardant materials. When purchasing a live tree, check for freshness—the needles should not pull from the branches or break when bent. When setting up the tree, live or artificial, locate it away from the fireplace, radiators, doorways and the main traffic area. Indoors or outdoors, use only lights that have been tested for safety by a recognized testing laboratory, such as Underwriter’s Laboratory. When using candles, fireplaces, and space heaters, use precautions to prevent mishaps by practicing safe usage methods, and be aware of safety precautions outlined in the products’ users manual.

During this festive time, a general reminder about responsible drinking and defensive driving is timely. As always, drinking and driving do not mix. When attending holiday parties and gatherings remember to designate a non-drinking driver. When hosting holiday gatherings, be responsible to your guests by providing non-alcoholic beverages for non-drinkers and designated drivers.

Soldier training and family recreation during cold weather can result in any number of weather related cold injuries. Leaders and supervisors are responsible for planning and conducting training in order to prevent cold related injuries. Likewise, this safety attitude should follow you home and be a part of your winter activities, i.e., skiing, snowmobiling, sledding, ice fishing. Hypothermia, one of the leading weather related injuries, is not just a northern state concern. The combination of wind, moisture and temperature can take a toll on anyone, anywhere when they are not properly clothed and prepared for conditions.

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Command Focus

Happy Holidays,
Gen. Raymond C. Byrne, Jr.,
Acting Adjutant General, Oregon National Guard

From the Editor

Thank you for all your excellent contributions to the special Holiday issue of the Oregon Sentinel. There wasn’t a whole lot of lead-time between this issue and the last one, so I appreciate all your hard work to get this one to press on time.

The holidays are a special time for members of the National Guard, whether serving at home or abroad, or merely waiting for the call to duty. It is a time of the year when we can take time out of our busy schedules and reflect on all that we can be grateful for, and when we can pray for the safety of our immediate families and those of our fellow service members deployed around the world.

The staff of the Oregon Sentinel is doing its best to get your stories to as broad an audience as possible, and have started to receive many more submissions for publication. I have said this before, but it begs repeating here. This is NOT our publication... it is, and continues to be, yours. Your letters, articles and photos make the Oregon Sentinel great, and help us tell your stories told to the world. We appreciate everything that you’ve submitted to us this year, and encourage your continued input and feedback in the new year.

There are many successes highlighted in our special Holiday issue. From celebrating the 367th birthday of the National Guard, and the life of a model-patriot from the Civil War era, Harriet Tubman, to our members who participated in the “Duck Walk” from Portland to Eugene in order to call attention to the needs of our troops deployed overseas. Our center layout highlights some of the monumental achievements of the Oregon National Guard during the past year, and our profile on Sgt. 1st Class Luther Mares of Oregon’s 1-162 Infantry is a testament to the indomitable spirit of our citizen-soldiers.

Once again, I thank all of you for your contributions—not only to the pages of the Oregon Sentinel—but those that you make on a daily basis, to your communities, your country, and to the world.

Maj. Arnold V. Strong, Editor-in-Chief, Oregon Sentinel

Lt. Gen. Roger C. Schultz, Director, Department of the Army
Letters From The Front

Delta Co, sends greetings from Ft. Hood, Texas

Greetings to the families back home.

I was asked by the family program to write some quick notes to let all of you know it is going down here in Ft. Hood, Texas. Many of you heard we had a rough start with living conditions. We have gotten most of that taken care of and have settled in by applying a little elbow grease. Most of our issues were growing pains with mail, e-mail and phones, which was to be expected. The weather has been cold, then warm, then raining — much like the Willamette Valley.

As far as the soldiers in Delta Company, we are exceeding standards as usual. Within the next two days we will be conducting another training run on all of our weapon systems and individual training. After Thanksgiving we start the collective lanes training in the field. We were fortunate enough to allow one of the squad leaders to have his new baby girl. Congratulations to the entire Powell family!

