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City of Tigard pays tribute to the 41st Brigade, page 7

WINNER OF A 2007 KEITH L. WARE AWARD FOR ARMY PUBLICATIONS

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THE
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Summer 2007

Oregon Sentinel

OF THE
OREGON NATIONAL GUARD

Oregon Guard pilot remembered at memorial

Story by Staff Sgt. Jefferson Thompson
142nd Fighter Wing Public Affairs

ST. HELENS, Ore. — Members of the Oregon National Guard, friends and family came together at St. Helens High School in remembrance of Maj. Greg D. Young.



ORANG pilot, Maj. Greg "Grumpy" Young.

Young died during a routine training mission when his F-15 crashed into the ocean off the Oregon coast, June 26, 2007.

Young received full-military honors which included a missing-man formation. Four F-15's performed the fly-over, and as they passed over the gathering on the high

See **YOUNG** on **PAGE 5**



Photo by Peter Steendam, Skywarrior Magazine

HERITAGE FLIGHT

An F-86 Sabre flown by Mr. Steve Hinton, and a Kingsley Field F-15 Eagle flown by Capt. Tony "Baron" Bierenkoven from the F-15 West Coast Demonstration Team based in Eglin AFB, Fla., take part in an Air Combat Command Heritage Flight during the Sentry Eagle exercise at Kingsley Field in Klamath Falls, Ore., Aug. 11. The biennial event, hosted by the 173rd Fighter Wing features a week of dissimilar air combat training between units from the Air Force, Army, Marines, and Navy in simulated combat situations, Aug. 9-11. See full story on page 4.



Photo by Tech. Sgt. Nick Choy, Oregon National Guard Public Affairs

Oregon Governor Theodore R. Kulongoski signs House Bill 3201 into law July 31, 2007 at the State Capitol in Salem, Ore.

Governor signs bill benefiting Guard TRICARE, other issues addressed in new law

Story by Kim Lippert,
Oregon National Guard Public Affairs

SALEM, Ore. — Governor Theodore R. Kulongoski signed into law a series of bills benefiting Oregon National Guard soldiers and their families as the 2007 Oregon State Legislative Session came to a close on June 28, 2007. Since 2001, more than seven thousand Oregon National Guard soldiers and airmen have served in Iraq and Afghanistan, thrusting the needs of soldiers into the political spotlight.

"This was a great year, the best I've seen in twenty years of doing this" said Brig. Gen. Mike Caldwell.

The 2007 Legislative session had lawmakers focusing on a variety of issues ranging from improving access to health care for soldiers and their families, protecting the rights of parents in regard to choice of their children's care while they are on

See **LEGISLATION** on **PAGE 3**

Oregon Sherpa unit sees changes



Oregon's C-23 Sherpa aircraft arrived at their new facilities at the Portland Air National Guard Base in Portland, Aug 20.

Story and photo by Spc. April L. Davis,
Oregon National Guard Public Affairs

Changes are on the horizon for the Oregon Army National Guard's Alpha Company, 641 Aviation Regiment. The unit is preparing to deploy to Iraq, while simultaneously moving from Salem, Ore. to the Portland Air National Guard Base.

The company, formerly known as Alpha Company, 249 Aviation Regiment, is moving into facilities formerly occupied by the Army Reserve's 939th Air Refueling Wing at PANG-B. The purpose of the move is to prepare for the Joint Cargo Aircraft, a program in which the Army and Air Force are replacing their aging fleet of Army C-23 Sherpas and Air Force C-130s with C-27J Spartans. The unit will be operating from buildings 375 and 374 at PANG-B by mid-October, and will acquire building 355 sometime in May or June.

"We're excited about the program, we're excited about the transformation," said Maj. David Doran, commander of Alpha Co., 641 Avn. "We are ready for the new airframe; we now have the facilities at PANG and we have slowly tripled our strength this year."

According to Doran, the C-27J Spartan will have about eight-times the lifting capacity, a better range, and will fly at double the air speed in comparison to the Sherpa. The new airframe will also have the ability to fly at higher altitudes and use short, austere runways, therefore making the C-27J operable in Afghanistan; a theater the Sherpa has been unable to support.

"We needed these aircraft yesterday, last year. We're flying the blades off the

See **A/641** on **PAGE 18**

Tell us what you think!

Address your comments, feedback and ideas to:
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The Oregon Sentinel

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Stories and photos from the field are gratefully accepted. We need your input to ensure better coverage.

Guard members and their families are encouraged to submit any articles meant to inform, educate or entertain readers of the Oregon Sentinel, including stories about interesting Guard personalities and unique unit training. Letters to the editor are also welcome. All letters must include the author's name, address and daytime phone number. Names may be withheld in print upon request, but all letters must be signed, and are subject to editing prior to publication. For publication schedules, or for any other questions, please see your unit Public Affairs Representative, or contact the State Public Affairs Office or any of the Oregon Sentinel staff members listed below.

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Year marked by courage, sacrifice, accomplishments



Maj. Gen. Raymond F. Rees
Adjutant General, Oregon National Guard

Recent state legislation placed the Oregon Office of Emergency Management under the Oregon Military Department.

This is an indicator of the faith our state places in the men and women of the Oregon National Guard, and it speaks to how seriously the leadership of our state takes emergency response. They know that when we are needed, we will be there.

Readiness is the engine that drives our

success – whether we’re serving our fellow citizens here in the U.S. or mobilizing for federal missions overseas, we must be ready to support any need, oftentimes at a moment’s notice.

Thanks to the experience of our veteran force, quality recruiting programs, and a commitment to high standards and professionalism we are ready to answer the call to duty anytime, anywhere.

Yet, despite the readiness of our citizen-Soldiers and Airmen there’s one area we probably can all improve upon: family readiness.

If a catastrophic earthquake strikes the Willamette Valley or snow storms paralyze Eastern Oregon – if wildfires ravage Central Oregon or a tsunami floods the coast – we’re almost guaranteed to mobilize. And if we are mobilized – be it in our own back yard or half-way across the globe – will our families be prepared?

September is National Preparedness Month – sponsored by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security. The goals for the month are simple: to increase public awareness about the importance of preparing for emergencies and to encourage individuals to take action.

I encourage each of you to raise your own awareness, including that of your families and friends, about how to prepare for and

respond to a crisis. It’s not a question of if a disaster will strike, but when.

Thinking about and planning for disasters helps in a number of ways. At the most basic level, preparation increases survivability – you put the odds of survival more in your favor. It also speeds the recovery process by helping victims transition from response into the recovery stage. Furthermore, knowing that your family is prepared allows you to focus on the mission – protecting life, limb and property.

There are a number of places you can turn to for information to prepare your family and friends. Visit www.ready.gov for a jumping off point. You can learn about the three fundamental steps to preparedness: getting a kit, making a plan, and becoming informed.

At the state level you’ll find information at www.oregon.gov/OOHS/OEM/. Click on the links to the “Library” and “Related Websites.” You can also find several sources for information through internet searches.

However, preparing for a disaster begins with motivation to action. Do it for readiness, do it for the safety of your friends and families, and do it for your peace of mind.

Raymond J. Rees

Those in uniform represent more than the individual

Uniforms and Standards. Recently I was informed by an officer of the civilian court system that some soldiers were showing up in court, for both serious and not so serious issues wearing their uniforms. When questioned by the court officer, one soldier stated that he was proud of his uniform, even though he was charged with some serious offenses.

Army Regulation 670-1, Wear of the Uniform, is a standard that tells us how to wear the uniform, items on the uniform, and all the accessories. It guides our uniform in the field and in garrison. Additionally as members of the National Guard we also have state law and state policy we are obligated to follow regarding how and when we wear our uniforms.

The regulations and policies are clear about when you will and will not wear the uniform.

State law 399.155 Unlawful wearing of uniform or insignia, says that “**No member of the organized militia shall wear, when on or off duty, any uniform or any device, strap, knot or insignia of any design or character used as a designation of grade, rank or office, such as are by law or regu-**

lation, duly promulgated, prescribed for the use of the organized militia, without the permission of the commanding officer. [1961 c.454 §75(3)]”.

Command Policy #130 states “**ORNG members must never wear the uniform or discuss their membership in the National Guard in an effort to gain personal favor of a public official”.**

The policy goes on to say “**they should not wear the uniform in a situation when it may be implied that the National Guard sanctions the cause for which the activity is conducted”.** Army Regulation 670-1 also prohibits wearing the uniform anytime it would bring discredit to the service.

My message is this: Unless you are tasked with an official civilian event or attending a civilian event as part of your official duties you should never wear your uniform. If you have any questions about whether or not you should wear your uniform to a civilian event, proceeding or meeting, ask your chain of command before the event.

In my opinion, that soldier’s answer to the judge was the wrong answer. When you wear the uniform in public you represent not only yourself, but all of your fellow



Command Sgt. Major Thomas R. Moe,
State Command Sergeant Major

servicemen and women. If you are truly proud of being in the service you would not even consider wearing your uniform if you found yourself in a situation that would not be a credit to yourself or your fellow service members.

Airman’s role in military defined by oath, values

Before I get to the meat of this article, I want to congratulate (newly promoted) Senior Master Sgt. Lawrence B. Taylor for being selected as the Air National Guard’s Senior NCO Outstanding Airman of the Year. As our state winner, Sgt. Taylor competed against the entire ANG in June and came out on top. Furthermore, he was automatically submitted for the 12 Outstanding Airman of the Year for the Air Force and (once again for our state) won that category. This is one of the biggest honors an Airman can get in their career.

I have to mention that for the last three years, Oregon has won the Air National Guard and 12 Outstanding Airman of the Year for the Air Force. We have had a winner from each category; Airman (Senior Airman John Lockheed), NCO (Staff Sgt. Dan Dierickx) and now Senior NCO. All three members just happen to come from the 270ATC, we are all very proud of your accomplishments.

In August Sgt. Taylor was recognized as the ANG winner with a week’s worth of activities in Washington D.C. and honored at a banquet the week of Aug. 4-11. He was then recognized as one of the 12 Outstanding Airman of the Year for the Air Force in September. Congratulations again Lawrence for your outstanding achievements. We here in Oregon are very proud of what

you have done for yourself, the state and our nation. (See the article on Lawrence Taylor on page 16).

Defining our roles

With all the risks and sacrifices that service demands; service to our nation, to its values, and to its dreams, we stand ready to serve our country. Our participation in ‘wingman’ programs to enhance relationships and security to fellow Airmen is an example of defining our roles as an Airman. When we joined the Guard we took an oath; everything we have done and everything we will do begins with that oath. Our lives changed at that time. We understand that the nation depends upon us to live up to that oath. We now have responsibilities not just to us, but to this great nation we have sworn to protect.

We must make sure Airmen get the training and education required for their specialty or area of expertise. Our focus should be on deliberate development. Education must be tailored to benefit Airmen in doing their jobs. Clearly defining our purpose and development as an enlisted corps is more critical today than ever before. Our Airmen have been called to action in many different and sometimes non-traditional capacities. The challenges have been great and often unfamiliar. Through your dedicated service and sacrifice we’ve met those challenges



Chief Master Sgt. Rodney R. Smith,
State Command Chief Master Sergeant

straight on, and have grown tremendously since the Global War on Terror began.

To keep at the top of our game, every Airman must know and understand their role in this fight and in our Air Force, today and tomorrow. It’s the enlisted force structure that defines us as Airmen, rather than merely specialists. AFI 36-2618, Enlisted Force

See AIRMAN’S ROLES on Page 5

Legislation addresses deployment, tax breaks, TRICARE



Photo by Tech. Sgt. Nick Choy, Oregon National Guard Public Affairs

Oregon National Guard Brigadier General Michael J. Caldwell, Deputy Director of the Oregon Military Department, explains the positive impact of House Bill 3201 on Oregon National Guardsmen and their families, during a signing ceremony July 31, 2007 at the State Capitol in Salem, Ore. In addition to a wide range of tax incentives, the bill includes assistance for Oregon doctors who provide medical care for veterans and their families, and tax credits for employees of the Oregon Youth Challenge Program, a boot-camp style alternative high school program administrated by the Oregon National Guard in central Oregon.

Continued from PAGE ONE

deployment, and tax exemptions for military personnel.

“Many of our soldiers have been on multiple deployments leaving their families for extended periods of time, it’s our goal to make sure we are doing enough to support them in every aspect of their deployment,” said Caldwell, who is Deputy Director of the Oregon Military Department. “Much of our state legislation this year focused on meeting the needs of the soldier and their families as they endure long separations,” added Caldwell.

The budget for the Oregon Military Department increased by 257 percent, to include a 70 percent increase for the Oregon National Guard with the rest of the increase

accounted for by the addition of Oregon Emergency Management which now falls under the jurisdiction of the Oregon Military Department. For more in-depth information on House Bill 2370 please see related article below.

“We’ve gotten smarter as a body since the last legislative session,” Caldwell said. “We’ve figured out some things that needed to be changed and we had a legislative body that supported us,” he added.

Lawmakers passed several pieces of legislation that will make Oregon National Guardsmen eligible for tax deductions. House Bill 2023, allows deploying soldiers to receive a \$60,000 property tax deduction.

House Bill 3201 encompasses a variety of tax related benefits for soldiers including a tax break for health care providers in the

first two years of provider’s participation in the TRICARE system.

“This bill helps provide our military families with certainty in health care because when our Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen, and Marines are serving overseas, the last thing they should have to worry about is whether their families are getting the health care they need at home,” said Kulongoski.

House Bill 3201 also gives Oregon Guardsmen working at the Oregon Youth Challenge Program a \$6,000 tax break.

“In many ways the Oregon Youth Challenge program is the little program that could,” Kulongoski said.

The boot camp-style program aimed at giving an opportunity for troubled kids to turn their lives around has operated in Bend, Ore., for more than a decade on limited funding. Despite meager resources the program has had outstanding results.

“Eighty-two percent of graduates are still successful five years after graduating from the program,” said Caldwell.

House Bill 2026 modifies exemption from personal income tax for military duty compensation to include any service performed by National Guard or military reserves while on active duty, if duty consists of service away from home for period of three consecutive weeks or more.

Several bills that passed this legislative session focus on helping soldiers navigate legal matters while on deployment. House Bill 2093 allows service members to request a stay of proceedings on legal matters under certain circumstances. House Bill 2092 allows a parent who is in active military service to delegate to spouse, by power of attorney, powers of parent regarding care, custody or property of minor child when parent has joint custody of minor child with child’s other parent.

Other legislation focused on helping maintain Oregon National Guard facilities. House Bill 5006 allocates \$11.4 million for the refurbishment of armories.

For more information on these bills and others that passed in the Oregon State Legislative Session go to www.leg.state.or.us.

TRICARE: Members must re-enroll by Oct. 1, 2007

Story by Kim Lippert, Oregon National Guard Public Affairs

Tricare Reserve Select, the premium-based health plan for qualified National Guard and Reserve members, will be completely restructured as of October 1, 2007. Those wishing to enroll must enroll by October 1, 2007.

To transition to this new coverage, all existing three-tier TRS plans will be terminated on September 30, 2007.

Members wishing to continue their TRS coverage must re-enroll in TRS prior to October 1, 2007. Failure to do so will result in a loss of coverage.

Beginning in October, TRS will be available to all members of the Selected Reserve regardless of active duty served, with the exception of those who are eligible for program or currently covered under the Federal Employees Health Benefits.

In addition to the eligibility changes, the new TRS Plan will bring an end to the three tiers and associated six premium rates. Beginning in October there will be one premium amount for each type of coverage. Member-only coverage will cost \$81 a month, while the Member-and-Family premium will be \$253.

Some of the benefits of the revamped TRS health plan include coverage similar to TRICARE Standard (and TRICARE Extra) and includes deductibles, cost-shares and a catastrophic cap on yearly out of pocket expenses for covered medical services.

Eligible members will no longer be limited to purchasing the insurance immediately following activation or during the annual open season. The improved TRS plan will allow eligible members to purchase the insurance at anytime throughout the year. TRS enrollees (individuals and family members) have the freedom to access care from any TRICARE-authorized, certified or network provider or hospital and may request care at a military treatment facility (MTF) on a space available basis.

All drilling service members are eligible for the restructured TRS health plan even if they are also covered by another health care plan the only exception being if the service member or family member is eligible for the Federal Employee Health Benefits.

To enroll, qualified members may submit a new TRS request form to their regional TRICARE Managed Care Support Contractor by September 30, 2007. The TRS enrollment form (DD Form 2896-1) can be found on the DMDC website (<http://dmdc.osd.mil/appi/trs/index.jsp>).

All TRS enrollees will also need to log on to the National Guard and Reserve Web Portal, at <https://www.dmdc.osd.mil/appi/trs/index.jsp> and follow directions to enroll.

Make sure to verify eligibility, select “purchase coverage” and choose individual or family coverage. You are required to print the TRS Request Form (DD Form 2896-1), and sign and submit the form along with one month’s premium payment to TriWest Healthcare Alliance.

The address is: P.O. Box 42048, Phoenix, AZ 85080-2048. Please make all correspondence attention to the TRICARE West Region contractor.

Bill moves Office of Emergency Management under Oregon Guard

Story by Kim Lippert, Oregon National Guard Public Affairs

New legislation was passed during the 2007 Oregon State Legislative session, which moved the Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Management under the Oregon Military Department.

Maj. Gen. Raymond F. Rees, the Adjutant General, Oregon National Guard, will assume the post of Homeland Security Advisor to the Governor.

According to the new legislation, which was signed into law by the Governor on Aug. 15, the Adjutant General of the Oregon National Guard will be placed in a leadership position in the state of Oregon during natural or man-made disasters.

“House Bill 2370 mirrors best practices benchmarks in nearby states – and across the nation – and ultimately will strengthen our abilities to respond in crisis and keep our citizens safe,” said Oregon Governor Theodore R. Kulongoski.

“By providing the Governor with an established command and control function, we will enhance our effectiveness in emergency management and our overall capacities to respond and bolster discipline interoperability,” the governor added.

One of the biggest benefits of connecting the Oregon Emergency Management office with the Oregon National Guard is the streamlining of resources, Rees said.

“It (the bill) will allow us quicker response time and more flexibility in terms of response capabilities,” said Rees.

According to the new structure, Ken Murphy will continue as the Director of the Office of Emergency Management, and will report directly to Rees.

The new legislation puts Oregon in line with states like Idaho, Washington, and Alaska who have also placed the Office of Emergency Management under the jurisdiction of the state office of Homeland Security.



Photo by Kay F. Fristad Oregon National Guard Public Affairs

Oregon Governor Theodore R. Kulongoski explains the significance of House Bill 2370, during the official signing of the bill at the State Capitol in Salem, Ore., on Aug. 15, 2007.

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We want your stories! We want your pictures!

Submit them to:
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c/o: Tech. Sgt. Nick Choy,
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Stories must be submitted in Microsoft Word files, with all formatting turned off. Photos must be high-resolution color JPG files, and must have an accompanying caption (also in MS Word) explaining what is happening in the picture, as well as the rank, full name, and unit of the person(s) depicted. Submissions for Letters to the Editor and Letters From The Front are preferred.

Sentry Eagle 2007 honors the 60th Anniversary of the Air Force

Thousands turn out for open house, air-to-air combat exercise at Kingsley Field



Photo by Senior Airman John Hughel, 142 FW Multimedia

Above: Spectators take in the flying demonstrations at Sentry Eagle at Kingsley Field in Klamath Falls, Ore. on Aug. 11, 2007. The biennial event draws thousands to the area. Below: Capt. Dan Schilling, commander of the Oregon Air National Guard's 125th Special Tactics Squadron, puts on a parachute demonstration at Sentry Eagle on Aug. 11. Photos by Senior Airman John Hughel, 142nd Fighter Wing Public Affairs.



