A representative of their directorate may be directed to the emergency operations center at (503) 584-3625.

Legislation introduced to provide retirement benefits at 20 years

With more vocal debate over a benefits package that has been basically untouched for National Guardsmen and Reservists for decades, Rep. Joe Wilson, R-SC, has introduced HR 4676 to provide immediate retirement benefits to those members who complete 20 years of service.

With the increasing reliance on the National Guard and Reserve since 1990, and especially since the horrific events of Sept. 11, it’s time to recognize the considerable contributions of these citizen-soldiers,” Wilson said.

This reliance upon the National Guard over the past decade warrants a full review of how benefits are provided.

The retiree retirement system has remained largely unchanged for more than 50 years. Increased deployments and higher operations tempo driven by the total force integration have resulted in greater personal sacrifices by Guardsmen and their families.

This is an important step in ensuring Guardsmen and Reservists receive their earned military retirement upon completion of their military career, rather than waiting for as long as 22 years before receiving retirement benefits.

HR 4676 has been referred to the House Armed Services Committee for consideration.

Oregon’s Representative Darlene Hooley is a supporter of this bill.

As of June 17, 2002, the Oregon Military Department guard shack became operational as part of the force protection program.

The procedures are as follows.

Employees

All employees will be required to stop at the guard shack and show current military ID badge.

Employees who do not have their military department ID badge will be required to show current photo identification.

Acceptable forms of ID will be a current military ID card, or current driver’s license. They will then be asked to state the reason for their visit to the building.

At the guard shack, only the driver will be positively identified, but the driver and any other vehicle occupants will still be required to receive visitor badges at the north entrance reception desk.

While at the guard shack, visitors and guests will be given a visitor parking card and instructed to park in the windshield of their vehicle.

Only vehicles with these visitor cards will be allowed to park in the spaces marked “visitor.”

Visitors or guests who arrive without any acceptable form of ID will not be allowed into the building.

If an employee arrives at the guard shack without a form of acceptable ID, their directorate will be contacted. Questions regarding the procedure may be directed to the emergency operations center at (503) 584-3625.
Throughout the world, operations are being conducted to suppress international terrorism. This effort includes not only our military forces, but it is also represented by our state department, the CIA, the FBI, numerous law enforcement agencies, and various intelligence-gathering assets.

In addition, other nations are actively engaged.

Progress is being made, and the National Guard certainly plays a key role in our country’s response capability.

There are approximately 50,000 National Guard members on duty currently to answer the call.

This is significant, and each of you can be proud of the role our citizen-soldiers and airmen are playing to enhance the security of our homeland.

As we prepare for the unknown, we still have the responsibility to maintain readiness at all levels, the most important of which lies with our people.

Annual training season is upon us, and everyone is committed to completing all training events in a safe and productive manner.

I look forward to visiting as many sites as possible as this busy summer unfolds.

In the midst of mobilizing the remainder of the 1042d Medical Company, a tragedy struck on Mount Hood.

The deaths of three mountain climbers were compounded by the near-tragedy that occurred when a Pavehawk rescue helicopter from the 939th Rescue Wing of the Air Force Reserve crashed.

By the grace of God, none of the crew members were killed.

The 1042d responded immediately to the request to rescue the climbers, and they were on the scene when the Pavehawk crashed.

Ultimately, the Army Guard had four helicopters working the rescue, and as usual, the 1042d performed their mission in an exceptional manner.

What a magnificent resource our air ambulance company represents to the citizens of Oregon.

You all are proud of the professionalism they consistently display in the course of executing very hazardous missions.

Deployment requests continue to mount.

The task force from the 1st Battalion, 186th Infantry, is currently at Fort Carson, preparing for a July ship date to the Sinai Peninsula.

The 116th Air Control Squadron is still on duty in support of Operation Noble Eagle, as well as numerous other Oregon Air Guard members.

With all the distractions, the Oregon National Guard continues to lead the way and set the example. We also had the opportunity to thank the members of the Army and Air Guard who secured our airports for eight months.

The Port of Portland hosted a recognition ceremony that rendered the appropriate honors to those who served, as well as their families and employers.

Job well done!

Currently, our legislature is meeting in special session to address a one-billion-dollar shortfall in the current state budget.

The results will not be positive for any agency, but we will survive, and we will continue to serve with pride.

I wish to express my sincere appreciation to all of you who serve, or who have served, our great state and nation. Of course, I include in that patriotic group all those families and employers that continue to support us. You do make a difference.
Many Army National Guard troops are returning to life as they knew it before the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks now that they are no longer helping to safeguard the nation’s airports.

In May, Guard troops left more than 400 airports where they had steadfastly stood watch in their camouflage uniforms at security checkpoints since President George Bush asked the governors for the Guard’s help late last September.

The mission for all Guard troops who have become familiar figures to millions of airline passengers from coast to coast ended May 31. All told, nearly 9,000 Army and Air Guard troops were assigned to 444 airports by last December after President Bush asked for additional personnel through the holiday season, said Greg Funk of the National Guard Bureau’s homeland security staff in Arlington, Va.

Many of them continued to hold down civilian jobs while pulling regular shifts at airports from Boston to Los Angeles. Others put their civilian jobs and college on hold.

The Guard’s numbers were reduced to 5,071 troops at 341 airports by May 10 and then to 2,182 personnel at 223 on the Monday after Mother’s Day, Funk added.

“The Transportation Security Administration, being committed to creating a workforce that commands the respect of the traveling public, is in the process of hiring security screeners and supervisors at over 400 airports who are taking and will take the place of our Guard members,” stated the National Guard Bureau.

“This has gone extremely well. There was a lot of competition to do this mission, so we were able to select the best National Guard soldiers and airmen,” explained Lt. Col. David Green, who coordinated a force of about 50 Army and Air Guard troops for four airports in New Mexico. “It has certainly boosted the National Guard’s image.”

The fact that the vast majority of passengers accepted the additional security measures made the duty pretty mundane most of the time, said Kysar. “Hey, boring is good,” he added before recalling some less than boring moments.

One man, for example, intentionally dropped his trousers after being asked by a civilian screener to open his belt buckle, Kysar said, because he felt his personal rights were being violated.