As you all know, the soldiers in Delta Company set the standard with the rest of us and many observers inside and out have mentioned we are among the best. I wish you all could see how well respected your soldiers are, and what a great time everyone and everyone of them is doing. As a commander I could not be more proud.

We greatly appreciate the donations of time, love, and thought, and personal items we have received. Hopefully, soon we can get some of the pictures developed and send a copy to the Family Program to be distributed at your location.

I will continue to write and update you on our progress as we move through this deployment. I am also hoping to share individual soldier’s stories and personal items when we get them. I’m sure you will enjoy hearing about the things they are doing in future e-mails.

Once again thank you for your support.

Capt. Scott Hildebrandt
Company D/2-162 Infantry

The ‘real’ story on Iraq

When we were told that we could write letters for this publication, so many ideas came through my mind, but I wasn’t sure what I really wanted to tell you since when I arrived I was so tired I fell asleep on the plane for my R&R leave a few days ago and talked to some reporters, my ideas became very clear. I need to talk about some of the questions they asked me, and some of the “facts” the press is giving to the American public.

First, for those of you who are on your way home, please keep in mind that the rubber is going to be let out when we leave. The media will be all over us, in particular from the flight, but were there to greet our flight and our soldiers as well. I felt great as they all clapped and cheered. I went out into the crowd and started shaking all of their hands and telling them thank you.

After I finished and said thank you again to the entire group, I was called over by a couple of United Airlines employees saying that we had a bag of care packages for the flight. I asked for the ticket and when I tried to tell them my final destination and when my flight was scheduled to leave, they just smiled at me and informed me that I would be on the next flight bound for the west coast. When I arrived at the ticket counter I was greeted by the manager and handed the ticket for the CLP flight. They found me a set of flights that now had me arriving prior to my previous time of departure (hint, go for price on your tickets do not worry about them, the airlines will make it work). They also worked on getting me back on the latest flight possible.

It was a great experience, and I will be writing thank you letters to both of them. The people in the airport were very nice. People kept waving, saying thank you and wanted to ask questions. They all wanted to know if it was a bad over there. I told them of all the good things we are doing in Iraq, and they all found it very interesting. It was a bit more than what they were seeing on the news. On the plane, they took all the soldiers who wanted to be first class. I stayed in coach, for the economy, in a row by myself, but was still treated like I was in first class. When the captain of the plane announced us, the plane started clapping and cheering. During the flight I had people walking down the aisles wanting to talk and say thank you.

Experiences like these make the pain and separation from our families easier to deal with. We are seeing the performers from all over the world on the news, just like the people in Iraq are seeing the combined army, the bad parts of Iraq. I did not expect this type of support. I did not think so many people would want to go out of their way to say hello and thank you.

My flight ended in Portland. I was so excited to see my wife and my 18-month old babies. After a brief moment of uncertainty, the babies welcomed me back with open arms. We had a great flight. It was true. No soldier in the 82 ROC have near this. We are not on the new armor and we are not on the issue list.

Now about Iraq. Things here are not what you have been told. It’s not making it out to be. We are doing a TON of good for the people. There is only a small, very violent group who want to keep us out for the most part. The masses want us here and want us to finish the job we were assigned to do. This is an important part of our story, and unfortunately this is not being told by the mainstream American public. Our soldiers are making great things happen here.

Finally, I would like to thank the Baltimore Veteran’s of Foreign Wars and the Baltimore Airlift Association. I was there last night I finally reached Baltimore around 5 a.m. After I went through customs, I was greeted by 50-plus people, all clapping. Most of them were wearing veterans of VFW uniforms. They shook my hand and said “thank you”. Also in the crowd were civilians, who were not wearing veterans gear. They rang my bell, the flight, but were there to greet our flight and our soldiers as well. I felt great as they all clapped and cheered. I went out into the crowd and started shaking all of their hands and telling them thank you.