Photo by Senior Airman John Hughel, 142 FW Multimedia

Story by Tech. Sgt. Nick Choy
Oregon National Guard Public Affairs

KLAMATH FALLS, Ore. — Kingsley Field's 173rd Fighter Wing hosted Sentry Eagle August 9-11, 2007, inviting military members from 15 different units from across the United States, and visitors from around the world.

The biennial event allows units to practice dissimilar aircraft training in simulated air-to-air warfare exercises which tests pilots' flying skills, basic fighter skills, air combat tactics, and close air support. The event culminated in a public open house and air show on Aug. 11.

Over 400 personnel encompassing the Air Force, Army, Navy and Marines participated in the event. Participating aircraft included F-15s, F-16s, F-18s, KC-135s, a flyover demonstration by an F-117 Stealth Fighter.

There was also an Air Combat Command Heritage Flight involving an F-86 Sabre flown by Mr. Steve Hinton, and a Kingsley Field F-15 Eagle flown by Capt. Tony "Baron" Bierenkoven from the F-15 West Coast Demonstration Team based in Eglin AFB, Fla.

"I think that Sentry Eagle is just the way we hone our skills," said retired Air Force Maj. Gen. Ron Bath, who flew in for the event from his home in Reno, Nev. "We fight the way we train, and we train the way we fight," he said.

The training is invaluable, Bath said. He referred back to his experiences as one of the first fighter pilots to cross into Iraqi airspace during the first night of the air war during Operation Desert Storm, which commenced on August 2, 1990.

"Sentry Eagle is a great way to say thanks to the community,"

— Maj. Dave "Chairman" Yao

"I realized why I did (the training) because it went off just like clockwork, and it was just like we trained," Bath said. "And there's nothing more important than continuing training and readiness. That's what Sentry Eagle is all about."

Coincidentally, the 60th anniversary of the Air Force occurred the same year as Sentry Eagle, and while there was cause for celebration throughout the Air Force, Klamath Falls had its own reasons to celebrate.

"We won the AETC Fighter Squadron of the Year Award in 2006, and just received an outstanding during the (recent) Operational Readiness Inspection," said Maj. Dave "Chairman" Yao, 173rd Fighter Wing Weapons Officer.

The biennial event drew over 10,000 spectators from around the country, including visitors from as far away as Europe and Japan, and business and civic representa-

tives from around the region.

"I think this is awesome," said Nate Leong, a photographer with Air Force Association Magazine. "We get to see all these different aircraft in one place at one time."

The impact of Sentry Eagle is visible everywhere in Klamath Falls. Hotels in the Klamath Basin filled up with visiting airmen and civilian attendees, while local area shops and businesses benefited from the increased traffic. The event, according to Bath, is a win-win situation for everyone, allowing the public to see how the different sections within the 173rd Fighter Wing work in unison, but also allowing the local community to get involved in the local air base.

"The unique thing about the event is it brings the militia nation right to the forefront," Bath said. "Obviously the Guard is not made up exclusively of active duty people, so it brings the civilian community into the military and it's a unique thing."

"Sentry Eagle has been a great event. It's a great way to say thanks to the community," Yao said.

Units who participated in the 2007 Sentry Eagle include the 173rd Fighter Wing from Kingsley Field; the 102nd Fighter Wing from Cape Cod, Mass.; the 131st Fighter Wing from St. Louis, Mo.; the 125th Fighter Wing from Jacksonville, Fla.; the 154th Wing from Hickam AFB, Hi.; the 120th Fighter Wing from Great Falls, Mont.; the 144th Fighter Wing from Fresno, Calif.; the 115th Fighter Wing from Madison, Wis.; Naval Air Station LeMoore, Calif.; the 141st Air Refueling Wing from Fairchild AFB, Wash.; the 80th Flying Training Wing from Sheppard AFB, Texas; the 33rd Fighter Wing from Eglin AFB, Fla.; the 325th Fighter Wing from Tyndall AFB, Fla.; Naval Air Station Fallon, Nev.; the 49th Fighter Wing from Holloman AFB, N.M.; and the 7th Bomb Wing from Dyess AFB, Texas. Additionally, special demonstrations were put on by the 125th Special Tactics Squadron from Portland, Ore.; and the Oregon Army National Guard.

The next Sentry Eagle is scheduled for August 2009.

Pilot from 173rd Fighter Wing surpasses 4,000 hours in F-15 Eagle

Story by Tech. Sgt. Nick Choy
Oregon National Guard Public Affairs

4,000 hours.

That's 240,000 minutes, or 14.5 million seconds, if you like it broken down that way.

The timeframe sounds like a long time, until you realize 4,000 hours would be the equivalent of working 8-hour days for two years without taking a vacation. Then it seems like an eternity.

So when Lt. Col. Rich "Peewee" Kelly of the Oregon Air National Guard's 173rd Fighter Wing in Klamath Falls, Ore., was told he was approaching 4,000 hours flying in an F-15 Eagle, he reacted with a bit of cynicism.

"I never thought it would happen," he said.

Kelly is one of only two F-15 C-model pilots in the world to have reached 4,000 hours flying the Air National Guard's premier strike fighter. He was able to reach the milestone during the Sentry Eagle dissimilar aircraft training exercise on Aug. 10.

Kelly began his military career in the active duty Air Force. At the time, it was considered quite an accomplishment to reach 2,000 hours in a fighter jet – a milestone that he never thought he'd reach.

"When I first started flying, only about five people had 2,000 hours," Kelly said.

He was able to reach the 2,000-hour mark while in the active duty Air Force. After joining the Oregon Air National Guard at Kingsley Field in 1999, Kelly was able to reach the 3,000-hour mark. As he drew close to the 4,000-hour mark, Kelly's squadron operations officer, Lt. Col. Wes "Pappy" French, began manag-

ing his flying hours in July so that the threshold would be reached during the weekend of Sentry Eagle. Kelly tried in vain to remain low-key.

"Pappy said it was 'to kill two birds with one stone because there was going to be a lot of media here,' and I said, 'I don't need a lot of personal attention on this thing,'" Kelly said with a self-deprecating smile.

The mission Kelly and his fellow pilots flew involved eight F-15 Eagles providing support to two F-18 Hornets which were tasked with putting 'bombs on target'. They went up against ten F-16 Falcons, who played the 'bad guys'.

"It was a great mission," Kelly said. "The good guys won."

On the way back to Kingsley Field, Kelly said someone told him over the radio about surpassing the 4,000-hour mark. Once on the ground, well-wishers from throughout the 173rd Fighter Wing came out to congratulate Kelly on the milestone.

"What really dawned on me was as the people came up to shake my hand, I think I knew everyone's first name," Kelly said.

"That's the neat thing about the Guard community. You have a hundred people come by to congratulate you, and you know all of them by their first name," he added.

According to his fellow pilots, Kelly's achievement is quite a feat considering his other responsibilities as the 173rd Operations Group Commander.

"He's done a great job to be a tactical leader as well as a good administrator and organizer as well," said Maj. Dave "Chairman" Yao, 173rd Wing Weapons Officer.

According to Yao, Kelly is one of the top pilots in the 114th Fighter Squadron

at Kingsley Field, but his responsibilities go beyond the air base. Kelly is also a dedicated family man.

He and his wife Vicky have been married for 20 years. They and their two sons, Matt and Michael, have called Klamath Falls home for the past eight years. Kelly is scheduled to make the rank of colonel in September, and with 22 years in the military, he hopes the unit will continue to let him fly for several more years. Perhaps even to crack the 5,000-hour mark.

"He's probably going to be the first guy to get to 5,000 hours," said Maj. Robb "Leif" Erickson.

Kelly said he reached the mark due to his philosophy of staying healthy and always being ready to fly at a moment's notice. He recommends volunteering to take missions which other pilots cannot fly because of prior commitments or medical issues.

"Never turn down a sortie," he said with a chuckle.

And though the achievement is noteworthy in the annals of aviation history, Kelly remains very grounded, diverting attention away from his achievement back toward the other sections in his unit.

"I've been fortunate, and I've had some great jobs flying the F-15 for many, many years," Kelly said. "But we have outstanding men and women here at Kingsley Field and the maintenance folks here are incredible, so when you go to fly the airplane, the airplane works, and we get to fly a lot."

"I never thought I'd be able to walk amongst the ranks of those few that have that many hours, and here I am now, with 4,000 hours," he said.

"He's probably going to be the first guy to get to 5,000 hours,"

— Maj. Robb "Leif" Erickson



Photo by Tech. Sgt. Nick Choy, Oregon National Guard Public Affairs

Lt. Col. Rich "Peewee" Kelly, with the 173rd Fighter Wing at Kingsley Field in Klamath Falls, Ore., with one of the fighter wing's F-15 Eagles on Aug. 11, 2007. Kelly surpassed the 4,000-hour mark in tail number "011" while on a training mission during the Sentry Eagle air exercise on Aug. 10.

Young: His passion was flying

Continued from PAGE ONE

school’s football field, one jet peeled off and entered a steep climb.

According to Air Force Print News Today, the the custom of fly-overs began during World War I, as an honor to pilots who were lost in battle.

Young also received a rendition of Taps played by a bugler, and a 21-gun salute performed by an honor guard.

“It’s important for them to see we are honoring him as best we can and as best we know how,” said fellow pilot and friend Capt. Paul Shamy, immediately following the ceremony.

“Anytime there’s a loss like this, everyone feels it,” he added.

Like many in the F-15 community, he knew he wanted to fly fighter aircraft from a young age, Shamy said.

“It was his passion. I know he didn’t consider it work. He loved every minute of it,” Shamy said. “On the other side of that his family and friends was where his heart was.”

Young is survived by his wife, Tonya, and four children.

For those who now fly the missions, the focus is on remaining professional, like Young would have wanted, said Shamy.

“I think that’s the best way we can honor him is to go out there and continue to be professionals,” he said. “Continue to go out there and do what he loved, and continue to be there for his family and friends.”



Photo by Tech. Sgt. Nick Choy Oregon National Guard Public Affairs

F-15s from the 142nd Fighter Wing in Portland participated in a missing-man formation at Young’s memorial service in St. Helens, Ore.

The accident remains under investigation, pending findings by an Air Safety Board and an Accident Investigation Board.

College savings accounts have been established for the children. The tax deductible donations can be made online or sent to: Air Warrior Courage Foundation, ATTN: Young Family, P.O. Box 1553, Front Royal, VA, 22630-0033.



Master Sgt. Norio Colipano, of the 142nd Maintenance Group, helps Maj. Gen. Henry C. “Hank” Murrow into the 142nd Fighter Wing’s flagship, tail number 142 at the Portland Air Base on June 11. Murrow visited the Redhawks briefly before flying to Klamath Falls to visit with the 173rd Fighter Wing at Kingsley Field.

NORAD commander visits PANG

Story and photo by Tech. Sgt. Nick Choy
Oregon National Guard Public Affairs

The commander of 1st Air Force, Maj. Gen. Henry C. Morrow, visited the 142nd Fighter Wing at the Portland Air Base in Portland, Ore., June 11.

Morrow, who is also the commander of the Continental U.S. North American Aerospace Defense Command Region, oversees four direct reporting units, 10 aligned Air National Guard units, and a large number of active air defense alert sites. Morrow is stationed at Tyndall Air Force Base in Florida.

It was Morrow’s first visit to the Portland Air Base. It gave him a chance to get acquainted with the unit and the mission, said 142nd Fighter Wing Commander, Col. Steven Gregg.

“(The visit) gave him a visual picture of what he’s heard about,” Gregg said.

Morrow said the Oregon Air National Guard has built up quite a name for itself across the country.

“I think it’s one of the premier units in the guard as far as air defense goes,” Morrow said.

“It’s a testament to the dedication of the folks here in Oregon, and I’m glad to have you on the team,” he added.

After Morrow met with top leaders at the wing and toured the operations group and alert facility, he left for Klamath Falls to visit the 173rd Fighter Wing at Kingsley Field. Morrow made the trip in the 142nd Fighter Wing’s F-15 flagship, tail number 142.

Morrow said he takes with him an overview of the Oregon Air National Guard, and an idea of what Oregon needs to improve their mission capabilities, but he added that he also gained a sense of the culture of the air units in Oregon — something that is difficult to measure without an in-person visit.

“I take back how you’ve gotten to where you are today and share that and the culture of the unit with my staff,” Morrow said. “There’s always things that we can do to help make life more enjoyable and more efficient (with the units),” he added.

272 Combat Communications Squadron to close in 2008

Story and photo by Chief Master Sgt. Steven P. Nichols,
272nd Combat Communications Squadron

Changes are coming for the 272nd Combat Communications Squadron. The unit is scheduled to close in April 2008.

However, unit members have not slowed down the deployment pace. Five personnel have deployed to Operation Jump Start as communications specialists, Entry Identification Team members, and even a welder.

Over the past couple of years, the 272nd Combat Communications Squadron has been actively engaged in deployments, operations and exercises around the world. In 2005, the unit was called upon to participate in Joint Red Flag at Nellis Air Force Base, and at Student Gap Training Range in Nevada.

They provided telephone, Internet and video teleconferencing capabilities to the 2-43 Air Defense Artillery Battalion who were deployed to Nevada from Ft Bliss, Texas.

In the same year, the 272nd CBCS also deployed over 50 personnel to Mississippi in response to Hurricane Katrina. The first member was ready to depart within 12 hours of notice that the unit was deploying to support Brig. Gen. Douglas A. Pritt and the 41st Brigade Combat Team.

Over a period of 72 hours, the 272nd prepared and deployed over 100 short tons of cargo, much of which had never palletized for airlift before. Once personnel from the unit landed in Mississippi, they began installing communications assets in nine separate locations throughout the city of New Orleans, ensuring the 41st Brigade could communicate with the troops searching the city.

The focus of 2006 was on preparing for an Operational Readiness Inspection and deploying members on Air Expeditionary Force Missions (AEF). During the Operational Readiness Exercises, the unit set up a compound typical to those in Iraq and Afghanistan, with the primary goal of building a communications site to provide enough communications – data and voice – to support 500-1000 deployed personnel. As the systems were being installed, various Ability to Survive and Operate (ATSO) events were thrown in to see how well personnel responded. The various AEF tours included personnel in Kuwait, Afghanistan, Diego Garcia, Manas and Puerto Rico.

Air Expeditionary Force Missions continue to be an excellent opportunity for unit members to deploy. Members have also deployed to Korea and Japan during the Foal Eagle exercise which tested the capabilities of the Korean Military’s Command and Control capabilities. Additionally, members are volunteering for stateside missions such as Grecian Firebolt, a Joint Exercise in Georgia with the 335th Signal Battalion, providing communications capabilities to three different locations throughout Georgia and supporting a drug interdiction mission providing support for Homeland Defense.

Other unit members have deployed with the 116th Air Control Squadron to Wendover, Nev., to validate a “Deployed Radar” concept and the contents of the Unit Type Code (UTC) used in the air control arena. Another mission unit members are volunteering for is OPLAN SMOKEY, the Oregon State Forest and wildfire operation. They would support the communications needs of the fire camps as well as working directly on the fire lines helping to contain and/or extinguish the fires.

Finally, members of the 272nd CBCS are heavily involved in the planning of the newest Homeland Defense Exercise for the State of Oregon. “Top Off” is an exercise focused on providing communications capabilities to state agencies in the event of a terrorist attack or natural disaster.

Volunteerism. Patriotism. Service Before Self. These are the driving forces that make up the Air National Guard and for the 272nd Combat Communications Squadron; a way of life.



Shortly following the destruction of Hurricane Katrina, The 272nd Combat Communication Squadron deployed to Louisiana to provide communications support to the Oregon Army National Guard’s 41st Brigade Combat Team. They provided satellite communications, and communications from the command post to Soldiers who were tasked with search and rescue missions throughout the damaged city.

Airman’s roles foundation of service

Continued from PAGE TWO

Structure, lays out concise standards, expectations and opportunities for every enlisted Airman. The foundation of the profession of arms has to begin with our core values, Integrity, Service Before Self, and Excellence. These values, along with the basic roles and responsibilities are needed to accomplish the mission, and form our foundation. This instruction establishes general Airmen responsibilities and refines both general and specific responsibilities for each level of the enlisted force. The AFI has clearly defined enlisted knowledge and performance levels while incorporating the Tactical, Operational, and Strategic levels of leadership and development. I urge you all to understand the Enlisted Force Structure. This is your blueprint for success in the Guard and the Air Force. Embrace your role and responsibility as an Airman, and we’ll continue to be the outstanding enlisted force our nation values.

On a closing note; as senior enlisted leaders, our goal is clear; develop our Airmen who will collectively leverage their respective strengths to accomplish the mission of the Oregon Air National Guard. Our enlisted corps in Oregon is the best in the world. We owe it to our entire enlisted force to provide the skills and education they need to continue to excel!

Oregon Guard looks at Christmas Valley site for joint force training

Story and photos by Tech. Sgt. Nick Choy, Oregon National Guard Public Affairs



Above: Existing buildings at the Christmas Valley site, owned by the Department of the Air Force, will be utilized by Oregon National Guard units under a current plan being proposed to the Secretary of the Air Force. Under the plan, the surrounding 200,000 acres may also be leased to the Oregon National Guard for joint-force training.

Above right: Maj. Lance McCuiston, (left) Project Manager for the Christmas Valley site, shows a delegation from Governor Kulongoski's office how long-range communications and datalink services from Christmas Valley is important to the flying mission in southern and eastern Oregon. McCuiston is the commander of the 173rd Fighter Wing's civil engineering unit at Kingsley Field in Klamath Falls, Ore.

If the Oregon National Guard has its way, some 200,000 acres near Christmas Valley, Ore., may be made available for joint-force training for Oregon's Citizen-Soldiers and Citizen-Airmen.

The site, located about 90 miles northeast of Klamath Falls in southern Oregon, is currently leased to the Department of the Air Force, and is under the control of the Office of the Secretary of the Air Force, which oversees all real estate assets for the Air Force.

The Oregon National Guard recently submitted a proposal to the Pentagon requesting use of the site, but because the lease expires in 2009, the proposal asks for the Department of Air Force to renew the lease, then transfer responsibilities of the site to the Oregon Guard. The site includes several existing buildings and infrastructure. The site was used by the Air Force for some time, but currently stands vacant.

According to top officials in Oregon, the Christmas Valley site is integral to training F-15 pilots at Kingsley Field in Klamath Falls, Ore.

"The reason we need that location is that it's in the center of our low altitude air space," said Maj. Lance "Axe" McCuiston, Project Manager for Christmas Valley Site.

Furthermore, it is the only low altitude air space in the state of Oregon, and critical for training of F-15 pilots, said McCuiston, who is also the commander of the 173rd Fighter Wing's Civil Engineering Squadron at Kingsley Field.

Kingsley Field, one of only two F-15 school houses in the country, trains about 33-percent of all F-15 pilots, including both active duty and National Guard. The active duty Air Force gains about 75-percent of all its F-15 pilots from Kingsley Field's training program.

The project to acquire Christmas Valley started in 2004, when Maj. Gen. Raymond F. Rees, the Adjutant General, Oregon National Guard, requested that a joint-force project management team look into the feasibility of acquiring the land through a lease agreement with the Department of the Air Force.

Rees said the Oregon National Guard will clearly benefit from gaining access to the Christmas Valley site, with the immediate impact being improvements to the air-to-air training requirements through electronic simulations, radar assistance, and data transmission.

But more importantly, there are a number

of long-term benefits to having a training area for Oregon's citizen-Soldiers and citizen-Airmen, Rees said.

"Master planning, coupled with programmed resources could provide answers to range and maneuver limitations we now face," he said.

In addition, a side benefit for the Christmas Valley region is the proposal now being put in front of the Oregon State Legislature which suggests partnerships in the area with renewable energy companies, which, according to planners, will not only provide electrical power to the training site, but also revenue to the residents of Christmas Valley.

