



VETS NEWS

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WWII VETERANS FIRST TO SEE THEIR TRIBUTE THE MEMORIAL WALL



PHOTO COURTESY OF MARK B. GIBSON

Oregon Veterans' Home resident and World War II veteran David D. Johnson, and OVH caretaker Christina Haigen, view the granite slabs that will make-up Oregon's WWII Memorial.

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

WWII MEMORIAL WALL STOPS AT VETERANS' HOME

By Mike Allegre

THE DALLES – A truck hauling 10 eight-foot slabs of polished black granite pulled off Interstate 84 and made its way up the winding steep drive that leads to Veterans Drive and eventually to a peek overlooking the entire Columbia Gorge. The destination was a place of honor and home to many World War II veterans – the Oregon Veterans' Home.

After being hauled across the country, the granite, which is part of the planned Oregon WWII Memorial to be built on the grounds of the state capitol, was on its way to Hillsboro to be engraved with the names of more than 3,700 military members from the state

who died while serving in Europe and the South Pacific during WWII.

“We were bringing the panels back to Oregon and it suddenly occurred to us that this might be the only opportunity for some people to see the wall,” said Bob Plame, a Marine veteran and project manager of the WWII Memorial Foundation, a non-profit organization charged with raising private funds to build the memorial.

Plame said Oregon is one of six states without a permanent memorial to honor WWII veterans and it is past time to remedy that situation. The foundation hopes to raise [\(SEE MEMORIAL WALL ON PAGE 4\)](#)

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Director's Message

Jim Willis, Oregon Department of Veterans' Affairs

AFTER 48 YEARS OF SERVICE

Having completed some 48 years of public service, I have decided to retire as the Director of the Oregon Department of Veterans' Affairs effective March 1, 2013. I make this decision secure in the knowledge that the veterans of Oregon are in good hands. My staff and others concerned with the welfare of our veterans and their families are well trained and dedicated to their mission.

I could spend this entire message identifying the many individuals who have assisted me in carrying out my duties, but in an attempt to avoid leaving anyone out, let me first thank my family who have stood by and supported me throughout my career in public service. I would also like to thank both Governors Kulongoski and Kitzhaber who gave me the opportunity to lead this great Department.

Next, let me thank the men and women of the Department of Veterans' Affairs for their support and professionalism in carrying out their individual duties. Also, I must say how proud I have been of those men and women who have served and are serving on the Governor's Advisory Committee to the Director of ODVA.

I must also thank those Veteran Service Officers in our counties and those who work for our National Service Organizations. Their work ensures that no veteran anywhere in Oregon is very far from an advocate to assist them with their needs.

Let me also recognize the support and leadership of my fellow Executive Branch Agency Heads for their partnership and support of our mission.

I would also like to recognize Oregon's Adjutant General and the men and women of Oregon's Army and Air National Guard for the partnership we have forged in serving our veterans.

The leadership and members of the Oregon Legislature along with Oregon's Congressional delegation must also be recognized for all that they have done in support of our veterans.

Oregon's National Service Organizations and Auxiliaries are led by dedicated individuals whose concern for their fellow veterans and families are at a standard equal to any of their counterparts anywhere in our nation.

While I am retiring from my current position, I will continue to be concerned for my fellow veterans as long as I am able to assist in serving them in the future.

I thank all of you for your support and wish each of you every success in the future.

With respect,

ONTARIO VETERAN APPOINTED TO VAAC



Michael A. Jones, Vietnam combat veteran from eastern Oregon, was appointed by Gov. Kitzhaber to the VAAC in December.

SALEM – Michael Jones, a Vietnam combat veteran from eastern Oregon, has been appointed to the Veterans' Affairs Advisory Committee by Gov. John Kitzhaber.

A former business owner and long-time community volunteer in Ontario, Jones is also a past-American Legion post commander and district commander who has served on the Legion's district executive committee and on the national Americanism Council.

Jones has also served on several boards in the Ontario and Malheur County area including the Ontario Police and Library Boards, Volunteer in Police Services, the county's emergency planning commission, and the county's veterans' memorial association.

"I'm very honored to have been selected to serve Oregon and especially eastern Oregon veterans and their families," Jones said. "I plan to bring common sense ideas and good information about how veterans view what's needed in our state and work together with Jim Willis and my fellow committee members to recommend improvements or changes."

Jones served in the U.S. Army from 1970-73, including two tours in Vietnam in 1970-71. Assigned to the 23rd Infantry Division (Americal), Cpl. Jones served on the front lines at forward observation posts locating enemy positions then calling-in air strikes or artillery barrages to halt their advance. He later served three years in the Oregon Army National Guard.

"The addition of Michael Jones to our advisory committee ensures that the interests of veterans in eastern Oregon will continue to be represented and considered when addressing the changing needs of veterans in this state," said Jim Willis, director of the Oregon Department of Veterans' Affairs (ODVA). "I'm pleased to welcome him to the committee."

The nine-member Committee was formed by statute in 1945. Playing an active role in the effective administration of the department, Committee members advise the department's director and actively engage in ensuring the agency is meeting its mission of service to veterans.

More information about the Advisory Committee, and ODVA services and programs can be found online at www.oregon.gov/ODVA.

VETS NEWS

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Vets News is a free publication printed every two months. Each issue contains current information impacting veterans in Oregon including Federal VA hot topics, and state, regional and local happenings. When credit is given to the source, Vets News articles may be reprinted.

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Reunions, events and story submissions are welcome, however, please note that all items are printed upon space availability. Input for the next issue must be received by **February 5**.

Up to the minute Oregon veteran news at www.oregondva.com

CHARITABLE CHECK-OFF SUPPORTS VETS HOME

As you prepare for the April 15 tax deadline, know that you have an opportunity to enhance the lives of those who reside at the Oregon Veterans' Home in The Dalles.

Through Oregon's Charitable Check-off campaign, individual taxpayers may donate all or a portion of their state tax refund to the Home.

To make a donation, go to the charitable check off portion of Form 40 on the 2012 Oregon tax form. Write-in Charity Code 12, for the Home, on lines 66 or 67 of the form, add the desired amount you want to donate to the Home, then complete, sign and date your return before filing it. The Oregon Department of Revenue will do the rest.

For more information about Charitable Check-off, call the department at 503-378-4988 and press 0, or visit: www.oregon.gov/ODVA/VETSHOME/Charitable_Check-off.shtml.