After I finished and said thank you again to the entire group, I was called over by a couple of United Airlines employees waiting with a list of flights. They asked for my ticket and when I tried to tell them my final destination and when my flight was scheduled to leave, they just smiled at me and informed me that I would be on the next flight bound for the west coast. When I arrived at the ticket counter I was greeted by the manager and handed the ticket for the CLP flight. They found me a set of flights that now had me arriving prior to my previous time of departure (hint, go for price on your tickets do not worry about them, the airlines will make it work). They also worked on getting me back on the latest flight possible.
1. A squadron of F-15 Eagles from the 173rd Fighter Wing in Klamath Falls, Ore. readies for takeoff during the 2003 Sentry Eagle Air Show.

2. Members of Oregon Army National Guard's 2-162 Infantry slide down "Cardboard Hill" at the 33rd annual Camp Rosenbaum at Camp Rilea. Approximately 160 "at-risk" youth attended this year's camp.


5. An Oregon Army National Guard CH-47 Chinook lifts a 2,000-gallon "Bamby-Bucket" at the aviation facility in Pendleton, Ore. during a firefighting training exercise.


8. Former 1042nd Medical Co. (Air Ambulance) commander Lt. Col. Matt Brady (l) and 82nd Rear Operations Center (ROC) pose for a photo at LSA Anaconda in Iraq.

10. MAST Project Officer Lt. Col. Dan Hokanson at the Army Aviation Support Facility in Salem, Ore. shortly before an Oregon Army National Guard Firehawk departs for fire-fighting duty in Yakima, Wash.


15. Oregon Army National Guard color guard detail made up of members of the Air and Army National Guard participate in the Albany Veteran's Day Parade on Nov. 11, 2003.
Oregon’s year in pictures

2. Oregon’s SR-71 “Blackbird” waits for its wings outside the Evergreen Aviation Museum in McMinnville, Ore. Members of the Air National Guard’s 142nd FW helped load and transport the aircraft.

3. Governor Ted Kulongoski enjoys a day in Gresham, Ore. The day was filled with American flags, one representing each person who perished in the attacks on the World Trade Center in New York City, the Pentagon, and the airline crash in Pennsylvania.

4. Master Sgt. Vern Loftus gives one of the Camp Rosenbaum attendees a “lift” during one of the many clubhouse activities.

5. A flight medic from the 1042nd Air Ambulance performs a medical evacuation at a mobilization ceremony at the Lane County Fairgrounds in Eugene, Ore. on Oct. 29, 2003 in preparation for deployment to the Middle East.


7. A flight medic from the 1042nd Air Ambulance performs a medical evacuation.


10. Oregon’s own SR-71 “Blackbird” waits for its wings outside the Evergreen Aviation Museum in McMinnville, Ore. Members of the Air National Guard’s 142nd FW helped load and transport the aircraft.

11. Oregon’s own SR-71 “Blackbird” waits for its wings outside the Evergreen Aviation Museum in McMinnville, Ore. Members of the Air National Guard’s 142nd FW helped load and transport the aircraft.

12. 1st Sgt. Randall Mefford and bride Candace are captured in a special moment as they assemble at a mobilization ceremony at the Lane County Fairgrounds in Eugene, Ore. on Oct. 29, 2003 in preparation for deployment to the Middle East.

13. Governor Ted Kulongoski enjoys a day in Gresham, Ore. The day was filled with American flags, one representing each person who perished in the attacks on the World Trade Center in New York City, the Pentagon, and the airline crash in Pennsylvania.

14. Master Sgt. Vern Loftus gives one of the Camp Rosenbaum attendees a “lift” during one of the many clubhouse activities.

15. A flight medic from the 1042nd Air Ambulance performs a medical evacuation.


17. Oregon Air National Guard’s 142nd FW celebrated a safety milestone. Maj. Mike Piott, Brigade Executive Officer, and other leaders helped unload a civilian-bound shipment of rice in Bamean in Northeast Afghanistan.