McCuiston, along with key members of the Oregon Military Department's installations team, headed up by Col. Rendell "Rock" Chilton, propose a plan to offset any electrical demands the new site may require. So far, according to McCuiston and others at Kingsley Field, the area's residents support the idea.

"We pretty much have unanimous support (for this)," McCuiston said. "We also have support letters from the Bureau of Land Management and the (local) Chamber of Commerce." McCuiston added that they have recently received the support of Oregon Senator Ron Wyden (D-Ore.).

The plan to provide a joint-force integrated training site at Christmas Valley for both Army and Air National Guard personnel in the state is important to not just the Oregon National Guard, according to Paul Evans, Military Advisor for Oregon Governor, Theodore R. Kulongoski, but also to the entire state.

"Christmas Valley is essential to the mission here at Klamath Falls, and the training mission of the 173rd Fighter Wing, but it is also critical to training and future opportunities for the Oregon National Guard," Evans said.

"We have access to possibly 200,000-300,000 acres, so if you can picture training special operations such as the 125th Special Tactics Squadron, it can benefit not just the flying units, but future missions that we don't even know about yet," McCuiston said.

"With almost 200,000 acres in question, the Oregon Army National Guard can potentially have access to a large training site in southern Oregon," Rees said. "It can provide an alternate to our existing training sites in the state."

On Aug. 11, during the Sentry Eagle event at Kingsley Field, McCuiston led a



delegation of representatives, including Evans and others from the Governor's staff, to the Christmas Valley site, located about 90 miles northeast of Klamath Falls. An Oregon Army National Guard CH-47 "Chinook" helicopter ferried the group from Kingsley Field to the remote site. Joining them was Brig. Gen. Michael Caldwell, Deputy Director of the Oregon Military Department.

"This is a great opportunity to save the taxpayers a considerable amount of money and put this investment to good use both for the Guard and the community," said Brig. Gen. Mike Caldwell, Deputy Director of the Oregon Military Department.

"We have been working with the Governor's Community Solutions Team to insure we have the concerns of the local and county governments up-front in an attempt to maximize the potential solar or wind energy production this site may provide," Caldwell said.

"Our objective is to make this a win-win for all of us," he added.

The group met with members of the 116th Air Control Squadron, who were training in

successful," Gregory added.

"It's going extremely well, better than we thought, and now we're getting our foot in the door," McCuiston said about the 116th ACS communications package and the established relationship between Christmas Valley residents and the Oregon National Guard. "The only roadblocks we see are getting it through the political channels in Washington D.C.," he added.

McCuiston said although most of the work on the project is complete at the local and state levels, there's still quite a bit of work to do with the Office of the Secretary of the Air Force in order to close the deal.

"We have our state representatives and senators behind us, and it sounds like some of our congressmen, however, we still have a little bit of political work to do," he said.

"The key here is creating as many constituent groups all working in the same direction. Public, private sector, the National Guard, the local community and some of the local businesses," said Allen Alley, Deputy Chief of Staff for Governor Kulongoski.

Part of the proposal also involves setting up a wind farm to generate electrical energy for the region. Planners envision the wind farm offsetting the amount of power required by the military at the main site.

Similar to other land use agreements, such as the Biak Training Center near Bend, Ore., the Oregon National Guard will support and cooperate with Bureau of Land Management land and natural resource conservation and stewardship efforts, said Maj. (Ret.) Bill McCaffrey, State Fire Management Officer.

"These responsibilities may involve restoring native vegetation, soil erosion control, and fire suppression functions related



Lt. Col. Jim Gregory, (right), commander of the 116th ACS, explains to a delegation from Governor Kulongoski's office how important the training at the Christmas Valley site is for his unit. The 116th ACS, based at the Rilea Training Site in Warrenton, Ore., made the 11 hour trip to Christmas Valley for their annual training during the week of Sentry Eagle.

Christmas Valley. Their primary mission was to provide communications support and data link services to Kingsley Field during the 2007 Sentry Eagle training exercise and open house. According to Lt. Col. Jim Gregory, Commander of the 116th ACS, the two-week deployment provided valuable training for his unit as well as important communications for Kingsley Field.

"We're out here with some folks who have never deployed with us before, so we're getting some good training for our younger individuals who are new to the unit," Gregory said. "We also have some folks who have been promoted into leadership positions, who haven't had the chance to take a leadership role yet."

The 116th ACS's deployment was also a chance to show both the Oregon National Guard and the Department of the Air Force that it could provide critical communications capabilities not previously employed by the Oregon Air National Guard – an important phase in the acquisition of the Christmas Valley site.

"This is a type of data link architecture that we've never tried before, and it has been

to or resulting from Oregon National Guard training activities," McCaffrey said.

The Oregon National Guard and the BLM have developed a long term cooperative relationship in natural resource management of multiple-use public lands at the Biak Training Center in central Oregon, explained McCaffrey. That constructive relationship serves as a model and framework which the Oregon National Guard expects to emulate at Christmas Valley, across the Poverty Basin to the North Alkali Lake flat, he said.

"A cooperative relationship and effective natural resource management will form an essential foundation in building trust and a good working partnership between the Oregon National Guard and the BLM, Lake County and the local community," McCaffrey said.

Christmas Valley, with a population of 500 people, is located in Lake County – about 90 miles northeast of Klamath Falls, and about 50 miles southeast of La Pine. Christmas Valley's chief industries involve ranching, farming and construction.



Oregon Sentinel

OF THE
OREGON NATIONAL GUARD



Members of the Oregon Army National Guard's 41st Brigade Combat Team assembled on the football field at Tigard High School on Aug. 4, as part of a welcome home ceremony hosted by the City of Tigard. The ceremony included a 21-gun salute and various award presentations. The day began with a parade through downtown Tigard and concluded with a community barbecue at Cook Park. The Brigade spent one year in Afghanistan training the Afghan National Army. Members of the Brigade returned to Oregon in several phases through the spring and summer of 2007.

City of Tigard says “Thank You” to 41st Brigade Soldiers

Story and photos by Tech. Sgt. Nick Choy
Oregon National Guard Public Affairs



Col. Dave Enyeart, 41st Brigade Combat Team Deputy Commander, and members of the 41st BCT, render courtesies during the 21-gun salute at the Tigard event. Above: Brig. Gen. Douglas A. Pritt, commander of the 41st BCT, makes a presentation to Tigard City Mayor, Craig Dirksen, in honor of the city's support of the Brigade during their one-year deployment in Afghanistan.

The City of Tigard honored the Soldiers of the Oregon Army National Guard's 41st Brigade Combat Team with a ceremony at the Tigard High School Football Stadium, Aug. 4.

Tigard Mayor, Craig Dirksen, Maj. Gen. Raymond F. Rees, The Adjutant General, Oregon National Guard, Brig. Gen. Douglas A. Pritt, commander of the 41st Brigade Combat Team and other representatives from local and state government praised the brigade for their sacrifice and service. The ceremony was sponsored by American Legion Post 158, while the parade and post-ceremony event at Cook Park were sponsored by the City of Tigard.

Almost 900 Oregon Soldiers recently returned home throughout the first quarter of 2007 after a year-long deployment in Afghanistan. The bulk of the deployment was made up of Soldiers from the 41st Brigade.

As part of Task Force Phoenix V, Oregon Soldiers joined a total of 5,900 Sailors, Airmen and Marines from 49 states and the two U.S. territories of Guam and Puerto Rico, to spend one year in Afghanistan training the Afghan National Army. The deployment supported Operation Enduring Freedom. Their mission was the single largest wartime deployment of Oregon military personnel since WWII.

“What an absolutely beautiful day,” said Rees, looking out over the 300 Soldiers gathered on the football field.

Rees drew an analogy of the Soldiers' return to Oregon to the movie, “Field of Dreams”, where the character of Shoeless Joe Jackson asks Kevin Costner, “Is this Heaven?”

“No son,” Rees said, continuing the analogy, “This is Tigard Oregon,” to which the gathering erupted in applause and cheers.

Rees praised the 41st Brigade Soldiers for their success in rebuilding the security of Afghanistan, and turned back toward the audience to thank the spouses and employers for their support. He then presented Command Sgt. Maj. Brunk Conley and Pritt with the Oregon Distinguished Service Award for their leadership in Afghanistan.

Pritt had high praise of the Soldiers of the 41st Brigade and all coalition partners. “They gave hope to an entire nation by their compassion, their understanding and caring for those who have only lived a life of oppression,” Pritt said to some 700 spectators sitting in the football stadium's grandstand.

The contribution and sacrifice would not have been possible without the support of families, friends and employers, Pritt said, turning to the audience behind him.

According to Pritt, almost 20 tons of humanitarian aid, in the way of blankets, shoes, clothes and school supplies were collected throughout the U.S. for the people of Afghanistan. Task Force personnel distributed the items while on missions throughout the country during their deployment.

“It enabled us to shape a future generation of Afghanis, and to create an environment of peace,” Pritt said.

Pritt made a special presentation to Joyce Lindsey, wife of Staff Sgt. Nathaniel “Brad” Lindsey, who was killed by insurgents Sept. 9, 2006 near the town of Shajoie in Afghanistan's Zabul province. Another Oregon Soldier who died during the Afghanistan mission

Afghanistan deployment built a legacy of success, performance



Brig. Gen. Douglas A. Pritt, Commander, Combined Joint Task Force Phoenix V.

As the Commander of Combined Joint Task Force Phoenix V, I extend my personal congratulations to the members of the 41st Brigade Combat Team who deployed to Afghanistan in support of Operation Enduring Freedom.

Your accomplishments were unprecedented and continued the legacy of success and exceptional performance the Oregon National Guard is well known for. Your professionalism, positive attitude and dedication exceeded all expectations and set a standard for excellence that few organizations will ever match.

Operating in a harsh and hostile environment this exceptional team trained 30,000 members of the Afghan National Army. In January, the Senior U.S. Commander in Afghanistan recognized the unmatched talent the National Guard brought to the task and expanded the mission to

include training 60,000 members of the Afghan National Police.

From 2006 to 2007, Task Force Phoenix grew from a strength of just over 3,000 to a combat experienced and seasoned force of over 7,200 professional warriors. The team also expanded to include active and reserve component members from the U.S. Army, Navy, Air Force and Marine Corps.

In addition, Soldiers from 16 coalition partner nations were assigned to the Task Force and provided valuable skills, insights and experience that were critical to the growth of the team. This exceptional team of combat-tested patriots continually demonstrated what a well trained force can do in difficult circumstances.

The U.S. Ambassador to Afghanistan, Bill Wood, said it best: "The success of CJTF Phoenix in training the Afghan National Army is nothing short of a miracle."

There is no way my words can adequately capture the impact our great warriors have had on the citizens of Afghanistan. Saving lives, establishing the rule of law throughout the land, and building a professional, trusted and capable security force is tough, demanding work.

The great Patriots from the Oregon National Guard led the way and demonstrated the true spirit of the Citizen Soldier by not only excelling at their military mission but also helping an impoverished nation rebuild and providing children with hope for a better future.

The Phoenix team adopted 59 schools, constructed 23 new schools, supported 14 orphanages and spent millions of dollars digging wells, constructing roads and clinics. The medical, dental and optometry assistance provided by the team brought critical care to women and children who previously had no opportunity for medical care. The Training Group at the Kabul Military Training Center expanded Basic and Advanced Individual training from 650 new Afghan Soldiers per month to over 2,000 Soldiers per month. They also established mobile training teams that conducted many of the courses at remote locations which further enhanced the war-fighting skills of the Afghan Soldiers. The Logistical team transported more supplies to more locations over more miles than anyone thought possible. The Embedded Trainers expanded the locations served from 59 to 107 to 343 different sites — many locations without water, sewer, power or adequate shelter.

In every case the men and women of Combined Joint Task Force Phoenix established a reputation for excellence known throughout Afghanistan. Our warriors received countless individual and team decorations, awards and recognition for their accomplishments. This acknowledgement of their performance came from the U.S. Department of Defense, the Afghans and their international partners.

We mourn the loss of the Soldiers who lost their lives defending freedom. We also extend our deepest sympathy to their families for their loss. In every case these great Soldiers who gave their all were true heroes who exemplified the finest values and were role models for their fellow warriors. They will never be forgotten.

I also extend my heartfelt appreciation to the families, friends, employers and to the citizens of Oregon, who gave unselfishly so that we might focus on the task at hand. Without your unfailing support, constant encouragement and amazing generosity, these outstanding accomplishments would not have been possible.

You provided thousands of dollars in donations and over 200,000 pounds of humanitarian assistance supplies to thousands of children and the poor alike. You brought warmth to children who fight daily for survival, joy to those who have little to brighten their day, and the light of knowledge to minds thirsty for education. The real hope for Afghanistan is in the children.

Your willingness to share in the bounty we enjoy as Americans helped bridge the



Pritt in Afghanistan.

gap between the children of Afghanistan and our great warriors who served as role models and ambassadors for our entire country and the rest of the free world. There is no way we can ever repay your contribution and we will always remain in your debt for the support you provided to the entire Phoenix team.

The unprecedented success of Combined Joint Task Force Phoenix V was made possible by the heroic efforts of the Soldiers who served in Afghanistan and those accomplishments would not have been possible without the untiring efforts of the fantastic team behind the scenes.

This deployment was our place, our time, and our destiny. I am proud to say we made the most of the opportunity and served with distinction.

This was the final assignment in my 37 year military career and I am honored to have to have served with such great Americans.

Elliott to resume ESGR post

Prepared by Sentinel Staff

Col. (Ret.) Bob Elliott has returned to his position as Executive Director for the Oregon Committee of the Employer Support of the Guard Reserve (ESGR).

Elliott retired after 34 years with the Oregon Army National Guard, and volunteered to deploy with the 41st Brigade Combat Team's Afghanistan mission. He returned to Active Duty Jan. 22, 2006, and reported to Fort Jackson, S.C., before heading to Afghanistan on a 26-day pre-deployment survey. He returned to the United States, joining the rest of Task Force Phoenix V at Camp Shelby, Miss. for mobilization training.

On June 4, 2006 Elliott and his team of 16 left for Herat, Afghanistan to mentor the Afghanistan National Army (ANA).

Elliott was the senior mentor for the 207th ANA Corp Commander, and the senior U.S. Military representative in Western Afghanistan, which comprises 25 percent of the country.

During the early part of the tour the 207th RCAG was given the additional task of mentoring the Afghanistan National Police (ANP). Both missions were highly successful, according to commanders.

He returned to Oregon in early June 2007 and assumed his previous position with the ESGR on July 11, 2007.

Elliott said he volunteered to serve on the Afghanistan mission for several reasons. He wanted to serve with the Task Force Commander Brig. Gen. Douglas A. Pritt, a long-time friend and coworker for over 32 years. Elliott also hoped that his volunteering would keep his two sons and others from having to go. Finally, he wanted to apply his knowledge of the military and leadership skills he had gained over the years.

"I never deployed while being a member of the Guard for all these years," he said.



Col. (Ret.) Bob Elliott in Afghanistan.

"When I was told there was a new program offered that allowed retirees to be recalled to Active Duty, I jumped on it," Elliott added.

He also said that his experience would allow him to better understand what it is like to be a Soldier who has deployed, and his experiences would help him assist them with their jobs.

Elliott briefs all branches of the reserves on their rights under the USERRA law, which protects their employment rights.

"Now I can stand in front of the reservist and know what they are going through," he said.

He wanted to thank his employer, IIF Data Solutions for their support of his deployment. Elliott said, "Knowing I had a job to return home to made his deployment less stressful".

He added, "If I didn't get my job back at least I knew who to go to for help."

If you need employment assistance, contact Col. (Ret.) Bob Elliott at 503-584-2837, or at 503-932-2362. He can also be reached via email at: bob.elliott@or.ngb.army.mil.

Salem group says 'thank you' to returning veterans

Story and photo by Tech. Sgt. Nick Choy,
Oregon National Guard Public Affairs



Spc. David Lamberson of Charlie Co., 579 Engineers, California Army National Guard, finds the perfect walking cane amongst other hand-carved canes donated by the Capitol Carvers, who visited Madigan Army Medical Center, June 8.

FORT LEWIS, Wash. (June 6, 2007)

— A senior group in Salem, Oregon has turned their collective hobby of carving into a philanthropic endeavor.

About ten members of the Capitol Carvers made the three-hour drive to Madigan Army Medical Center in Fort Lewis, Wash., to meet with National Guard Soldiers who are recovering from wounds received while deployed to Iraq and Afghanistan.

The group presented Soldiers with hand-carved walking canes. Each cane came with an accompanying letter thanking the individual Soldier for their sacrifice and service. The letter also highlighted the Capitol Carvers' background and history, and explained the type of wood used in each walking cane.

The Capitol Carvers comprise primarily of Oregon seniors. The group meets once a week at the North Salem Senior Center in Salem, Ore., to carve items ranging from animals, people and caricatures, in various mediums, including stone, wood and bone. The group's organizers were inspired by a similar group in North Carolina, which carved a number of walking canes for injured members of a Marine unit who recently returned to that state.

Of the 50 walking canes initially requested by Washington Army National Guard Family Resource Coordinator, Sheryl Obermiller, 43 have been completed. The group intends to complete the last of the 50 canes, but plans to carve more as they are needed, said Capitol Carver Vice President, Louis K. Wakefield, Sr.

"We wanted to show our support and love of our troops in a very physical, personal way," Wakefield said.

Many of the Soldiers who received their walking canes already had simple canes which could be bought at any store. But according to Spc. David Lamberson of Charlie Co., 579 Engineers, California Army National Guard, his new cane came with something no store-bought cane could ever have — a personal touch.

"You can tell a lot of time and love was put into these canes," Lamberson said. "This shows that somewhere, somebody cares, and they're willing to take the time to show it," he added.

New Army program helps identify Soldiers with Traumatic Brain Injury

Traumatic Brain Injury, Post-Traumatic Stress share many common symptoms



Photo by Randy Montoya

MODELING BRAIN INJURY — Engineer Paul Taylor, left and Corey Ford, neurologist at the University of New Mexico's Department of Neurology, study models of early traumatic brain injury.

Story by Spc. April L. Davis,
Oregon National Guard Public Affairs Office

The Army has launched a new, mandatory program to help Soldiers identify symptoms and seek treatment for Mild Traumatic Brain Injury and Post Traumatic Stress Disorder.

“The training is an educational piece designed to inform commanders and Soldiers, so they are aware of what MTBI is,” said Maj. Thomas Lingle, deputy state surgeon for the Oregon National Guard.

MTBI is a type of concussion resulting from the brain being shaken inside the skull. It is an unseen physical injury that can be caused by a blow to the head or shock wave from an explosion.

“It is a common injury for Soldiers coming back from Iraq,” said 2nd Lt. Shannon Fitch, behavioral science officer for the Oregon National Guard’s Medical Command.

Soldiers who have experienced Improvised Explosive Devices or mortars may possess symptoms of MTBI. Soldiers can also get a mild brain injury from training exercises such

as combatives, airborne or air assault training, according to the Army’s new MTBI training program.

“Anything that causes you to see stars, your ears to ring, or loss of consciousness could cause a brain injury,” said Fitch.

Fitch said many Soldiers don’t realize they have a mild brain injury and will return to combat situations where they receive repeated concussions before they start to notice something is seriously wrong.

“If they know the signs and symptoms of MTBI, they can prevent further injury from happening in the future,” said Fitch. “It’s all about knowledge, education and prevention.”

MTBI disrupts brain functions and if left untreated could cause permanent damage. Medical Command personnel say it is important for Soldiers and their families to know the symptoms, so they can seek treatment as soon as possible.

“The first step is for Soldiers and leaders to be able to identify if they might have it or if they know someone who might have it, and then get the Soldier to someone who can help them,” said Lingle.

