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FALL 2019

# Oregon Sentinel

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE OREGON NATIONAL GUARD

## First responders, volunteers train with Mongolian partners in ‘Gobi Wolf’ exercise



A group of Mongolian free range camels along with members of the National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA) welcomed members of the Oregon National Guard, Alaska National Guard and other key first responders during the Gobi Wolf 19 exercise held in Sainshand, Mongolia, from Sept 9-21, 2019. The Oregon National Guard provided trainers and operational support during the two-week exercise.

Photo by Master Sgt. John Hughe, Oregon National Guard Public Affairs

**Stories continued on Pages 5 to 7**

## Combined Task Force 501 unites nations for rescue training

*Story and Photos  
by Staff Sgt. Amy Elker,  
115th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment*

**KAPOLEI, Hawaii** —Six Soldiers and four Airmen from the Oregon Army and Air National Guard traveled to Hawaii to help support and assist Soldiers from the Vietnam Army, the Bangladesh Air Force and the Bangladesh Fire Service and Civil Defense (FSCD) as they completed a Basic Rope Rescue Certification Training held July 15-19 at the Kalaeloa Urban Search and Rescue Training Area. The training was to help the participants be prepared to conduct search and rescue missions in the event of a natural or manmade disaster.

The Oregon Guard Soldiers and Airmen are part of a Chemical, Biological, Radiological, Nuclear and High-Yield Explosive Enhanced Response Force Package (CERFP) team. As domestic and emergency response experts, they assisted the other nation’s as they went through the training which was dubbed “Combined Task Force 501.”

The training included how to utilize mission essential equipment to conduct victim and casualty search, rescue and extraction rope rescue operations.

The cooperative nature of the Oregon National Guard working with Vietnam and Bangladesh is part of the State Partnership Program (SPP). SPP connects a state’s National Guard with the armed forces, or equivalent, of a partner country to develop a mutually beneficial relationship. Bangladesh has been Oregon’s partner country since 2008 and Vietnam since 2012.

**Story continued on Page 4**



Oregon Army National Guard Sgt. Loren Waters, strikes a Spiderman pose as he hangs inverted mid-rappel during a Basic Rope Rescue Certification Training held July 15-19 at the Kalaeloa Urban Search and Rescue Training Area, Hawaii.

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COMMAND

# Exhibiting proper military Customs and Courtesies

It is important to ensure that we continue to follow our military customs and courtesies. Plainly put, our military courtesies at the core, are exhibiting good manners and being polite with one another and serve as our common code of conduct. The courtesies extended to the senior (by a junior) acknowledges the senior's responsibility and authority and in turn, the courtesies extended to a subordinate (from a senior) reflects the respect and regard for the junior's contribution in accomplishing the mission.

Exhibiting proper military customs and courtesies demonstrates both the commitment and self-sacrifice each and every one of us has made, and shows confidence both in oneself and in our organization.

It is up to us, as Non-Commissioned Officers (NCOs), to keep customs and courtesies in front of our Soldiers and Airmen in order to demonstrate what right looks like. The Air Force's Little Brown Book (AFI36-2618) refers to this as 'Airmanship,' or having a "commitment to a culture of pride and professionalism." Although considered obsolete, the Army's Field Manual 22-100, Army Leadership also states, "you demonstrate your character through your behavior...the old saying that actions speak louder than words has never been more true."

Army Command Sgt. Maj. Fritz U. Smith wrote in the publication, One Leader to Another, that "many Soldiers have a tendency to look the other way or choose to pretend they did not recognize the senior person. Many do not familiarize themselves with the regulation or they simply believe it is an option if the Soldier is having a bad day. This failure to conform displays a lack of discipline and often tells a lot about an organization without even visiting the unit."

Smith further stated that "customs and courtesies are important to our NCO corps as well as the rest of the Army, to ensure we remain a professional, self-disciplined, strong and relevant and ready force; full of pride, resourceful and out of the box thinkers. Soldiers must understand that if we are to remain the dominant fighting force, which we are today that we cannot afford to forget the lessons of yesterday. It is not just the combat situations that bond us as Soldiers, but those customs and courtesies, values and beliefs we all share."

Spend time on professional development, attend your unit's events, support the ceremonies of other units to help you develop and incorporate ideas for your own unit. Get involved and



Command Sgt. Maj. Robert C. Foesch  
Senior Enlisted Leader,  
Oregon National Guard

learn without waiting for a schoolhouse or the NCO education system to tell or show you, and share what you learn with others.

We must continue to be an NCO corps that leads by example and maintains and enforces standards. As the Army's Creed of the Noncommissioned Officer states, "No one is more professional than I."

More information regarding this topic can be found in the new revised Army Regulation 600-25 Salutes, Honors and Courtesy, dated 10 SEP 19, as well as the Army's Non-Commissioned Officer Guide FM 7-22.7, 7APR15.

Both the Air Force Handbook 36-2618, 5 JUL 18 and Air Force Instruction (AFI) 1-1, Air Force Culture Standards, 07 AUG 12 also address customs and courtesies.

## Joint Operations Center links National Guard resources to communities

Story and Photos by  
Staff Sgt. Cory Grogan,  
Oregon National Guard Public Affairs

**SALEM, Oregon** - The Oregon Military Department's Joint Operations Center (JOC) provides continuous (24/7) situational awareness to the Adjutant General that supports Oregon National Guard missions and activities. Located in Salem, Oregon it has many unique capabilities that support both state and federal missions, including being the hub where Oregon National Guard planning, training, and response coordination happens for emergencies and disasters to provide Oregon communities with military resources in times of need.

In recent years, one of those resources has been personnel for wildland fire-fighting, and Lt. Col. Martin Balakas, the Joint Director of Domestic Support for the Oregon National Guard, who served on fire teams in 2015 and 2017, said his leadership role in the JOC has special meaning because of that experience.

"I've seen it from that perspective, and it's an even bigger honor to be involved at this level where we're coordinating the training, planning and deployment of those forces," said Balakas.

"Really as a guardsman and as an Oregonian, one of the things I'm proudest of is how self-sufficient we are as a state, and our ability to respond under the governor's call to help those people where we live."

Master Sgt. Marcus Merrick, who is the Operations Non-Commissioned Officer in Charge for the Joint Operations Center said the JOC is the touchpoint for communities, municipalities, and other organizations outside of the Oregon National Guard to receive support from the Oregon Military Department.

His primary responsibility is to manage the day-to-day operations of the JOC and supervise the technicians who conduct 24-hour operations there. He is also responsible for training, planning and coordination of events that the JOC supports like wildland fire training, and ensuring support services and



Sgt. 1st Class Melissa Fleming, who works in the Oregon National Guard Joint Operations Center handling all of the in-and-out processing of personnel coordinated through the JOC works at her station in the JOC, Aug 30, at the Anderson Readiness Center.

equipment are always operational and ready to go.

"We have some sandbagging machines that we can provide to outside agencies, and of course we also have the whole gamut of military equipment we can allocate through the Joint Operations Center, to provide outside communities with resources the military has that can't be found in other places," said Merrick.

Sgt. First Class Melissa Fleming, who handles all of the in-and-out processing of personnel coordinated through the JOC, said she is proud to be a part of the mission. "We serve our state first, so both of our components as an air component and land component, come together as a joint force to help the citizens of Oregon," Fleming said. Both Balakas and Merrick echoed the sentiment of pride that Fleming has when sharing their personal feelings about the mission.

Merrick has previous experience as an EMT, firefighter and paramedic, and in law enforcement.

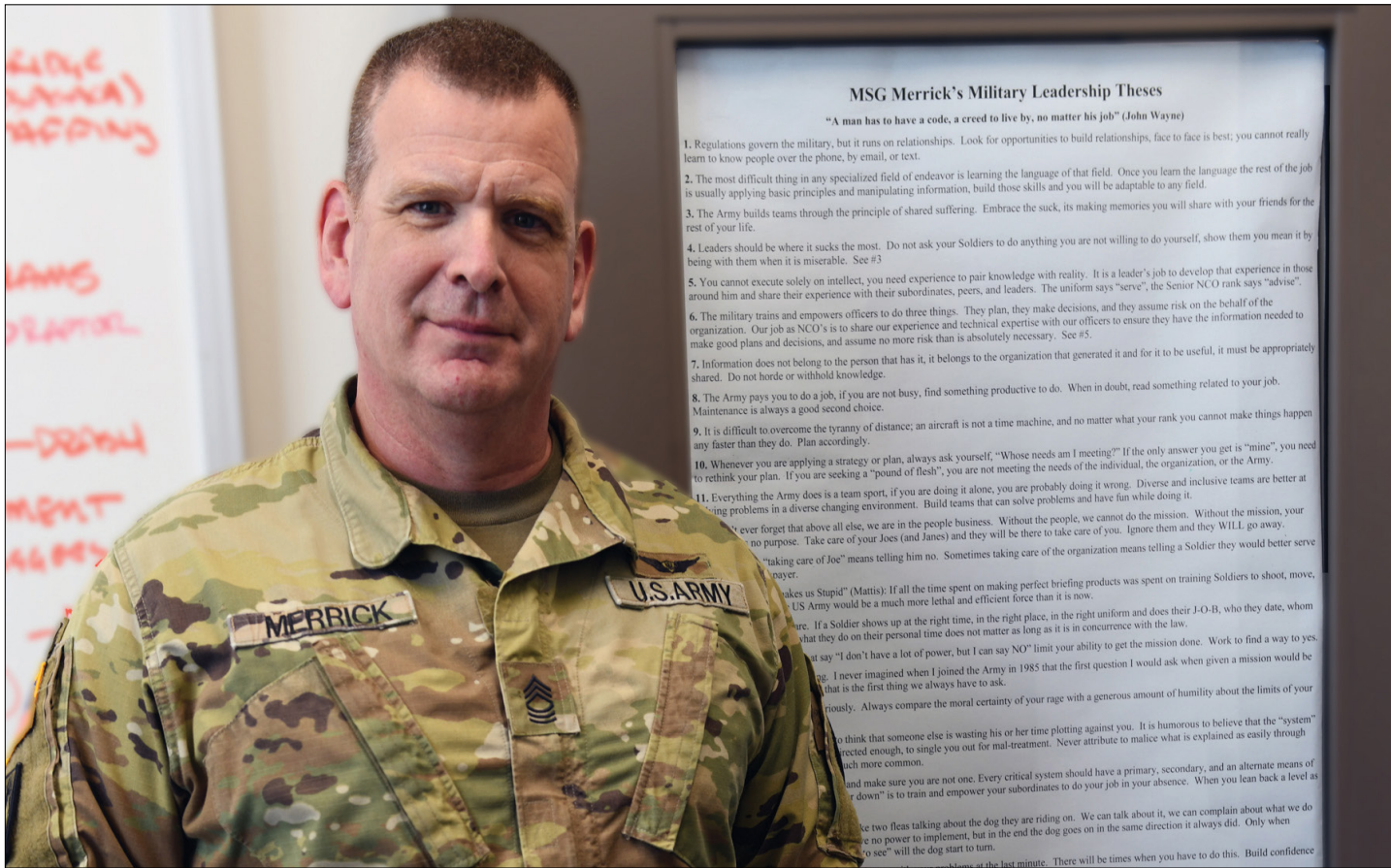
"Having been in those fields and knowing the capabilities that we have—bringing that to the communities has been a real big bonus for me," Merrick said.