“Another man threw his shoes at a screener when asked to remove them so they could be checked for wires. The shoes did not hit the screener,” Kysar added.

And there was the occasional government official or diplomat who, Kysar said, would try to cut through the security process by impatiently asking the tired old question “Do you know who I am?”

Your mere presence at the checkpoints no doubt averted would-be criminals and terrorists who have, presumably, chosen other paths of less resistance,” Christopher Browne, Reagan National’s vice president and manager, told the departing Guard soldiers.

“You have been absolutely instrumental in restoring the nation’s confidence in this critical mode of transportation,” Browne added, “I truly hope we can maintain that confidence in your absence.”

Others echoed Browne’s praise as the mission winds down.

“They did a good job,” said a Harbor Police officer in San Diego about the troops who ended the mission at that international airport on May 5.

“I want to express my appreciation to the National Guard men and women in the airports,” said Margot Crandall of Little Rock, Ark., about the troops she encountered at half a dozen airports in California, Texas, Florida and Georgia.

“There’s the presence that should be intimidating to the wrong people, but they have been so friendly and helpful to the general public,” she added. “It makes me feel that I am part of them instead of apart from them.”

So what makes sling loading so interesting and exciting? It’s the contact with risk and the combination of teamwork that keeps these soldiers motivated.

“The first time I did sling loading it was a total adrenalin rush. Just imagining a Chinook helicopter landing on my head made me scared and nervous,” said Greer. “I have successfully sling loaded about 10 times in my career of 11 years. Now I mentor soldiers who are experiencing this excitement for the first time. When I coach soldiers, I emphasize safety. Be conscious about your surroundings. I warn them about the hazards that can happen like getting electrocuted, or being hit by the equipment. Sling loading is something I have looked forward to when getting ready for drill. Sling loading is a fun and exciting experience of my Guard life.”

Military operations became a real-world scenario as soldiers of Det. 1/168 Aviation, Pendleton, were called to sling load a crashed Air Force Pavehawk helicopter from the slopes of Mount Hood in June.

Sling loading has been in use for over 45 years in a variety of ways in the military and the civilian world. The most publicized would be the medical evacuation: helicopters lowering gurneys for rescuers to hoist injured people from cliffs or out of treacherous waters.

Like most military occupational skills (MOS), sling loading is used in the civilian job market. Logging, fire fighting, construction, and oil exploration are just a few of the career fields in which sling loading is used. Logging on a steep hill, cliffs on either side, is not possible to use cranes or trucks, is one example of sling loading. With sling load procedures, you can perform the mission in a timely fashion.

There is the occasional challenge that requires time to become proficient,” Jim Coates, chief pilot for Columbia Helicopters in Airlie, Ore., said. “It’s a much more skill then just flying a helicopter.” He has been doing sling loading for 23 years at Columbia Helicopters.

A skilled sling loader is valuable to the military mission and is marketable in the civilian work place.
Oregon commander honored with Gen. MacArthur Leadership award

Duty. Honor. Country. While those three words may have long been the motto of the U.S. Military Academy at West Point, N.Y., they are also deeply held values of every Army leader who genuinely cares about soldiers, Army Chief of Staff Gen. Eric K. Shinseki told the newest winners of the General Douglas MacArthur Leadership Award.

Shinseki handed a 15-pound bronze bust of MacArthur to 27 company-grade officers who earned the award for demonstrated exceptional leadership in 2001 during a Pentagon ceremony on May 22.

“Look after (your soldiers)—their training, their tools, their spirit—so that they are ready to do what is necessary when called upon,” Shinseki said. “For it is in the courageous actions of our soldiers that continues the drumbeat of duty, honor, country.”

The chief said he was present at West Point as a young cadet when MacArthur gave his well-known farewell address and spoke about “duty. Honor. Country. Those three hallowed words.”

He said he was also present just a couple of months ago when Sen. Daniel Inouye, chairman of the appropriations defense subcommittee and a World War II veteran from Hawaii who was awarded the Medal of Honor, received the academy’s Sylvanus Thayer Award.

Inouye is not a West Point graduate, but duty, honor, country have been a part of his life as a soldier and throughout 43 years of public service in Congress, Shinseki said.

“Two great soldiers. Each took a different path, but follow the values of duty, honor, country,” Shinseki said.

The MacArthur award is given annually to 13 active-Army, seven National Guard and seven Reserve officers who exhibit extraordinary leadership abilities and embody the ideals embraced by MacArthur.

Criteria for the award include the ability to motivate others, understand fellow soldiers and inspire commitment, teamwork and esprit de corps.

The MacArthur Leadership Award program is jointly sponsored by the Army and the General Douglas MacArthur Foundation.

Capt. William J. Prendergast IV, Oregon Army National Guard; commander, Co. D, 1st Battalion, 186th Infantry Regiment, was among the 2001 MacArthur awardees.
Horror: 1042nd Med Co rescues downed Air Force crew and injured hikers

“We heard a big bang,” Dave Mull, a member of American Medical Response, said. “It was silent, as if it was all happening in slow-motion. The next thing, everyone was on radios, yelling that a bird went down.”

The crash was transmitted live by Portland-area television stations while viewers watched in horror.

“Oh my goodness,” one of the announcers said. “Oh, that’s horrible. You’re watching this live, folks. Oh, if only this were a movie. You saw the tail go into the mountain and it just blew apart, rolling down the hillside, oh, good Lord!”

The Pavehawk hit the snow, shattering the rotors, as the fuselage rolled down the mountain. The helicopter came to rest upside down on a snow field.

“The Air Force pilots sensed something went seriously wrong,” Staff Sgt. Frayne Fowler, a flight medic with the 1042nd Med Co., said. “They cut the cable holding the litter with the injured climber, and steered the faltering helicopter away from the ground crews at the site.

Fowler was on the side of the mountain, assisting an injured climber, about 25 to 30 feet away from the Pavehawk when the disaster happened.