PDX, ALASKA AIR HONOR FALLEN SOLDIERS WITH IMPROVED PROTOCOL

PORTLAND – Transporting the remains of a fallen military member is a serious task with specific rules. It is one that airlines and airports have taken more serious in recent years, and that includes Alaska Airlines and the international airports in Portland (PDX) and Seattle (SeaTac).

Initially, Alaska Airline employees had noticed many violations of military protocol at SeaTac, mostly due to a lack of awareness and training. Brian Bowden, an Alaska Airlines' line aircraft technician said, "Mishandlings are embarrassing and unacceptable. Our goal is to show respect by ensuring the proper standards are followed as we seamlessly transfer the remains with honor and respect to the fallen and their family."

With that, 14 Alaska aircraft technicians developed a "Fallen Soldier" program, complete with a handbook that explains very specific protocols when handling the remains of deceased military members.

Changes in protocol began in 2011 at SeaTac. In 2012, PDX Customer Relations Manager Donna Prigmore received a special request from Senior Master Sgt. Linda Baugher, of the 142nd Fighter Wing in Portland, to examine the Fallen Soldier Program at SeaTac. This resulted in the adoption of a similar type program at PDX that is coordinated by the Port of Portland in close partnership with Alaska Airlines. It includes training, a guide book, a customized patriotic cart for transporting remains, and total support by all air carriers.

Following their training, Fallen Soldier volunteers know exactly how military remains are to be handled, to include loading the fallen military member in the aircraft cargo bay last so as to ensure the remains are unloaded first at the final destination. A private Transportation Security Administration screening is requested for the military escort. Volunteers will also help any airline requesting assistance.

Refurbished, carpeted baggage carts at SeaTac and PDX are used to transport caskets and are customized with a retractable American flag curtain and service branch plaques representing the Army, Navy, Air Force, Marines and Coast Guard. To



A newly refurbished, carpeted baggage cart is now used to transport the casket and remains of the fallen at Portland International Airport.

assist all air carriers in protocol training, Alaska technicians at SeaTac also built a mock casket so employees can train and simulate an arrival and departure in the hangar.

"These brave men and women sacrificed their lives for you and me," Bowden said. "Often, their families are traveling with their fallen loved one. It's the least we can do to respect and honor their service and memory."

Prigmore said the program, and its associated cart, represent one of many elements of PDX's Military Appreciation Program, which originally began in 2011. "Traveling service members also receive complimentary items and services such as meeting space and beverages in the conference center, baggage carts, luggage storage, and discounts of up to 20 percent off purchases offered by a vast

majority of PDX concessionaires for all with a valid military ID card," said Prigmore, an Oregon Air National Guard lieutenant colonel with more than 20 years of service in the U.S. Air Force.

Through early-December 2012, Alaska had completed 17 originations, transfers, and final destinations for the fallen. The program at both airports has reportedly improved camaraderie between all air carrier work groups, including cargo, customer service and ramp agents, and flight crews.

"It's a real honor and privilege to be part of a team that cares for and supports our fallen troops and their families like Alaska, SeaTac and PDX have," said Alaska Airline pilot Pat Carpenter, who has also been part of the project.

ODVA'S VAL CONLEY AND LINDA ADAMS RETIRE, SUCCESSORS NAMED



Val Conley

SALEM – The Oregon Department of Veterans' Affairs is one of the highest tenured agencies in state government. It's not abnormal for veterans to work with employees who know veteran issues inside and out and have been with the agency for more than 30 years.

However, during the final two months of 2012, several long-time employees decided to retire from service including the deputy director and the admissions and liaison officer at the Oregon Veterans' Home.

After more than 34 years of state service – all with the Oregon Department of Veterans' Affairs – Deputy Director Val Conley retired on December 7. A long-time advocate for woman veterans, she is the past-president of the National Association of State Women Veteran coordinators and a founding member of the bi-annual Oregon Women's Veterans Conference.

Conley, an Army veteran, began her career in the home loan office in January 1979 in Bend and Eugene. She transitioned to veteran service officer

in 1991 and was later promoted to manager of veteran service officers in Portland in 1996. She was named as the administrator of ODVA's veteran services division in 2004 and served there until she was appointed as ODVA's deputy director in April 2011.

With Conley's retirement, former Portland Claims Office Manager Edward Van Dyke was selected by ODVA Director Jim Willis to become the new deputy director. Van Dyke is a retired Oregon Army National Guard sergeant major with 22 years of military service and has been with ODVA for more than 11 years.

"Certainly, Val has left a wonderful legacy of dedicated work serving our veterans and she's helped increase awareness of many women veterans' issues. I'm grateful for the more than 30 years of professional and valuable service she's provided to Oregon's veterans," said Willis.

"Ed brings a professional military career background and service to veterans as a claims manager. He has keen leadership, management and organizational skills," he added. "I'm confident in his abilities and look forward to working with him."



Linda Adams

Following more than six years at the Oregon Veterans' Home (OVH) in The Dalles, Linda Adams retired in November. The daughter of a World War II D-Day veteran, Adams is a long-time Columbia Gorge resident and served as Hood River and Wasco County's veteran service officer for seven years before joining the OVH in 2006.

"I can't thank Linda enough for her hard work, loyalty and dedication to the residents at the Home and while serving our veterans in the field," Willis said. "She's done a terrific job. And I'm also pleased to welcome and have Dallas on our team as he serves our residents at the veteran's home."

Dallas Swafford, an Iraq combat veteran from Gresham, was selected as the new admissions and liaison officer. Swafford has eight years of military service and is currently assigned to Bravo Co., 141 Support Battalion, Oregon Army National Guard in Portland. Previously, he was employed by Oregon Employment Department in The Dalles. He and his wife have two young daughters.

\$1.2 million for construction and if fundraising during the next few months goes well, he said the memorial could be completed by Veterans Day 2013.

Once built, the memorial will pay tribute to the 152,000 troops from Oregon who served in WWII, the Oregon communities and civilians who supported the troops on the home front, and the ultimate sacrifice of those who did not return home.

Standing 33-feet high, the memorial will feature a five-sided granite obelisk. It is believed to be the only five-sided obelisk in the nation. The area will be paved with granite quarried, cut and polished in Pennsylvania and cover 75-by-75 feet of space in Wilson Park in Salem.

Fifteen honorary board members are supporting the foundation's efforts to build the state's memorial. They include Governors John Kitzhaber, Ted Kulongoski, Barbara Roberts, and Victor Atiyeh; Secretary of State Kate Brown; Senators Ron Wyden and Jeff Merkley; Congresswoman Suzanne Bonamici; Congressman Earl Blumenauer; Oregon Historical Society Executive Director Kerry Tymchuk; WWII Oregon Medal of Honor recipients Bob Maxwell and Arthur Jackson; former state representative and WWII veteran Bill Markham; and WWII veterans Gerry Frank and Art Sorenson.