The Oregon Sentinel

News You Need

Free online defensive driving course available for all ORARNG soldiers

The online web-based Defensive Driving Course (DDC), accredited by the National Safety Council (NSC), is provided to all ORARNG soldiers free of charge by NGB. It will eventually replace the current ‘Train-the-trainer’ DDC and the accident avoidance training (AAT) portion of the overall driver-training program. Current DDC/AAT is valid until the four-year retraining cycle. ORARNG goal is for 100% of TPS personnel and 25% of Traditional soldiers to complete this training in FY-04. Access to the website from any computer with Internet access, a fast connection is preferable, but not necessary.

This program may be worked intermittently. It should take a total of 3-4 hours to complete. Use your SSN, your unit’s Unit Identification Code (UIC), and the access code “OR2002.” Information must be correct, and the website below typed in exactly.

The program will provide you with a certificate of completion to print. Take it to your unit’s driver licensing POC for annotation on your military license. An official NSC certificate may be obtained from the Safety Office; POC is CW3 Swartwout, 503-584-3221, for DDC Program issues.

Family members may take the DDC at a special reduced rate of $29.95, which can be paid by credit card on the website. Family members’ sign in through our initial website, then click the “family & friends” button.

For more information, visit www.safetyserve.army.mil, and use the access code “OR2002” to get started.

Two new programs aim to boost the morale of deployed soldiers

There are two programs available to provide morale boosts to our troops in Iraq. The first is Operation Freedom’s Library, the brainchild of Maj. Richard Miller. “There are only so many things soldiers can do here, and they eventually will have seen every movie that has been sent and played spades more than enough times,” Miller wrote. Individuals who want to donate reading materials to Operation Freedom’s Library can e-mail Miller at richard.alan.miller1@us.army.mil. Deborah Crane, the spouse of a retired soldier and mother of an airman, is the founder of Treats for Troops (TFT) Inc. The company’s mission is to send at least one package in the hands of every American service member. Individuals can adopt a service member without knowing anyone in the service. TFT acts as the liaison between soldiers who’d like to be sponsored and Americans who wish to adopt a service member without knowing anyone in the service. TFT acts as the sponsor and the liaison between soldiers who’d like to be sponsored and Americans who wish to show their support to members of the U.S. Armed Forces. The sponsor and the service member are not able to contact each other directly. For more information, visit www.treatsfortroops.com.

Army One Source answers questions, concerns about deployments

Army News Service — The Army recently established a new information and referral service line called Army One Source (AOS), is available 24-hours a day, and provides information about deployment-related issues for soldiers, deployed civilians and their immediate families.

The service was activated on August 15, 2003, and is available not only to Army installations worldwide, but to all members of the Army’s reserve components.

The line is staffed by consultants who hold master degrees in social work, psychology and who can talk about a variety of subjects such as parenting,triecare, childcare, relocation, finances, legal, elder care, education and everyday household issues. State-side active-duty and deployed National Guard and Reserve Soldiers, deployed civilians and their families can also arrange for up to six face-to-face private counseling sessions with licensed clinical social workers who know the military environment. The service is also available to the immediate family of single Soldiers.

From within the continental United States, callers can dial 1-800-464-8107. From outside the United States callers should dial the appropriate access code to reach a U.S. number and then dial 1-800-464-8107. Hearing-impaired callers should use 1-800-364-9188 for TTY access, and Spanish speakers can use 1-888-732-9020. The AOS also provides bilingual and multicultural staff capable of communicating in Spanish, Korean and German.

The Army Well-Being Liaison Office’s Army Information Line, 1-800-833-6622, is still available to answer questions callers may have that are not exactly deployment-related.