Physical symptoms of MTBI can include blurred vision, headaches, ringing ears, dizziness, fatigue, and sensitivity to

light and sounds. Behavioral symptoms can include confusion, memory loss, difficulty organizing daily tasks, loss of concentration, slowed thinking or speaking, impaired decision making or problem solving, sleep problems, and impulsive behavior. Emotional symptoms can include always feeling sad or anxious, feeling easily overwhelmed, and feeling easily irritated or angered.

According to the Army’s training program, many of the symptoms of MTBI are similar to what Soldiers experience with Post Traumatic Stress Disorder. PTSD, or Post Combat Stress, is an anxiety disorder that develops after someone experiences a life-threatening situation.

Physical symptoms resulting from combat stress include fatigue, headaches, chest pain, sleep problems, difficulty breathing normally, pounding heart, profuse sweating, muscle tremors, weakness, and nightmares. Behavioral symptoms can include withdrawal, restlessness, emotional outbursts, paranoia, easily startled, and alcohol or substance abuse. Emotional symptoms can include anxiety or panic, fear, easily irritated or angered, and depression.

Soldiers who have Post Combat Stress have trouble putting the event out of their mind and will continue to “re-experience” life-threatening events or have nightmares. Soldiers with PTSD are paranoid or “hyper-vigilant” of their surroundings, avoid places or people that may remind them of a traumatic event, and may become emotionally detached.

Both MTBI and PTSD are common and treatable conditions, Fitch said, but she added that many Soldiers choose not to seek treatment for fear that it will affect their military career. For the safety of themselves and others, it is important that Soldiers seek help, she emphasized.

“As a Soldier you should not only be maintaining your physical health, but also your mental health,” Fitch said. “We are not here to hinder Soldiers or hurt their career, we’re here to help them. Our goal is to successfully put Soldiers back into boots.”

Fitch said Soldiers can seek help confidentially through the Oregon National Guard Medical Command.

“Unless Soldiers become a potential danger to themselves or others we will not inform their chain of command that they are seeking treatment,” she said.

Lingle said the Medical Command does not perform the treatment, but can help coordinate proper care through the Veterans Administration and help ensure that VA paperwork is filed correctly for Soldiers to receive treatment at no cost.

“We can’t treat them here, but we know who to pick up the phone and call,” said Lingle. “It is important that they notify us, or contact the VA, but make sure someone knows, so they can take appropriate actions to get treatment.”

If you or someone you know has symptoms of a mild brain injury or combat stress, you may call the Medical Command at 503-584-2303. All inquiries are kept confidential.

QUICK FACTS

Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI)

Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)

If the head is hit or violently shaken (such as from a blast or explosion), a “concussion” or “closed head injury” can result. Concussions are rarely life-threatening, so doctors often use the term “mild” when the person is only dazed or confused or loses consciousness for a short time. However, concussion can result in serious symptoms. People who survive multiple concussions may have more serious problems. People who have had a concussions may say that they are fine although their behavior or personality has changed. If you notice such changes in a family member or friend, suggest they seek medical care. Keep in mind that these are common experiences, but may occur more frequently with TBI. If in doubt, ask your doctor.

Common symptoms of TBI

- Difficulty organizing daily tasks
- Blurred vision or eyes tire easily
- Headaches or ringing in the ears
- Feeling sad, anxious or listless
- Easily irritated or angered
- Feeling tired all the time
- Feeling light-headed or dizzy
- Trouble with memory, attention or concentration
- More sensitive to sounds, lights or distractions
- Impaired decision making or problem solving
- Difficulty inhibiting behavior, impulsiveness
- Slowed thinking, moving speaking or reading
- Easily confused, feeling easily overwhelmed
- Change in sexual interest or behavior

Some symptoms may be present right away. Others may appear much later. People experience brain injuries differently.

Speed of recovery varies. Most people with mild brain injuries recover fully, but it can take time. In general, recovery is slower in older persons, and people with a previous brain injury might find it takes longer to recover from a current injury. Talk to your healthcare provider about any troubling symptoms or problems.

For more information, visit www.pdhealth.mil.

PTSD is a condition that develops after someone has experienced a life-threatening situation, such as combat. In PTSD, the event must have involved actual or threatened death or serious injury and caused an emotional reaction involving intense fear, hopelessness or horror. People with PTSD have three kinds of experiences for weeks or months after the event is over and the individual has returned to a safe environment.

People who have PTSD have experiences from all three of these categories that stay with them for most of the time and interfere with their ability to live their life or do their job. To find out if you are experiencing PTSD, take the Mental Health Self Assessment test at www.militarymentalhealth.org.

Re-experiencing the Event

- You can’t put it out of your mind no matter how hard you try
- You have repeated nightmares about the event
- You have vivid memories, almost like the event is happening all over again
- You have a strong reaction when you encounter reminders such as a car backfiring

Avoiding Reminders

- You work hard at putting it out of your mind
- You feel numb and detached - lack of feelings
- You avoid people or places that remind you of the event

Feeling “keyed-up” or “on-edge”

- You easily startle
- You feel irritable or angry for no apparent reason
- You are always looking around, hypervigilant
- You may have trouble relaxing or falling asleep

PTSD is treatable. Therapy has proven to be very effective in reducing and even eliminating symptoms. Early treatment leads to the best outcomes. If you think you or someone you know may have PTSD, please seek treatment right away.

Kaiser Permanente doctor owes personal success to U.S. education

He returns to Afghanistan to help build schools alongside Task Force members

Story by 1st Lt. Amanda Straub,
CJTF-V Public Affairs

KABUL, Afghanistan – Dr. Mohammad Khan Kharoti knows firsthand what a difference education can make in a life. Born to a family in the nomadic Kuchi tribe in Afghanistan, Kharoti is now a doctor of nuclear medicine at Kaiser Permanente Hospital in Portland, Ore.

“My father was a simple nomad with only a few camels,” Kharoti said. “He died not being able to read. My mother is still living, but she can not read. Because of a family in the United States, I was able to get an education and become a doctor,” Kharoti said.

“Three of my children are now studying in the best schools around the world,” he said. “All of this prosperity and opportunity came in the light of education!”

A man of small stature, Kharoti speaks gently about himself and his family, but a fire is kindled behind his eyes and he waves his hands animatedly as he talks about the importance of education.

“Education is the key to fight terrorism, the darkness of ignorance, to build bridges, to go forward hand in hand,” Kharoti says. “Without education it is difficult to build bridges, to build airplanes, to communicate. Without education it is difficult to understand other countries and cultures. All of these things can only be understood through the light that education brings.”

Kharoti believes that the ignorance of the Afghan people caused them to fall victim to the influence of the Taliban regime. He said that ignorance is the biggest enemy of the world and education is the best bomb

“Education is the key to fight terrorism, the darkness of ignorance, to build bridges, to go forward hand in hand,”

— Dr. Mohammad Khan Kharoti

to use to defeat terrorists.

“The Taliban took advantage of our hospitality because we had no understanding,” Kharoti said. “I want our people to be educated so no one can be used the way we were used on September 11. I do not want to see this happen in our country or any other country.”

In 2001, before the attacks of 9-11 when the Taliban was still in control of Afghanistan, Kharoti visited the country and begged Taliban leaders to allow him to open a school for girls and boys in Shin Kalay (Green Village), a village in the area where he grew up.

“I asked them,” Kharoti said, “If you had a sick family member, your daughter or your wife, would you want them to see a male or a female doctor?” They said they would rather have their female family members see a woman doctor of course. I told them, ‘That is why we need to have school for girls as well as for boys.’”

The school began with 10 boys and quickly grew to 15 girls and 60 boys. The school was modest, to say the least. Students sat through lessons outdoors in the scorching Afghan heat memorizing their lessons due to a lack of pencils and paper. Students scooped water from a nearby ditch for drinking and washing and there was no electricity. Kharoti placed heavy emphasis on an English curriculum from the beginning.

“English is the language of science and medicine and communication between countries,” Kharoti said, “and many of the books that are donated to the school are in English, so it is very important for the students to learn English from the beginning.”

Since the school’s modest opening in 2001, Green Village School has grown to accommodate 1,100 students. Through donations to the Green Village School project, many from generous Oregon contributors, the school has gained new classrooms, desks, school supplies, books, music equipment, electrical generators and an electric well which supplies a continuous



Photo courtesy of Dr. Mohammad Khan Kharoti

Approximately 1,100 students currently study at Green Village School in newly constructed, freshly-painted classrooms complete with real desks donated from the United States.

supply of fresh, clean drinking water.

“It is important for the people to see this side of America,” Kharoti said. “It is one thing for the people here to see a Humvee in the street. It is another to see their children sitting on desks from America. I want to see them walk in the library and see rows and rows of books from America that will last years and years.”

Kharoti sees the Green Village School project as a way to show his gratitude for the opportunities he was given and share his blessings with the people from his home country.

“I was so poor growing up,” Kharoti said. “I could never have become a doctor on my own. But thanks to the help I received from friends in the United States I have prospered and now, thanks to my work, 1,100 more boys and girls will walk into the light of education.”

Dr. Kharoti believes firmly that it is important to educate both genders in any society and says that educating girls provides more long-term benefits for Afghan society than educating boys only. Educated women can teach their children about the world and how to tolerate and respect people from all different cultures and countries. Today the school teaches nearly equal numbers of Afghan boys and girls.

“An educated mother has great influence on a child. The mother is with the child from the crib. Children are closer to their mother than their father when they are young, she teaches them about economics, peace, all things,” Kharoti said. “She is the light of the house. In Afghanistan we have a saying, ‘If a wife dies, the light goes out of the house.’”

Kharoti recently visited the Green Village School to assess its progress and needs. He wants to expand the school to include 12 new classrooms, a library, a computer lab, and sanitary bathrooms with flushing toilets and running water.

Visiting the school was difficult due to recent security threats. In February bomb threats forced the school to close temporarily. Kharoti was not sure he would be able to visit the school due the security situation and insurgent threats against his life. He says it is very difficult for him to travel to his old home without a military escort.

“The security posture is necessary to make Afghanistan’s schools safe. All nations who support and care about Afghanistan’s children must fight terrorism and support education,” Kharoti said.

Kharoti also said that gaining support from the village elders in Green Village is vital to the success of the school. The school serves as a community center for important holidays, weddings and other celebrations. It has a mosque on the grounds where villagers can go to pray.

The school was used as a voting center in



Photo courtesy of Dr. Mohammad Khan Kharoti

A generous donation from a Portland resident provided recorders and harmonicas for students to learn music. All forms of music were strictly forbidden under the Taliban regime.

the last parliamentary election where thousands of people, including 4,000 women, came to vote. The multi-purpose function of the school ensures the support of the elders in the community who can negotiate with Taliban to keep the school safe.

Kharoti was able to secure \$70,000 in additional funding from the Combined Joint Task Force Phoenix V Commander’s Emergency Response Program. Task Force Phoenix V is commanded by the 41st Brigade Combat Team based out of Oregon. The task force is made up of servicemembers deployed to Afghanistan from 49 states, with more than 800 from Oregon.

“It’s neat because we can stay in touch with this school even when we redeploy,” Maj. Robert Fraser, task force Civil Affairs Officer said. “There will always be a piece of Oregon here in Afghanistan.”

“Ten years from now these children will be standing with you side by side,” Kharoti said.

“One child will grow to meet with senators and he will come from this school. He will tell them about what America did for him. I hope I will be alive when this dream comes true. This will be an example for all of Afghanistan that we are for understanding,” he said.

“We are not against any particular religion,” he continued. “We are for cooperation, understanding, tolerance and respect. Children with this kind of education will become candles, the light at the end of the tunnel.”

If you would like to learn more about the Green Village School or ways you can help support Dr. Mohammad Khan Kharoti’s work, please visit www.greenvillageschools.org or write to: Green Village Schools, Inc., P.O. Box 80061, Portland, OR 97280.



Photo courtesy of Dr. Mohammad Khan Kharoti



Photo by 1st Lt. Amanda Straub, CJTF-V Public Affairs

Dr. Mohammad Khan Kharoti, (center), recently visited Afghanistan to check on his school project and meet with Task Force Phoenix to seek funding and security for the Green Village School. Here he is meeting Lt. Col. Mark Rathburn (left) and Maj. Robert Fraser, Task Force Civil Affairs Officer. Rathburn concentrated on ways to secure the area around Shin Kalay, while Fraser reviewed plans for school expansion in order to seek funding for construction and school supplies.

Above: From the beginning, Dr. Mohammad Khan Kharoti knew that English training would be very important for the students of Green Village School. Kharoti said English is the most common language in the world, the language of science and medicine, and many of the students’ books and supplies are donated in English, so he insisted that English be taught from the first days the school opened, even to the youngest students.

Two female combat medics see actual combat in Afghanistan



Photo by 1st Lt. Amanda Straub, CJTF-V Public Affairs

Staff Sgt. Jo Turner (left) and Spc. Cheryl Ivanov (right) are battle buddies who stick together and help each other cope with the emotional and mental stress of operations in a combat zone.

Story by 1st Lt. Amanda Straub,
CJTF-V Public Affairs

SGARDEZ, AFGHANISTAN – Staff Sgt. Jo Turner, of Springfield, Ore., and Spc. Cheryl Ivanov, from Coos Bay, Ore., have a unique opportunity to work in the “Good Old Boy’s Club” while deployed to Afghanistan.

They are both female combat medics deployed with Oregon’s 41st Brigade Combat Team and are attached to the Afghan National Army’s (ANA) 3rd Infantry Kandak, 1st Brigade, 203rd Corps to provide medical support during missions.

In addition to providing medical assistance on tactical missions, Turner and Ivanov are also responsible for mentoring ANA healthcare providers and teaching classes to Kandak medics. According to the duo, because they are women, it was a challenge to earn the title and respect that comes with being an embedded trainer.

“We’re running the missions and doing the stuff, but we don’t get the credit because we have to do it subversively because we’re female,” Turner said. “I’ve been fighting that my whole life.”

Ivanov says everyone was hesitant about letting the women go on patrols with the ANA. No one was sure how the ANA would react to having women on patrol. Even some of the U.S. Soldiers were leery about having women in combat. However, their skills

were in high demand due to the shortage of medics in Afghanistan. Now accepted into 3rd Kandak, Turner and Ivanov have become an integral part of the team.

“They stared and stared at first,” Ivanov said. “Then they saw us sleep on the ground like they did and eat their food like they did and ever since then Turner and I have been okay.”

Both women earned Combat Medical Badges as a result of their work under fire. They drive armored Humvees for the embedded trainers assigned to 3rd Kandak during patrols and provide medical support to the ANA, Afghan police, U.S. Military and civilians, ensuring that all receive the best medical care when something goes wrong.

Master Sgt. Dan Stapleton, the senior embedded trainer on the team, feels Turner and Ivanov have provided invaluable assistance since their incorporation into 3rd Kandak.

“I don’t think I’ve done a mission without you since you started,” Stapleton said to the two medics.

From the beginning, the two women worked hard to earn the trust and respect of the ANA Soldiers and prove their capabilities to the American supervisors. The ANA were extremely hesitant to trust Turner and Ivanov or seek medical care because of their gender. But any doubt as to their abilities was put to rest following an unfortunate incident.

An Improvised Explosive Device (IED) hit a truck full of ANA Soldiers early in the deployment. Other ANA Soldiers responded to the attack by quickly loading the wounded into another truck and speeding them to Khost before Turner and Ivanov could give them on-the-scene care.

“It was only our second time out and nobody had seen what we could do,” Turner said.

Most of the men in the truck were fatally wounded, but Turner believes they could have saved at least one of the men by applying a tourniquet to his severed leg. Turner said the Soldiers killed in the attack were some of the first to befriend and support her and Ivanov which made the incident difficult to accept for both women. All but one of the men in the attack died of their wounds, and when Turner and Ivanov learned at least one of the men could have been saved, they made it clear to the Afghan Soldiers that wounded warriors should receive treatment before being evacuated. The medics later wept for the fallen ANA Soldiers as if they were their own.



Photo courtesy of U.S. Army

Turner and Ivanov spent a lot of time with the local population, especially with the local children, who they referred to as “the hope of Afghanistan”.

“When the ANA saw us crying, as upset as they were, they started to trust us,” Turner said. “It was a breaking point. Now they know we can do tourniquets and call for medical evacuation and they ask us to go with them. They are upset if we’re not on a mission.”

In another incident, 3rd Kandak was ambushed while on patrol, receiving insurgent fire from rocket-propelled grenades and small arms fire. An ANA general was in the convoy and ignored his own safety in order to direct his Soldiers. Stapleton jumped from his armored Humvee to secure the general as he continued to command his troops. Turner then drove her Humvee into the firefight with Staff Sgt. Arthur Perez manning the crew-served weapon in the turret. The ANA gained even more respect for the medics when they saw that Turner was not afraid to get into the fight.

“The ANA guys treat us like family now,” Turner said. “They call us ‘mother and sister’.”

Turner and Ivanov take family seriously and both have children at home. Ivanov is the mother of two boys and two girls. her husband, Private 1st Class. Ognian Ivanov, is also deployed with the 41st Brigade Combat Team as a weapons repair specialist where he is stationed at the same forward operating base with his wife. Ivanov has a civilian career as a lab assistant at Bay Area Hospital in Oregon and has been in the National Guard for five years.

Turner, who has been in the Army for 16

years, has two sons and one daughter, all of whom are serving in the military. In the civilian world, she is the director of nursing services at Eugene’s Good Samaritan Rehabilitation Center, and has been a registered nurse for ten years.

Turner and Ivanov were both deployed in support of the Hurricane Katrina relief mission in 2005, but for both women, the ANA mission is the first combat tour.

When it comes to the dangers of combat, Turner and Ivanov try to be realistic. They know they are putting themselves in danger every time they accompany the ANA on a mission in the volatile pass between Khost and Gardez. They trust their training and they trust the Soldiers around them.

“My ANA (Soldiers) take care of these gals,” Stapleton said. “That’s why I don’t worry about taking them out with me. They (the Afghanis) are very protective (of them).”

Despite the hazards, Turner and Ivanov both say that accompanying the ANA on field missions is a wonderful experience.

“It’s awesome,” Turner said. “It’s what we’ve been trained to do.”

Medics in the Army receive special training called Tactical Casualty Care Under Fire. It prepares individuals to deal with combat situations. They are trained to first secure the area, and then to treat casualties. Many medics find it difficult to postpone treating the casualties until the firefight is over, but they are all taught that no one is safe until the enemy threat has been neutralized.

“If we have to lay hot lead down range and then treat (the) casualties, that’s what we do,” Ivanov said.

Ivanov and Turner roll out with the ANA and their embedded trainers at least once or twice a week. Many of their missions require them to stay in the field for six days at a time. Their longest mission, which lasted 18 days, involved establishing a new forward operating base in the Khost-Gardez Pass.

“If something goes down, I don’t worry,” Ivanov said. “They’re a bunch of good guys. The ANA really have our backs. They’ll take care of us.”

“You don’t know how you’ll react until that first ambush,” Turner added. “I was more pissed off than anything.”

“It doesn’t really bother me when they [insurgents] shoot at us,” Ivanov said. “It’s the IEDs that worry me.”

Turner and Ivanov began working with 3rd Kandak in support of humanitarian missions. The embedded trainers would coordinate medical assistance missions to nearby villages to make friends, gather intelligence, and help the local population. Turner was surprised when she began treating a man and an interpreter came up and whispered in her ear, “He’s Taliban.”

“It made my stomach turn,” Turner said. Both medics have come to terms with the fact that they must treat anyone in need of assistance during these medical missions.

“At the same time,” Turner said, “we got a lot of useful information. For example we found out about and stopped an illegal checkpoint.”