"To make a difference in our own backyard, and sometimes maybe even be saving our own homes is really, truly important to what we do as guardsmen," said Balakas.

The JOC has a variety of important missions that the people who work there take seriously, but being able to help Oregonians in Oregon has meaning that makes the mission even more exceptional.

COMMAND

# Oregon National Guard NCO documents his personal creed



Master Sgt. Marcus Merrick, the Operations Non-Commissioned Officer in Charge for the Joint Operations Center, stands by a copy of the Military Leadership Theses principles he wrote, Sept. 30, in his office at the Anderson Readiness Center in Salem, Oregon.

Story and Photo by  
Staff Sgt. Cory Grogan,  
Joint Forces Headquaters Public Affairs

**SALEM, Oregon** - When Master Sgt. Marcus Merrick took over as the Operations Non-Commissioned Officer in Charge for the Joint Operations Center, a command philosophy memorandum for the Joint Domestic Operations Command had been created by his predecessor, retired Sgt. Maj.

Vinnie Jacques. Merrick said that idea of documenting best practices inspired him to start writing down what should go into his own, personal leadership philosophy.

Merrick said he later went on to write a paper for the Sergeants Majors Academy on how military personal codes, oaths, and values statements like The Army Values, Soldiers Creed, Infantry Creed, NCO Creed, Code of Conduct, and more, impact those who serve as Soldiers and leaders. He also

wanted to explore how that has changed in the almost 35 years he has been in the Army.

"This is a tool. I started this with an intended audience of one, for myself," explained Merrick. "One day someone saw it on my desk and asked if they could have a copy. I now share it with anyone that has an interest."

Merrick says it's useful to communicate what he thinks is important to the people he works with so they understand his decision

## Master Sergeant Merrick's Military Leadership Theses

"A man has to have a code, a creed to live by, no matter his job" (John Wayne)

1. Regulations govern the military, but it runs on relationships. Look for opportunities to build relationships, face to face is best; you cannot really learn to know people over the phone, by email, or text.
2. The most difficult thing in any specialized field of endeavor is learning the language of that field. Once you learn the language the rest of the job is usually applying basic principles and manipulating information, build those skills and you will be adaptable to any field.
3. The Army builds teams through the principle of shared suffering. 'Embrace the suck,' it is making memories you will share with your friends for the rest of your life.
4. Leaders should be where it sucks the most. Do not ask your Soldiers to do anything you are not willing to do yourself, show them you mean it by being with them when it is miserable. See #3
5. You cannot execute solely on intellect, you need experience to pair knowledge with reality. It is a leader's job to develop that experience in those around him and share their experience with their subordinates, peers, and leaders. The uniform says "serve", the senior NCO rank says "advise".
6. The military trains and empowers officers to do three things. They plan, they make decisions, and they assume risk on the behalf of the organization. Our job as NCO's is to share our experience and technical expertise with our officers to ensure they have the information needed to make good plans and decisions, and

- assume no unnecessary risk. See #5.
7. Information does not belong to the person that has it, it belongs to the organization that generated it and for it to be useful, it must be appropriately shared. Do not hoard knowledge.
8. The Army pays you to do a job, if you are not busy, find something productive to do. When in doubt, read something related to your job. Maintenance is always a good second choice.
9. It is difficult to overcome the tyranny of distance; an aircraft is not a time machine, and no matter what your rank you cannot make things happen any faster than they do. Plan accordingly.
10. Whenever you are applying a strategy or plan, always ask yourself, "Whose needs am I meeting?" If the only answer you get is "mine", you need to rethink your plan. If you are seeking a "pound of flesh", you are not meeting the needs of the individual, the organization, or the Army.
11. Everything the Army does is a team sport, if you are doing it alone, you are probably doing it wrong. Diverse and inclusive teams with broad backgrounds are better at solving problems in a diverse changing environment. Build teams that can solve problems and have fun while doing it.
12. Don't ever forget that above all else, we are in the people business. Without the people, we cannot do the mission. Without the mission, your position has no purpose. Take care of your Soldiers and they will be there to take care of you. Ignore them and they WILL go away.
13. Sometimes "taking care of Joe" means telling him no. Sometimes taking care of the organization means

- telling a Soldier they would better serve the Army as a taxpayer.
14. "Power Point makes us Stupid" (Mattis): If all the time spent on making perfect briefing products was spent on training Soldiers to shoot, move, and communicate the US Army would be a much more lethal and efficient force than it is now.
15. Don't ask, don't care. If a Soldier shows up at the right time, in the right place, in the right uniform and does their J-O-B, who they date, whom they are married to, or what they do on their personal time does not matter as long as it is in concurrence with the law.
16. Don't let the people that say "I don't have a lot of power, but I can say NO" limit your ability to get the mission done. Work to find a way to yes.
17. Funding drives everything. I never imagined when I joined the Army in 1985 that the first question I would ask when given a mission would be "who is paying for that?" but that is the first thing we always have to ask.
18. Don't take yourself too seriously. Always compare the moral certainty of your righteous indignation with a generous amount of humility about the limits of your own knowledge.
19. It is the height of arrogance to think that someone else is wasting his or her time plotting against you. It is humorous to believe that the "system" is 1. Organized enough, and 2. Directed enough, to single you out for mal-treatment. Never attribute to malice what is explained as easily through incompetence, incompetence is much more common.
20. Avoid single points of failure and make sure you are not one. Every

making process and leadership philosophy. "It's also something I use to re-center myself on a regular basis, to remind myself what matters and what I should be holding to, I read some or all of this daily. It's also for growth, for myself and others," Merrick said.

Merrick encourages everyone he shares it with to provide feedback if they are interested. He says that's why number 18 on his list is important. It states, "Don't take yourself too seriously. Always compare the moral certainty of your righteous indignation with a generous amount of humility about the limits of your own knowledge." Merrick wants to learn from others as much as he wants others to learn from him.

Merrick says it's difficult for him to decide what is most important in his leadership themes, but that number one on his list is probably it, "Regulations govern the military, but it runs on relationships. Look for opportunities to build relationships, face to face is best; you cannot really learn to know people over the phone, by email, or text."

Merrick says none of the ideas are originally his, but that it is his way of stating and understanding some truths that have been around as long as Soldiers have been going to war.

"I freely take snippets from other leaders and from history and am always revising or trying to more eloquently state what I think and feel a leader should be—and do," he said. "Maybe someday a Soldier will take something from this and internalize it to make them a better leader, and make a difference for one of their Soldiers, or maybe even save a life or make a difference in combat, that will be the most important part."

Merrick thinks and documents his thoughts because he believes good leaders in the Army should internalize the Army values to develop their own unique, critical understanding of how to lead others effectively.



FEATURES: State Partnership Program & Preparedness Training

Combined Task Force 501 unites nations for disaster rescue training

Continued from Front Page

The State Partnership Program was established by the National Guard to help enhance each country's search and rescue operation capabilities and bridge the cultural gap between the partner nations through building interpersonal relationships.

This is the second year the Hawaii National Guard has sponsored the Basic Rope Rescue Certification training, but the first year Oregon and their state partners were invited to attend. Other participants of the training included Hawaii's state partners: Soldiers from the Philippines and Indonesian armies.

Cpt. Valentine Roberts, Hawaii Army National Guard, CERFP, Operations Officer, who coordinated the training event, explained the benefits of holding the training in Hawaii. "Because of Hawaii's unique location within the Pacific, we're kind of cut off and isolated from the rest of the Continental United States," he said, "and being a part of

the Asia-Pacific region, understanding our partner nations' capabilities—of what they bring to the fight and what we bring to the response—enhances everybody's response time or response capabilities to whatever natural or manmade disaster may arise. So linking everyone together, doing this type of joint training, really allows us, as responders, to better assist the public."

Tech. Sgt. Carson Mather, Medical Dental Group, Detachment 1 (CERFP), 142nd Fighter Wing, Oregon Air National Guard, said the multi-national training experience was very valuable.