The Army Information Line is open from 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. (EST) Monday through Friday. Callers who reach the line after hours can leave a voicemail which will be returned the following day. The staff is available to answer callers’ questions and provide assistance in any way they can. The service is not only for Soldiers and their families, but available to all members of the Army’s seven constituent groups; soldiers (active, Guard and reserve) civilians, retirees, veterans and families, as well as the members of their extended family.

Websites provide important tips to avoid holiday depression

Most of us think of the holidays as a time for joyous celebration and making happy memories with family and loved ones. While the holiday season may be a time of great joy, it is also a particularly stressful time that results for many in heightened, and occasionally severe, feelings of depression and anxiety. Here are some of the problems, along with potential remedies for them:

The holidays just aren’t as great as I thought they would be. Many of us place very high expectations on ourselves and our family members based on images of what the holidays are “supposed to be like”. These images come from other people, TV, the movies, and glossy magazines. Trying to meet these expectations makes us at times and when we believe that we’re “falling short” of those expectations, it’s depressing. Give yourself a break! Stop trying to be a Martha Stewart clone. Think about what’s really important and meaningful for you and your family at this time of year, focus your energies there, and don’t get sidetracked into thinking happiness lies in having all the trappings concocted by merchants.

There isn’t enough time to enjoy the holidays. If you examine what you actually do during this period, you’ll probably find that much of your time is spent trying to meet those holiday expectations described above. Try not to over commit yourself, whether that means limiting shopping trips to the mall, holiday parties, concerts or elaborate parties in your home. Reserve some days when you have nothing scheduled and don’t give in to feelings of guilt when you have to say “no” to some activities in order to rest or just “hang out” with loved ones.

I get into serious debt over the holidays. Again, this problem goes back to your trying to meet unrealistic expectations, this time with respect to your budget. Set a ceiling for gift values and party-making, then stick to it. Remind yourself that you want others to think highly of you because you remembered them this holiday season, not because you spent a lot of money on them.

I feel lethargic and bloat during the holidays. This is a time of year when we seem to be surrounded on all fronts by holiday treats, goodies, and other things that are more often associated with “cheer.” When we indulge ourselves, our digestive systems don’t have a chance to keep up, and come crashing down soon afterward. Try to go easy on the alcohol, sugar, and caffeine. Enjoy yourself, but balance those treats with foods and nutrients that are good for you, i.e. fruits, vegetables, and grains (but watch those fatty, creamy, sugary, salty, and sugary treats). Get out and exercise for 30 minutes a day, even if it’s just walking around the neighborhood. This is especially important after those heavy holiday meals.

The holidays seem lonely for me. Expectations are probably highest for spending the holidays with people who love and care for us. Thus, when we’re alone or separated from loved ones, holiday depression can be at its worst. If you can’t be with family and friends, certainly make as much contact as you can by telephone, and then get out of the house and do something with it. This doesn’t mean wandering through crowds at the mall, which can be even more depressing. Rather it might be participating in a religious service, joining in a community sing-along, or serving meals at a homeless shelter. When others ask you what you’re doing for the holidays, don’t be afraid to be honest if you have plans, and if you don’t, be shy about accepting invitations from people who do. Most people know well. This is hard to do for the more introverted among us, but making the effort to attend just one social event will make all the difference in the world.

It always seems my family gets into fights around the holidays. The holidays are NOT supposed to be like a Norman Rockwell illustration. The reality is that family problems do not magically disappear during the holidays. Understand that there may be little you can do to control other family members and relatives, but try to make your best effort to avoid and defuse those “hot button” issues that trigger arguments and hostile feelings. Spend time during the year dealing with problems instead of letting them fester to the point of boiling over at a time when everyone’s emotional sensitivity is running high. And accept the fact that some family members can only tolerate a limited amount of time with one another.