“As we were giving (the pilot) the windup signal for the cable, we were hunched over, protecting our patient,” Jeff Livick, from the Timberline Ski Patrol and one of the ground rescuers, said. “I felt the rotor wash kind of dissipate, at which point I looked up and the cable was falling out of the helicopter and the helicopter’s rotors started hitting the wall. Things flew everywhere, started rolling down the hill, bodies flying out. Basically the most incredible thing I’ve witnessed in my life.”

The quick thinking of the pilots saved the lives of the rescuers on the ground above the crevasse.

“At that high of an altitude, pilots can lose lift capabilities,” Maj. Gen. Alexander H. Burgin, Oregon National Guard adjutant general, said. “Wind gusts or a sudden draft could also have contributed.”

Authorities believe that extremely thin air at the summit and occasional wind gusts contributed to the crash.

Co-pilot Scott Nielsen, from the 939th Rescue Wing, was watching the television coverage with the rest of the unit at headquarters when the helicopter crashed.

Nielsen said that the Reservists know the risks involved in their jobs, but their motto, “These things we do so that others may live,” sums up their attitude.

One of the 1042nd Med Co. helicopters had just offloaded a climber at Legacy Emanuel Hospital in Portland when they received the news about the Pavehawk going down. The crew made sure their patient was taken care of, and sprinted back to their Blackhawk to race back up the mountain and help their Air Force comrades.

“Each consecutive roll (of the helicopter) left one more person sitting in the snow,” Livick said. “So this helicopter finally came to rest upside down, with just five people sitting in the snow, wondering what the heck just happened.”

According to Maj. Kris Kraiger, of the 304th Rescue Squadron, Air Force Reserve, all six airmen on the Pavehawk are safe and in fair condition.

The investigation process will be a long one, as authorities go through the maintenance and flight records of the equipment and the personnel, according to Karole Scott, a spokeswoman for the rescue wing.

Officials are not sure how long it will take to recover the wreckage. The helicopter’s fuel tanks have to be emptied in order to protect the environment. The Pavehawk, an HH-60G Sikorsky helicopter, is built to provide search and rescue operations. It’s typical crew includes two pilots, one flight engineer, and one gunner. The Pavehawk’s primary mission is to rescue stranded personnel in combat. Because of this mission, and the equipment necessary to support it, including internal auxiliary fuel tanks, weapons and a refueling port, the Pavehawk weighs in at more than 4,000 pounds heavier than the UH-60L Blackhawk.

The UH-60L Blackhawk, also built by Sikorsky, has better high altitude and hot weather performance, greater lifting capacity, and improved corrosion protection. The highest altitude a Blackhawk can perform in is 19,151 feet, according to Sikorsky specifications.

After the Pavehawk crash, the 1042nd Med Co. sent two more Blackhawks and crews to Mt. Hood.

“We have a lot of pride in our unit,” Chief Warrant Officer 4 Al Jung said. Chief Warrant Officer 4 John Trotter agreed.

“Everyone makes (rescues like this) happen—the mechanics, the crew, everyone. It’s a team thing,” Trotter said.

At the height of the crisis, there were four of the 1042nd’s Blackhawks, two Air Force Reserve Pavehawks, and LifeFlight on the mountain. They all rotated to assist with the injured.

The deep bergchrund-classified crevasse is located about 800 feet below Mt. Hood’s summit, near the last pitch to the top. It is a well-known hazard on the mountain, and usually grows as the glacier recedes in warmer temperatures.

The distance from the bergchrund to the point where the terrain gets steep is about 250 feet and a 65-degree slope. The bergchrund is between 10 and 45 feet deep at this time of the year, according to Mike Christy, of the American Medical Response.

Twelve of the Blackhaws and their crews are preparing to deploy to Saudi Arabia, Kuwait and Afghanistan in support of Operation Enduring Freedom.

Flight crew Staff Sgt. John Phelps, Sgt. Patrick Casha, Sgt. 1st Class Kevin Hoggard, Spc. Tony Quesada, and Sgt. Dan Bobo are assisted by a LifeFlight medic while off loading an injured climber at Emanuel Hospital in Portland.

Hood’s Heroes

Pilot Chief Warrant Officer 4 Mike Cataldo
Co-pilot Chief Warrant Officer 4 Al Jung
Crew chief Sgt. James Tourney
Flight medics Staff Sgt. Frayne Fowler and Spc. Patrick Casha

Pilot Chief Warrant Officer 4 Rodney Comstock
Co-pilot Capt. Tom Lingle
Crew chief Sgt. 1st Class John Esch
Flight medics Spc. Dan Bobo and Spc. Tony Quesada

Pilot Chief Warrant Officer 4 Rick Chagroon
Co-pilot Chief Warrant Officer 4 John Trotter
Crew chief Spc. Scott Dye
Flight medics Staff Sgt. John Phelps and Spc. Jason Johnson

Pilot Chief Warrant Officer 5 Marco Frye
Co-pilot Maj. Dan Hokanson
Crew chief Spc. Floyd Petterson
Flight medics Spc. 1st Class Kevin Hoggard and Spc. Randy DeFord

The fallen Air Force Reserve Pavehawk.

Rescuing injured climbers.

Courtesy of Storm Smith, Tualatin Valley Fire and Rescue

Staff Sgt. Frayne Fowler, 1042nd Medical Company (Air Ambulance), is lowered to the ground next to the crevasse on Mount Hood to begin the rescue of injured climbers.
### Active duty identification card

Authorizes appropriate medical, commissary, exchange, and morale, welfare and recreation (MWR) benefits and privileges for the period of active duty specified on the members’ orders.

### Medical care

Family coverage available through Tricare, the military health care system similar to civilian HMOs.

### Dental coverage

If the service member is on orders for active duty for more than two years, the family may enroll in the Tricare family member dental program.

### Commissary

Supermarkets usually located on military installations that sell food, sundry and cleaning products for cost plus a five percent surcharge.

### Exchange

The military department and drug store. All Guard and Reserve personnel and their dependents have unlimited shopping privileges at any exchange. A military ID is required.

### MWR

Activities include arts and crafts facilities, bowling centers, golf courses, libraries, outdoor recreation, and youth services activities. Guard and Reserve members and their dependents are entitled to use all class “C” facilities on the same basis as active duty personnel.