"I've had the fortunate opportunity to work with both Vietnam and Bangladesh in the past under State Partnership opportunities, but this one, particularly having the opportunity to work with the Indonesians, has been fantastic," he said. "Knowing that we're all in it for the same thing—to save lives and take care of ourselves and others—it's been great seeing the collaboration, so if it comes time to respond together, we're all on the same page."

Maj. Adam Lulay, U.S. Army bilateral affairs officer in Vietnam, was present in Vietnam for the initial signing of the SPP agreement in 2012.

He also had the opportunity to travel to Bangladesh and help both countries design and build their rubble piles for rescue training. While he was not part of the training itself, he traveled to Hawaii to observe the training and visit with the participants.

Addressing whether or not he felt the joint training has

been successful, he said: "The proof's in the pudding. You see how far these countries have come in such a short amount of time and the integration we've seen with the U.S. Initially, these countries were doing things that probably weren't the safest. Now, we use similar training, similar instant command system structures, similar rope rescue training equipment. If we ever had to respond on a mission, either in their country or an international level, we could actually work side by side, shoulder to shoulder and do real world recovery and response."

Sgt. Loren Waters, 442nd Engineer Utility Detachment, 1249th Engineer Battalion, Oregon Army National Guard, said he greatly enjoyed working with individuals from other countries, with varied cultures and backgrounds. "There's a lot of different countries on earth, and we've got people from all kinds of different walks of life," he said. "The biggest take away from this is that we're all pretty much the same. We have a lot of the same wants and needs, and we just want to be able to go back to our countries and be a help when the absolute worst happens."

First Sgt. Jason Obersinner, Non-Commission Officer in Charge, Headquarters and Headquarters Detachment, 821 Troop Command Battalion, Oregon Army National Guard, said the highlight of the trip for him was "the FTX where we picked team leaders, broke out into teams and were given an urban search and rescue mission, where our team had to rescue a mannequin or other team member at three different locations, and with our blended teams—with members from each



An Indonesian Soldier hauls Spc. Eric Holloway, 224th Engineer Company, 1249th Engineer Battalion, up a tower during a Rope Rescue Certification Training.

represented country and state—we had to work together through language barriers—and the Hawaii sun—to rescue those who needed to be rescued."

He also agreed that the training was valuable stating, "It's always important to keep our SPP strong and healthy, and the only way you do that is when you are doing face to face training with your state partners. We know disaster is going to come, we just don't know when; so being prepared—trained, ready and equipped to respond to such an event—is a Guardsman job."



Oregon Air National Guard Tech. Sgt. Bradley Karlin, Medical Dental Group, Det. 1 (CERFP) and two Vietnamese Soldiers practice securing a member of the Bangladesh Fire Services Civil Defense.

ORNG Set to Roll out 2-Weeks Ready Emergency Preparedness Training

Story by Sgt. Cory Grogen,  
Joint Forces Headquarters Public Affairs

**SALEM, Oregon** - Emergency responders including members of the Oregon National Guard need to be ready to respond to emergencies and disasters. That's why having an emergency plan and supplies is important, knowing you may have to leave your family to help protect the lives and property of others.

For many years, Emergency Management experts recommended being prepared for 72-hours. While that is a good start, it does not reflect the reality of the impacts from a large earthquake and tsunami, which will leave much of our infrastructure, including transportation routes, communications networks, and water and energy services unusable. This threat looms from Northern California to British Columbia because of a subduction zone called Cascadia that will eventually cause a devastating earthquake and tsunami similar to the 2004 Boxing Day subduction zone earthquake and tsunami in Indonesia, and the 2011 Tohoku occurrence in Japan.



The images from those natural disasters are a vivid reminder of what we face, but experts say being prepared can make a difference.

That's why in 2013, a group of specialists in Oregon began to think about improvements needed for education and outreach, and what it would take for individuals and families to be better prepared for Cascadia and other threats in Oregon. The new recommendation is for individuals and families to be self-sufficient for at least two-weeks, and Oregon's Office of Emergency Management began to develop an outreach campaign called "2-Weeks Ready."

Oregon National Guard leadership has recognized the importance of emergency preparedness making it a priority to adopt and share "2-Weeks Ready" with its service members and families, and will be rolling out emergency preparedness training at the unit level.

"We encourage Oregonians to be prepared for a minimum of two-weeks as part of our "2-Weeks Ready" initiative," said Maj. Gen. Michael Stencel, Adjutant General, Oregon. "When more individuals and families in our organization are prepared, our Soldiers and Airmen can better focus their energy on injured and other vulnerable populations immediately following a disaster."

So what does being ready for two-weeks mean?

According to Oregon Office of Emergency Management Director Andrew Phelps it means having the 'skills and the stuff' to take

care of yourself and those in your household for at least two-weeks following an emergency or disaster.

"Learning first aid and CPR can go a long way towards individual and family preparedness, as can ensuring

your residence is properly insured, you know where utility shut-offs are located, how to communicate and evacuate, and where to get emergency information."

He says there is not just one-way to put together two-weeks' worth of supplies since everyone has individual dietary and medical needs.

"If your family includes children, seniors or pets, you will have additional needs. Everyone's kit will look different but for a basic starting point, you can visit our "2-Weeks Ready" page. This page suggests activities or items to include in your preparedness kit. You probably have many "2-Weeks Ready" items around the house and may be more prepared than you think! Being prepared to be self-sufficient for two-weeks is an achievable goal. Many of the standard preparedness kit items such as flashlights, gloves, hand-crank radios, trash bags and a first-aid kit are already in a 72-hour kit if you have one."

Brig. Gen. Gregory Day who has been an advocate of the initiative says "2-Weeks Ready" presentations are scheduled to be given to all Oregon National Guard members to encourage them to think and talk about emergency preparedness.

"It is a good idea to have meaningful conversations with members of your household about things like backup transportation, who will take care of kids and elderly in your family if you are unable to, what resources you have in your

neighborhood, determining an out of state contact, and other things that will help better prepare you," said Day. "It also important to make sure your family has enough food and water for at least two-weeks, it is the foundation of your emergency supplies."

Emergency management planners say that until the Cascadia earthquake and tsunami happens we don't know exactly how our infrastructure and our environment are going to respond, and that it's important to heed warnings that we need to get prepared. Using available science and forecasts, and looking at how we prepare can help the Oregon National Guard build a culture of preparedness, according to Stencel.

For more information on how to get 2-Weeks Ready go to:  
<https://www.oregon.gov/OEM/hazardsprep/Pages/2-Weeks-Ready.aspx>.



Photo by Capt. Jessica Clarke, OMD Public Affairs  
Maj. Gen. Michael E. Stencel, Adjutant General, Oregon, takes time to present Chief Warrant Officer 3 Wiley Fretwell with an emergency kit provided by the Oregon Office of Emergency Management Public Information Office, Sept. 8, Salem, Ore.

FEATURES: State Partnership Program & Preparedness Training

Oregon CERFP Guardsmen train with Mongolian first responders

Story and Photos by  
Sgt. Timothy Jackson,  
115th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

**SAINSHAND, Mongolia** - Wild horses ignore the zebra-striped crosswalk on the main road in Sainshand, Mongolia and meander towards a high-ropes tower where Oregon National Guardsmen are working alongside Mongolian National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA) first responders.

The two groups are working together during Gobi Wolf 19, hosted by NEMA and the Mongolian Armed Forces as part of the United States Army Pacific's humanitarian assistance and disaster relief "Pacific Resilience" series from Sept. 9-21.

Oregon Guard Chemical, Biological, Radiological, Nuclear and high-yield Explosives (CBRNE) Enhanced Response Force Package (CERFP) members instruct and learn from their Mongolian counterparts in both high-angle and rope rescue and confined space search and extraction exercises.

"They ask a lot of questions and give a lot of feedback on how they do things as well," said Staff Sgt. Patrick Gonzalez, a military policeman with the 1186th Military Police Company out of Salem, Oregon.

Gonzalez is an instructor for the confined space extraction portion of the exercise. Mogolians and Oregon Guard members create makeshift classrooms and exercise scenarios in an abandoned food processing factory. In the factory, paintings of a horse



Oregon National Guard Spc. James Paredesbravo, assigned to the 1186th Military Police Company, teaches a class on confined space search and extraction, Sept. 16, during Gobi Wolf 19.

flying above the clouds, and a Tibetan monk in orange decorate one room. In another an idyllic Mongolian family smiles for a portrait, with a colorful city painted as the back-drop, not unlike the town outside the windows.

Oregon Guard Soldiers observe as Mongolia NEMA members cram through a tight space with ropes attached to safety harnesses, extracting patients from collapsed and dusty dark spaces that make economy seating on a discount airline seem like an open field. Gonzalez said that a confined space is defined as a place you could not live, and where entry and exit and severely limited.

Gonzalez helps a NEMA member lift a piece of wood off a simulated casualty, but

three of the walls—the face wall is painted a vibrant blue. Oregon National Guard Soldiers and Mongolian first responders alike peak out into the six windows cut into the blue wall, heads framed like the intro to the Brady Bunch show.

"The advantage of the high angle rope rescue techniques that we're teaching is that it allows rescuers and crew to safely get to a patient that is in a restricted environment, package them in an immobilizing device such as a sked or a liter, and use the

rope system to extract the victim without causing further injury to them," Obersinner said.

At another point in the exercise a Mongolian first responder packages a trusting mummified Oregon Guardsman into a sked and lowers him three stories down at a straight 90 degree angle. High angle refers to lifting a patient using a rope and harness at an angle greater than 45 degrees.