Treating the casualties of war can take its toll on a person. Turner and Ivanov have been exposed to the most extreme injuries of war, and like all medical professionals, they must deal with the fact that they can not save everyone. Once they responded to a rocket attack at a nearby Kuchi camp. Insurgents had been aiming at the American base, but hit the camp instead wounding and killing several civilians. Turner and Ivanov were appalled at the gore as well as the pain and fear of the civilians there, but they focused on treating everyone they could – even as another rocket landed just a few meters away.

“It’s our job,” Ivanov said. “When you go out you do your job and you don’t think about it until later. You go person to person as fast as you can. You don’t have time to think about it.”

Turner and Ivanov are hopeful that their work in Afghanistan will crack the glass in the ceiling and pave the way for other women in the military and healthcare, especially Afghans, to be successful contributors to society and security.



Photo courtesy of U.S. Army

Ivanov, a female combat medic deployed with Oregon’s 41st Brigade Combat Team from Coos Bay, says she loves going on missions and working with the Afghan National Army Soldiers.

The painful realities of war hit home for Oregon Soldier

Coos Bay man seriously injured in training exercise while serving in Afghanistan

Story by Alexander Rich,
www.theworldlink.com

COOS BAY, Ore. — The story of Ognian Ivanov could be a sad one, but it's not. He could be just another victim of a seemingly endless war, but that would be ignoring all the good he accomplished.

As an Oregon National Guardsman in Afghanistan he saw the anguish and suffering of the people there, but also reasons for hope. Women were casting off their burkas and raising their voices. Children were getting medical treatment and soaking up knowledge from whomever would provide some. And he was offering Afghan soldiers training to secure their country when disaster struck.

During a training exercise, a mortar round was accidentally triggered and exploded in his right hand. He was taken to a hospital in San Antonio, where his hand was amputated and multiple additional injuries were treated.

Yet as his family and friends held their collective breath, Ognian helped bring another community together.

As a native of Bulgaria, Ognian Ivanov understands freedom. He was serving in the armed forces and remembers the celebrations when the tentacles of Communism finally retracted their grip.

His love for freedom eventually brought him to America, where he met, and married, Cheryl in Coos Bay. In 2000, they moved back to Coos Bay after spending several years in Las Vegas. He got a job as a technician at The Mill Casino-Hotel, while she worked as a phlebotomist at Bay Area Hospital. Although a foreign national, Ognian joined Cheryl in enlisting with the Oregon National Guard.

"Ogi feels that if the United States opens its arms and accepts someone as a citizen with all of the rights, freedoms and benefits of a natural-born American, then you lay your life down to help protect those said rights, freedoms and benefits," Cheryl wrote in an e-mail from San Antonio.

In June 2006, Ognian and Cheryl left for Afghanistan. They were stationed in a small forward operating base, Camp Lightning, near the city of Gardez in the southern part

of the country.

While Ognian trained Afghan recruits, Cheryl roamed the countryside, providing medical assistance and learning more about the culture. One of only two women in her unit, Cheryl was valuable in providing care as well as changing the perceptions of those she treated.

"As a woman working so closely with the Afghan men, I had to earn the respect and trust that would have come so easily to my male counterparts," she said. (See related story on next page).

She garnered recognition by joining numerous forays into the field.

"(Improvised explosive devices), suicide bombings, rocket attacks, I went through it all," she said. "One time, I spent 18 days in the field but it was a good thing because it really changed their attitudes."

Cheryl noticed she was not the only woman who was able to gain respect.

"In the time we were there, fewer and fewer women were wearing burkas and a lot of schools are looking for uniforms so girls can play soccer," she said. "The women are sick and tired of their children getting injured and killed."

As a veteran of the Bulgarian army, Ognian had received training in the use of Soviet-era weapons. Some segments of the Afghan army rely on such equipment, so on Feb. 6, Ognian found himself training some recruits in the proper handling of Soviet mortar rounds.

A soldier mistakenly activated one and then froze in terror. Ognian grabbed the live round and was about to toss it when it detonated.

"Ogi always made sure to follow orders and we were told to always wear our protective gear," Cheryl said.

When the round went off in his hand, "he had his protective gear on and that's why he's still here," she said.

Cheryl joined Ognian as he was transported to Germany and then to San Antonio, where he was checked into the Brooke Army Medical Center.

"The doctors can't believe he survived it," Cheryl said.

Ognian's armor protected his upper body and head from shrapnel, but his extremities



Photo courtesy of Spc. Cheryl Ivanov

Pvt. 1st Class Ognian Ivanov (right) with wife, Spc. Cheryl Ivanov in Afghanistan before the accident which injured Ognian.

bore the brunt of the blast.

Surgeons amputated his right hand to the middle of his forearm. His right eye appeared to be damaged by the explosion. His right femur broke and his lungs have several contusions.

Doctors examined his right eye and determined his eyesight was fine. He has been removed from the intensive care unit and put into an intermediate care ward.

It is difficult to determine how long it will take Ognian to recover from his injuries, though Cheryl said doctors have said to expect one or two years of therapy.

Since the accident, Cheryl has been providing updates to staff at both The Mill Casino and Bay Area Hospital.

"It took us really hard when we learned he got hurt," said Miling Laygui, a slot department administrator at The Mill. "You don't expect someone you know to get hurt."

By the time he left for Afghanistan, Ognian had risen to the rank of bench technician at the casino. He was training and working with the nine other technicians in

his department. But many more were interested in his well being.

"We had an article in our last newsletter about the two employees we have in Afghanistan," said Bernie Crowder, an assistant manager at The Mill. "After we learned about Ogi, everyone was bugging me about updates, so I just started sending the letters I received to everyone on the casino e-mail list."

At Bay Area Hospital, Vickie Montgomery serves a similar role, disseminating e-mail updates to the 50-person lab. Montgomery remembered speaking to Cheryl the first time after the accident happened.

"She called me from Afghanistan as soon as he had been injured," she said. "We cried on the phone together. She was very afraid. I don't think she could get to his side fast enough."

Cheryl said that neither she nor Ognian has any regrets about going to Afghanistan.

"That's what you do, you offer yourself to your country," she said.

Oregon eye doctor helped give the gift of sight to Afghanis

Story and photo by
1st Lt. Cathrin Fraker,
CJTF-V Public Affairs

KABUL, Afghanistan — In addition to caring for vision needs of the Warriors of Task Force Phoenix, Lt. Col. James Randolph, Petty Officer 2nd Class Conward Bundrick, and Petty Officer 3rd Class Khalil Weaver, gave the gift of sight to the people of Afghanistan.

A villager in his mid-fifties sat down in the exam chair. His look was very serious as he concentrated on the eye chart to which Weaver was pointing. Randolph, an eye doctor from Oregon, used an antique skiascopy rack to determine the correction the man needed, and Bundrick located a pair of glasses with the appropriate prescription and passed them to the doctor.

Randolph placed the glasses on the man and the change was immediate. He looked at the eye chart and his face transformed. The once stern look was replaced with a bright smile. The man laughed and told the interpreter that he could see. He pointed and said that he could clearly make out the eye chart that was barely visible without the glasses.

"When you get a smile like that, you know you have really helped someone who couldn't see," Randolph stated.

Together, the team has experienced the smiles of children and adults who have been given the gift of sight.

"People here have so little," Bundrick said. "To give them something we take for granted, it is the best thing."

Bundrick and Weaver, both active duty

Navy personnel, usually work in a clinical environment. The mission at Task Force Phoenix has given them an opportunity to see the immediate reaction of their patients when they see clearly for the first time.

Although they have only worked together for a short time, Randolph, Bundrick and Weaver have formed a precision team. From setting up for a Cooperative Medical Assistance (CMA) mission to routine exams, each knows their role.

During CMA missions, the team loads up several pairs of glasses, made in different prescriptions, and boxes of equipment to conduct eye exams. Bundrick and Weaver make up over 100 pairs of glasses from frames that have been donated by various organizations and businesses. During a CMA the team can fit anywhere from 40 to 150 people with glasses.

Local villagers line up outside the makeshift exam room waiting for their chance to visit the eye doctor and improve their vision. Eye problems range from normal, age-related vision problems which are easily corrected with reading glasses, to more severe problems and loss of sight. The most common ailment Randolph treats is allergic conjunctivitis which is due to soot, dust, pollen and other pollutants in the air.

Randolph and his team have participated in six CMAs. Each patient is different, but the end result is usually the same, most walk away with a new pair of glasses or medicated eye drops and the smile that reassures the team of their success.

Unfortunately, there are patients that have damage beyond the immediate help of eyeglasses. Some require cataract sur-



Oregon eye doctor, and Soldier, Lt. Col. James Randolph, (right), with his patients in Afghanistan. Randolph brought some of the equipment from his own private practice to help treat local Afghanis.

gery that is available in Afghanistan. Others require more extensive surgery that is not available in this country. Still others have irreversible conditions that cause permanent loss of sight.

One common cause of blindness in Afghanistan is corneal scarring. The scarring is the result of a simple injury that is left untreated. The cornea becomes scarred causing permanent damage and loss of sight. Some cases leave the individual with a noticeably disfigured eye.

Nazanin, a young girl with a disfigured

eye, came to Randolph for care. Although nothing could be done to restore her sight, Randolph is fitting her for a cosmetic contact that will give her eye a more normal appearance.

The feeling of making a difference has been rewarding and unforgettable for the team. After 37 years in the Army, and 28 years as an optometrist, Randolph still smiles each time someone leaves his office better than they came in.

"This deployment has been the highlight of my career," said Randolph.

Reintegration team provides resources for returning Soldiers

Story by Kim Lippert,
Oregon National Guard Public Affairs

The return of the 41st Brigade Combat Team brings almost 900 Oregon Soldiers back to their home state. For many the return to civilian life is an easy one. For others it can be a bit more challenging.

The Oregon National Guard’s Reintegration Team helps facilitate a smoother transition back into civilian life by helping returning soldiers with job placement, educational training, and even referrals for emotional counseling.

“We have a higher rate (of soldiers seeking help) this early in the game, said Ray Lewallen, retired Oregon National Guard soldier now working for the Reintegration Team. “We are getting calls almost daily from soldiers needing help,” added Lewallen.

The Oregon National Guard Reintegration Team has been in existence for more than two years. Lewallen said the teams outreach continues to grow – with more people than ever seeking help.

“I think our Soldiers are smarter now, many of them are on their second and third deployment, they are recognizing troubling symptoms sooner and seeking help,” said Lewallen.

The statistics speak for themselves. According to Col. (Ret.) Scott McCrae, who also works with reintegration team, 65 percent of returning Soldiers are underemployed or unemployed, and 17 percent of service members nationwide have a diagnosis of Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD). One half of female deployed Soldiers come back with some sort of readjustment issue that needs to be addressed, McCrae said.

Nearly 100 Soldiers who deployed with the 41st Brigade Combat Team to Afghanistan were women.

“We’ve never had a situation in our history where so many female Soldiers were seeing combat,” said Lewallen.

According to the National Center for PTSD, women are twice as likely as men to develop Post Traumatic Stress Disorder.

“We are not sure what levels of combat stress and family stress we are going to be dealing with because part of Afghanistan was fairly secure and part of it was just as bad as Iraq,” McCrae said.

McCrae said the ORNG Reintegration Team has grown and changed in the two years since its inception.

“The biggest difference is when we started out in February of 2005 we weren’t sure where we wanted to go,” said McCrae. “We have matured now and we have networks across the state,” he added.

The group has relationships with the Oregon Department of Veterans’ Affairs, several government agencies, local employers, and other members of the community. More than two hundred employers across the state have signed an agreement with the Reintegration Team to list themselves as “Veteran Friendly”; those businesses looking to hire service members.

Those relationships allow the reintegration team to steer soldiers in the right direction and help meet whatever need they may be facing, McCrae said.

“We help Soldiers help themselves,” said McCrae. “I think this has been the best thing we have done for our Soldiers in my 35 years in the Oregon National Guard,” he said.

The ORNG Reintegration Team is hosting several military job and benefit fairs across the state; Sept. 23, at the Medford Armory; Oct. 13, at Klamath Community College in Klamath Falls, Ore.; and Nov. 3, at Clackamas Community College in Oregon City.

For more information on the Oregon National Guard Reintegration Team, call 888-688-2264. The number is manned 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. You can also visit the website at www.oregonarmyguard.or.ngb.army.mil.

CJTF-V members help flood victims



Photo by Tech. Sgt. Cecilio M. Ricardo Jr., U.S. Air Force

Combined Joint Task Force Phoenix V member, Maj. Arnold Strong, of the Oregon Army National Guard, carries bags of supplies for flood victims in front of the Afghan Olympic Stadium April 10, 2007, in Kabul, Afghanistan. Kabul was ravaged by the first flood in 15 years. The Training Assistance Group from Camp Alamo coordinated food distribution efforts to supply flood victims in Kabul. They provided 100 pounds of rice, beans, wheat, flour ,tea, cooking oil, shovels, sand bags, tarps and more to approximately 100 families. Hundreds of families lost their homes, belongings and supplies to the flood.

Oregon guardsman finishes college courses while in Afghanistan



Photo courtesy of Chemeketa Community College

Spc. Jonathan Cartney stands in front of a destroyed Soviet-era tank near the city of Konduz, Afghanistan during his year-long deployment with the 41st Brigade Combat Team.

Story and Melanie Moisan,
Chemeketa Community College Marketing & Public Relations Coordinator

Spc. Jonathan Cartney, Oregon National Guard, was a soldier serving in Afghanistan when he signed up for classes at Chemeketa Community College in the fall of 2006.

Hoping to get help paying his tuition, he called the financial aid office to see if he qualified for assistance. He learned his combat pay pushed his income too high, and he was ineligible for aid, but, even so, that didn’t stop the financial aid office from adopting him as their “guy in Afghanistan.”

“He was such a nice young man,” said Elaine Smith, federal work study coordinator, “and talking to him put an Oregon face on the nightly news. He’d call or send e-mail and bring us up-to-date on what was going on in his life.”

When he first went to Afghanistan, Jonathan had already served 10 months in Kirkuk, in the northern part of Iraq. He had little time there to study, but in Afghanistan he signed up for online classes in reading, writing and math.

“It wasn’t easy,” he said, “I completed much of my reading while bouncing up and down in the back of a Humvee.”

It may not have been easy, but it could help him achieve his goal. Jonathan grew up in the northeast corner of Oregon and graduated from Cove High School. He has wanted to be a paramedic since he was 8. At the age of 17, he joined the Oregon National Guard, in part to help pay for a college education.

“I also wanted to serve my country,” he said, “and I wanted the chance to work as part of a team.”

Because of his interest in the medical field, he asked to serve as a medic while in the Middle East. It was hard being away from friends and family, but helping other people, no matter what nationality they were, helped make that separation easier.

“The best part of my tour,” he said, “was being a part of MedCAPS [Medical Civilian Assistance Program]. We’d go out to villages for three or four days and treat people for their health problems. It was good just being able to help someone in need.”

Around Christmas that year, Jolene Jones, financial aid assistant at Chemeketa, suggested they send Jonathan a Christmas present, an idea that grew into a series of care packages.

“Elaine really took the lead,” said Jolene. “People from several departments contributed, but she collected everything and got it to the post office. She was also our main contact with Jonathan.”

“They sent me a lot of stuff,” Jonathan said. “It seemed like about 800 pounds of books, snacks, games, socks, hats, stamps, and writing material.” Things, he said, that he always appreciated receiving. Of more importance to Jonathan, however, was the friendship those gifts represented.

Now back home after “364 days, 12 hours and 13 minutes in Afghanistan,” Jonathan is enrolled in Introduction to Emergency Services and a psychology class, hoping to enter Chemeketa’s Fire Protection and Emergency Medical Technician-Paramedic programs in the fall. He also works for the Sublimity Fire Department as a “sleeper” – a position that provides experience and a place to live for students attending school full time in the emergency service field.

He’s happy to talk about his future, but, like many soldiers, there are other things he’d rather not talk about. For example, he’s not interested in the politics of his situation, saying these are problems for the politicians.

“My job is to be a soldier on the ground and make sure my guys are okay,” he said. “That’s what we do.”

Nor is he interested in watching the war unfold on television.

“A soldier dies and it’s covered for a minute,” he said, “but they spend days on Anna Nicole Smith. It’s hard to watch.”

When asked if he or any of his friends had been wounded, he is even more succinct. “A couple of my friends were injured; a couple are no longer here.” Then he lets you know it’s time to move on to another topic.

On Sept. 11, 2006, Jonathan requested that an American flag be flown for Chemeketa over his base in Kabul, and on June 26, 2007, he gave that same flag to President Gretchen Schuette as a gift to the college out of his gratitude for the professionalism and caring of the college’s staff and faculty. He took a second flag, flown that same day in Afghanistan, to Elaine Smith, for going out of her way to be a friend to him.

“People at the college knew I had some issues,” he said, in a classic case of understatement, “and that sometimes situations might keep me from meeting a deadline. The people at Chemeketa always treated me like a real person.”

“You enabled us to shape a future generation of Afghanis and to create an environment of peace,”

— Brig. Gen. Douglas A. Pritt,
commander, 41st Brigade Combat Team



Photo by Tech. Sgt. Nick Choy, Oregon National Guard Public Affairs

Brig. Gen. Douglas A. Pritt presents Joyce Lindsey (right), with a plaque commemorating the sacrifice of her husband, Staff Sgt. Nathaniel “Brad” Lindsey, who was killed in action in Afghanistan, Sept. 9, 2006.

Tribute turns into a community event

Continued from PAGE 7



Photo by Spc. April L. Dustin, Oregon National Guard Public Affairs

A toast to the troops! From left to right: Chip Terhune, Governor Kulongoski’s Chief of Staff, Brig. Gen. Douglas A. Pritt, commander, Joint Task Force Phoenix V, Brett Joyce of Rogue Brewery, and Maj. Gen. Raymond F. Rees, The Adjutant General, Oregon National Guard.

Members of the 41st Brigade marched behind the 234th Army Band, with Pritt and the color guard leading the way. The Soldiers made their way into the football stadium, as spectators filed into the stands.

Shortly following the official ceremony, Soldiers were each given a commemorative bottle of beer, featuring a collector label emblazoned with the Joint Task Force Phoenix V logo and an overview of their Afghanistan deployment. Rees joined Brett Joyce from Rogue Brewery, to hand out the bottles.

Soldiers and their families then made their way down the street to Cook Park, for an afternoon of food and festivities.

Attendees could chose between face painting, a rock climbing wall, jump houses for the kids, a dunk tank and weapons and military vehicle displays. There were several vendor booths, a large stage with live entertainment, and several food booths providing free refreshments, hot dogs, hamburgers, ice cream and popcorn. Although organizers had planned for 2,000 guests, only a fraction turned out for the event.

The gathering gave Soldiers a chance to catch up with fellow brigade members they had not seen since returning home in early 2007.

“It’s nice to see the comraderie of everybody when they get back together,” said Staff Sgt. Roland Howard of Beaverton, Ore. Howard was seriously injured by an improvised explosive device while in Afghanistan.

“To see the support you get from the city, family members and businesses in the local area. It really makes it feel like everything we did over there was worthwhile,” Howard said.

Task Force Phoenix V was tasked with a unique mission to train and mentor members of the Afghan National Army (ANA). Due to the success of their mission, the task force was requested to also train the Afghan Police. The ANA is an all-volunteer army, much like the military forces in the United States.



Photo by Tech. Sgt. Nick Choy, Oregon National Guard Public Affairs

A member of the Patriot Guard Riders watches the welcome home ceremony for the 41st Brigade Combat Team at the Tigard High School Football Stadium, Aug. 4. The group often shows its support of Oregon’s military by attending official events.