### Legal assistance

Statute services have legal assistance officers available to assist families with legal problems during periods of active duty. Typical legal services include wills, powers of attorney, child support, income tax returns, and contractual disputes.

### Basic pay

An active-duty member is entitled to basic pay. Basic pay is based on a 30-day monthly rate with pay periods twice each month—the 15th and the 30th.

### Basic Allowance for Subsistence (BAS)

This allowance is intended to provide a partial subsidy for the cost of food. It is generally paid only when the member serves on active duty. The number of dependents does not affect BAS, and it is not subject to income tax.

### Basic Allowance for Housing (BAH)

This allowance is intended to provide a partial compensation for the cost of housing while the member serves on active duty. The housing allowance for members serving on active duty for more than 129 days, or those serving any length of time in conjunction with a contingency operation such as the Kosovo conflict, is paid according to the member’s rank, dependent status (with or without dependents) and location of the duty station.

### Travel on military aircraft

Dependent family members may travel space available with their sponsor only outside of the continental United States or to and from the continental United States when the member is serving on active duty. No other space-a-travel is offered to Guard and Reserve family members.

### Government quarters

Members and their families may use government quarters while on vacation on an “as available” basis.

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**Mobilization**

An art form to bring reserve component members to active duty.

The challenge, according to the mobilization process motto, is placing “the right unit and reservist...at the right time...in the right place...with the right training.”

Reservists, about 1.5 million strong, represent about half of the service members in the Department of Defense.

The reserve components are comprised of: the Army, Navy, Marine Corps, Air Force, Coast Guard, Army National Guard and Air National Guard.

Volunteer reservists are always the first ones called for military service. Selected reservists (those drilling regularly and getting paid) are the first to be recalled, followed by individual ready reservists (those who do not drill with a specific unit).

After that, standby reservists and retiree reservists (those who are not on disability) are called.

After the voluntary recall, there are four levels of mobilization.

**Partial mobilization**

Authorized by Congress and the President, full mobilization includes all reserve units in response to a declaration of war or national emergency.

These would include all members of the ready reserve, standby reserve, and retired reserve, as well as National Guard United.

Congress must declare a state of emergency, and can hold forces in uniform for the duration of the emergency plus six months.

**Full mobilization**

When forces beyond the existing force are needed, total mobilization is authorized, meaning additional units would be organized and activated.

Total mobilization involves bringing the industrial base of the country to full capacity to provide resources and equipment capable of supporting a full-scale war, such as in World War II.
With the mobilization of Guard and Reserve soldiers comes additional benefits for their families. However, because of the geographic locations of Guard and Reserve families, it is often difficult to obtain information about your benefits, and in some cases to use them.

"When a Guard or Reserve member is called to active duty for more than 30 days, part of the processing for entry on active duty should be the completion of a DD Form 1172, Application for Uniformed Services Identification Card—DEERS enrollment for each eligible family member and legal dependent. This application will allow family members and dependents to receive the tam active-duty-dependent ID card. These cards authorize appropriate medical, commissary, exchange and MWR privileges for the period of active duty on the soldier’s orders. Family members and eligible dependents need to go to an ID card issuing site in order to be issued the appropriate ID card. Ask your command or unit family program coordinator for a list of ID card issuing locations closest to you. Be sure to call ahead to confirm specific requirements, documents, and hours of operation. When Guard members are on active duty for more than 30 days, medical care is available for family members and dependents. Eligibility begins the day the soldier starts active duty. Eligible family members may be treated on a space-available basis at any military medical treatment facility. The availability is very often limited, so a desirable option is to enroll in Tricare. Tricare is the military health care system. It is similar to civilian health maintenance organizations (HMO). It is organized by regions. Each region is composed of military and civilian companies to help provide care. Tricare offers three plans: Prime, Standard and Extra. Contact the Northwest Tricare region at (800) 404-0110. If the Guard member is on orders for active duty for more than two years, family members are eligible for the Tricare family member dental program. While a Guard member is on active duty, his or her dependents can utilize commissaries, exchanges, family service programs, legal assistance, MWR facilities, and more. For comprehensive information on all family benefits, service pay scale, and helpful web links, check out the military’s Lifelines web site at: www.lifelines2000.org"
Income tax changes mean more military qualify for EIC

Tax changes affecting reportable income for some service members will allow more military personnel qualify for the earned income tax credit, said Defense Department officials.

According to lawmakers who changed the way income is figured and the way the credit is paid, Unified military members will be the chief beneficiaries, according to Col. Chuck Triplett, executive director of the Armed Forces Tax Council.

In the past, the basic allowances for housing and subsistence and pay excluded from income for due to combat zone service was included in calculating whether a person qualified for the earned income tax credit. The credit was "paid" with the filing of an individual's annual income return.

"This year Congress is only going to make you include the money you taxed," Emwelser said. The allowance is treated as gross income when computing the credit, he noted. In addition, Thrift Savings Program contributions also will be excluded from income.

What this means is that more members are going to qualify for earned income credit this year than ever did previously.

The earned income credit is for employees who don't make a lot of money. Income for this year is $29,201 ($30,201 if married filing jointly) if you have one qualifying child; $33,178 ($34,178 if married filing jointly) if you have two or more qualifying children and $11,060 ($12,060 if married filing jointly) if you do not have a qualifying child.

Other rules apply.

Refundable credits, like the earned income tax credit, are worth more than deductions because they reduce income taxes dollar for dollar and the government pays the taxpayer any credit remaining after the tax due falls to zero.

For most persons claiming the credit, deductions are limited to 28 cents or less on the dollar and then only to zero.

Instead of waiting for a lump-sum annual credit payment, taxpayers can request advance monthly installments now if they expect both their annual earnings and in-kind benefits to come to be less than $29,201 ($30,201 if married filing jointly); they have or expect to have at least one qualifying child; and they expect to qualify for the credit in tax year 2002.

Service members with questions about the changes who wish to visit their installation Defense Finance and Accounting Service office or legal assistance office. The Internal Revenue Service web site www.irs.gov can provide full details, and access personnel information in a variety of features such as a MyPERSCOM feature that will allow a soldier to customize the site's search engine box.