"The language barrier is a struggle but the partnerships are a lot of fun and it's a good experience," Obersinner said.

Command Sgt. Major Robert Foesch, senior enlisted leader of the Oregon National Guard, sees the Soldiers working on an operational level as them forging relationships with our partners that could impact world affairs.

"You're on the world stage, you've got to produce, you don't get a mulligan... you've got to do it right the first time," Foesch said.

Foesch said getting to know the Mongolian's culture and training style on the trip was vital if we were to ask for help, or they were to request help from us in a future emergency. He emphasized the most important aspect was getting to know and working with our allies.

"The national guard is strategically important to this because of the benefit we have over active duty... we have soldiers in units for a long time, so we can send people that they have already worked with once, or twice, or three times," Foesch said.

It was Pvt. Brandon Huelter's, a military policeman with the 1186th Military Police Company, first time out to a Gobi Wolf exercise. He was one of the Soldiers who experienced a cultural day, where they played Mongolian games, practiced



U.S. Army, Oregon and Alaska National Guard soldiers stand in formation at the formal opening ceremony for the Gobi Wolf 2019 exercise in Sainshand, Mongolia, Sept. 15, 2019.

archery, and rode camels. He said that he liked the thoughtful nature of the Mongolians, and said he noticed people from the province took meditation and staying positive very seriously.

Back at the food factory the Mongolians and Oregon National Guard members are taking a traditional tea break, sweat and dust mix on their forehead as they take off their protective helmets.

Gonzalez believes this exercise was one that anybody interested in helping others would've enjoyed.

"We need more bodies, we need more people, this is just one thing that we're gonna be doing in the next few years, there's gonna be more to come," Gonzalez said. "If anyone else wants on it, talk to someone on CERFP and they'll tell you more about it and how to get on in."



A Mongolian first responder is shadowed by a member of the Oregon Army National Guard during a class on confined space search and extraction during Gobi Wolf 19 exercise, Sept. 17.

SERE instructors help train 173rd FW pilots in water survival techniques

Story and Photo by  
Master Sgt. Jefferson Thompson,  
173rd Fighter Wing Public Affairs

**DESCHUTES COUNTY, Oregon** - U.S. Air Force F-15C pilots from the 173rd Fighter Wing spent one day preparing for an emergency ejection over water during water survival skills training at Cultus Lake in Central Oregon, July 25.

In the day-use campground overlooking the crystal-clear lake, pilots donned their flight suits, sans patches, and prepared to practice releasing from a parachute while being dragged through the water, navigating beneath a water-logged chute, and entering and exiting a life raft.

This year, the aircrew flight equipment section brought Survival, Evasion, Resistance and Escape, otherwise known as SERE, instructors from Fairchild Air Force Base, Washington, and Beale AFB, California to teach the material ensuring the pilots are qualified to fly and train over water, something they do when using the coastal ranges in Oregon.

"Our role this year is to coordinate with SERE, get them down here as trainers as well as provide the equipment," said Master Sgt. Brian Vaughan, the flight chief for 173rd Aircrew Flight Equipment.

The list of equipment is long: flight suits, helmets, life preservers, inflatable rafts, harnesses, survival kits, recovery devices, a parachute and anchor system, and the gear to simulate a parachute drag.

"It's a lot of work, we actually start planning about a year out and there are a lot of permits that we need from the Forest Service...and then just getting the gear ready," said Vaughan.

The SERE instructors took them through various procedures involving their included survival gear and explained what the process will involve when being picked from the water using a number of different methods.

"It's kind of a first-of-its-kind event," Staff Sgt. Michael Bilodeau, a SERE water survival specialist from Fairchild AFB, Washington, on getting away from his classroom and out to the operational Air Force. "We get a chance to work with these folks and give them a little bit of information that we have at the schoolhouse that we want to pass along to them."

"It went great, good training," said Lt. Col. Ryan McLain, the 114th Fighter Squadron commander. "It's always a good refresher and it's good to get some new perspectives and some of these guys that



Oregon Air National Guard Lt. Col. Kedric Osborne, an F-15C Instructor Pilot at the 173rd FW, takes a deep breath before submerging beneath a floating parachute at Cultus Lake, July 25.

came out have done different things than we have, they were able to teach us some new things."

Additionally, Bilodeau points out that it's a great opportunity for the aircrew flight equipment and the pilots to bring their families along for a first-hand look at the training.

"This is also a chance to showcase a part of what they do for their families,

'hey, here's a taste of some of the training I've been through,'" said Bilodeau. "More often than not you go away for training and then you come back, so this is a nice chance to share it with them."

This training will ensure all of the pilots in attendance are certified to fly and train over water for the next three years when AFE will plan another training at one of the lakes surrounding the Klamath Basin.



FEATURES: State Partnership Program

First responders, volunteers train with Mongolian partners in ‘Gobi Wolf’ exercise

Story and Photos by  
Master Sgt. John Hughel,  
Oregon National Guard Public Affairs

**SAINSHAND, Mongolia** – There are several important pieces of equipment firefighters wear that make up their Personal Protection Equipment (PPE) or “turnout gear.” Of all the specialized pieces, the most distinct for Cheyenne Sanchez is a photo of his sister inside his fireman’s helmet.

“When I suit-up to go into a building that is on fire, the helmet is the last piece of equipment to go onto my head, and her picture is the last thing I see as I go into a life-threatening situation,” Sanchez said, describing how essential a ‘safety first’ approach is, heading into harm’s way.

“It’s that final reminder that I need to return home safely to the people that I love and who care about me.”

Sanchez, a firefighter with Capital City Fire and Rescue in Juneau, Alaska, is one of many key first responders and volunteers, from both the U.S. military and civilian sectors supporting the Gobi Wolf 2019 exercise taking place in Sainshand, Mongolia from Sept. 9-21, 2019. He was specially recruited by the Alaska State hazardous materials (HAZMAT) team coordinator, Megan Krollor to instruct firefighter and HAZMAT response training.

“At the international level, I’ve never done anything like this before coming here,” he said, describing how the range

collapse systems,” said Oregon National Guard Sgt. Joseph Duchscherer, assigned to the 1186th Military Police Company and CERFP Search and Extraction team leader.

With a team of five other Guardsmen, they worked through a full week of training in an abandoned facility that proved to be an ideal exercise site for multiple scenarios. Often the location had two and three training projects taking place at the same time; from rope teams rappelling from the rooftops to jackhammers noisily cutting through concrete, and search and rescue dogs curiously roving through the old factory floors.

“In many ways, this exercise was a little more ‘real-world’ in nature because lumber is scarce in this part of

the country – to do this work you have to make the best of what resources are available,” Duchscherer said.

“It was also great to compare and contrast other best practices techniques because the NEMA rescue unit members are seasoned professionals too.”

The planning for the exercise started months in advance and included subject-matter experts to meet the specific request made by local NEMA officials.

“In February of this year we started planning this exercise and had a large window of time to build it, but it wasn’t until the end that we had all of the specialized experts in place to meet the program,” said Lt. Col. Eric Slayter, U.S. Army Pacific Director, Northeast Asia Civil-Military Operations and exercise director.

The Gobi Wolf 2019 exercise had 21 different training classes up from just eight during the previous year’s exercise. Slayter said that

this greatly expanded the need for both the quality and quantity of instructors to fill the large agenda.

“Many of these aspects for Gobi Wolf 19 pin-pointed technical exchange and in-depth course work, which is why we brought in groups like the Forestry Service to talk about incident command systems, and other specialized areas in disaster management systems, public affairs, and medical treatment.”

This year’s Gobi Wolf exercise also hosted a conference on Women’s Peace and Security, highlighting the need to focus on vulnerable populations where women are primarily responsible for children and elderly members of the family.

The engagement is a critical part of the Government of Mongolia’s ability to prepare for an unforeseen crisis. However, these crises are not only unique to Mongolia but are prevalent throughout the Indo-Pacific.

“We do this to build lasting relationships with partner nations, not just military and government agencies – but to foster broader cooperation to effectively respond to disasters,” Slayter said, all the while emphasizing other non-governmental organizations integral role in the exercise.

“The Alaska civilians and other first responder filled critical areas and were incredible subject-matter experts.”

One of those experts was Don Werhonic, assistant fire chief of Fairbanks North Star Bureau HAZMAT Team. After serving in the U.S. Army for 10 years, he transitioned to working hazards materials for the past 18 years. The training was not far from his heart, working alongside American military members and their Mongolian counterparts.

“I loved everything about being a squad leader (in the Army) and working with my troops and supporting their specific needs,” he said, recalling his prior service experience working with uniformed personnel. “So it was easy for me to share and relate to their (NEMA) unit structure and needs.”



Members of the National Emergency Management Agency take part in the formal opening of Gobi Wolf 19, a Disaster Response and Exchange Exercise, Sept. 15, 2019 in Sainshand, Mongolia.

The training allowed NEMA rescue unit members to go in-depth on many hazards chemicals that could impact large portions of the population in the Dornogovi Province in the event of earthquakes, train derailments and the various destructive effects from random sand storms in the Gobi Desert.

“This has been one of the best real-world experiences I’ve ever done, and I enjoyed the interaction with our NEMA host members and their engagement in the classroom,” he said.



Oregon National Guard Sgt. Joseph Duchscherer, assigned to the 1186th Military Police Company, spray paints an entrance to a doorway to indicate injured personnel as he clears a building, Sept. 12, 2019.

These agency-to-agency interactions strike at the core of the exercise; comparing similar disaster response capabilities, yet providing a platform for NEMA to further develop and manage environmental and hazardous material disaster responses in specific areas around the country.