Afghanistan veteran awarded for valor as Portland Police officer

Story by Spc. April L. Davis,
Oregon National Guard Public Affairs

PORTLAND, Ore. — An Oregon Army National Guard captain returned home from Afghanistan to a heroes’ welcome not just for serving overseas, but also for his actions in his civilian job as a Portland police officer.

William “Jack” Gillentine Jr., a member of Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 41st Infantry Brigade Combat Team, was awarded the Medal of Valor, the Portland Police Bureau’s most distinguished award, on June 20 during an awards ceremony at the David Douglas Performing Arts Center.

“It’s an honor, the Medal of Valor is not an every day award of course, but it’s nice to be formally recognized for all the things police officers do every day to help the public,” said Gillentine.

Gillentine and several of his colleagues were awarded for assisting in the rescue of a 14-year-old girl who witnessed a suspect stabbing and killing her grandmother outside of her home.

“Everybody that was there did a great job and all the awards that were given for this incident were well-deserved,” Gillentine said.

On March 12, 2005, Gillentine and his partner, Portland Police Officer James Nett, responded to a request for assistance from a Multnomah County Sheriff’s deputy to help rescue the teenager. After witnessing her grandmother’s murder from a window, the girl locked herself in an upstairs bedroom and called 911.

“Our biggest concern was for the safety of the 14-year-old-girl,” said Gillentine. “She was still on the phone with dispatch and they were telling us through our radios that the suspect was now inside the house.”

“Jack and I got there first, the deputy and four more officers arrived soon after,” said Nett. “We found the grandmother deceased just outside the house and we quickly developed a plan that four of us were going to go inside.”

The officers kicked down the door and began searching the house. They found the suspect sitting on the floor in the kitchen.

“He had the knife and he was covered in blood,” Gillentine said. “The deputy challenged him to drop the weapon, the guy got up off the ground, he yelled like a war-cry and charged at us.”

The officers fired at the suspect several times as he kept charging.

“My first thought was, is this really happening, is this guy really going to charge three officers with our pistols drawn,” Gillentine said. “And then because of your training and experience you instantly realize what is going on and you just automatically react.”

The officers continued to fire shots at the suspect until he eventually stopped advancing. He later died as a result of his wounds.

“He started out about fifteen feet away and he got about two feet from us before he finally went down,” said Gillentine.

In his 14-year military career and eight years as a police officer, it was the first time Gillentine had to shoot a suspect. He said the stressful situation helped him prepare for the firefights he faced in Afghanistan while deployed with the 41st IBCT.

“You can never get enough training in stressful situations,” said Gillentine. “As a police officer you deal with a lot of stressful incidents and you have to maintain your sense of calm. All of my experiences over the past eight years with the police bureau certainly helped me stay calm when bullets, (rocket propelled grenades) and mortar rounds were flying.”

Gillentine said he was involved in about 12-14 firefights while stationed with an Embedded Training Team near Gardez and the Pakistan border.

“The firefights were more intense than anything I’ve ever dealt with as a police officer, because you couldn’t really tell when one firefight ended and another one began,” said Gillentine.

He said that his experiences in Afghanistan will, in turn, help his career as a police officer. He plans to use what he learned in Afghanistan to help battle terrorism in the Northwest.

“My job as a police officer and my job as a Soldier definitely compliment each other,” Gillentine said.

He attributes his success as both a police officer and Soldier to the support of his wife, Shana, his partner, James Nett, and all his family and friends.



Photo by Dale E. Miller, Portland Police Bureau Photo Lab

The Portland Police Bureau awarded Capt. Jack Gillentine with a Medal of Valor, the bureau’s most distinguished award, for assisting in the rescue of a 14-year-old girl.

Quotable Quotes

“You sleep safe in your beds because rough men stand ready in the night to visit violence on those who would do you harm.”

— George Orwell, author, (1903 — 1950)
From a BBC broadcast, April 4, 1942

Oregon Soldier helps save lives through suicide prevention

Story and photo
by Sgt. 1st Class Erick Studenicka,
National Guard Bureau

ARLINGTON, Va. (8/20/2007) — In terms of a threat to Army National Guard Soldiers, it easily rivals rounds from a concealed sniper, the devastation of an improvised explosive device or a blast from rocket propelled grenade.

The threat doesn't stem from any foreign armed forces or military power, and casualties resulting from this threat are often the saddest and most heartbreaking of deaths for the family and friends of these Soldiers.

The threat is suicide, which ranked as the No. 3 cause of death for Army National Guard Soldiers through Aug. 13, according to the Army National Guard's Suicide Prevention Program. There have been 42 cases of suicide in the Army National Guard this fiscal year, and it narrowly trails only combat (47) and accidents (45) in terms of Soldier deaths.

Statistics reveal the National Guard suicide trend mirrors the active-duty Army and the numbers are increasing. The Army Suicide Event Report released Aug. 16 reported there were 99 confirmed suicides among active duty Soldiers in calendar year 2006, its highest number since 1991. The Army National Guard's total of 42 is already 17 more than the 2006 total and marks the highest total since the Army National Guard began keeping suicide statistics in 2004.

The comparison to the active duty has one major difference though, said Master Sgt. Marshall Bradshaw, the National Guard Bureau suicide prevention manager.

"The active duty Army has resources and facilities available to the Soldiers 24 hours a day, seven days a week," Bradshaw said. "They have a greater ability to track information and provide suicide prevention resources to their Soldiers.

"Providing suicide prevention resources (for the National Guard) is a greater challenge," he said.

Bradshaw is the subject matter expert for the National Guard Bureau, and he attended the Army suicide media roundtable held in conjunction with the Army's release of its 165-page Army Suicide Event Report.

Bradshaw said that current suicide numbers for the Army National Guard may be skewed high due to recent changes in reporting methods and improved information collection.

"The National Guard appointed its first full-time suicide prevention program manager in August 2006. Until that time, there weren't good tracking mechanisms in place," said Bradshaw, an Oregon National Guardsman, who became the program manager on Aug. 1. "We believe much of our information, our increased numbers, is due to better tracking mechanisms.

"However, logic would tend to agree, along with the Army and its increased deployments, that our suicide numbers would increase also," Bradshaw said.

It's yet to be proven, however, that there is a direct correlation between deployments and suicide. Col. Elspeth Ritchie, the behavioral health psychiatry consultant to the U.S. Army surgeon general and roundtable participant, said there is currently little statistical evidence linking suicide with the number and length of Soldiers' deployments.

She did say that said failed relationships are believed to be the cause of 70-80 percent of suicides and that deployment-linked stress definitely could be a factor behind strained relationships.

Finances and employment issues are two other major causes of suicide, Bradshaw said.

National Guard statistics reveal 60 percent of Soldiers, who committed suicide this year, have been on a previous deployment.

Other National Guard suicide statistics from this fiscal year show that gunshot wounds are the most common method of suicide (67 percent) and lower enlisted ranks make up the majority of suicides (32 of the 42 suicides were committed by the ranks

of sergeant and below). Thirty-nine of the 42 suicides this year were committed by male Soldiers.

The National Guard's suicide rate (12 per 100,000) remains about the same as that of the general U.S. population, which is 11.05 per 100,000, according to the Center for Disease Control.

Every Soldier is an important, valuable resource to the military, and the National Guard will continue to prioritize suicide prevention, Bradshaw added.

In addition to the National Guard's commitment toward funding a full-time suicide prevention program manager, 30 states have now appointed part-time managers as an additional duty. Training for the state suicide prevention program managers is set for the spring of 2008. Also, funding is being pursued to establish a permanent position in each state.

The suicide prevention program will partner with the U.S. Army Center for Health Promotion and Preventative for the release of the ACE Suicide Intervention Program in January 2008, and NGB will host "Train the Trainer" events for all state suicide prevention managers at their training event during the spring of 2008.

Bradshaw said anyone considering suicide but fearing the stigma associated with



Master Sgt. Marshall Bradshaw, the Army National Guard's Suicide Prevention Program Manager, posts a suicide prevention placard at the National Guard's joint headquarters at in Arlington, Va., on Aug. 17. Statistics reveal suicide is the third-leading cause of death among National Guard Soldiers.

seeking help should know that studies have shown careers are not affected by requests for mental-health guidance or counseling.

Anyone considering suicide or who knows someone pondering suicide is encouraged to contact their local chaplain or call the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline at 1-800-273-TALK, the civilian suicide prevention number at 1-800-SUICIDE or military OneSource at 1-800-342-9647.

Training in Germany a chance for 3670th to show their 'stuff'



Spec. Jennifer Scott, of Portland, Ore., installs a radio mount in a Humvee during her active duty deployment in Bamberg, Germany the week of July 23.

Story and photo
by Master Sgt. Thomas Hovie,
Oregon National Guard Public Affairs

For the 127 soldiers from the 3670th Maintenance Company, their recent annual training took them to Bamberg and Swinford, Germany for the week of July 23.

Driven by the demands of the war in Iraq, active duty deployments allowed members of the Oregon Army National Guard to help undermanned units already in Germany.

The unit's three-week annual training provided a unique opportunity for Oregonians to not only sharpen their skills and help out active duty forces, but also gave the Oregon Soldiers a chance to experience life overseas.

"A lot of this stuff is new to me," said Spc. Curt Steininger, an Oregon Guardsman who deployed with the 3670th.

Steininger said he knows generators, but since he had a chance to work with dif-

ferent vehicles during his deployment, he learned quite a bit. He also had a chance to see things in Germany which he had not experienced before.

"Getting out in Germany and seeing things is an experience in itself," he said.

Many other soldiers feel the same way.

Chief Warrant Officer 3 Kevin Hanks, who is the officer in charge of the element in Swinford, Germany, said his troops have been busy helping out a motor pool unit which has had its share of difficulties.

"Obviously they don't have the staff to technically inspect all these vehicles, so what we have been able to do is come in and 'TI' all these vehicles so they can then order the parts they need," Hanks said.

Hanks added that the Oregon Soldiers inspected over 2,000 pieces of equipment over three weeks — an outstanding achievement by Army standards, he said.

"It's a win, win situation," Hanks added. "The Army is getting the expertise and we're

getting the training. That's what the citizen soldiers does."

As some soldiers were busy inspecting vehicles, others spent time sifting through barrels of unused parts.

"Class-9 turn in of excess parts," said Spc. Brad Riley, a maintenance control specialist with the 3670th Maintenance Company, who is from Camas, Wash.

"We inherited this job and what we are doing is sorting out what was useable and tagging it, then putting it on pallets and running it through the system. Once we get the paper work squared away, the parts are outta here," Riley said.

Riley said the parts then go to a central warehouse where anyone in the system can access them if they are needed. The price of the parts can get expensive, so the recovery efforts saved thousands of dollars.

Active duty training missions such as these are also an ideal place for knowledge to be passed from the seasoned soldiers to those who are less-experienced, said Lt. Col. Don Rolph, former commander of the 821st Troop Command, which oversees the 3670th.

Sgt. Oakie George, a mechanic with the 3670th, has been working for 21 years in the same job specialty. George, who is from Portland, Ore., said he knows his job intimately, and tries to pass that knowledge to new troops.

"With the troops that have never done their MOS before, I've been showing them how to do a job or two and then letting them go and do it," George said.

About 100 kilometers north of the army base in Bamberg, more Oregon Soldiers are working in a similar situation.

Sgt. 1st Class John Hernandez, a maintenance supervisor with the active duty Army's 317th Maintenance unit, is also one of the maintenance shop's non-commissioned officers in charge. He supervised some of the Soldiers from Oregon.

"We have a shop with 14 people, but we

should have 42. We are drastically undermanned, but these folks have come in and filled in fantastically," he said.

The troops under Hernandez's management concentrated their efforts on work orders pertaining to electronic equipment such as Night-Vision Goggles, field phones and mobile fax machines that have been piling up because of the shop's staffing issues. Hernandez was impressed with the working knowledge of troops from Oregon.

"I've been extremely impressed with this particular group of people," Hernandez said. "They are so professional and so knowledgeable. I would take this group of soldiers anywhere with me."

The technicians from the 3670th do far more than electronic repairs. Many of the soldiers are heavy-equipment repair operators and metal fabrication technicians as well. The Soldiers work on everything from Humvees to the M-109 Howitzer. They had a chance to do a number of varied tasks, ranging from fine-tuning their welding skills, to simple installation of radio and antenna mounts.

Spec. Jennifer Scott, a forward signal specialist from Portland, Ore., who has been with the unit for 10 years, spent a few days installing radio mounts in Humvees which had just returned from Iraq.

"It's been going great," she said. "They are keeping us busy, and we're doing what we're supposed to be doing... you really couldn't ask for more."

"We got to go to Munich last weekend," Scott added. "You know it was really nice. The locals were really nice to us. We got stuck on the train due to a storm and the Germans showed us how to take the taxi's back to base, it was quite an adventure."

Overall, the deployment was a huge success, Rolph said.

"The Oregon Guard Soldiers received valuable training and the Army got caught up on a lot of backlogged work. It was truly a win-win situation," he said.

Camp Rosenbaum builds bridge of trust, hope for at-risk youth



Photo courtesy of 142nd Civil Engineering

Members of the 142nd Civil Engineer Squadron stop for a photo opportunity during their construction of the fishing dock at Slusher Lake at Camp Rilea in Warrenton, Ore. the week of June 25. The construction of the dock was completed within 14 hours, with members of the civil engineering unit volunteering their time, according to project coordinator, Chief Master Sgt. (Ret.) Joe Buxton. Funding for the construction of the dock, which will be used primarily by youth who attend Camp Rosenbaum, include: the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife, the Astoria Kiwanis Club, Nike, Inc., and the Rosenbaum Foundation. From l to r: Tech. Sgt. John McCorquodale, Staff Sgt. Scot Rickert, Airman First Class Gordian Grau, Staff Sgt. Ramon Lopez, Senior Airman Andrew Wolf, Senior Airman Charles Jedda, and Tech. Sgt. Ron Eckert.

Story by Mark Brown,
The Daily Astorian
Reprinted with permission

WARRENTON, Ore. (July 23, 2007) — Girls and boys were landing speckled pink rainbow trout left and right while fishing at Slusher Lake near Warrenton.

Camp Rosenbaum was in full swing again for its 37th year at Rilea Armed Forces Training Center, and the kids had a new dock to use as they tried to pull lunkers from the lake.

“I just heard they needed a new dock a couple years ago, and they really do great

things with kids here, so we did what we could,” said Emil “Swede” Nyberg, Lieutenant Governor of the Pacific Northwest Kiwanis Foundation Division 67, at a ceremony dedicating the new dock.

Each year, 165 children ages 9 to 11 from disadvantaged backgrounds spend a week at Camp Rosenbaum, where they learn that police officers and military personnel are normal people just like them.

“These kids come from some tough backgrounds, and they don’t always have very positive interactions with authority,” said Rachel Strobel, a Portland police officer working as a counselor for the seventh

year.

“Maybe they saw an officer arrest a parent or sibling, so they have this negative view of us,” said Strobel.

Oregon Air National Guard members and Portland police officers work as counselors and assume camp nicknames like Babyface, Phlik and Smiley. At the end of six days, after developing bonds with the children under their care, they appear in their uniforms to drive home the point that authority can be trusted.

“This way, they get to know us as people first, and I’m always amazed by their reactions when they learn I’m a police officer.”

Tracy Crews, a biologist with the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife, contacted Nyberg in 2006 when she heard that the Kiwanis leader was just the person to wrangle money and organize labor to build a dock. Crews, leveraging funds from the Youth Angling Enhancement Program and Oregon Wildlife Heritage Foundation, had stocked the lake with 1,000 trout and thought the campers deserved a better fishing platform than the original rickety dock.

Nyberg raised funds through Kiwanis and a short, new dock was built. He went to watch the campers use it and recalls a young girl awkwardly casting for the first time and landing a 24-inch rainbow.

“I just knew we had to build a bigger dock then,” he said.

Nyberg went to work requesting funds from Kiwanis, the Oregon Air National Guard, the Rosenbaum Foundation and the Samuel L. Johnson Foundation. Engineers volunteered labor, donations accumulated, corporate sponsors pitched in, and a large addition was added to the dock allowing for 20 campers to fish at one time.

By Nyberg’s estimates, all the donations, including time and labor, add up to nearly \$40,000, and he and other Rosenbaum supporters watched Monday as the kids learned to cast – sometimes tangling lines and nearly hooking counselors – and reeled in fat rainbows from the shallow water around the new dock.



Photo by Tech. Sgt. Shelly Davison Ball, 142nd FW

Emil “Swede” Nyberg, of the Pacific Northwest Kiwanis Foundation Division 67, (left), talks to some of the children who attended Camp Rosenbaum, at the Slusher Lake fishing dock dedication, July 23. Nyberg’s group helped secure a portion of the funding for the project.

All of the campers are selected by housing authorities from Oregon and southwest Washington. Counselors say that many of the kids haven’t seen the countryside before, and most of them are sad to leave after a week of horseback riding and other activities.

Trysten Hendricks, a 10-year-old camper from Portland, had fished once before but “not at a pretty place like this.” She said that after only one day at the camp, she had already made a “ton” of friends and declared that if she caught a fish, the other half of the dock would be required to eat worms.

“There’s a lot of mosquitoes here, but it’s way better than where I live,” she said.

Lt. Dawn Deland, with the 142nd Fighter Wing of Air National Guard, said “some of the stories these kids tell you about their lives are just shocking. They just don’t get a chance to be kids. Here, they get that chance.”

Oregon Youth Challenge Program provides environment for change

Story by Kim Lippert,
Oregon National Guard Public Affairs

REDMOND, Ore. — One hundred nine teenagers said goodbye to their past and hello to their future when they walked across stage at the Oregon National Guard Youth Challenge graduation on June 13, at the Deschutes County Fairgrounds in Redmond, Ore.

They came from a wide variety of backgrounds, 87 male, and 22 female. But they all shared a common purpose; a desire to better their lives.

“Before I came to the Oregon Youth Challenge Program I was 18 years old, a drop out, and homeless,” said Cadet Allen Serfass.

For Serfass and the other cadets at OYCP the changes they made through the challenging five and a-half-month program are profound. One cadet lost sixty pounds. Another became the first one in her family to ever graduate from high school.

“I can’t believe I was able to accomplish this, I’m now going on to college,” said Shannon Dibene of Beaverton, Ore.

The Oregon National Guard Youth Challenge Program is a quasi-military style educational program aimed at getting students who are no longer attending school or failing many classes back on track. The program offers attendees an opportunity to earn eight high school credits, a high school diploma or General Educational Development degree (GED). Cadets also earn two additional credits in OYCP’s mandatory mentorship program, which links graduates with two OYCP-approved mentors who oversee cadets’ progress 12 months after graduation.

The program instills confidence, pride, and accountability in their cadets, and helps teach attendees job skills and responsibility. Aside from the academic requirements, cadets are also required to complete 80 hours of community service.

Sitting on 160,000 acres of federally-

protected land just outside of Bend, Ore., the program’s isolated warehouse-like facility is self contained. Juniper trees dot the landscape just outside the compound, and jackrabbits roam freely about.

The program is not easy. Many do not make it through the first two weeks, known as the “pre-challenge”. Cadets go through intense physical training and discipline from the moment they arrive. They are also expected to take on responsibilities, and held accountable for every action. The work is also mentally intense, as cadets are expected to hold a minimum of 80 percent on all their academic work.

Furthermore, cadets are not allowed access to cell phones, television, or access to the Internet except for educational purposes. According to OCYP officials, the average high school grade-point-average for incoming cadets is 1.1. But for those who do make it, the rewards are life changing.

“Before this program I could have told you every shot and type of alcohol on the shelf, but not much else,” said Cadet Caitlyn Henry of Bend, Ore.

Henry thrived in the program. She went from skipping school and abusing drugs and alcohol to becoming a member of student government. Her future plans include attending the Seattle Arts Institute.