"For many, like the men and women at the Oregon Veterans' Home, time is of the essence to build the memorial," said ODVA Director Jim Willis. Today there are approximately 32,000 WWII veterans remaining in Oregon.

To help honor the "Greatest Generation" by donating to the foundation, visit www.oregonwwiimemorial.com



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If you would like to make a donation in the name of a WWII veteran or civilian who contributed to the WWII War effort, please provide the following information. You will receive an official WWII Honoree Certificate with the name if the person indicated below:

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 -OR-
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 Relationship to Honoree (ie: Son, Daughter, Spouse, Friend) _____

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 For more information email info@oregonwwiimemorial.com or visit www.oregonwwiimemorial.com

HIRING OUR HEROES JOB FAIR DRAWS 500 VETERANS TO PORTLAND



A veteran discusses employment options with a potential employer during the Hiring Our Heroes job fair in Portland last November.

PORTLAND — With Oregon's unemployment rate just over 8 percent in late-2012, and the overall national figure falling below 8 percent, some veterans are still finding it difficult to get jobs. The number of veterans needing work remains much higher, which was evident in November as some 500 job seekers gathered at the Hiring Our Heroes (HOH) job fair in Portland.

The job seekers ranged from veterans in their 20s, who served in Iraq and Afghanistan, to Vietnam-era veterans nearing retirement age. Employers who participated in the job fair included companies representing diverse industries such as security companies, law-enforcement agencies, banks and high-tech companies.

The Institute for Veterans and Military Families at Syracuse University, using unpublished data from the Bureau of Labor Statistics, estimates the unemployment rate last November for veterans age 24 and younger is a staggering 28 percent and that the overall unemployment rate for veterans of the most recent Gulf Wars remains at about 10 percent nationally.

To combat these statistics, programs such as HOH, affiliated with the U.S. Chamber of Commerce (USCC), and the similarly named Defense Department's Hero 2 Hired, are being credited for helping to increase the pace of hiring. The U.S. Department of Labor (USDOL) and Oregon Employment Department also have been closely involved in the efforts.

Craig Snitker, a retired Army NCO, is an employment transition coordinator for Hero 2 Hired. One of the keys to placing veterans in jobs, he said, is helping them prepare for interviews, specifically helping them understand how to describe their military skills in terms useful to private employers.

"That translation is probably the biggest challenge we have with people applying," Snitker said.

Not until later in 2013 will event sponsors be able to track how many successful hires may have come from the event. Tonja Pardo from the U.S. Department of Labor, Veterans Employment and Training said the USCC and employment department unofficially tallied more than 620 people who had registered for the Portland job fair. She added that more than 1,700 resumes were accepted, approximately 470 interviews were conducted and 40 provisional job offers were made.

"Employers estimate that more than 530 hires may come from these interviews within the next year, according to a survey taken during the event," Pardo said. "The Hiring Our Heroes committee also noted the very high caliber group of job seekers who attended. They were professional, dressed for success and were ready to go to work. These job seekers knew employers were seeking candidates because of their prior military service as well as honoring their sacrifices they've made to this country."

Employers can help veterans who are looking for jobs to better connect by knowing why a particular job may appeal to a veteran, said Jim Booker, Oregon Employment Department.

"They could use the company's mission to relate to a veteran's sense of mission or do some research and show how the job would match well to a particular military job skill. I'm seeing many veterans who don't know where to start looking for work and employers who have jobs and are even looking for veterans, but don't get any takers," Booker said.

In March, another HOH job fair will be held in Salem. Veterans, National Guard and reservists can find more information about the event and register online at www.hoh.greatjob.net.

NEXT JOB FAIR

SALEM

Hiring Our Heroes

March
14

Salem
Conference
Center

Register online
www.hoh.greatjob.net

Questions? Tonja Pardo @ 503-947-1490

GUARD, RESERVE VETS DENIED VA CLAIMS 4 TIMES MORE THAN AD

Compiled from an Army Times news report

National Guard and reserve members who deployed to Iraq and Afghanistan are having a harder time than other veterans getting disability compensation claims approved by the Veterans Affairs Department.

According to a report in Army Times, new data obtained under the Freedom of Information Act by Veterans for Common Sense (VCS) shows the denial rate for claims filed by reserve component combat veterans is four times higher than for post-9/11 combat veterans who were active-duty members.

On the positive side, the statistical reports show a 97 percent approval rate for Iraq and Afghanistan claims. Yet, the difference between active and reserve claims could be a sign that the system isn't being fair to reserve component members, who make up 40 percent of this new generation of veterans, said Paul Sullivan, the former executive director of VCS who identified the problem while he was still with the nonprofit veterans group.

"We don't know why this has happened," Sullivan said. "We do know this is not a new problem. In 2008, the denial rate for Guard and reserve disability claims was twice as high as for other Iraq and Afghanistan veterans, so the difference has grown."

Guard and reserve members who served in Iraq or Afghanistan and have filed benefits claims are, on average, about four years older than their counterparts who served on active duty, which could be a reason for more wear and tear on the body. However, while they are older, Guard and reserve members who have filed claims have served less time, on average, which could make it harder to prove a disability was service connected.

The average length of service of Guard and reserve members is 3.8 years, compared with an average of 9.3 years for veterans of active service. There are 1.6 million post-9/11 combat veterans. About 566,000 are receiving disability benefits; 53,000 have been identified with service-connected conditions that merit disability ratings too low to qualify for compensation. Another 15,640 claims were denied, according to the VA records.

While Guard and reserve members make up 40 percent of post-9/11 combat veterans, they have accounted for 60 percent of the claim denials. Among the almost 900,000 pending disability claims, those from post-9/11 combat veterans make up 186,000 of the backlog, a number that is likely to rise.



Oregon Army National Guard soldiers stand over a cache of anti-aircraft flak shells they located south of Baghdad, Iraq. This is one of several cache's found by soldiers from both Charlie Company, 2-162 Infantry, 41st Infantry Brigade and Alpha Company, 2-162, 39th Brigade Combat Team. Since September 2001, more than 30,000 Oregon Guard members have been deployed in support of Operations Iraqi Freedom and Enduring Freedom.

Sullivan said post-Vietnam War claims from combat veterans did not peak until a decade after that war ended. "I really think we face a situation where we have 1 million new claims by 2013," he said. "We are getting about 10,000 new veteran patients at the VA and 9,000 new claims filed every month."