On the final day of the Gobi Wolf exercise, an after-action review allowed participants to provide feedback on the complexity of the training and develop improvements for future training.

Addressing the participants, Col. Nuganbayar Batmunch, deputy chief of NEMA, highlighted the training between the two nations.

“This has been 14 days of amazing training where we could organize and gain great knowledge with our American colleagues,” he said, speaking through an interpreter. “During Gobi Wolf, we were able to share and build on a common desire; where we strive to meet the needs of others when disaster and recovery operations are critically needed.”



Don Werhonic, Assistant Fire Chief for the City of Fairbanks, Alaska, leads a class of chemical hazards for NEMA members during the Gobi Wolf 19 Exercise, Sept. 8, 2019.



Cheyenne Sanchez, a firefighter and EMT from Juneau, Alaska, pauses for a photo and displays the inside of his helmet with a photograph of his sister, Sept. 11, 2019 in Sainshand, Mongolia.

Oregon Army National Guard Sgt. Aaron Stiner, a CERFP trainer leads a course on HAZMAT DECON as part of the Gobi Wolf 19 Exercise, Sept. 12, 2019 in Sainshand, Mongolia.

The Mongolian Armed Forces and the Mongolian National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA) as part of the United States Army Pacific’s humanitarian assistance and disaster relief “Pacific Resilience” series hosted the Gobi Wolf exercise. Mongolia has an ongoing State Partnership with Alaska and during this year’s exercise, the Oregon National Guard played a key role in supporting all groups during the training.

Whether it was rope rescue, search and extraction, or collapsed structures, the Oregon CERFP members quickly discovered that their Mongolian partners were curious in the teaching techniques and hands-on experience offered throughout the exercise.

“They [NEMA members] had limited experience with shoring and structural collapse but they quickly adapted to the techniques and equipment we use to build structural

FEATURES: State Partnership Program

Canine trainers bring experience, compassion to Mongolian disaster response exercise

Story and Photos by  
Master Sgt. John Hughel,  
Oregon National Guard Public Affairs

**SAINSHAND, Mongolia** - It’s not often in life that someone can pinpoint an exact moment when his or her life instantly changed. For Melissa Becker, that moment came during an everyday ritual and helped foster her consecutive journeys back to Mongolia.

“Went to get a cup of coffee and came back with a puppy,” Becker assertively recalled, linking a flash from more than 16 years ago to her present-day trip to Sainshand with co-volunteers Debra Gillis and Dolly Lefever. “I know it sounds simple but when I adopted this dog, it altered my life in a profound way.”

It was the coffee barista at her local coffee shack, whose parents were desperate to rehome a puppy after just one day. Becker instantly said yes, adopting the dog and beginning a long excursion into training and developing her desire into working with search and rescue dogs.

As part of a trio of volunteer canine trainers with the Alaska Search and Rescue Dogs (ASARD), Becker helped train dog handlers with the National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA) during the disaster response and exchange exercise ‘Gobi Wolf 19’ from Sept. 9-21. They are key subject matter experts, providing years of insight and passion in the field of canine rescue.



Dolly Lefever, a volunteer with Alaska Search and Rescue Dogs, with the help of an interpreter, describes some of the training materials with two members of the National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA) rescue unit, Sept. 8, 2019, during classroom as part of Gobi Wolf 19.

“I love the dog training; each dog has a different personality and using those strengths and weakness while bringing out what’s best from each dog is what I find the most interesting,” Gillis said.

Depending on the season, she will train handlers and their dogs in different skills. In the spring and fall, it is often tracking, in the winter it is “nose work” when relocating indoors.

“I train their handlers on how to train their dogs,” she said, stressing the importance of the one-on-one relationship and skills formed during training.

“I sometimes get frustrated with the lack of dog trainers in Search and Rescue because that’s where it all begins -- where you discover what each particular dog is really good at -- not every dog can be a search and rescue dog,” she said.

That sentiment of understanding, not only with the individual dog but what drives someone to diligently work in search and rescue, was reiterated by Lefever, describing the transition from mountain climbing and mountain rescue and now to working with rescue dogs.

“I decided to take a break from mountain climbing in the late 1990’s to start working with rescue dogs,” Lefever said, modestly acknowledging the transition from one form of training and lifesaving work to another. That ‘break’ came after a remarkable achievement in the mid-1990’s.

On May 11, 1993, Lefever successfully climbed the 29,029-foot peak of Mount Everest, on her way to being the first American woman ever to complete climbs of all the tallest peaks on each of the seven continents by 1994. They included Mount Denali (North America), Aconcagua (South America), Kilimanjaro (Africa), Elbrus (Europe), Vinson (Antarctica), Kosciuszko (Australia) and Mount Everest (Asia).

But with the same quiet determination she used to pursue those feats, Lefever diligently works with rescue dogs now.

“I joined ASARD in the early 2000’s and traveled other parts of the U.S. to do more training,” she said, relating her awareness from years of traveling around the world during her mountain climbing conquest. “I had this fear of earthquakes and I knew that to get a FEMA out to an (earthquake) site would take quite a long time and cost many lives.”

Though her current dog, Shadow, a Mini Austrian Shepard, did not pass the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) test, he is trained to a level 2 search and rescue dog and has been part of nearly 25 missions.

The trip to Mongolia is the second year in a row for Becker to work with NEMA and rescue dogs during the Gobi Wolf exercises, but shortly before leaving Alaska, she lost her dog Tatonka. It wasn’t far from her mind when echoing many of the connections they share with being an owner and conveying the training to their Mongolian counterparts.

“That strong tie with a dog, how far you can go, how much you can do ... it’s incredible,” Becker said.

In some ways, the two weeks of training in Mongolia was a bit of a welcome distraction and a clear chance to see how much of the training from the previous year had transpired with the NEMA dog handlers.

“I see a huge difference because I was lucky enough to be here last year and see how the program is running now,” she said. “They (NEMA) are getting away from the Soviet-style of sharp and

harsh correction to the dogs (if they do something bad), and most of the students here just completed six months of training in Ulaanbaatar.”

Becker was involved with some of the training in 2018 in Ulaanbaatar and noticed the difference when she arrived back in Mongolia this year.

“I can tell that they have been trained differently,” she said. “But just in the first week of training this year, working with Jake and his handler here (in Sainshand) we saw noticeable changes -- you just get so much more out of a positive relationship with the animal.”

Those changes were noteworthy even for Gillis after the first five days for focused and compassionate training.

“All the teams, all the handlers have excellent relationships with the dogs,” Gillis said, highlighting the motivation how each team responded to the training. “The dogs are trying so hard to communicate with that handler and it shows that relationship they had coming in and they are putting everything together in that overall big picture.”

As the week of training went on, the three trainers also observed two import aspects with the NEMA dog handlers; the first being a relaxed confidence with their dogs and the second being a camaraderie between the trainers as a whole.

“I am seeing the guys working together, supporting each other,” said Lefever, noting the change. “It didn’t show right at the beginning but it is defiantly there now and they are willing to try new training ideas with the dogs.”

With two translators helping the Alaska handlers work with their Mongolian counterparts throughout the exercise, there was also a shared kinship and universal language transpiring with the group. After the in-classroom work ended, the NEMA members would often stay asking additional questions of their three American trainers.

“We’re here to support them, we don’t always share the same view but we try and get to the same point,” said Gillis. “Their love for the dogs, they have the same dedication and I’m willing to bend over backwards to support that!”

One of the noticeable alterations Becker pointed out from last year’s training and reiterated by Gillis and Lefever was the change and pitch in the reward voice used by the NEMA dog handlers.

“I could start to hear how some of them raised the octave in their voice, trying to get it higher when acknowledging the dog’s correct response,” said Gillis.

Laughing to that response, Becker was quick to say how this began in the previous year’s training and has carried over to this group too.

“We talked about that last year, that ‘Silly High Voice,’ and how it was different from how they might normally verbally reward their dogs,” said Becker. “The handlers see how receptive the dogs are to that sound and are starting to use it.”



Melissa Becker pauses between training exercises as groups of trainers and their dogs with the National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA) unit work to clear a training site, Sept. 10, during the Gobi Wolf 19 exercise.

Outside of the U.S., dogs in many countries are seen less as pets and used more as working animals. Lefever noted how the earthquake in Nepal in 2015 changed that perception when people could see how dogs could be so effective in collapsed structure recovery.

“The attitude change is remarkable, to see how these guys are using these dogs as a respectable tool -- it is just incredible,” she said.

For their part in Gobi Wolf 19, all three traveled to Mongolia as unpaid volunteers much like the time and dedication they offer back home in their native state of Alaska. But with the chance to make such an enormous impact with their partners in Mongolia: Becker, Gillis and Lefever all said it was an experience they would never forget.

“There was a moment during the training when we were working at one of the training sites, and this wonderful breeze, almost like a constant current, came through the building. The dogs, with all of their training, just followed it one after another,” Gillis said, capturing the essence of their calling and volunteer assignment in Mongolia. “We all looked at each other (with the same satisfaction) for how well the dogs were responding. It was just beautiful.”



Search and Rescue dog handlers with the National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA) unit train with their assigned dogs at the NEMA training area, Sept. 8, 2019 during Gobi Wolf 19, a multi national State Partnership Program exercise in Sainshand, Mongolia

Gobi Wolf 19 is hosted by NEMA and the Mongolian Armed Forces and is part of the U.S. Army Pacific’s humanitarian assistance and disaster relief “Pacific Resilience” series. With an ongoing relationship between Mongolia and Alaska through the National Guard’s State Partnership Program, many civilian and volunteer organizations, like ASARD, played an immense role in this year’s training.