“It’s kind of gotten me on track,” Henry said. “Anyone who wants to change their lives around should come here,” she added.

As the cadets prepared to walk across the stage to accept their certificates, Maj. Gen. Raymond F. Rees, the Adjutant General of the Oregon National Guard, offered his congratulations.

“I’m proud because you stood up and understood you needed to make a change,” said Rees. Without change troubled teens often become another statistic, Rees added.

“One out of five babies are born to parents who do not have a high school diploma,”

said Rees. “One in nine teenagers drops out of high school,” Rees said.

“There’s no better program (than OYCP),” said Rees. “A report to Congress found this is the most effective program of its kind in the nation.”

OYCP officials said the Oregon program is one of three in the nation which is accredited as a high school. Two others award only GEDs. The diplomas are signed by the Bend-LaPine school superintendent, and Challenge Program is accredited by the school district.

Sixty percent of the funds for the program come from federal sources, while 27 percent are from the state school fund, while the remaining 13 percent comes from the state general fund. Teachers at OYCP are from the surrounding area, with many having former teaching experience in the Bend school district, while many of the program’s cadre are current or former Oregon National Guard members.

The primary mission of the OYCP is to make an investment in youngsters to avoid burdening the legal and welfare system later on. Studies done on a sampling of OYCP attendees show a marked improvement in the lives of the cadets after graduation. About 78 percent find employment, 36 percent enter the military, approximately 53 percent seek additional post-high school education, 83 percent register to vote, and about 39 percent took part in some kind of community service after graduation. According to program administrators, 79 percent of the graduates reported that their OYCP experience was highly beneficial. The improvements are entirely up to the individual cadets, said OYCP director, Daniel Radabaugh.

“We can’t change you, we can only create opportunities for change,” Radabaugh said.

Shawna Hill knows the benefits of the program first hand, her son Pfc. Ryan Hill



Photo courtesy of OYCP

Richard Norlan received the Ryan Hill Championship Award at the OYCP graduation ceremony in Redmond, Ore., on June 13. Maj. Gen. Raymond F. Rees, the Adjutant General, Oregon National Guard (left) attended the ceremony. Shawna Hill (left center), and Master Sgt. (Ret.) Pat Shields, OYCP Commandant, (right) are also pictured.

graduated from OYCP in December, 2003. Hill died on January 20, 2007 in Baghdad, Iraq. Shawna Hill presented the PFC Ryan Hill award to the OYCP graduate that demonstrated the positive qualities Hill possessed, like making a difference, being a team player, and having fun.

“When Ryan was killed I made a decision that good must come out of the tragedy,” said Hill. “Ryan wanted to motivate and inspire others to become the absolute best that they can be and to passionately pursue their purpose,” added Hill.

Richard Norlan received the first annual Pvt. 1st Class Ryan Hill Champion Award which is engraved with a quote from Hill’s Myspace page, “A true champion is one who wants to make a difference, never gives up, works hard and never stops following their dreams.”

“It’s my desire that this award will make a small difference in helping the recipient accomplish their mission,” said Shawna Hill.

Oregon Soldier proves you can never be too old to be a patriot

Story and photo
by Staff Sgt. Russell Bassett
115th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

FORT DIX, N.J. — Sgt. 1st Class Michael Gholston comes off the firing line and removes his Kevlar helmet. Large droplets of sweat stream down his face. Gholston wipes the sweat from his brow and looks around at his fellow Oregon National Guard Soldiers.

“Drink water,” Gholston says, slinging his M-4 rifle onto his shoulder.

Hearing their squad leader, the other Soldiers drink deeply from the hydration packs they wear on top of 30-plus pounds of body armor.

In early June, Gholston and the rest of Oregon’s 115th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment fired their weapons at the Short Range Marksmanship range. While on the range they were only firing at targets, two short months later they could be shooting to save their lives.

The 90-degree New Jersey heat makes the training tough, but it’s nothing compared to the 130-degree days they will face in Iraq.

At 52 years of age, Gholston stands out from his fellow Soldiers, all of whom are in their 20s or 30s. His hair is several shades greyer and his face is more lined, but as the other Soldiers take a short respite from the day’s training by sitting in the shade of a tree, Gholston remains standing.

He goes from Soldier to Soldier asking them how they did on the range. He offers words of congratulations to those who shot well and words of encouragement to those who did not.

Iraq will not be Gholston’s first war experience. Many of his fellow Oregon Soldiers had not yet been born when Gholston deployed to Vietnam in 1975. Gholston was deployed with the U.S. Navy as a combat videographer, and he filmed the fall of Saigon and the evacuation of refugees from the war-torn country in the waning days of the conflict.

Thirty years after the Vietnam War, Gholston decided it was time to once again serve his country.

“We are at war, and by watching the news it became very apparent that troops were needed to support the war effort,” Gholston said. “I think going to Iraq is a chance of a lifetime. It’s the biggest story out there right now, and I feel privileged to be able to report on it.”

Going from Navy to Army, especially



Sgt. 1st Class Michael Gholston, a squad leader with the Oregon National Guard’s 115th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment, talks with his fellow Soldiers after coming off a range at Fort Dix, N.J., in early June. Gholston, a 52-year-old Portland resident, rejoined the service after serving in the U.S. Navy when he was younger. Gholston and the rest of the 115th deployed to Iraq in August.

after taking a 15-year break in service, was not easy for the Portland, Ore. resident. He experienced many growing pains during the transition.

“It’s a totally different mindset between the Navy and Army,” Gholston explained. “In the Navy we just went out and did our job, but in the Army it’s about being a total Soldier. You have to shoot and qualify on your weapons, do ruck marches and everything else that infantry Soldiers do. I had that Navy mindset and plus I’m getting older, so I had to really train and focus to keep up.”

When Gholston first started with the 115th MPAD in 2005, his leadership didn’t know what to make of the new staff sergeant with no Army experience.

“He scared the hell out of us because of his lack of Soldier skills” admitted 1st Sgt. Michael Cummings, the unit’s top non-commissioned officer. “We had to teach him how to shoot an M-16. He had never fired one before.”

Gholston’s first real test was being sent to New Orleans to help with the Hurricane Katrina relief effort.

“New Orleans was a real eye-opener,” Gholston said. “My experience is with the Navy, but I was really submersed in the Army. We got the job done though. I shot over 18 hours of footage documenting the

devastation and interviewing Soldiers of the Oregon National Guard.”

After that “eye-opener,” Gholston applied himself to becoming a good Soldier and good NCO.

He started working out everyday, doing push-ups, sit-ups and running. He also took every Army class he could, successfully graduating the two phases of Basic Non-Commissioned Officer Course, both of which are two weeks in length, and then completed the month-long Warrior Training Course. During this time, he lost 25 pounds and honed his soldier skills.

“Because of my prior service, I was put right into a leadership position, so I’ve had to not only pull my own weight, but set the example,” Gholston said. “I couldn’t just sit at a desk and tell people what to do. I had to be out there leading the way.”

His fellow 115th Soldiers noticed the improvement.

“When Sergeant Gholston first arrived, I was like ‘uh-oh,’” said Staff Sgt. Kevin Hartman, a 115th team leader. “The first time I saw him handle a rifle I thought, ‘Oh, geez, I don’t want to be on the line with this guy.’ But now I think he’s awesome. A fire got under him somewhere, and he has done everything he can to be a good Soldier, NCO and leader.”

Hartman said Gholston is a good leader

not only because of how Gholston prepared for the role, but because of who he is as person.

“You can train a good person to be a good Soldier, but you can’t always train a good Soldier to be a good person,” said Hartman, a resident of Eugene, Ore. “He is probably one of the most humble NCOs I have ever met. He has gone to school after school, doing it all so he can be prepared, but he has kept his good attitude. He hasn’t lost track of who he is as a person.”

Cummings said he is now confident of Gholston’s ability to lead troops in Iraq.

“He has applied himself to becoming Army rather than Navy,” the first sergeant said. “He has done everything he can to be the best Soldier he can. ... He has been a sponge for knowledge, and it has been phenomenal just to see the way he has worked at it. His (physical fitness) improvement speaks for itself.”

The unit’s commander, Maj. Don Troxell of Bend, said he feels privileged to serve with Gholston.

“I’ve been impressed with his adaptability and his ability to acquire the knowledge and skills he needs to become a successful NCO,” Troxell said. “I feel privileged to serve as a commander with someone who served with Public Affairs in Vietnam. He was standing on the deck of the U.S.S. Hancock when they evacuated the refugees from Vietnam. I remember watching that on the news as a kid and Sergeant Gholston was actually there.”

The 115th leadership was so impressed with Gholston’s improvement that they promoted him to sergeant first class in May.

Gholston said squaring himself away was challenging but rewarding, and he had these words of wisdom for other aging, prior-service personnel who are considering joining the Army.

“Be prepared for challenges,” he said. “It won’t be a cake walk. You have to get in shape and you can’t be complacent. Don’t expect to automatically be successful just because you have lots of experience. Seek out challenges and learn. Don’t just say, ‘I’m in charge.’ You have to earn the respect.”

Gholston and the other 20 members of the 115th MPAD arrived in Iraq in August. They will be stationed at Camp Speicher, in the Northern Iraqi city of Tikrit. Gholston will lead a team of print and broadcast journalists throughout the theater of operations, telling the Soldiers’ stories for Army and civilian media outlets.

Oregon Airman takes national top honors: making it three in a row

Prepared by Oregon Sentinel Staff

ARLINGTON, Va. (Aug. 13, 2007) – The 270th Air Traffic Control Squadron in Klamath Falls must be doing something right.

In August, another Oregon Air Guardsman — again from the 270th ATC — made it into the Air National Guard’s top six enlisted Airmen of the year when the Air Guard’s command chief master sergeant hosted Airmen of the Year Week Aug. 4-11.

Senior Airman John Lockheed took the title in 2005, and Staff Sgt. Dan Dierickx was given the top honor in 2006. Both Airmen, in addition to Taylor, are members of the 270th ATC, based at Kingsley Field in southern Oregon.

Command Chief Master Sgt. Richard Smith, the Air Guard’s highest ranking enlisted member and host for the annual event, presented Senior Master Sgt. Lawrence Taylor, from the 270th Air Traffic Control Squadron, based at Kingsley Field in Klamath Falls, Ore., the Senior NCO of the Year Award.

“I think these Airmen will reflect back on their week here and realize the importance of what this award means and that it’s a representation of our entire enlisted force,” Smith said. “We have a great Air Guard enlisted force, all 93,000 plus.”

“It’s been absolutely awesome, and I’ve enjoyed every minute of it,” said Taylor who was also recognized as one of the Air Force’s 12 Outstanding Airmen of the Year. He said his service as an air traffic controller at home

and at Baghdad Airport in Iraq and the team members he worked with there were central to his success.

The process began with unit- and wing-level competitions and progressed to state selections. The six national winners were selected by the Air Guard’s top leaders from entries submitted by the 54 states and territories. Winners were then invited to bring one guest for an all expenses paid trip to Washington.

The special group conversed and shook hands with military, civilian and political leaders in and around Washington, D.C. They were lauded at several ceremonies, and they toured the nation’s capital in the summer heat. When they left, they carried a suitcase full of memories as well as certificates, coins, plaques, statuettes and other special rewards which recognized their achievements.

It’s not everyday you get to visit the Guard’s senior leaders at their homes, including Army Lt. Gen. H Steven Blum, chief of the National Guard Bureau. The Airmen joined the Army National Guard’s Soldiers and NCOs of the Year at Blum’s home on Fort McNair for an evening reception.

“They have a tremendous opportunity and great potential to be anything they want to be,” Blum said. “There may be a future command chief or a command sergeant major in this group, or even a future chief of the bureau. I’m immensely proud of them. They are just extraordinary young Americans.”

The Airmen went from Washington to Oklahoma City to attend the Enlisted Association of the National Guard of the United



Recipients of the National Guard Bureau’s top Airman awards following the ceremony in Arlington, Va., in August. Senior Master Sgt. Lawrence Taylor is on the far left.

States’ annual conference.

“This is one of the best groups we’ve ever had,” said Smith. “No matter what your job is, if you do your best, you will be recognized. The most important job you have is the one you have now, so do your best today, and you will progress. I’m living proof of that.”

Rounding out the National Guard Bureau’s top six Airmen were; Staff Sgt. Jesse Permenter, 116th Air Support Operations

Squadron, Washington (Airman of the Year); Tech. Sgt. Michael Keller, 179th Airlift Wing, Ohio (Noncommissioned Officer of the Year); Senior Master Sgt. Dorothy Pearson, 116th Air Control Wing, Georgia (First Sergeant of the Year); Tech. Sgt. Wendy Haight, 123rd Airlift Wing, Kentucky (Honor Guard Program Manager of the Year) and Tech. Sgt. Celia Herrera, 107th Air Control Squadron, Arizona (Honor Guard Member of the Year).

Letters to the Editor

Never ignore high-blood pressure

I had a patient some years ago who suffered a heart attack. He came to my intensive care unit (ICU) after being resuscitated from death in the emergency room. It took a lot of drugs and care but we stabilized him after about three days of touch and go.

He was then moved to a medical floor. The very next day he was found unresponsive in his hospital bed. He came back to ICU as he had suffered a stroke. After two more days, he went into kidney failure and was put on dialysis. He was on a ventilator as he would not breathe on his own and his blood pressure was kept up by a variety of drugs. After eight days of this, the family made the decision to terminate all life support and they let him go.

His wife told us that her husband had known “for years” that his blood pressure was “high”. He refused to see a doctor, and was proud of the fact that he would somehow always evade the blood pressure checks during his physicals. He didn’t want to “jeopardize” his career.

He died and left his wife and three children, ages 8, 7, and 6. He had 13 years in the active Air Force. He was just 33 years old. He wasn’t stupid; he was just ignorant of the facts. High blood pressure (hypertension) and the medications to control it will not spell the end of your career. Properly treated hypertension may not even affect your status to deploy. If you have hypertension, you need to take care of it. Have your pressure taken and follow up if there is a problem. Hypertension will cause heart attack, stroke, and kidney disease.

As part of the ARNG Decade of Health Initiative there will be blood pressure kiosks set up in seven ARNG locations. The kiosks are similar to those you see at pharmacies. These include Camp Withycombe, Camp Rilea, the Anderson Readiness Center in Salem, Camp Biak, the Tigard Armory, the Ashland Armory, and the La Grande Armory. Be smart and use the kiosk to check your pressure monthly.

Free clinics and some fire departments offer free blood pressure checks as well. Your unit medics should also be able to conduct blood pressure checks. For any questions call Capt. Daryl Ottaway, at 503-584-2284 or via e-mail at daryl.otaway@us.army.mil.

Capt. Daryl Ottaway,
Occupational Health Nurse, Oregon Army National Guard

Deployed Chief of Staff receives gift from Camp Rosenbaum group

Hello Everyone,

Greetings! I hope this e-mail finds you all well. Jan and I, along with our family, want to thank you all so very much for the cards, letters and e-mails we’ve received from you all over the last week. Your support, thoughts, and prayers have been of great comfort to us as we grieve the loss of Jan’s mother, Gloria Hicks.

This week was another busy week of travel back and forth to Baghdad. The military travel system here in Iraq offers many options with both Army and Air Force fixed-wing and helicopter assets to move us around here in-theatre. Before I left for Iraq I was told that this assignment required a lot of travel, and they weren’t kidding. I’ve flown over 35 trips in every size aircraft from a seven-passenger C-12, flown by the Montana Army National Guard, to an Air Force C-5 “Globemaster,” which carries over 100 passengers in addition to a huge load of cargo. The C-12 was the most comfortable, but the best ride overall was a C-17 flight, when I was able to sit in the cockpit with the crew as we flew a night flight to Baghdad.

The helicopter flights are the most common way I get around here in Iraq.

I’ve flown on the twin-rotor CH-47 “Chinook,” another twin-rotor helicopter, the CH-46, and my preferred way to get around for short trips, the UH-60 “Blackhawk” helicopters. Over half the crews that I’ve flown with have been National Guard crews and I like flying with them because they’re always more experienced. One of the UH-60 helicopter crew chiefs I flew with this week was from the Kansas Army National Guard.

He’s served in the military since 1968 (two tours in Vietnam), is a High School science teacher, and claims to be the oldest helicopter crew chief in the Army. Besides the fact that he was a really nice guy, it was great to find someone here that is older than I am!

This week’s photo is a very special one. When I returned from Baghdad on Thursday I had a package waiting for me. Upon opening it I found a truly amazing gift from Master Sgt. SuEllen Holmes, “Zinger,” who serves with me in the Oregon Air National Guard. SuEllen volunteers at Camp Rosenbaum, where she works in arts and crafts, and has worked with our campers for many years.

The quilt she made measures 52” by 66” inches, has a patriotic border of American flags, and contains 12 panels with pictures from Camp Rosenbaum. On the reverse side, the staff from Camp Rosenbaum signed their names along with messages of support. The photo doesn’t begin to do the quilt justice, but I hope you get an idea of the effort that went into this wonderful gift.

I also want to thank Shari and Sarah Martin for the cookies and treats, and Harvey Fink for his wonderful 28 pound CARE package of snacks and goodies. I really and truly feel very blessed to have so many people supporting me with prayers, packages, cards and letters! Until next week, God bless you all and Keep the Faith, We Are!!

Col. Bruce Prunk



Col. Bruce Prunk, Chief of Staff, ORANG, displays a Camp Rosenbaum quilt made by Master Sgt. SuEllen Holmes during the 2007 event in late July. Camp counselors and staff signed the quilt.

A/641 prepares for deployment

All-volunteer unit will fly Sherpas in Iraq

Continued from PAGE ONE

Chinooks, we’re flying the wings off the Sherpas, and the bottom line is we need a more capable aircraft to do the job that the Chinooks and Sherpas are being asked to do,” said Doran. “Army aviation is all centered around supporting the ground commander’s intent and maximizing his ability to execute the mission. We move people and equipment quickly around the battlefield where they need it, when they need it to maximize their advantage over the enemy. I think the C-27 will be able to do that same job, but do it much better.”



A C-27J participates in a military test involving parachute jumps.

Oregon is currently third on the fielding list to receive the new C-27J Spartans and Doran anticipates the unit will receive four of them in late 2009 or 2010. He expects to see a new Military Table of Organization and Equipment (MTOE) for the company in 2008, which will drastically increase the size of the fixed-wing aviation unit in Oregon.

“We’ve done everything we can do at the company level, state level and national level to be poised and postured to receive the

JCA, and we will continue to be ready for when National Guard Bureau and the Department of Defense tell us how they want to execute this re-alignment.”

Also, in mid-October the unit will deploy 14 Soldiers to Logistical Support Area Anaconda, Iraq, along with about 30 Soldiers from Oklahoma, South Dakota and Washington. The unit will spend six-months flying Sherpas, transporting personnel and equipment throughout Iraq and Kuwait in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom.

The entire unit is an all-volunteer force for this deployment, said Doran. The unit was previously mobilized from December 2004 to March 2006 in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom. Alpha company as a whole, including detachments from three other states, will deploy with about 50 percent of the personnel they went to Iraq with in 2004-2006.

Of the 14 Oregon Soldiers heading to Iraq with A Co. 641 Avn., only two of them previously deployed with the C-23 Sherpa company. However, many of the Soldiers have deployment experience with other Oregon aviation units, including Detachment 2, Lima Company, 151 Aviation; Detachment 1, Delta Company, 113 Aviation; and 1042 Medical Company (Air Ambulance).

“The fact that most of them have been deployed, they’ll know what to expect and are more able to prepare for it,” said Doran. “It takes a little bit of the uncertainty and anxiety out of deploying.”

Doran said for the Oregon Soldiers who served in Afghanistan, Iraq will be a completely new environment and a different mission. He said the Sherpa unit’s troop and cargo transport missions will be very different for Soldiers who previously performed medical evacuations on deployment with 1042 Med. Co. (AA).