Tom Tarantino, chief policy officer for Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans of America said this is disturbing, and even worse, we do not know why. "Funky record keeping, filing claims without the help of a veterans' service officer who understands the process or structural problems in how claims are handled could all contribute to the discrepancy."

VA reports indicate the hearing disorder tinnitus is the most frequently claimed disability for Iraq and Afghanistan veterans, claimed by about 40 percent of post-9/11 combat veterans who were awarded service-connected disabilities. Spinal or cervical injuries or strains account for 24 percent of the

awards, while post-traumatic stress disorder appears in 22.5 percent.

Details about specific disabilities are not broken down by active or reserve status, making comparisons by conditions impossible, Sullivan said.

Florida Rep. Jeff Miller, chairman of the House Veterans' Affairs Committee, said this situation is a sign of miscommunication between the VA and Defense Department. "Both need to treat veterans of the National Guard and Reserve as they would any member of the armed forces, and this includes providing timely benefits for their service," Miller said.

"Once again, this underlines the need for a single electronic medical health record, shared by both departments, as well as better communication between National Guard and reserve components with VA to ensure those who served in either have access to their records."

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STUDY: GULF WAR ILLNESS “NOT ALL IN THEIR HEADS”

Compiled from a USA Today news report

WASHINGTON — For years Gulf War veterans have been told the symptoms they were suffering were all in their heads. Yet many researchers say that isn't true. Gulf War illness is as real as the symptoms and a study released in the Archives of Neurology on Nov. 26, shows the symptoms are due to damage to the autonomic nervous system.

The study's lead author, Robert Haley, chief of epidemiology at the University of Texas Southwestern Medical Center in Dallas said, “This is the linchpin because the disease itself is so difficult to express and to understand.”

Gulf War illness presents a series of symptoms ranging from headaches to memory loss to chronic fatigue. It plagues one of four veterans of the 1991 Persian Gulf war. Haley said veterans described simply that they “don't feel well” or “can't function,” without being able to further explain a disease that affects the automatic functions of their bodies, such as heat regulation, sleep or even their heartbeats.

There is no known treatment for Gulf War illness, Haley said, but a diagnosis can lead to clinical trials and a possible solution. The disease affects up to 250,000 veterans, according to the Institute of Medicine. Researchers have spent 15 years researching a hypothesis, and then “we planned the ultimate study that proved that hypothesis,” Haley said.

Over seven days, Steven Vernino, the chief of the neuromuscular division at Southwestern, and Haley

sent 97 veterans through 25 tests, including brain imaging. The group had been drawn from a sample of 8,000 Gulf War veterans.

Paul Sullivan of Veterans for Common Sense, and a Gulf War veteran, said, “This finding is important because for the first time physicians who care for Gulf War veterans now have a medical explanation for many of the unusual symptoms.”

The team conducted several studies, and then built a theory based on the results of that work. Veterans suffering from Gulf War illness tend to fall in three categories: Syndrome 1, cognitive and depression problems; Syndrome 2, confusion ataxia, which is similar to early Alzheimer's disease; Syndrome 3, severe chronic body pain.

Haley said studies released in December 2012 will include theories as to what causes the syndromes.

“This is the most important study of all,” Haley said. “Veterans want to know what's wrong with them. Now, for the first time, all the doctors in the country can say, ‘Maybe these are autonomic symptoms.’ If you're not thinking autonomic, the symptoms can sound kind of flaky.”

Sullivan said knowing the medical basis for a disease focuses the search for specific treatments and makes it possible to test them in clinical trials. He hopes the study will encourage Congress to devote more money for Gulf War illness research.

“If VA continues to be reluctant to fund research,



A U.S. Marine patrol walked across the charred landscape near a burning oil well during perimeter patrol near Kuwait City at the end of the Persian Gulf War.

then Congress should hold hearings that prompt VA to do the right thing for our veterans.”

The doctors had funding from Congress until 2010, when they were dropped by the Department of Veterans Affairs after being accused of wasting millions of dollars in research money. That came directly after a 2009 study from Haley showing that neurotoxins such as anti-nerve agent pills, insect repellent and the nerve agent sarin caused neurological changes to the brain, and that the changes seem to correlate with different symptoms.

After they lost funding, Haley and the other researchers continued their work on their own time.

VET DISTILLS NEW PRODUCT, BOURBON WHISKEY TOASTS FALLEN



Above: The 4 Spirits Distillery's newest product, Bourbon Whiskey, is dedicated to the memories of four fallen Oregon soldiers who owner Dawson Officer served with in Iraq; First Lt. Erik McCrae, Sgt. Justin Linden, Sgt. Justin Eyerly and Sgt. David Roustum.

Left: The 4 Spirits Distillery's newest product, Bourbon Whiskey, flanked by the distiller's first two releases- Slaptail and Webfoot vodkas.

More than a year ago, Vets News ran a story about former Oregon Army National Guard soldier Dawson Officer who had recently started 4 Spirits Distillery, a micro-distillery located in Adair Village, near Corvallis.

With the blessing of members of Oregon's 2-162 Infantry Regiment, the unit he deployed with to Iraq, Officer dedicated the distillery to the memories of four men he served with in Delta Company who were killed in action in 2004 by naming his business in their honor.

First Lt. Erik McCrae, Sgt. Justin Linden, Sgt. Justin Eyerly and Sgt. David Roustum lost their lives while serving in Baghdad, Iraq. “We were combat soldiers at that time and fought side by side,” Officer said.

“There isn't a day that goes by that I don't see their faces and think about their loss, and the events before and after their service to this country.”

Even as Officer released his first products, two college-themed vodkas, Slaptail and Webfoot, the self-proclaimed “whiskey drinker by nature” was busy at work developing his next product.

The first batches of 4 Spirits Bourbon Whiskey, released last September, used 17 barrels of bourbon from Indiana. Officer experimented with different ways of filtering to “coax the ideal combination of drinkability and bold taste from the barrel-aged whiskey and find the right balance of flavor and smoothness.”

The mission behind the bottle design and the new bourbon was to follow his inspiration. “We created a dedication bottle and new product for the four spirits, the four guys from the 2-162,” he said.

Officer said at least 10 percent of his profits will be donated to the veterans' reintegration program in Oregon.

HOMELESS VETS HOUSING BEING BUILT IN ROSEBURG



PHOTO COURTESY NEIGHBORWORKS, UMPQUA

When completed in 2013, the Eagle Landing Homeless Housing project in Roseburg will include in 11 buildings with 54 units available for homeless veterans and veterans who are at risk of homelessness.