For Debra Gillis, the trip to Mongolia is her first (other than Canada) out of the United States but she instantly found a connection with the German Shepard dogs primarily utilized by the NEMA and Sainshand Police Department.

“I love the dog and love the breed,” she said, after spending a long but productive day with half a dozen dogs on obstacle courses while working directly with their NEMA trainers.

Initially, Gillis started with training dogs for sport competition but later with her dog, Sterling began to work in search and rescue with ASARD in 2001. After his untimely death, she began training her next dog, Ruger and completed more than 100 missions prior to his passing in 2016.

Now Gillis is training Gauge, the fourth in a lineage of German Shepards. Like all dog owners and handlers, a special bond between makes each dog’s characteristics and skills unique, especially when they are trained to become rescue animals.



Debra Gillis, a volunteer with Alaska Search and Rescue Dogs, helps train and assist members of the National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA) unit, Sept. 9, 2019, as part of Gobi Wolf 19 in Sainshand, Mongolia.



OREGON NATIONAL GUARD COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND REGIONAL EVENTS

# 234th Army Band celebrates centennial accross the state

Story by Sgt. Jennifer Lena,  
115th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

CLACKAMAS, Oregon - The 234th Army Band kicked off their state-wide Centennial Tour June 30 at Mt. Hood Community College in Gresham, Oregon to commemorate the 100th anniversary of their inclusion in the Oregon Army National Guard and the unit's rich history of musical excellence. The tour was the unit's annual training (AT).

The tour, which lasted through July 13, traveled to the cities of Dayton, Gresham, Salem, Independence, Happy Valley, Roseburg, Eugene, Bend, Madras, Prineville and Hood River, Oregon. The programs featured numbers ranging from formal to playful, some of which were arranged or written especially for this occasion.

The unit currently consists of 37 uniquely talented members with diverse backgrounds. The full band, known as the Empire Builders, performed for family, friends and the public free of charge. The unit also has several smaller musical performance teams, which tour under the names Brass Ops (a horn ensemble), 45 Away (a rock ensemble), and General Dischord (a woodwind ensemble). All three teams were included in the Centennial Tour, allowing for multiple performances a day to entertain as many Oregonians as possible.

"Army bands in general are the face of the Army, therefore, the 234th Army Band is the face of the Oregon National Guard," said 1st Sgt. Tasha Cruz, non-commissioned officer in charge of the 234th. "We are the ones the public sees on a fairly regular basis, so we are constantly telling the Army story, sharing experiences about the Oregon Guard and rallying public support."

"This is my first time touring with the band," said Spc. Ruben Monroy, trumpet player. "I feel that going through AT together as a unit has helped us build better chemistry that is hard to get when you only see each other 2 or 3 times a month."

On a regular basis, the band provides musical support at military functions, such as Military Academy graduations,

change of command ceremonies, parades, funerals, opening ceremonies, mobilization and demobilization ceremonies and much more. The unit's AT typically includes a concert tour of Oregon, but this year had to be extra memorable.

"Learning about the band's history has further inspired me to work harder and be the best soldier and musician I can be," Monroy said. "This band holds much meaning to many people, and I can sincerely say I am proud to continue its legacy."

In honor of the band's 100 year history, the group incorporated soloists, former band members, and guest conductors into the show and held an alumni dinner where commemorative coins were handed out.

"I've been a member of this band since 1997, having joined when I was 17 years old," Cruz said. "Many of the former members we've invited to our Centennial shows were leaders when I was a private, and I looked up to them. Reconnecting with them again and seeing their joy at being a part of our celebration was very rewarding for me."

The 234th Army Band was founded on June 20, 1919. The unit was originally known as Band Section, Service Company, 162nd Infantry Regiment. The band was inducted into federal service in September of 1940 and served in World War II, participating in the campaigns at Luzon, New Guinea and the Southern Philippines. This resulted in the unit earning the Philippine Presidential Unit Citation for service.

In 1947 the band was renamed the 234th Army Band, which it remains today. The unit is currently located at the 41st Infantry Division Armed Forces Reserve Center, Camp Withycombe, Oregon.

"If there are Oregon Guardsmen and women out there who are musicians, they should come visit and find out what it takes to audition," Cruz said. "Being in the band is a great way to do what you love while also getting to serve your community and the state."

Soldiers of the 111th Army Band and the 234th Army Band rehearse together for a joint performance during their annual training at the Oregon Military Museum in Clackamas, Oregon, July 6, 2018. This is a first time collaboration between the 111th Army Band and the 234th Army Band by methods of team building exercises and group performances creating a lasting camaraderie between both units. (U.S. Army National Guard Photo by Pfc. Chavaughn Washington/Released)



Jim Little, a former member of the 234th Army Band, looks at photos of the band on display at Mount Hood Community College, June 30, 2019. The display was part of the Centennial Celebration of the band and included a 90 minute performance by current and former members of the unit. (National Guard photo By Spc. Michael Germundson, 115th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment)



Above: Sgt. 1st Class Jesus Cruz of the 234th Army Band leads the marching band formation as the Drum Major during a joint rehearsal between the 111th Army Band and the 234th Army Band at the Oregon Military Museum in Clackamas, Oregon, July 6, 2018. This is a first time collaboration between the 111th Army Band and the 234th Army Band by methods of team building exercises and group performances creating a lasting camaraderie between both units. (U.S. Army National Guard Photo by Pfc. Chavaughn Washington)

Left: Jim Little, a former member of the 234th Army Band, looks at photos of the band on display at Mount Hood Community College, June 30, 2019. The display was part of the Centennial Celebration of the band and included a 90 minute performance by current and former members of the unit. (U.S. Army Photo By Spc. Michael Germundson, 115th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment)

Right: Soldiers of the 234th Army Band's rock group, 45 Away, perform for the public during an Independence Day festival July 4, 2019, at Happy Valley Park in Happy Valley, Ore. (U.S. Army Photo by Sgt. Jennifer Lena, 115th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment)



Sgt. 1st Class Brent Rubio leads the joint marching band of the 111th Army Band and the 234th Army Band out of the stadium after their performance Anthem at Evergreen High School in Vancouver, Washington, July 6, 2018. This is a first time collaboration between the 111th Army Band and the 234th Army Band by methods of team building exercises and group performances creating a lasting camaraderie between both units. (U.S. Army National Guard Photo by Pfc. Chavaughn Washington)



Oregon Army National Guard 1st Sgt. Tasha Cruz sings a duet with retired 1st Sgt. Jan Johanson, during the 100th Anniversary celebration of the 234th Army Band at Mount Hood Community College, June 30, 2019. The duet was part of a 90 minute performance that included current and former members of the unit. (National Guard Photo By Spc. Michael Germundson, 115th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment)





## OREGON AIR NATIONAL GUARD

# Team Kingsley adds “shoot house” to world-class training arsenal

*Story and Photo by  
Master Sgt. Jefferson Thompson  
173rd Fighter Wing Public Affairs*

**KLAMATH FALLS, Oregon** - The 173rd Security Forces Squadron (SFS) increased the training capability for the base, as well as the surrounding area, when they constructed a new “shoot house” on the base designed to simulate real situations law enforcement and first responders deal with as a part of their mission.

The 5,000 square foot facility is equipped with breach or pry doors and breach glass windows, as well as a camera monitoring system, dimmable lights, and smoke generators used to replicate anything from a fire to a hostage situation or an active shooter.

“It’s a perfect facility for us to train our tactics, how we clear buildings, how we handle, let’s say, an active shooter scenario,” said Lt. Col. Lucas Ritter, the security forces squadron commander.

What sets the facility apart from others, is that it’s designed for use with Simunitions—the closest thing to live ammunition available for training. Simunitions are live rounds, which are loaded into normal weapons and



Teams of security forces Airmen honed their skills in a newly constructed “shoot house” at Kingsley Field in Klamath Falls, Oregon.

utilize a small, plastic projectile that sting a bit but are non-lethal. It’s the only structure like it within a four-hour drive from the Klamath Basin.

“They are going to have the opportunity to experience those real-life adrenaline rushes with the unknowns and the variables that it creates,” said Steve Westerberg, Oregon Dept. of Public Safety and certified law enforcement officer on what makes a shoot house like this one a unique training tool.

“We’ve had agencies ranging from our law enforcement partners in the (Klamath) Basin, to fire departments and even federal forest rangers,” said Tech. Sgt. Timothy Lombardi, one of the security forces members who helped make the project a reality.

The building entered its first day of service to the base and others with a tactical team competition attended by two teams from Beale Air Force Base, California, the 173rd SFS and Klamath Falls Police Department.

The building rang with the sounds of doors being breached with hand-held rams or haligans, the pop of Simunition rounds as well as the occasional concussive blast of a flash-bang grenade as teams stormed the building in hostage rescue situations and

active-shooter interdictions.

“The cool part about it—it’s got breaching doors at pretty much every access,” said Sergeant Dave Penkava, a SWAT Team leader with Jackson County Sheriff’s Office who attended the opening day competition. “Breaching doors provide a training opportunity that you don’t often get in the real world. It has windows that can be ported, glass that can be broken, all at a reasonable expense to the user.”

Lombardi explains that visitors and community partners are responsible for the cost of the pins that secure a breaching door and panes of glass for the window breaching.

“It’s good stuff, it’s new to a lot of people,” said Staff Sgt. William Brow, 173rd Security Forces Squadron. “Here, you have the ability to do everything whereas a typical structure on-base you can’t.”

At lunch the teams took a break for a grand-opening ceremony where they presented plaques and coins to those who were instrumental in seeing construction of the \$475,000 facility through to completion. Ritter thanked the 28 competitors for their participation, and with that they returned to the shoot house until well into the afternoon.