It’s always such a letdown when the holidays are over. The “post-holiday blues” are a pretty universal complaint when January 2nd rolls around and all that anticipation and excitement have dissipated. Know that you’re in very good company and once you get back into your work or school routine these feelings will normally pass quickly. If you’re one of those people who tend not to do anything special except during the holidays, consider planning trips, outings, and other events to look forward to for the year ahead. Think about doing your best in the year ahead rather than making unrealistic resolutions that you won’t be able to meet come next December 31st.

If we try to keep our expectations in check and focus on relaxing and enjoying the company of others, we’ll go far toward making the holidays a time of pleasure rather than dread. In any case, if your depressed mood does not diminish after a couple of weeks, don’t ignore it. Chronic depression is a serious illness that affects millions of Americans. Talk to a trusted family member, minister, counselor, or your local mental health provider and get the help you need.

This article is a reprint of the web-based article “Combating Holiday Depression”, located on the Army Physical Fitness Research Institute website. The original publication can be found at http://www.carlisle.army.mil/apfr/december.htm.

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Grantham University to offer free MBAs

Washington D.C. – In November, John Whitney, Executive Director of Federal Children’s Scholarship Fund (FCSF), a non-profit organization announced a new program that allows active duty officers and non-commissioned officers in the U.S. military to obtain MBA degrees from a fully accredited university free of charge. These degrees are being offered by Grantham University, a leading distance education institution.

This new program is exactly what officers in the military have been looking for in order to get their MBA, free of charge, and they can study from anywhere in the world and work at their own pace.

According to Whitney, the program allows for such flexibility in how and when study and work are performed, and helps students to move their careers forward while still allowing them to fulfill their military duties and obligations.

The only requirement for active duty officers and NCOs is an undergraduate college degree. Grantham’s academic programs are structured for ease of entry, and include refresher courses to assist students gain the foundations necessary for advanced study.

Students enrolling in the MBA program will use Grantham University’s method of Advanced Distributed Learning (ADL) which incorporates online and distance education. This is ideal for personnel who are deployed or who may work shifts that prohibit them from attending traditional classes.

The Grantham MBA program is considered fast-paced and requires 36 credit hours of course work partitioned into three semesters. Up to nine credit hours of coursework considered fast-tracked and requires 36 shifts that prohibit them from attending who are deployed or who may work online or e-learning and distance programs are structured for ease of college degree. Grantham’s academic officers and NCOs is an undergraduate forward while still allowing them to fulfill for. It allows them to get their MBA, leading distance education institution of offered by Grantham University, a fully accredited university free of military to obtain MBA degrees from a commissioned officers in the U.S. active duty officers and non-(FCSF), a non-profit organization John Whitney, Executive Director of Uniformed Services.

The Grantham MBA program is “This new program is exactly what the Oregon National Guard Association (ORNGA) will be awarding three $1000 scholarships at the ORNGA Conference on April 24, 2004. The scholarships will be awarded to persons who demonstrate qualities of leadership, civic action and academic achievement.

They are available to all members of the Oregon National Guard, ORNGA members, or their spouses or children. Prior year’s recipients are not eligible, (i.e. winners for school year 2003-2004 must wait a full year before applying for another scholarship). The deadline for applications is March 1, 2004. Scholarship applications are available on the Web. Visit www.mil.state.or.us/ornga/HTML/Scholarship/, or call the ORNGA office at 503-584-3030, or Lt. Col. M. K. Woodward at 503-584-3931 for more information.

ESGR changes mission

More than 1.2 million Americans serve in the Guard and Reserve, representing nearly one-half of our total military force. Because of the increasing number of Guard and Reserve deployments of Guard members and Reservists, the Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve (ESGR) has changed their mission to meet the needs of military members.

The new mission, dubbed, “Closing the Loop” will help civilian companies and other organizations cope with the issues associated with extended deployments of their military-member workforce. Executive Director Col. Bob Elliot (Ret.), says the new mission will streamline operations and place more emphasis on employer issues.

“America’s employers are linked to our national security by sharing their most precious asset, their employees,” Elliot said.