ROSEBURG — After two-and-a-half years of planning, construction for the Eagle Landing Homeless Housing project is now under way. The project broke ground in October and will become one of first of its kind in the U.S., providing housing for homeless veterans and veterans who are at risk of homelessness.

The U.S. Department of Veteran's Affairs (VA) has committed to ending veteran homelessness by the year 2015 and through a partnership of NeighborWorks Umpqua, the VA, and United Community Action Network, the Eagle Landing project will help bring the VA closer to that goal.

"We really appreciate all of those that have helped in funding, helped in putting together our proposal, and our contractors," says Karan Reed

of NeighborWorks Umpqua. "That's something. This is going to provide a lot of jobs in the next year, in our community."

In a report by The Daily Journal of Commerce, "nearly half" of Oregon's homeless vets are found in southern Oregon.

"A lot of veterans come here for outpatient services," NeighborWorks Umpqua executive director Betty Tamm told The Daily Journal of Commerce. "They hang out somewhere – under the bridges or in the forest – so they can get to their service."

The apartments in 11 buildings will include 54 units available for veterans, 44 singles, and 10 two- to three-bedroom apartments for families and be located just past the south entrance to the VA Roseburg Campus. The VA has leased out about

five acres of land, at no cost, for the project. They also contributed \$1 million.

The project should be finished and ready for move-in by the end of 2013.

The Housing Authority of Douglas County plans to provide HUD rent subsidies which means eligible vets won't have to pay more than 30 percent of their limited incomes on rent. When completed, Tamm said, Eagle Landing will give homeless veterans "stable housing and provide services to help them reintegrate into society."

Other donors for the \$12 million project include Oregon Housing and Community Services, Enterprise Community Partners, Wells Fargo Bank, the Meyer Memorial Trust Fund, the Collins Foundation, Rural LISC, HUD's HOME program and NeighborWorks America.

FREE TAX PREPERATION

Low to moderate income Oregonians will be able to have their income tax returns prepared free by trained volunteers statewide. CASH Oregon, a non-profit group in partnership with AARP Tax-Aide, supports free tax preparation and tax credit outreach in 32 counties in Oregon at more than 140 tax sites.

Ron Justus of CASH Oregon said in 2012, they saw 55,323 tax returns filed statewide.

"There were tax returns filed electronically, amended returns, prior tax year returns done, tens of thousands of state returns filed and good old paper returns completed for working Oregonians. We also saw another 6,476 people with questions and answers directed to the appropriate help," he said.

Many people who earn very little may be eligible for a refund. Tax credits that many could qualify for are the Federal and Oregon Earned Income Tax Credit, the Federal Child Tax Credit, and the Oregon Working Family Child Care Credit. Trained volunteers will help taxpayers sort through their questions and provide assistance.

Free tax preparation sites are available statewide. For more information or to find a location nearest you, dial 211, or visit www.cashoregon.org.

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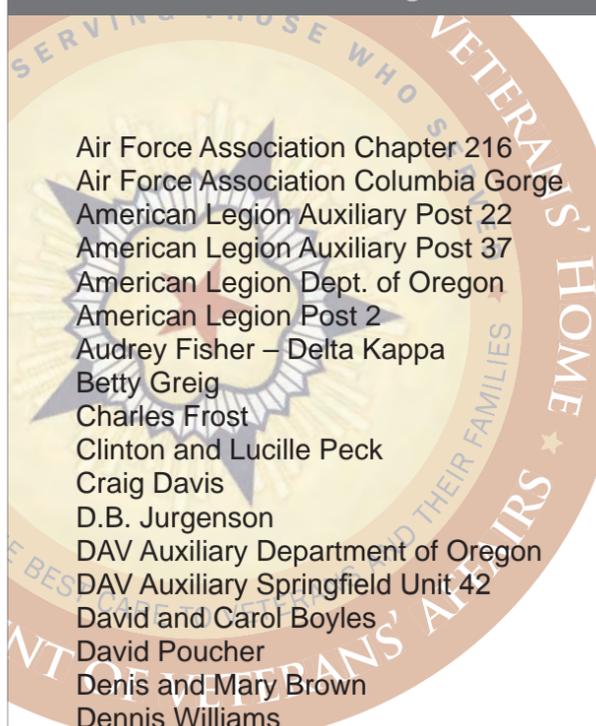


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The generosity of the ever-growing number of Friends of the Home continue to provide life-enriching experiences to the veterans and their family who call the Veterans' Home - home.

Not only does the Home accept monetary donations, but gifts such as magazine subscriptions, books, blankets, and personal items. If you are interested in donating your time as a volunteer, please contact the Home at 541-296-7152.

Contributions to the Oregon Veterans' Home during the months of Oct/Nov/Dec 2012



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OREGON VET PLATE BENEFITS VETERANS HOME

SALEM – Nearly five years after Oregon veterans were offered a distinct vehicle license plate to display their military service, its popularity has placed it in the top two group plates issued by the state's Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) since its release in January 2008.

This is great news for the Oregon Veterans Home. More than \$8 from the sale of each new plate registration and renewal benefits residents of the Home and helps funds activities such as field trips, magazine subscriptions and special events.

The number of white veteran plates issued has increased by nearly 205 percent over the original veteran plate design, according to the Department of Motor Vehicles.

Between January and November 2012, Debi Mercer at DMV said 2,575 veteran plates were issued and the monthly average of new veteran plates issued compared to the old design has increased to 234 from 69.

“These new plates are much more popular with veterans than the original plates with the green tree background. It's obvious Oregon veterans want to display their branch of service or service related medal and support the Veterans' Home.” Mercer said.

In 2012, the average monthly revenue generated for the Home from veteran plate sales was \$5,412.

For more information on obtaining an Oregon veterans vehicle license plate, or to donate directly to the Veterans' Home, visit ODVA's website, www.oregon.gov/ODVA/Pages/index.aspx.



Get your ODL with your veteran status today.

Visit your local DMV for details.

VETERAN COURTS EFFECTIVE: STRESS REHABILITATION OVER JAIL TIME

Contributed by Tom Mann

With thousands of combat veterans returning home from the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, communities across America began recognizing a disturbing and unforeseen trend. Veterans across the nation were ending up in jail after their combat deployments in higher numbers than their demographic should expect.

As the terms Posttraumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) and Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI) have become household terms during these wars, there is strong belief among veteran advocates and law enforcement that these two conditions also can be mitigating factors in crimes being committed by returning veterans.