PERSCOM web page updated with user-friendly information


"Step one is to provide our users with a better organized and more user-friendly site," said Col. Chuck Triplett, PERSCOM chief information officer.

The front page will still have popular links to promotions and school lists, Army promotions, a service member satisfaction key and official military personnel file. The big changes will be in how we've organized the page, Triplett said.

"It's like reading a newspaper," Triplett said. "We want the most important information to be up front and easy to find. This makes more sense because it depends on PERSCOM to have promotion and school information in an organized manner.

The page will be broken down into officer, enlisted, and soldier, family and veteran information.

Other changes directly into branch newsletters, career field designation, colonel's division, evaluations, schools and training.

Enlisted surfers similarly can find newsletters, drill sergeant information, evaluations and promotions, recruit training and schools information.

Soldier, family and veterans information will link to information such as PERSCOM's awards and casework, military education, personnel records, and retiree services.

Some of the big improvements to the site will be a better and more friendly search feature, a PERSCOM guide for visitors and newcomers, and an A to Z listing, officials said.

Work done of the links into PERSCOM directorates will remain unchanged for the present, PERSONCOM officials said. They have established a work group to continue to improve the web site and said future versions will incorporate features such as a MyPERSCOM feature which will allow a soldier to personalize and access personnel information in a way that best meets their needs.

In addition, the TAGD online site for the adjutant general was just redesigned about six weeks ago. It can be accessed at www.perscom.army.mil/tagd/index.htm or through PERSCOM offices by clicking on The Adjutant General Directorate.

Powers of attorney benefit families during deployments

"There are many occasions during the course of a military career when the power of attorney might be necessary. But, legal experts caution, do your homework before granting one to somebody.

Typically, service members will need a power of attorney when they may be deployed or going overseas and leaving their loved ones behind to handle the affairs of the household," Navy Lt. Joan Malik said. Malik is a legal advisor with the Pentagon's Joint Service Legal Assistance Office.

There are two basic types of power of attorney: general and special. A general power of attorney basically gives the person who holds it the power to handle any business in your name, Malik said.

Service members can grant a special power of attorney, which spells out the details of what the person named in the document can do for you while you're away.

"Don't give a general power of attorney to someone you don't trust," she said. Based legal assistance attorneys can help service members determine which type of power of attorney will best meet their needs.

Service members commonly need to issue powers of attorney when they change assignments, when they sell their spouses' belongings to sell cars, move out of government quarters and a myriad of other things. Those spouses often need legal authorization to conduct the necessary business.

Service members may also need a power of attorney to provide the person they named in the document with access during a deployment or exercise. Caregivers may need a power of attorney to enroll in classes and take part in other activities, Malik said. Caregivers would particularly need a power of attorney to authorize medical treatment if the service need is handled by a power of attorney. Medical powers of attorney are used if a person becomes incapacitated and someone else needs to make medical decisions.

"This document designates who you want to speak on your behalf regarding your care," Malik said. She advises sitting with family, friends, or neighbors who holds your power of attorney to make sure they understand your wishes in different circumstances.

Generally, Malik said, powers of attorney are granted for one year. She said a member can revoke a power of attorney in two ways if circumstances change.

The first and simplest is to physically destroy the original document, Malik said.

The second is to write a letter of revocation, have it notarized and send a copy to the person holding the power of attorney. It's best to also send a copy of the revocation to places where the person is likely to use the power of attorney, such as banks or moving companies.

Military service members and their families can have powers of attorney drawn up and notarized at most base legal assistance offices. Malik recommended troops call their legal assistance office if they have any questions about powers of attorney.

FCC program teaches military smart way to keep in touch

"Calling Home: What You Should Know" is the title of a new Federal Communications Commission brochure that tells service members overseas and stateside how to save money when keeping in touch with family and friends via telephone.

The brochure is packed with information about making long distance contact cheaper for defense personnel and their families, according to K. Dane Snowden, chief of the FCC Consumer and Governmental Affairs Bureau's National Telecommunications and Information Administration.

"The FCC is trying to educate people about what their options and rights are," Snowden said during a recent interview. "We've put together a brochure that we'll distribute to military installations across the country and abroad to show soldiers how to use this information at their fingertips.

"The brochure contains different calling options," Snowden noted. "It's aimed at those consumers who have access to the Internet before they sign up for a particular calling plan, and tells them where they can go so they have any problems with their carrier.

"All consumers will find the tips helpful, but the FCC designed the program specifically for military personnel," Snowden said all the information is in a central location, either in the brochure or through the FCC's toll-free number 1-888-CALL-FCC (1- 888-225-5322). The TTY number is 1- 888-225-5322.

Snowden said one of the most important questions to ask a carrier is if the carrier has a military option plan. Many telecommunications providers realize they need to shop around for the best deal in telephone service "as we would for a car or dishwasher."

For example, look at the consumer's brochure, check out the different carrier's websites. If they have a search button, type in "military," she said. People who don't own a personal computer can log into a friend's computer, find access in most libraries and bookstores, she said.

Prepaid calling cards can be money savers, but consumers should be careful about which ones they buy, Snowden pointed out.

"We encourage all consumers to read the brochures before they buy prepaid calling cards and ensure they're from a reputable company," he said. "It's also important to realize what the costs are. For example, on a calling card it's important to understand what the first minute cost and what hook up fees are.

That way you prevent getting five minutes of calling for $15 or 25 minutes of fees associated with international calls.

Snowden warns people not confuse calling cards with prepaid calling cards. "Using a calling card doesn't necessarily guarantee a low rate and rarely means you'll get the lowest rate for a domestic calling plan," he explained.

The toll-free 1-800 or 1-888 numbers are good options for people in the United States who make calls to a single long distance number within the continental U.S.

"Toll-free numbers often provide the lowest rate alternative for calls made to one number," Snowden said. Cell phones are convenient, but they don't work everywhere and they can be expensive, he warns.

Callers can use the international callback service to call anywhere in the world and pay US rates.

"You call your US service provider and then you call your counterpart with an American dial tone," Snowden said.

However, he emphasized that, "This service should be researched and discussed with the service provider before leaving the United States."

Military base phone banks are another inexpensive way to stay in touch with family and friends. But the demand is so great that it cannot sometimes be accessed.