## Airmen in control: 270th Air Traffic Control Squadron complete annual training

*Story and Photos  
by Senior Airman Emily Copeland  
173rd Fighter Wing Public Affairs*

**REDMOND, Oregon** — The 270th Air Traffic Control Squadron (ATCS) completed their annual training at the Biak Training Center in Redmond, Oregon, from June 26-29.

This year’s annual training was intended to familiarize personnel with vehicle operation and capabilities, shelter construction and teardown, as well as vehicle convoy operations. Additionally, it was intended to empower the members of the Airmen tier (E-1 through E-4) by letting them lead all phases of training, specifically the confidence course and convoy operations.



Staff Sgt. Brady Settell, 270th ATCS drives a Humvee during a Military Operations Urban Terrain and Light Maneuver Training course Redmond, Ore., June 27.

Mobility exercises allow air traffic controllers to simulate operations in remote locations or hostile environments. The exercise also serves as a leadership course for younger Airmen who have not had experience in field operations such as leading convoys, establishing a forward operating base (FOB), off-road driving, and protecting assets.

“The Airmen in our squadron have a natural ability to lead and to get the mission done,” said Master Sgt. Royce Mace. “Letting our Airmen get into that uncomfortable zone really allows them to grow and succeed. I have all the confidence they will adapt and overcome any situation put before them.”

Each step of the training was completely Junior Airmen lead, with only oversight provided by the unit’s senior leadership to ensure the process was completed properly and within the training requirements.

“Grooming the Airman tier is important to our squadron so we can maintain a high level of knowledge, competency and continuity for years to come,” said Mace. “This is vital to answering and sustaining state and federal missions now and in the future.”

The mission for the first day of the training was to prepare equipment and convoy to the Biak Training



270th ATCS Airmen participate in a low-rope confidence course during annual training, June 27.

Center, which served as a simulated remote forward operating location. The convoy was made up of two Humvees, a M35 2 1/2 ton cargo truck, and M939 5-ton cargo truck, all of which travelled from home base at Kingsley Field, Oregon to Redmond, Oregon. After successfully arriving at the FOB, the Airmen in charge had the task of establishing shelter and familiarizing themselves with the surrounding environment.

Day two of training brought the Airmen together with a low-rope confidence course which was created by U.S. Army cadre to grow leaders and teams by problem solving to complete each obstacle course.

“I did not know what to expect with the course as it was my first annual training exercise, but I learned a lot about communication and working as a team,” said Airman 1st Class Debbie Cawrse, 270th ATCS controller. “I feel like this training made me a better leader and more confident in the skills that I possess.”

The unit also completed the Military Operations Urban Terrain course and Light Maneuver Training which was created to allow each Airman to operate and acquaint themselves with the vehicles while being observed by a trainer. After the course completion, each Airman was certified to drive the cargo trucks and Humvees.

The third day of training was the close quarters combat training with modified paintball guns, which also was used a morale event. The unit used a simulated town made from containers and vehicles as hiding and protection from opposing forces.

The final day of training was completed with the convoy returning back to Kingsley Field in Klamath Falls.

“This training was a great experience,” said Cawrse. “It was challenging and fun training, but I got to see different leadership styles and execute a mission by ourselves. I’m really proud to be an air traffic controller with the best team.”

## Special Forces Operator, author recounts Medal of Honor story for Oregon Airmen

*Story and Photo by  
Tech. Sgt. Brandon Boyd  
142nd Fighter Wing Public Affairs*

**PORTLAND Oregon** — Author and former 125th Special Tactics Squadron Commander, Air Force Lt. Col. (ret.) Dan Schilling visited the Portland Air National Guard Base, Portland, Oregon, Sept. 8, 2019 to host a professional development seminar for the Airmen of the Oregon Air National Guard.

Dan Schilling retired in 2016 after 31 years of military service. During his comments to the Airmen on base, Schilling said he thought he was done with missions when he left the military.

Despite a long and storied career, the military man continues to be on a mission.

A prior special forces commander, Schilling was a combat controller who served in Operation Gothic Serpent in Somalia, a story famously highlighted in the book and movie Blackhawk Down.

The mission for Schilling has shifted from directing combat power to a mission of telling a poignant story. The story he’s telling is about Tech. Sgt. John Chapman, a fellow combat controller who lost his life while fighting in the mountainous



Author and former 125th Special Tactics Squadron Commander, Air Force Lt. Col. (ret.) Dan Schilling visits Portland Air National Guard Base, Ore., Sept. 8, 2019, during a professional development seminar for the Airmen of the Oregon Air National Guard.

terrain of Afghanistan.

Chapman was awarded The Congressional Medal of Honor by President Donald Trump almost two decades after his passing, for his actions on Takur Ghar Mountain, Afghanistan on March 4, 2002. Chapman was the first Airman to posthumously receive the medal since the Vietnam War.

Chapman was attached to a Navy SEAL team. They came under heavy fire when they landed on the mountain which was heavily fortified by experienced fighters. Chapman continued to engage despite sustaining injuries from enemy fire, which ultimately led to his death.

According to Schilling, the decision to co-write the book when approached by Chapman’s sister, Lori Chapman Longfritz, was not an easy one to make. Schilling, however, felt a sense of duty and responsibility to tell

Chapman’s story.

“I just had the obligation...I knew the Delta Force guys involved, I knew the SEALs, I knew all the Combat Controllers. I had seen the footage before, we all knew what happened on the mountain at the 24th Special Tactics Squadron,” said Schilling.

Schilling decidedly took on the task.

Writing Chapman’s biography, Alone at Dawn, became his full-time post-retirement endeavor.

Schilling said the goal for the book was “to change the perception about the United States Air Force” and tell the story of Combat Controllers through the story of Tech. Sgt. John Chapman.

According to Schilling, Air Force Combat Controllers have similar foundational training to the Navy SEALs, and make a similarly significant impact on the mission of the U.S. Military, yet they are far less familiar to the American public compared to the SEALs. Their training is longer, more challenging, complex, and costly than any other special operations force in the world, says Schilling.

“When there’s a global, attention-grabbing catastrophe, sometimes the world’s first responders are U.S. Air Force Combat Controllers,” Schilling remarked during his visit.

Alone at Dawn not only tells the story of Tech. Sgt. John Chapman’s sacrifice for his country, it tells the story of every Combat Controller in the United States Air Force. Chapman’s legacy and the legacy of others like him will live on through their stories.

## OREGON AIR NATIONAL GUARD

# 142nd Fighter Wing ‘Redhawks’ conduct training with Navy counterparts

*Story and Photos by  
Master Sgt. John Hughe,  
142nd Fighter Wing Public Affairs*

**PORTLAND, Oregon** - The Oregon Air National Guard’s 142nd Fighter Wing hosted the VFA-41 Squadron, assigned to Naval Air Station Lemoore, California, along with their F-18F Super Hornets during two-weeks of dissimilar aircraft combat training (DACT) at the Portland Air National Guard Base from Aug. 11-23.

As part of the two weeks of DACT exercises, the Navy brought six of their F-18’s and nearly 125 ‘Black Aces’ members to skirmish with ‘Redhawk’ F-15C Eagles. The training helped focus on compliance and capabilities preparation, allowing both units to stay proficient while providing upgrade training to junior pilots.

“We do this training about once a year when our weather is good, which supports an active flying schedule,” said Oregon Air National Guard Maj. Brent Ellis, chief of scheduling for the 142nd Fighter Wing, 123rd Fighter Squadron.

One element of the joint training helps establishes familiarization with different airframes and tactics. It also allows both sides to define the advantages and disadvantages within a dedicated training plan.



A U.S. Navy F-18F Super Hornet from VFA-41 squadron, based out of Naval Air Station Lemoore, Calif., prepares for an afternoon sortie at the Portland Air National Guard Base, Portland, Oregon.

“The goal of this training is to get all sides ‘together in the same room’ and fill in the capability gaps and see what our airplane (Eagle) does better than theirs, and what their airplane (Super Hornet) does better than ours,” said Ellis.

With a morning and afternoon flying schedule, this allowed both sides to role-play as the home team ‘Blue Air’ or the enemy ‘Red Air’ aggressors and rotate positions daily.

A wide variety of Air-to-Air encounters are calculated into the training. Ellis described some of the “6 vs. 6, 6 vs. 4 and 4 vs. 4,” scenarios factored into the daily missions. “It normally falls into an offensive counter-air situation where we will attack a base or a defensive counter-air where we will defend our base.”

Within the different mission tasks, the aircraft can engage in 2 vs. 1 or 2 vs. 4 or a variety of other combinations to achieve an objective. Ellis said that most of these tactics are, “missionized air-to-air encounters, as basic ‘blocking and tackling’ sorties.”

“It’s not very often when we can get the whole team together on the field, and then scrimmage as we have during an extended (two-week) training period,” he said.

As the Commanding Officer of Fighter Attack Squadron 41, Navy Commander Josh Appezzato and his combat flying team of 13 pilots and 13 weapons officers welcomed the challenge to sharpen their skills against the Eagle airframe and 142nd pilots.

“One of the biggest benefits that my pilots have seen in dogfighting with the F-15 is fighting a dissimilar airplane with a higher thrust to weight ratio than an F-18,” Appezzato said, pointing out design and capabilities features of the two supersonic airframes.

The F-18F Super Hornet is a two-seat operational jet, which allows for greater situational awareness during combat conditions and features an exclusive weapons package. The role of the second crew member on the F-18F model functions as the weapons systems officer (WSO).