The city of Buffalo, NY was the first jurisdiction to take action in 2008. Seeing its returning veterans struggling with reintegration and ending up in the courts, Buffalo instituted the nation's first so-called "veteran's court." Modeled on the existing drug court model, veteran's courts offered certain veteran offenders an opportunity to obtain help for their combat-related conditions if the court and its partner providers believe these conditions contributed in some way to the veteran's actions.

The theory is it is better to provide treatment rather than jail so these combat veterans can have an opportunity to reintegrate in appropriate ways.

Every jurisdiction in the nation was watching Buffalo to see if its model would be successful. It did not take long for Buffalo to prove itself – veterans were receiving help for their conditions and making spectacular progress; the repeated relapse rate for states with veteran's courts is 1 percent, according to New York State Supreme Court Justice Seamus P. McCaffery. He says simply, "It works." And not just for returning veterans, but for veterans of many eras, including Vietnam veterans who never received the help they needed when they returned home.

Oregon is one of 10 states to follow New York's lead. Veteran's courts have been established in Klamath, Lane, Marion and Multnomah counties, and others are looking to do the same. Allowing veterans to obtain the treatment they need to address their combat-related conditions has not only helped veterans get back on the right track, but has saved the counties money by not having to house these



Judge Robert Russell Jr. (r.) congratulates a veteran who successfully completed his program at the Buffalo (N.Y.) Veterans Treatment Court. Modeled after local drug or family courts, veterans courts stress rehabilitation and mentoring over jail time.

veterans in their local jails.

Those involved in veteran's courts are quick to point out that this program is not a "Get out of jail free" card. Like the drug courts, veterans who are appropriate for the program must agree to abide by the rules and directions of the program, which can include mental health treatment, drug and alcohol treatment, in-patient rehabilitation and other conditions.

Should a veteran not meet a condition or directive, they are put back in jail and potentially disallowed from the program, meaning they would serve out the remainder of their sentence.

There are many players participating in the veteran's courts. Some of the key people include the judge, the district attorney (DA), the defense attorney, the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs Justice Outreach Coordinator, the County Veteran Service Officer, the National Guard Reintegration Team, and local providers, such as county mental health, non-profit provider organizations and victim's rights groups. Together, the participants work to develop a plan for the veteran that provides both treatment and a clear path toward reintegrating

the veteran back into society in a way that is safe for both the veteran and the community.

Not every veteran is appropriate for the program. Under Oregon law, Measure 11 crimes disqualify a veteran for the program, and the DA has the authority to determine a case inappropriate for veteran's court. There is a healthy dialogue between the judge, the DA, the defense attorney, and advocacy groups to ensure the public interest is served.

However, because veterans in the program can obtain treatment through federal VA health care programs, many times it actually is less expensive and more productive for the county to send a veteran through the program, because the costs are being borne by the federal government not the county.

As the military downsizes by as many as 1.5 million service members during the next five years, Oregon can expect to see as many as 30,000 veterans return home, many of them combat veterans. With the success of the existing veteran's courts and the interest of many counties to establish their own courts, the model has become one more tool to help veterans successfully reintegrate into their communities.

UPGRADING MILITARY DISCHARGES

Veteran service offices often receive inquiries from veterans about how to upgrade their military discharge. Although these offices may be able to find mitigating circumstances that allows veterans to receive a service-connected disability rating despite a dishonorable or general discharge, the process of upgrading a discharge is handled through the individual branch of service.

Any person who has been discharged may apply for an upgrade through the appropriate Discharge Review Board (DRB), authorized by law through the secretary of each branch of service.

These boards can consider a discharge or dismissal of any service member except those by sentence of a general court-martial. The Army, Air Force, and Coast Guard have separate boards, while the Navy operates the board for both Navy personnel and members of the Marine Corps.

Under governing military law, service members must apply for discharge upgrade within 15 years of discharge. If the discharge is older than 15 years, an

application for a change to military records must be sought through the same review board.

The application process is simple as using a DD Form 293, Application for the Review of Discharge or Dismissal from the Armed Forces of the United States. This form is available online, at most DoD installations, regional offices of the VA and through veteran service offices.

In addition to submitting a DD Form 293, a veteran should supply copies of records or statements that support the veteran's case. Signed statements from the veteran and other witnesses who have direct knowledge or involvement are considered appropriate evidence.

Advice and guidance are available through many sources including veteran service offices. To download a DD Form 293, get the address of where to send completed applications, or to learn more, visit www.realwarriors.net/veterans/discharge/upgrade.php.

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EDUCATIONAL AID PROGRAM
OREGON DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS' AFFAIRS

MILITARY CONVENTIONS, REUNIONS AND EVENTS

Central Oregon Women Vets Meet in Redmond

This first gathering is, Jan. 12, at AK's Tea Room, 525 SW 6th St., 2 p.m. Theme: "Owning our service without having to defend it." Keynote speaker: Iraq veteran, Kelly Garcia. Door and raffle prizes, too. RSVP is required as space is limited. Cost: \$9.

Contact: Judith Burger-Myers, 541-977-3550

★ **Hiring Our Heroes Job Fair in Salem** The fair is March 14, 9 a.m. to 1 p.m., at the Salem Conference Center, 200 Commercial St. S.E. Veterans, National Guard and reservists can find more information about the job fair and register online at www.hoh.greatjob.net.

Contact: Tonja Pardo, 503-947-1490

15th Medical Battalion, 1st Air Cav The association will hold its 16th reunion in Old Sacramento, CA, April 17-20, at the Holiday Inn. All years served, including all Companies and Medevac Platoon.

Contact: James Calibro, 209-573-0701 or www.15thmedassociation.com

1st Battalion, 50th Infantry Reunion This Association will hold their reunion April 30-May 3, at Fort Benning, GA. Register for the Association Convention separately. Hotel reservations: Hampton Inn & Suites, Phenix City, AL. Reserve by April 5: 866-799-3642.

Information: www.ichiban1.org/html/reunion.htm

Screaming Eagles - 101st Airborne Division Assoc. 71st Reunion The annual reunion is Aug. 14-17, at Red Lion Hotel, 909 N. Hayden Island Drive, Portland.

Contact: Jerry Gomes, Oregon Cascade Chapter, 503-668-6127, www.ScreamingEagle.org

Underage Military Veterans Service Monthly meeting on the first Friday, 10:30 a.m., at Farm House Restaurant, 3612 SE 82nd, Portland.