The "Calling Home" campaign, which was launched this month, is slated to run for a year, but will be lengthened if needed. "Our goal is to get information in the hands of all service personnel and defended dependents," he said. "We want to save money when keeping in touch with their families and friends."
Cold War medal not created by DoD; not authorized for wear

The Department of Defense will not be creating a Cold War service medal, and any so-called Cold War military medals created by private vendors are not authorized for wear on military uniforms, defense officials said.

"From a fiscal consideration, it was decided not to create a medal," said Brad Loo, deputy director of officer and enlisted management personnel for the Office of the Secretary of Defense. "Throughout the Cold War years, commanders used a full spectrum of indicators to recognize the achievements and sacrifices of service members," he said. Former Secretary of Defense William Cohen signed an official Defense Enrollee Recognition Certificate in 1999, and the Army, as executive agent, has been responsible for issuing them to any eligible applicant.

The certificate recognizes all service members and federal employees who faithfully served their country during the Cold War era, Loo added. For certificate purposes, that era is the end of World War II, Sept. 2, 1945, to the collapse of the Soviet Union, Dec. 26, 1991.

Last year, someone began sending e-mail to people informing them of the application process for the medal said Arlette King, chief of policy for the Army Award Branch. "What we do is make sure the correct issue by putting out messages on our web site stating that there is not an authorized medal," King said. Several different designs had been offered on the Internet—and even at military clothing sales stores. "This is America. Anyone can purchase the commemorative medal from private vendors, just don’t wear it on his or her uniform."

It’s illegal to wear unauthorized medals on a military uniform, said Master Sgt. Kettee Messman, uniform compliance noncommissioned officer for the office of the Army deputy chief of staff for personnel.

Messman cited Title 18, Section 3702, "Military Medal or Decorations": "Whoever knowingly wears a medal not authorized for issuance to an officer of the United States military forces may be fined or imprisoned not more than six months or both." The site to apply for a Cold War Recognition Certificate is the Army’s at coldwar.armymil.mil/ Any other sites offering certificates, replicas or other commemoratives for sale are neither official nor endorsed by DoD or the services.

New DEERS consolidates medical information by 2003

The new Defense Enrollment Eligibility Reporting System (DEERS), scheduled to begin in 2003, consolidates medical information from more than 120 different databases into a single one that will allow access to information about any enrollee, and will contain the remaining information regarding claims, data about other health insurance carried by enrollees and additional administrative data, he said.

Friedrichs expects full implementation of New DEERS in 2003. "I believe many in this country have been interested in medical information systems for a long time," he said. "New DEERS probably has today the most successful pre-deployment testing that I’ve ever seen in the military." The service launched DEERS in October 2001, added the Tricare for Care information to the database for senior enrollees (those older than 65) and anyone who qualified for Medicare.

"Phase 2 will be deployed next year and will contain the remaining information regarding claims, data about other health insurance carried by enrollees and additional administrative data, he said.

Friedrichs expects full implementation of New DEERS in 2003. "I believe many in this country have mass within them, I believe that we will be the first to the table to do this," he said. "We’ve already corrected hundreds of thousands of errors as we’ve consolidated the information. The new system allows us to correct the information in real-time as soon as they are identified. And the advantage of the system is that it impact to the patient is minimal when you correct the transactions occurring behind the scenes."

DoD launches new website for news on war against terrorism

The U.S. Department of Defense’s unofficial website has spawned an unconventional web site to report news about that war. Freedom began last October. The goal was to inform the public, both in the U.S. and abroad, of what the U.S. was doing to combat global terrorism, according to Secretary of Defense Donald H. Rumsfeld, who is secretary of defense for public affairs.

We wanted people to know what our service members were doing at the front lines, overseas, to defend our country,” said spokesman. "Our goal is to help the public understand and appreciate how dedicated and committed our men and women in uniform are to our defense effort."

The site captured attention quickly. Shortly after DefendAmerica’s debut on Jan. 2, USA Today named it a "hot site" and Time Magazine reported: "If you want the official war news, that’s easy—go to the Pentagon’s comprehensive site, www.DefendAmerica.mil.”

Although DefendAmerica has been available to the public for only seven months, it already boasts readers in more than 70 countries, and links to it can be found on web sites all over theoke after according to the magazine. According to a news photographer and military journalist who was brought on board to edit DefendAmerica.

The site is updated on the site changes daily. Jackson said, and includes coverage of every Pentagon briefing by Defense Secretary Donald H. Rumsfeld and other military officials.

A feature called "Americans working together" reports on the myriad ways Americans work together to combat terrorism, while "profile" spotlights individuals and the roles they play in the war effort. Archives of both features can be found by clicking on the site.

DefendAmerica is also the home of "America’s Thank You Note," an online form where supporters are invited to sign a virtual thank-you note to US service members.

A daily feature titled "We Remember Their Sacrifice" pays tribute to each victim who died in last year’s Sept. 11 attack on the Pentagon.

Military buffs have found the site to be a "fantastical source for military aircraft and equipment. A “database” section offers technical information about a wide range of military systems and equipment.

Another section, "backgrounder," offers information on subjects from the various conflicts and their influence on warfare. The site also contains links to other government and military web sites along with streaming and archival video news stories.

DefendAmerica reports on all branches of the military, including the Army, Navy, Marine Corps, Air Force and Coast Guard, both active duty and reserve components.

Probably the most popular feature on the site is "photo galleries," which feature photos by joint combat camera and other photographers that chronicle the war effort. As of mid-2002, 111 terrorists’ attacks to the current campaign to help Afghanistan rebuild after the collapse of civil government against the Taliban.

"There are a lot of stories to tell about this war effort," Jackson said, "and there’s an enormous demand out there for this information," he said to reporters. "We’re glad that they’re finding us an authoritative place to see what’s going on.

Dairy Queen honors military with free sundaes on July 6

On Saturday, July 6, members of the American Legion family, active duty, National Guard and Reserve military personnel and veterans showing proper identification will receive one free five-ounce sundae at Dairy Queen stores.

Seventh Queen is partnering with the American Legion and the Children’s Miracle Network to honor our troops fighting the war on terrorism. Freedom began last October and was also raise $1 million for Children’s Miracle Network hospitals.