Doran commanded Oregon’s CH-47 Chinook helicopter unit, Det. 1, Delta Co., 113 Avn., during deployment to Afghanistan. He explained that half of those missions involved inserting troops directly into combat. He said not having to deliberately fly into battle will be a nice change for Soldiers who previously deployed with the Chinook unit.

“Fortunately, we do have our South Dakota and Washington brethren bringing basically the same cast of Sherpa veterans with them,” said Doran. “Once they hit the ground in theater, they’ll be ready to do the job because they know what the mission looks like and what Balad (LSA Anaconda) looks like.”

Doran said the Oregon and Oklahoma contingents have tripled in strength since the company’s last deployment, because they are posturing to receive the new Joint Cargo Aircraft. He said bringing in more people from other aviation backgrounds and from other states has broadened the company’s experience base.

“We’re not so much a conglomeration of a few units, we have been able to establish a great trust between the detachments in this company and we really feel like we are building a team with team cohesion.”

The company will be the first C-23 Sherpa unit to go into theater with night vision training, they will also go into theater with 100 percent of their personnel trained as combat life savers.

“It’s our job to go over there and do the best possible mission we can, and part of this is to bring everyone home safely,” said Sgt. 1st Class Scott McCoy, who will be a Flight Platoon Sergeant on the deployment.

McCoy is a full-time aviation technician at the Pendleton Aviation Facility. The deployment will be his first trip with the Sherpa unit, but not his first trip overseas. In 2000, he traveled to Bosnia with the Oregon National Guard.

“The last time I deployed, my youngest was five,” McCoy said. “He’s 11 now, and he’s taking it kind of hard, but with the technology we have today, we can still communicate, and I will do my best to reassure him that we’re taking every precaution to do our job safely.”

Doran agreed that staying in contact with family and friends via the Internet or phone is important, but it still doesn’t take the place of actually being there during the important times. His wife will give birth to their third child while he is deployed.

“The milestones you miss, the time you can’t reclaim, you just can’t get that back,” he said.

“Leaving family is the hardest part, but we just accept it because that’s the life of a Soldier,” Doran added.

In Iraq, the unit will be attached to the 12th Aviation Brigade, which is the same brigade that Det. 1, Delta Co., 113 Avn. and 1042 Med. Co. (AA) were attached to during their deployments in Afghanistan.

“We’ll be working with a lot of familiar faces, we know what their expectations are,” said Doran. “This will be the brigade’s third rodeo, so they’re really a high-speed organization and know what they’re doing.”

Alpha Company will fly Sherpa aircraft that are already in the theater of operations, which have modifications to complete the unit’s mission; including night vision, upgraded communication systems and survivability equipment.

Four full-time crew members and four part-time crew members will make up the rear detachment in Oregon and will continue to perform state missions.

News Briefs

Retiring conductor plays in Astoria event



Command Sgt. Maj. Keith Neal.

Command Sgt. Maj. Keith Neal is not normally known for his musical expertise, but he was honored to be selected to guest conduct the North Coast Symphony Band (NCSB) of Astoria, Oregon during the city's 2007 Fourth of

July Celebration.

Neal was the guest conductor for the band during two concerts July 3-4, during which he conducted the "National Emblem March" by E. E. Bagley.

The first concert on July 3 was held in the historic Liberty Theater in Astoria. The second concert was held the following day in the Cannon Beach City Park.

Neal, a tuba player in the band since 1998, said he enjoyed playing with the band and was very pleased to be asked to conduct. The experience was a great honor, he added.

"It was really exciting for me to conduct the band and an experience I will not forget," Neal said. "I was fortunate to have great support from the other band members."

NCSB is a 45 member band, made up of community musicians that range in age from high school students to retirees. Members travel from all over northwest Oregon and Southwest Washington to play in the band.

Neal was recently honored in a retirement ceremony on July 15 in Lake Oswego, Ore. After joining the United States Navy Reserve in 1968, he served in Vietnam before being honorably discharged in 1974. He later joined the 1/186 Infantry, Oregon Army National Guard and served various duties throughout the organization before retiring as the 82 Brigade Command Sergeant Major in May, 2007.

Brig. Gen. Charles Yriarte praised Neal for his service to the Oregon Army National Guard, saying, "CSM Neal's knowledge and expertise will be greatly missed by the Oregon Army National Guard."

Trailblazers to host military on Nov. 10

The Portland Trailblazers will pay tribute to Oregon's military on Nov. 10, 2007, as part of their tribute to the 41st Brigade Combat Team during the Veteran's Day weekend.

Oregon National Guard members can take advantage of \$10 tickets to see the Portland Trailblazers play the Dallas Mavericks at the Rose Garden Arena in Portland, Ore. The game is set to begin at 7:00 p.m.

Other discounted tickets include seats for \$15 and \$41. Tickets must be purchased before Sept. 28, 2007. After this date, tickets will be offered to the general public. All sales are on a first-come, first-served basis.

Prior to the game, military members and their families will be allowed to use the court to play half-court games from 2:00 to 3:00 p.m.

For more information contact Phil Horn at 503-963-3965, or at phil.horn@trailblazers.com. For information on this and other upcoming games, see the ad on this page.

PANG-B to no longer issue vehicle decals

Effective immediately the Portland Air National Guard Base will discontinue the practice of issuing DD Form 2220s (POV window decals) to all USAF/ANG members and retirees.

The Air Force has been strictly adhering to the 100 percent credential checks as installation gates since Sept. 11, making the check of a vehicle decal unnecessary. Additionally, vehicle owners are more efficiently tracked thought state license plates, not mili-

tary decal numbers. The burden of time and cost associated with registering POVs on the base does not enhance the Force Protection Posture, according to the Air Force.

The Air Force stopped requiring bases to issue the window decals on March 15, 2007. Prior to that, the Air Combat Command stopped requiring bases to issue the window decals on February 7, 2007. The Portland Air National Guard Base is the only base in the area that continued to issue window decals.

To gain access to the installation and operate your POV on base, vehicle operators must present a valid military I.D. card to the gate sentry. All vehicle operators are still required to carry on their person or maintain in their vehicle a valid state driver's license, current state vehicle registration, and proof of vehicle insurance. These items must be displayed immediately upon request by Security Forces. In addition, motorcycle riders are required to have the motorcycle safety card in their possession while riding on the base and must show the card with their military I.D. card to the gate sentry.

Visitors will still require a base pass (AF Form 75) from the gate sentry.

If you currently have a window decal, you can remove it from your vehicle, but you must first write down the DD Form 2220 number on a piece of paper, and include your name, rank, and social security number. Give this information to the 142nd Security Forces Pass and Registration office so they can delete your vehicle from the data base. You may also keep the window decals on your vehicle, but when the year sticker expires you will not receive a new one from the base Pass and Registration Office.

Unit sexual assault courses offered

The National Guard Bureau Sexual Assault Prevention training will be conducted throughout fiscal year 2008. It will consist of a scenario-based, interactive lesson with discussions led by Victim Advocates, Sexual Assault Response Coordinators, and other trained personnel. Training dates for individual units will be set by SARCs will in the coming months. If you have any questions, contact either your unit SARC, or Lt. Col. Marilyn K. Woodward, ORARNG Safety Manager and JFHQ SARC & SAPR Program Manager at marilyn.woodward@us.army.mil.

OR Military Dept to hold blood drive

The Oregon Military Department is holding a blood drive on behalf of the American Red Cross, Wednesday, Oct. 3, 2007, from 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. The American Red Cross hopes to collect at least 5,000 units of blood each week to keep up with local usage. Soldiers and Airmen are encouraged to help them reach this goal.

For more information, contact Sgt. 1st Class Nancy Pine at 503-584-3989, or via e-mail at nancy.pine@us.army.mil. You can also sign up online at www.givelife.org. The sponsor code is ORMilitary.

New law clarifies where and when to render salute

WASHINGTON, D.C. — U.S. Senator Jim Inhofe (R-Okla.) today praised the passage by unanimous consent of his bill (S.1877) clarifying U.S. Law to allow veterans and servicemen not in uniform to salute the flag. Current law (U.S. Code Title 4, Chapter 1) states that veterans and servicemen not in uniform should place their hand over their heart without clarifying whether they can or should salute the flag.

"The salute is a form of honor and respect, representing pride in one's Military service," Inhofe said. "Veterans and service members continue representing the military services even when not in uniform.

"Unfortunately, current U.S. Law Leaves confusion as to whether veterans and service members out of Uniform can or should salute the flag," he continued. "My Legislation will clarify this regulation, allowing veterans and servicemen alike to salute the flag,

whether they are in uniform or not.

Senator Inhofe said he looks forward to seeing those who have served saluting proudly at baseball games, parades and formal events.

"I believe this is an appropriate way to honor and recognize the 25 million veterans in the United States who have served in the military and remain as role models to others citizens. Those who are currently serving or have served in the military have earned this right, and their recognition will be an inspiration to others."

High Desert Museum offering discounts to military members

The High Desert Museum began offering a discount to all Military members starting June 9.

Any person who shows an active, reserve, or retired military ID during normal business hours will receive a 10-percent discount on admission. The High Desert Museum is open 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. daily, except for Thanksgiving, Christmas, and New Year's Day.

The museum is located at 59800 S. Highway 97, in Bend, Ore. For more information, please visit www.highdesertmuseum.org.

Salem center offers free yoga classes to Oregon vets

Indigo Wellness Center in Salem is offering free yoga classes to all returning Oregon veterans.

Yoga can be a helpful tool in re-integrating back into life. The center offers classes for all levels throughout the week. The center is located at 3276 Commercial St. SE in Salem.

For more information, contact Zohra Campbell at 503-370-9090, or visit their website at www.indigowellnesscenter.com.

Humans, not nature causing many Oregon wildfires

While lightning generated fires have taken the spotlight this summer, human-caused fires have kept firefighters busy on state and private lands throughout Oregon.

Nearly 400 abandoned campfires, debris burns, smoking, and equipment misuse have sparked wildfires in the state.

"Even though we're having a period of cooler weather, we're still responding to a high number of human-caused fires" said Rick Gibson, fire prevention manager for the Oregon Department of Forestry.

"Since firefighters are kept busy extinguishing these smaller human-caused fires, our resources are not able to fully focus on the natural fires that we have no control over."

Mary Ellen Holly, president and CEO of the Keep Oregon Green Association, said that the number of human-caused fires is higher than any year within the last ten years.

"Our focus is to reduce the number of human-caused wildfires, a mission we've had for over 67 years," she said. "People, residents and visitors must start taking more responsibility for this prevention."

According to Holly, many of the state's forested areas, including private, federal and state lands, are in a restricted use status, which means forest users must check before they go into the forests or perform any operations on their properties to see if their planned activities are allowed.

Campfires are prohibited on all state-protected lands except in designated campgrounds, Gibson said. Furthermore, debris burning is not allowed except on very few districts where a permit is first required. Equipment use and smoking are also restricted.

Once investigators have determined that a wildfire is caused by carelessness, the responsible party will be charged for suppression costs. Gibson stated that over 200 of those charges were made and collected in 2006.

Miracle League to dedicate Vancouver baseball field

The Columbia River Miracle League and several other Vancouver groups will dedicate a baseball field in Vancouver, Wash., Saturday, Sept. 22.

The field, located at the Harmony Sports Complex at Northeast 18th St., and 192nd Ave., in east Vancouver, Wash., has been upgraded to include wheelchair-accessible ramps, sidewalks, 12 handicapped parking stalls, and a new playing surface.

Organizers began planning for the upgrades almost two years ago, according to TEAM Construction spokesperson, Shonnie Samwel. Donations from local construction companies, with equipment and a labor force supplied by the Oregon Army National Guard's Innovative Readiness Training program, made the project possible, she said.

For more information, visit www.columbiarivermiracleleague.org.

The Oregon National Guard

is teaming up with the

Portland Trail Blazers

this season to provide you and your family with a special savings on your ticket price to see:

Greg Oden
and the

Trail Blazers

for every home game this season!

Tickets are limited Available
in the 100, 200, and 300 level,
ranging anywhere from
\$15-\$100 per person!

To take advantage of this special offer, tickets must be purchased at least three weeks prior to the requested game date.
To order your tickets please call Kevin Duplaga @ 503-963-3979 or via email: kevin.duplaga@trailblazers.com



Here are three exciting game dates we highly recommend:

Saturday Nov. 10, vs. Dallas 7:00 pm - Military Night

Sunday Dec. 30, vs. Philadelphia 3:00 pm

Friday Feb. 29, 2007 vs. LA Lakers 7:30 pm - National Guard Night with the Blazers

Oregon Soldiers’ efforts help save nature trail in Newport



Above: A view of some of the erosion and damage to the Hatfield Marine Science Center’s coastal estuary trail in Yaquina Bay in Newport, Ore. Oregon Soldiers worked on a project to mitigate some of the beach erosion and restore sections of the trail in March, 2007.

Prepared by Oregon Sentinel Staff
Photos courtesy of IRT

Soldiers with the Oregon Army National Guard, Innovative Readiness Training Program (IRT) started construction on a coastal erosion mitigation project on March 6, 2007 in Yaquina Bay.

The Hatfield Marine Science Center (HMSC) and Coastal America Northwest Regional Implementation Team requested assistance from the Oregon Army National Guard to address erosion problems along part of the Center’s Estuary Nature Trail in Newport, Ore. The trail winds around HMSC campus along the bay.

State and Federal agencies determined that placing rock and gravel along the bay shoreline would be the best method to stabilize the trail. The design was implemented to avoid the impact of hard shoreline stabilization (rip rap), and was constructed to consider the impact on the estuarine species, habitats, biological productivity, and water quality of the bay.

Soldiers with the Oregon Army National Guard, Innovative Readiness Training Program (IRT) first removed sections of the collapsed and damaged asphalt trail.

As truck loads of gravel and rock started to arrive, soldiers and employees of the HMSC washed the gravel and rock before placing it along the shoreline. This process helped prevent contamination to the water and marine life in the bay.

The cleaned rock was then placed along



Soldiers from the Oregon Army National Guard’s Innovative Readiness Training Program use a “Bobcat” tractor to maneuver rocks into place along a nature trail in Yaquina Bay in Newport, Ore., in March.

the shore using rubber-tracked bobcats — another method of preserving the existing shoreline and habitat.

The project was completed on March 8. Project NCOIC Sgt. 1st Class Stacy Heathcock supervised a small crew, which included Soldiers from the 1249th Engineer Battalion.

Those who worked on the project included; Spc. Heidi Miller, Spc. Zach Spencer, Pfc. Eva Finnel, and Pfc. Joaquin Waldroop, who were from various units including the 234th Engineer Co. in Warrenton, Det. 1,

224 Engineer Co. in Newport, and the Headquarters Support Co., 1249th Engineers based in Salem, Ore.

According to officials with the Hatfield Marine Science Center, the new trail construction and stabilization will allow the local population and visitors to resume use of the estuary trail for exercise, study, and recreation.

The HMSC receives about 150,000 visitors annually with about 25,000 visitors coming from local elementary and high school touring groups.

Keep your family safe: Get a kit, make a plan, be informed

Emergency Checklist

- One gallon of water per person per day for at least three days
- Three-day supply of non-perishable food
- Can opener for canned food
- Medications
- Battery-powered or hand crank radio
- Flashlight with extra batteries
- First aid kit
- Personal documents
- Emergency contact person’s information
- Money
- Extra clothing with jackets and cold-weather gear
- Sanitary supplies, moist towelettes
- Local maps
- Pet supplies and pet food

Helpful links

- American Red Cross: www.redcross.org
- U.S. Dept. of Homeland Security Emergency Preparedness site: www.ready.gov

It’s early in the morning. You wake to the rumble and shake on what was supposed to be a quiet Saturday morning. The noise and shaking gradually worsen, and you soon realize that you’ve just experienced a large earthquake.

In 1993, a magnitude 5.9 trembler hit the Willamette Valley, leaving many buildings throughout the area severely damaged.

The “Spring Break Quake”, centered near Scotts Mills, Ore., was caused by a sudden shift in the Mt. Angel fault line.

The event also caused a sudden shift in the planning and preparation efforts for Oregon’s citizens and increased the awareness of disaster management at the family level.

Story by 1st Lt. Victor Hoffer,
Oregon National Guard Public Affairs

Since then, the basic structure for emergency preparedness has been refined to eight words; Get a kit. Make a plan. Be informed.

Get a kit. A basic disaster kit can be assembled from local retailers. It should be designed to support a family for three days. Comfort should take a back seat to survival. When designing a kit, think of the worst-case-scenario. Envision dealing with a lack of electricity, clean running water, and a lack of perishable foods.

Make a plan. Knowing what to do is the key to survival during a disaster. Every emergency plan must include places to meet, emergency phone numbers, and when to evacuate the house. Know when to call 911 and when not to. It is recommended that an out of town relative be an emergency contact, since most phone lines will either be dead or overwhelmed in the local area. Also, ensure every member of your family knows the phone number to your emergency contact.

Be informed. Information is the key to emergency survival. Knowing what to do and when will save time and trouble (and possibly your life).

Get to know your neighborhood and surrounding region. Learn about emergency plans established in your immediate area, and educate yourself and your family about potential emergencies which could happen in your area.

The American Red Cross recommends learning first aid and CPR. They offer classes for adults and youngsters.

Surviving the initial disaster is only half the battle. Making sure you’re ready for the aftermath will ensure the long-term survival of you and your family members.

Healthcare, tax deductions big topics at town hall meeting

Story by Kim Lippert,
Oregon National Guard Public Affairs

Maj. Gen. Raymond F. Rees, The Adjutant General, Oregon National Guard, joined Congresswoman Darlene Hooley and others, for a town hall meeting at Camp Withycombe on Monday, August 13, with soldiers and their families to discuss deployment and post-deployment issues.

“I’m inspired and humbled by your example,” said Hooley. “I know the challenges of soldiers don’t end when you come home.”

Family members asked Hooley and other members of the panel for advice on how to navigate the TRICARE system, information on how to obtain free airfare for loved ones wishing to come home before deploying to Iraq, and help gaining access to services after returning from deployment.

Hooley discussed recent legislation that has the possibility of benefiting veterans greatly in regard to health

care. The U.S. House of Representatives passed the CHAMP Act which will improve assistance with premiums and co-payments for low-income seniors in Medicare. In this bill, Hooley got a five percent increase in reimbursement rates for Medicare physicians in counties in the lowest fifth percentile of fee-for-service costs in the country. Hooley said this doesn’t guarantee that TRICARE rates will increase as well, but the indication that she’s received from the Congressional Research Service is that it should result in a corresponding increase to TRICARE reimbursement rates. The bill still has to be passed by the Senate and signed by the Senate President.

Finding health care providers that accept TRICARE has been a longstanding issue for Oregon National Guard soldiers and their families, according to Brig. Gen. Mike Caldwell, Deputy Director of the Oregon Military Department.

“Given the increase of Oregon National Guard members and families that will be under TRICARE this October, we

have a very critical situation in Oregon with the limited number of physicians,” Caldwell said.

The Oregon National Guard was very fortunate to get the State Legislature to add a tax deduction of \$2,500 for doctors who enroll in TRICARE, Caldwell said.

“I hope this has a positive impact on getting more Oregon doctors to accept our soldiers,” he said.

The legislation also included additional tax deductions for Oregon Guardsmen, doubling the annual deduction from \$3,000 to \$6,000.

It also allows employees of the Oregon National Guard Youth Challenge Program, headquartered in Bend, Ore., to take advantage of the \$6,000 annual tax deduction.

The legislation was sponsored by the Oregon War Veterans Association on behalf of the Oregon National Guard.

For the full story, see “Legislation addresses deployments, tax breaks, TRICARE” on page three.

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