Contact: Willie Paradise, 503-665-1739

Vietnam 25th Infantry Div., 1st Air CAV Vets All veterans are invited to meet monthly for lunch and conversation on the second Tuesday at Superking Buffet, 5105 SE 82nd Ave., Portland.

Contact: Gary Hartt, 503-632-6955

US Merchant Marine-Navy Armed Guard Meet Oregon's AMMV meets on the third Monday of each month, 11:30 a.m., at the Beaverton Izzy's Pizza, 11900 SW Broadway.

Contact: Bob Roberts, 503-663-7876

10th Mountain Division Group Newcomers, WWII comrades and descendants meet monthly on the last Wed. Lunch: 12 p.m., Eastmoreland Golf Course Club House, 2425 SE Bybee Blvd., Portland. Discussions include maintenance planning, improvements and planting for the 10th Mountain Memorial Grove.

Contact: Jim Bray, 503-913-7058

Submit Event and Reunion information:

Online form: www.oregon.gov/odva/info/events
Email: vetsnews@odva.state.or.us



Sherman County World War II veterans (l-r) Dewey Thomas, Peter McNab, Charles Decker and Donald Thompson stand in front of one the last two signs placed along the World War II Historic Highway near Biggs Junction, Nov. 9.

WWII VETERANS HIGHWAY SIGNS INSTALLED AT CAMP RUFUS

It was at the gateway of the World War II Veterans Historic Highway in the Columbia Gorge that the last two signs honoring Oregon veterans were installed Nov. 9, south of Biggs Junction on US Highway 97. The signs mark Camp Rufus as the northern entry to this historic route.

It is the first highway in the nation to be dedicated to express appreciation to veterans and inform the traveling public about the World War II training sites served by two major highways east of the Cascades: US 97, from the Columbia River to the Oregon/

California border, and State Highway 126 from Redmond east to Prineville.

A total of 18 signs have been placed along this 325 mile stretch of highway. They mark the eight vital training sites represented along the historic highway where different branches of the military trained. The sites include Camp Rufus (sign at Biggs), Madras Army Airfield, Redmond Army Airfield, Civilian Pilot Training at Bend and Prineville, Camp Abbot at Sunriver, and Marine Barracks and Naval Air Station at Klamath Falls.

VA HEALTH CARE COUNTS AS INSURANCE

Veterans who are enrolled in VA's health care system will not face fines when the Affordable Care Act (ACA) goes into effect in 2014, according to the Veterans Health Administration.

Their enrollment counts as health insurance under provisions in the ACA. This is largely thanks to the VFW efforts, which resulted in having VA health care recognized as meeting minimum health insurance standards.

Currently the VA says about 8.6 million vets are enrolled in its health care system and another 6.6 million are eligible to enroll.

FREE VETERAN LEGAL ASSISTANCE

The Veterans' Project, offered through the Metropolitan Public Defender's Office, is offering free legal assistance to veterans. Veterans in need of legal assistance regarding civil litigation matters, criminal consultation, employment discrimination, housing discrimination, expungement and social security help are encouraged to contact their office for assistance.

Call 503-225-9100 for more information.



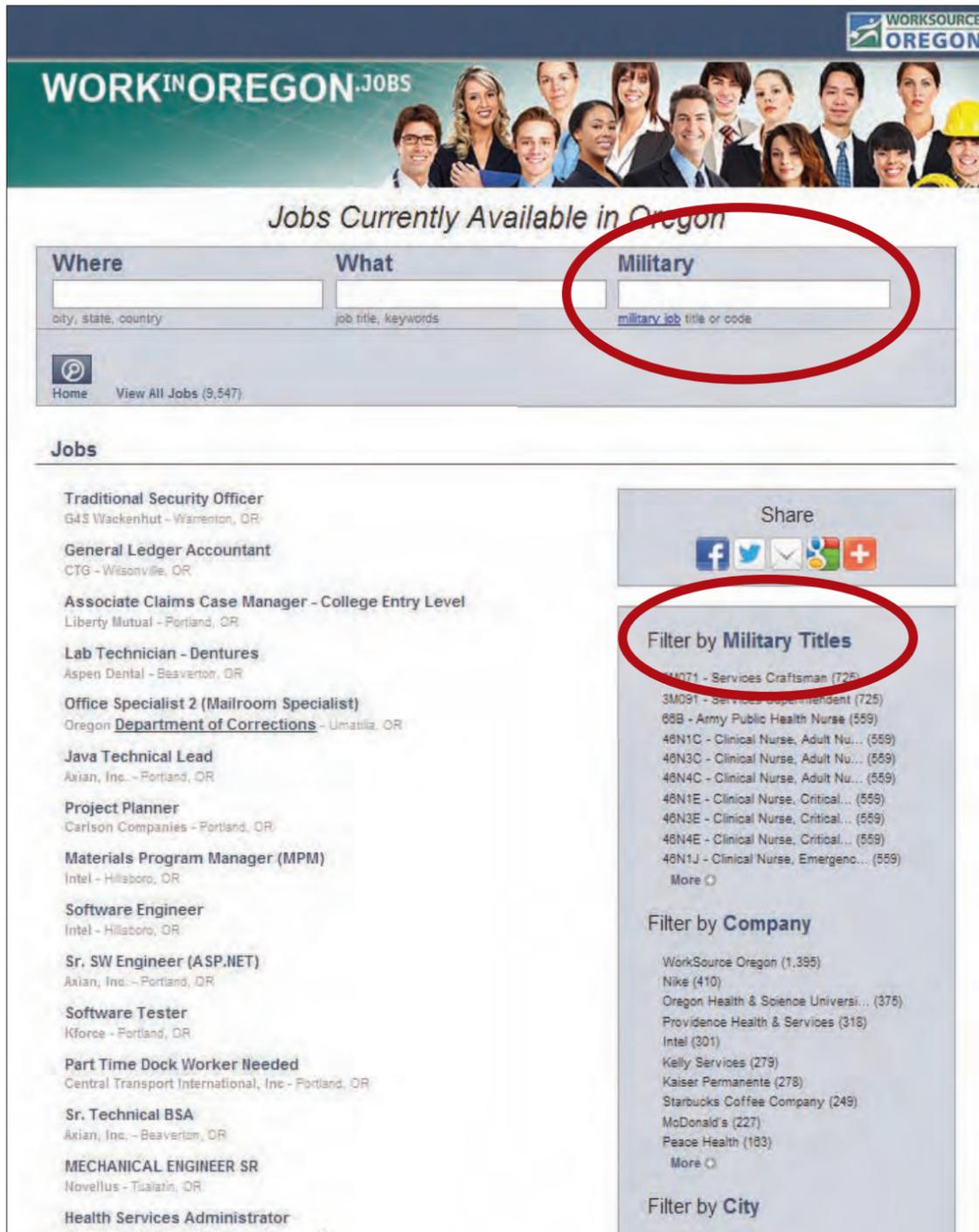
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STATEWIDE JOB BANK FOCUSED ON EMPLOYING VETERANS



www.WorkInOregon-Veterans.jobs

SALEM – WorkSource Oregon’s statewide job bank now allows military veterans the opportunity to search job openings in Oregon by their military job title or code using a new expanded website.