DefendAmerica’s site will be held at the Golf Club of Oregon on Sunday, July 21 at 8 a.m.

Located just minutes off I-5 in Albany, this historic 18-hole golf course is nestled along the Willamette River and provides a beautiful wooded background in which to play.

The format is two-person better with prizes awarded to the lowest scoring four teams along with awards for various specialties, including long putts, longest drive and most putts made.

Also, as a non-profit organization, any donations made to the cadet class fund can be used as a tax-write-off. The tax rate is 53%.

The cost is $45 per player, with a $5 barbeque lunch available.

For more information or to register, contact SOC Don Holden at (503) 481-5575 or by e-mail at oscopen@excite.com.
Dental benefits available for retirees through Delta Dental

Dental health care benefits are available to eligible retired family members through the TriCare Retiree Dental Program (TRDP), administered by Delta Dental.

Information regarding coverage and plans is available online at the Delta Dental website at www.ddpdelta.org.

A special enrollment offer is available for those members who enroll within 90 days of their retirement from active duty. Recent changes in the TRDP have provided for an enhanced benefits plan, which provides for more extensive coverage.

Enrollment is made easy by calling Delta at 1 (888) 336-3260, or by using their online registration at www.ddpdelta.org/fgs-bin/enrollment.asp.

In addition to online enrollment, the website also enables you to check premium rates for your zip code, print claims form, view a payment chart, and check the frequently asked questions list for answers to most questions you may have about the program.

Since there is no such thing as a one-size-fits-all plan, members of the retiree community are encouraged to become familiar with the plan before enrolling, and to remember that it is not a government subsidized program.

Delta Dental may also be contacted by e-mail.

Enrollment: ddperrol@deltab.org

Customer service: ddserver@deltab.org

Premium payment inquiries: ddpbilling@deltab.org

Other Delta Dental contact information:

Enrollment (new enrollments, changes and related correspondence): (888) 838-8757 Monday - Friday (excluding holidays) 7 a.m. - 5 p.m. PST

Customer service (claims, eligibility inquiries and related correspondence): (888) 336-3260 Monday - Friday (excluding holidays) 8:15 a.m. - 4:30 p.m. PST

Interactive voice response: (888) 336-3260 Available around the clock Monday - Saturday

New VA handbook outlines programs and benefits for vets

A new edition of the Department of Veterans Affairs' popular handbook "Veterans Affairs' popular handbook" is now available. The handbook can be downloaded free from VA's web site at www.va.gov/opa/feature/ddpbilling@delta.org

Government subsidized program.

Federal Benefits for Veterans and Dependents includes resources to help veterans access their benefits, comprising a listing of various toll-free phone numbers, world wide web locations and a directory of VA facilities throughout the country.

The handbook can be downloaded free from VA's web site at www.va.gov/opa/feature.

The handbook is one of the US Government Printing Office's (GPO) top selling consumer publications.

GPO accepts credit card orders for the publication at 1 (866) 512-1800 (toll-free) for a cost of $5 each to US addresses, $6.25 for international customers.

It can be ordered by mail from the GPO at Superintendent of Documents, PO Box 371954, Pittsburgh, PA 15250-7954 (stock #031-000-02225-3).

In addition to health-care and burial benefits, veterans may be eligible for programs providing home loan guarantees, educational assistance, training and vocational rehabilitation, income assistance pensions, life insurance and compensation for service-connected illnesses or disabilities.

In some cases, survivors of veterans who received benefits may also be entitled to continuing benefits.

The handbook describes programs for veterans with specific service experiences, such as prisoners of war or those concerned about environmental exposures in Vietnam or in the Gulf War, as well as special benefits for veterans with severe disabilities.

Update DEERS with changes of address or family status

It is important to update your Defense Enrollment Eligibility Reporting System (DEERS) record to show any changes of address, family status such as marriage, divorce, birth or adoption, etc.

Remember: Each family member's eligibility is independent and must be updated.

NOTE: If applicable, DEERS must also be updated to reflect your having Medicare Parts A and B, when you turn 65, the medical section of your military ID card may need to be updated.

Home addresses are important because DEERS is the system used to send out information on health benefits.

Also, health benefits could be denied if DEERS is not updated to reflect new information.

You may update your DEERS address in several ways:

* Visit the DEERS website at https://www.dmdc.osd.mil/swg/owa/webguard/login?appl=01&rule=02

* Visit a local personnel office that has a uniformed services I.D. card facility.

* Call ahead for hours of operation and for instructions if you are updating a record for someone who is housebound.

To locate the nearest military I.D. card facility visit www.dmdc.osd.mil/hs/

* Call the Defense Manpower Data Center Support Office (DSO) telephone center at (800) 538-9552. The best time to call is between 9 a.m. and 3 p.m. (Pacific Time) Wednesday through Friday to avoid delays.

Fax address changes to (831) 655-8317.

* Mail the change information to the DSO, ATTN: COA, 400 Giguip Road, Seaside, CA, 93955-6771. Other aspects of the DEERS record may be updated by sending appropriate documentation (such as marriage or death certificates) by mail or fax, or by visiting the nearest military I.D. card facility.

For additional questions regarding your DEERS record, call the DSO telephone center at (800) 538-9552. The hours of operation are 6 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. (Pacific Time) Monday - Friday (excluding federal holidays).

Golf tournament scheduled to benefit Portland-area charity

Mark your calendars for the 2002 “Wings of Angels” 5th annual golf tournament and charity event on Aug. 30, at the Gresham Golf Course, in Gresham, Ore.

The event is open to all Department of Defense employees (state, federal and retired), family members and guests.

Proceeds go to the Dougby Center, an organization in Portland that helps children cope with the traumatic loss of parents and siblings.

The tournament format is a four-person scramble—you pick your foursome; you pick your team with a blind draw.

The price is $65 a person, which includes golf, cart, banquet, prizes and more.

The deadline for registration is Aug. 1, 2003.

For more information contact Senior Master Sgt. Debbie Cimmer at (503) 335-3030 or Lt. Col. Bill Nielsen, (503) 335-4197.