A study by the Defense Department in 2000 found that more than 60-percent of the Guard and Reserve were unable to advance in their civilian jobs. Such missions have traveled to training centers in San Diego, Ca., Colorado Springs, Co., and the Pacific Command in Honolulu, Hi.

“It gives employers a chance to observe firsthand the type and quality of military training and leadership of National Guard and Reserve members,” says Elliot.

In Oregon ESGR Committee Chairman Col. James Cleary (USMC Ret.) points out the Bosslift’s effectiveness.

“We’ve received valuable input, with constructive insights on the challenges and benefits of having employees serving in the Guard and Reserve,” Cleary said.

Elliott added that employers should know that Guard and Reserve soldiers benefit from a drug-free work environment, gain proven leadership skills, and receive special training that is often helpful in their civilian jobs.

For more information on the ESGR, contact Col. Bill Elliott at (503) 584-2837, or via email at: bob.elliott2@or.ngb.army.mil.

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On November 1, 2003, Capt. Martin R. Plotner, 142nd Security Forces Commander, presented awards to Oregon Army National Guard soldiers for their service during Operation Armored Falcon. Also present was Col. Mark A. Kyle, 939th Air Refueling Wing Commander. 1st Lt. “Devil” Platten, JFHQ(OR) MP5, were among the very few to be demobilized from duty, and will spend approximately eight days out-processing, before returning to Oregon. From left to right: Staff Sgt. Darrell Kuntz, Spec. Harold McWatters, Spec. Jason Young and Private 1st Class Mark Webb.
Oregon’s 1-162 Infantry soldiers, currently serving in Operation Iraqi Freedom, have distinguished themselves not only by successfully mobilizing as a battalion for the first time since World War II, but also by recently earning the coveted Combat Infantryman Badge (CIB).

The CIB was established by the War Department in October 1943. Lieutenant General Lesley J. McNair, who at the time was the Army Ground Forces commanding general, was instrumental in its creation. He originally recommended that it be called the “fighter badge.”

The CIB was designed to enhance morale and the prestige of the “Queen of Battle.” Then Secretary of War Henry Stimson said, “It is high time we recognize in a personal way the skill and heroism of the American infantry.”

There are three requirements for award of the CIB. The soldier must be an infantryman satisfactorily performing infantry duties, must be assigned to an infantry unit during such time as the unit is engaged in active ground combat, and must actively participate in such ground combat. Campaign or battle credit alone is not sufficient for award of the CIB.

The soldiers of the 1-162 provided base security at key U.S. installations, and helped secure the Kuwaiti port through which flowed 90-percent of the logistical needs and supplies for U.S. forces in Iraq. In October, 2003, security forces of the 1-162 successfully detected and defeated a suicide bomb, which was detonated outside the concrete barriers far from its intended target.

After guerillas stepped up their attacks on supply lines, commanders realized something had to be done. Part of the solution was to create a U.S. installation near a critical crossroads of two main supply routes called Camp Kaslu. The 1-162 infantry built their own camp, set up a defendable perimeter, and secured the area. They built important relationships with the local population by holding occasional medical clinics, and even lending a helping hand with the melon or corn harvests. Complementing these community interactions, 1-162 soldiers performed regular patrols. Faced with the new security presence, enemy attacks on the main supply route quickly subsided. Overall the new ties that had been established with the surrounding community worked to everyone’s advantage. While Iraqi locals sometimes tried to be “helpful” by bringing unexploded ordinance to U.S. soldiers (raising a few heartbeats), they were also very instrumental in helping to expose weapons caches; in one case exposing an arms cache of 1,500 anti-personnel landmines.

Like soldiers in any conflict, Oregon’s 1-162 Infantry will come home with some “war stories.” As they return to Oregon in Spring, 2004, they will take home with them a sense of pride and accomplishment, but more importantly, they will have with them the Combat Infantry Badge, which was well-deserved, and well-earned.