This site only lists available jobs from employers verified by WorkSource Oregon which means each job listing on the site is a valid job opening. Jobs can also be searched by city, employer name and key word.

Job seekers do not have to be registered with WorkSource Oregon in order to take advantage of these new tools.

The website is available on smartphones and other mobile devices and feature social media links, allowing users to quickly share job postings via Facebook, Twitter, email and more.

WorkSource Oregon assists job seekers in finding employment through 47 WorkSource Oregon Centers statewide. The staff in the these centers provide help with resume writing, job search workshops, training opportunities, job search assistance and other services.

There are many sites that assist veterans find employment, but this site is the first for jobs specific to employment in Oregon.

For more information, contact the WorkSource Oregon Center in your area. A list of centers can be found at WorkSourceOregon.org.

WorkSource Oregon's new website allows military veterans to search job openings in Oregon by their military job title or code. Job seekers do not have to be registered with WorkSource Oregon in order to take advantage of the new site.



VETERANS' SERVICE OFFICES

County Service Organization Service Offices

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| Baker | 541-523-8223 | Jane Chandler |
| Benton | 541-758-1595 | Don Johnson |
| Clackamas | 503-650-5631 | Janice Harlan-Raisl |
| Clatsop | 503-440-8310 | Philip Simmons |
| Columbia | 503-366-6580 | Grace Clark |
| Coos | 541-396-3121, Ext. 362 | Kay Ducheneaux |
| Crook..... | 541-447-5304 | Angela Gilley |
| Curry | 866-298-0404 | Kimberly O'Neal |
| Deschutes | 541-385-3214 | Keith Macnamara |
| Douglas | 541-440-4219 | Mary Newman |
| Gilliam | 541-384-6712 | Bryan Hunt |
| Grant | 541-575-1631 | Bob Muenchausen |
| Harney..... | 541-573-1342 | Guy McKay |
| Hood River | 541-386-1080 | Les Logsdon |
| Jackson | 541-774-8214 | Bob Carson |
| Jefferson | 541-475-5228 | Tom Weiss |
| Josephine..... | 541-474-5454 | Lisa Shipley |
| Klamath | 541-883-4274 | Kathy Pierce |
| Lake | 541-947-6043 | Charles Pike |
| Lane | 541-682-4191 | Joseph Reiley |
| Lincoln | 541-574-6955 | John Reed |
| Linn | 800-319-3882 | Kim Grooms |
| Malheur | 541-889-6649 | Connie Tanaka |
| Marion..... | 503-373-2085 | ODVA |
| Morrow | 541-922-6420 | Linda Skendzel |
| Multnomah | 503-988-3620, Ext. 25005 | Katie Pereaault |
| Polk | 503-373-2085 | ODVA |
| Sherman | 541-565-3408 | Bryan Hunt |
| Tillamook | 503-842-4358 | Bill Hatton |
| Umatilla | 541-278-5482 | Peggy Raines |
| Union | 541-962-8802 | Byron Whipple |
| Wallowa..... | 541-426-3155, Ext. 241 | Linda McIntyre |
| Wasco | 888-804-1817 | Russell Jones |
| Washington | 503-846-3060 | Eric Belt |
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National Service Organization Service Offices

| | |
|---|--------------|
| American Legion | 503-412-4771 |
| Disabled American Veterans | 503-412-4750 |
| Military Order of the Purple Heart..... | 503-412-4770 |
| Paralyzed Veterans of America..... | 503-412-4762 |
| Veterans of Foreign Wars..... | 503-412-4757 |

Oregon Department of Veterans' Affairs Service Offices

| | | |
|----------|---------------------------------|---|
| Salem | 503-373-2085 or 800-692-9666 | Patty Bolstad Dave Cooley Renee French Joe Glover Vicky Kaufman Leah Rickert Doug Yerke |
| Portland | 503-412-4777 | Deanna Erhardt Donna Hunt Linda McMillan Martin Ornelas |

Veterans' Affairs Advisory Committee

| | | |
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| Dennis G. Guthrie 4495 NE 25th St. Redmond, OR 97756 541-548-6990 | Michael Jones 110 4th St. Ontario, OR 97914 | Mary J. Mayer 2520 NE 58th Ave. Portland, OR 97213 310-897-1902 |
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Meetings of the Advisory Committee are public meetings held quarterly. For meeting dates and locations, please call 503-373-2383. Special needs will be met for those who have a disability.

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VETS NEWS

JANUARY / FEBRUARY 2013

Find current veteran news and information 24/7 online at oregon.gov/odva | oregondva.com | facebook.com/odvavet

WWII VETERANS FIRST TO SEE THEIR TRIBUTE THE MEMORIAL WALL



Oregon Veterans' Home resident and World War II veteran David D. Johnson, and OVH caretaker Christina Haigen, view the granite slabs that will make-up Oregon's WWII Memorial.

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WWII MEMORIAL WALL STOPS AT VETERANS' HOME

By Mike Allegre

THE DALLES – A truck hauling 10 eight-foot slabs of polished black granite pulled off Interstate 84 and made its way up the winding steep drive that leads to Veterans Drive and eventually to a peek overlooking the entire Columbia Gorge. The destination was a place of honor and home to many World War II veterans – the Oregon Veterans' Home.

After being hauled across the country, the granite, which is part of the planned Oregon WWII Memorial to be built on the grounds of the state capitol, was on its way to Hillsboro to be engraved with the names of more than 3,700 military members from the state

who died while serving in Europe and the South Pacific during WWII.

"We were bringing the panels back to Oregon and it suddenly occurred to us that this might be the only opportunity for some people to see the wall," said Bob Plame, a Marine veteran and project manager of the WWII Memorial Foundation, a non-profit organization charged with raising private funds to build the memorial.

Plame said Oregon is one of six states without a permanent memorial to honor WWII veterans and it is past time to remedy that situation. The foundation hopes to raise (SEE MEMORIAL WALL ON PAGE 4)