Retiree office looking for new orientation course instructors

The retiree office is attempting to identify former Oregon National Guard members who would be interested in serving as instructors for a recently-developed new employee orientation course.

Work is part-time, and a wide variety of subjects are taught during the course.

If you are interested, contact RSO@or.ngb.army.mil or call (503) 584-3804 or toll-free 1 (800) 542-7500 ext. 3804.

Highlighted FAQs regarding Tricare-for-Life benefits

Q. Do I need a beneficiary card to receive health benefits under Tricare For Life?

A. No. A Tricare For Life beneficiary card is not necessary. However, if you do not request and enrollment is not required. When you receive care from a civilian provider, your provider will usually file claims with Medicare. Medicare will pay its portion, then automatically forward the claim to Tricare for the remaining amount of its payment.

Q. Do I need a beneficiary card to receive care under Tricare? Tricare will send its payment to your provider.

You will receive an explanation of benefits (EOB) that indicates the amount paid to your provider.

To be eligible for the expanded Tricare coverage, uniformed services retirees, eligible surviving spouses, and survivors, need to be registered in the Defense Enrollment Eligibility Reporting System (DEERS). They also must be eligible for Medicare Part A, and purchased Medicare B.

Q. Is my ID card still OK even though it says “No civilian medical care after age 65”? 

A. Yes. If you become Medicare eligible while your present ID card is valid, it is not necessary to have a new card issued as long as your DEERS information is current. The best way to verify Tricare eligibility in DEERS and to obtain a current ID card is to go to an ID card issuing facility. Its personnel can provide information about the documentation that is necessary, its address and hours of operation. If it is not possible for a beneficiary to go to an ID card facility, he or she can contact DEERS at 1 (800) 538-9552 for guidance.

Information about the nearest ID card facility can be found on the web site at www.dmdc.osd.mil/owa or by calling Tricare’s toll-free number, (888) DOD-LIFE (888-363-5433). More frequently asked questions about Tricare For Life are available online at www.tricare.osd.mil/dfaasfaq.cfm.
In an incident that some regard as the first naval engagement of the American Revolution, colonists board the Gaspee, a British vessel that ran aground off the coast of Rhode Island, and seized control of the ship. After landing away its crew, the Americans set the Gaspee afire.

The War of 1812

The War of 1812 began on June 18, 1812. The United States declared war on Great Britain in response to a series of British violations of American shipping rights. The war ended on December 24, 1815, with the signing of the Treaty of Ghent.

The Civil War

The Civil War began on April 12, 1861, when Confederate forces fired on Fort Sumter in South Carolina. The war ended on April 9, 1865, with the surrender of Confederate forces at Appomattox Court House.

The Vietnam War

The Vietnam War began on December 20, 1964, with the first US military action in Vietnam. The war ended on April 30, 1975, with the fall of Saigon and the end of the Republic of South Vietnam.

The Korean War

The Korean War began on June 25, 1950, when North Korean forces invaded South Korea. The war ended on July 27, 1953, with the signing of the Korean Armistice Agreement.

The Revolutionary War

The Revolutionary War began on April 19, 1775, with the Battles of Lexington and Concord. The war ended on September 3, 1783, with the signing of the Treaty of Paris.

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Sgt. James Torurnay guides an injured climber from the side of Mount Hood to the interior of a Blackhawk during a rescue effort in May. Members of the 1042nd Medical Company, pilot Chief Warrant Officer 4 Mike Cataldo, co-pilot Chief Warrant Officer 4 Al Jung, crew chief Tournay, and flight medics Staff Sgt. Frayne Fowler and Sgt. Patrick Casha, rescued three of the four critically-injured climbers.

Paltridge receives national meritorious service award

On May 22, 2002, at the Omni Shoreham Hotel in Washington, DC, Capt. Lori Paltridge was awarded the Federal Asian/Pacific American Council's (FAPAC) Military Meritorious Service Award. Paltridge has served as the state equal employment manager for the Oregon National Guard since January 1999. She is responsible for the affirmative employment program, diversity program, special emphasis program, discrimination complaints program, equal employment opportunity training, and employee assistance program.

Established in 1985, the FAPAC promotes equal opportunity and cultural diversity for Asian/Pacific Americans within the federal and District of Columbia governments. FAPAC works to promote overall awareness of the impact of Asian/Pacific American cultures, contributions, work ethics, and behavior as related to government employment.

The awards ceremony recognized outstanding military service members who have made significant contributions to the advancement of Asian/Pacific Americans and the promotion of diversity and equal employment opportunity in the federal workforce and the Asian/Pacific American community. The criteria for the awards includes:

- Promoting an innovative and harmonious environment between the military and Asian/Pacific American community
- Assisting the workforce in overcoming discrimination and eliminating barriers that hinder equal opportunity for Asian/Pacific Americans and other minorities in the Armed Forces
- Promoting the tenets of civil and human rights, race relations, equal opportunity, affirmative action, human relations, and public service programs within the Armed Forces
- Allowing military members to participate in program activities that will benefit the career development of Asian/Pacific Americans in the Armed Forces
- Managing and promoting a diversified workforce within the military
- Serving Asian/Pacific Americans in the community and in the Armed Forces by reaching out and continuing education that set an example for others to follow
- Paltridge enlisted in the USAF in Portage, Wisc., in October 1988 to become an electronic warfare signal intelligence morse interceptor. She served four years on active duty at Camp Humphries, Korea, and Fort Meade, Md.
- She joined the National Guard in 1992 and received her commission in 1996.
- Since then, she has held positions of increasing responsibility in the Oregon Army National Guard.
- Previous assignments included serving as a morse code intercepter, a Russian linguist, and a tactical intelligence officer.
- Paltridge earned a bachelor’s degree in Russian and Russian studies from Cornell College, Mt. Vernon, Iowa, in 1988.
- She is also a graduate of the non-commissioned officer professional development school, Camp Jackson, Korea; the officer candidate school, Monmouth, Ore.; the officer basic course for quartermaster, Fort Lee, Va.; and the military intelligence transition course, Fort Huachuca, Ariz.
- Paltridge’s awards and decorations include the Army Achievement Medal and the National Defense Service Medal.