“The integration piece between the Navy and Air Force has been incredibly

beneficial especially with some of our younger Lieutenants who have never operated with the Air Force and F-15’s before,” Appezzato said, remarking how the extended training cycle help advanced air-to-air skillsets. “Almost all of our younger pilots have completed necessary upgrade training while we’ve been here.”

Having just completed a seven-month deployment in May to the Middle East and assigned to the USS John C. Stennis,



A U.S. Navy F-18F Super Hornet from VFA-41 squadron, taxis along the flightline with an F-15C Eagle, assigned to the 142nd Fighter Wing at the Portland Air National Guard Base, Portland, Oregon, during dissimilar aircraft combat training (DACT), Aug 13, 2019.

Carrier Strike Group (CSG) 3, VFA-41 was responsible for deterring Russian and Syrian aircraft threats from American and coalition forces in Afghanistan, Syria and Iraq.

“Unlike the training we are doing here in Oregon, on our deployment, our mission was the air-to-surface environment, supporting Marines and Soldiers on the ground as well as a Forward Air Controller (Airborne) FAC (A) mission, which allowed us to coordinate with ground forces in close contact with enemy troops,” said Appezzato.

Coming off such a recent real-world deployment, this experience brought an up-to-the-minute urgency to the training, another significant factor in the exercise tempo.

“It’s beneficial that we are able to work on joint interoperability between the Navy and Air Force – that’s how we’re expected to fight and that’s how we want to train,” said Oregon Air National Guard Lt. Col. Nick Rutgers, 123rd Fighter Squadron commander.

Most of the overall training design allows for annual training requirements to be accomplished. Rutgers said that it is not some much about the hours but principally about sorties and the quality of training during the collaborative exercise.

“Split equally between both teams, it comes up to nearly 100 sorties in both ‘Red Air and Blue Air’ missions,” he said. “We work effectively together, refining tactics and learning from one another.”



An Oregon Air National Guard F-15C Eagle, assigned to the 142nd Fighter Wing is towed from a maintenance hangar during dissimilar aircraft combat training, Aug. 13, 2019.

## ORANG, 123rd Fighter Squadron says farewell to last charter member

*Story and Photos by  
Master Sgt. Steven Conklin,  
142nd Fighter Wing Public Affairs*

**OREGON CITY, Oregon** - The 123rd Fighter Squadron said their final goodbyes to their last remaining founding member, Fred Parish, during a memorial service held on Sept. 8, 2019.

A resident of La Grande, Oregon, Parish passed away on July 7, 2019 at the age of 98. He was one of 117 Oregonians that chartered the 123rd Observation Squadron “Redhawks,” which today has become the 123rd Fighter Squadron based out of the Portland Air National Guard Base, Oregon.

“Fred Parish was a valued founding father of the Redhawks,” said Lt. Col. Nick Rutgers, 123rd Fighter Squadron commander. “Fred’s warrior ethos and passion for the organization has helped weave the fabric of success that will undoubtedly continue into the future.”

He was born Sept. 1, 1920 in Portland, Oregon, to Robert A. Parish Sr. and Annie H. Parish and graduated from Franklin High School in Portland.

Tech. Sgt. Fred Parish initially entered military service in the U.S. Army Air Corps in April 1941. He was a medic assigned to the 123rd Observation Squadron, which



Lt. Col. Nick Rutgers, 123rd FS commander, and Chief Master Sgt. Mike Lamer, attend Fred Parish’s memorial ceremony Sept. 8, at Bible Doctrine Church in Oregon City, Ore.

became the first Oregon National Guard unit following WWII.

Brig. Gen. Donna Prigmore, Oregon Air National Guard commander, remarked on Fred’s impact to the organization.

“The Oregon Air National Guard has been an integral part of the nation’s air defense since 1941, and Fred was at the cutting edge of that success. He was a brave and motivated man who helped pave the way for our future, and for that, we will always be grateful.”

During his time in service, Fred served as a WWII medic in the China Burma

India Theater of Operations. His efforts enabled critical photo reconnaissance needed to thwart the Japanese advance through China and over “the Hump” to India and Eastern Europe. Of note, on one occasion Parish vaccinated more than 6,000 newly arriving troops in less than 24 hours. In addition, Tech. Sgt. Parish was recognized for his efforts to rescue a pilot from a burning aircraft at Gray Field, Washington.

Fred’s awards include the Good Conduct Medal, American Defense Ribbon, and Asiatic-Pacific Theater Ribbon with 2 Bronze Battle Stars. He was in the Army’s Officer Training School when WWII came to a sudden end. Fred, along with many other officer candidates in his class, was returned to his Non-Commissioned Officer rank, where he finished out his service until his discharge in October 1945.

After military service, Fred made significant efforts to locate former members of the 123rd Observation Squadron and involve them in Oregon National Guard Heritage. He was instrumental in the coordination of the first Oregon Air National Guard reunion for the 50th Anniversary, and the subsequent anniversaries leading up to the 75th.

“While Boy Scouting and rotary were a huge part of his life, there is no question that his service in the 123rd Observation Squadron and World War II were the dominant events in his life,” said Roger Parish, Fred’s oldest son. “More than anything else combined, he talked about his experience in the Oregon National Guard.”

Fred is survived by his two sons, Roger (Kathy) Parish and Brian (Connie) Parish, his grandsons Ted, Chris, and Geoff Parish, and granddaughter Shirley Shold. He has six great grandchildren: Taylor, David, Kira, Conner, Abigail, and Grace. His wife of 64 years, Loreta, passed away in 2012.



A photograph of the late Tech. Sgt. Fred Parish stands on a remembrance table during a memorial ceremony, Sept. 8, 2019.



NEWS

1-82nd Cavalry Squadron completes XCTC, gains valuable skills

Story and Photos by  
Sgt. Jennifer Lena  
115th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

**YAKIMA, Washington** – Hundreds of Oregon Army National Guard Soldiers from the 1st Squadron, 82nd Cavalry Regiment (1-82 Cav.) completed their annual training in eastern Washington’s rough terrain and harsh climate, June 14-28. Soldiers were tested and evaluated on their combat readiness, in coordination with First Army, during an eXportable Combat Training Capability (XCTC) rotation at the Yakima Training Center, Washington.

Cavalry scouts, combat medics and support elements from armories in Albany, Portland, The Dalles, Redmond, Prineville and Bend, Oregon, converged to participate in this large-scale training exercise. XCTC events are designed to simulate a realistic combat environment with the intent to test platoon proficiency in their unique military occupational specialties and Soldier skills.

“It is important for the 1-82 Cav., and other units, to conduct XCTC rotational training in order to test our ability to fight and communicate at echelon in austere environments,” said Lt. Col. Dominic



Oregon Army National Guard Sgt. Paul Mannelly receives the Best Warrior NCO of the Year from Maj. Gen. Alan Dohrmann and Command Sgt. Maj. David Lien during the 2019 Region VI Best Warrior Competition at Camp Gilbert C. Grafton, North Dakota, May 9, 2019.

L. Kotz, commander of the 1-82nd. “Exercises like these enable leaders to plan and execute missions with assets and personnel that they would normally not have an opportunity to work with.”

This event was the first time the 1-82nd was able to work with the 81st Stryker

Brigade Combat Team (SBCT). The job of the cavalry scouts of the 1-82nd is to be the eyes and ears of the 81st SBCT commander and staff, enabling them to make accurate and timely decisions.

“The infantry is on the front lines of the battlefield, but they need to know what’s

of communication, sustainment and maintenance,” Kotz said. “If we cannot communicate in the field, then all I have is 520 cavalrymen camping; if we cannot re-supply ourselves with food, fuel and ammunition, then we will wither; and if we cannot maintain our vehicles and equipment, then the entire formation will come to a grinding halt.”

Active duty Soldiers from the 189th Combined Arms Training Brigade out of Joint Base Lewis-McChord, Washington, served as coaches, mentors and operational controllers (OCs) during XCTC. The Brigade provides oversight and valuable perspectives for National Guard units that may not have had the time or resources to complete the training necessary for deployment.

“In my personal opinion, we have been excellent,” said 1st Lt. John Evans, platoon leader for C Troop, 1-82nd. “Our first mission was really rough, but with the OCs out here from First Army supervising and refining all of our actions, they’ve helped us identify some weak points and strong points and how to merge those to become a more efficient fighting force.”

“We had one simple objective,” Kotz said. “Train hard, train safely and be better on day 15 than we were on day 1.”



Oregon Army National Guard Sgt. Paul Mannelly receives the Best Warrior NCO of the Year from Maj. Gen. Alan Dohrmann and Command Sgt. Maj. David Lien during the 2019 Region VI Best Warrior Competition at Camp Gilbert C. Grafton, North Dakota, May 9, 2019.

ahead of them before they just walk into something,” said Spc. Timothy Parson-Eoyeo, a Stryker Combat Vehicle driver in C Troop, 1-82nd. “That’s where the scouts come in: to observe what’s ahead and report it back so that we don’t have astronomical losses due to something unexpected.”

The training exercises the scouts performed involved extensive lanes focusing on zone reconnaissance, dismounting a Stryker, handling mass fires on the notional enemy using direct and indirect fire systems, and above all, communication.

“Another reason these exercises are important is because it stresses the importance



Pfc. Joseph Hauser, a cavalry scout gunner for Bravo Troop, 1st Squadron, 82nd Cavalry Regiment conducts zone reconnaissance at the Yakima Training Center in Washington.

173rd Fighter Wing fuel storage tanks maintained for longevity

Story and Photos by  
Master Sgt. Jefferson Thompson  
173rd Fighter Wing Public Affairs

**KLAMATH FALLS, Oregon** - This summer marks a rare occasion at the 173rd Fighter Wing as the 50-foot-tall main fuel tank stands empty while maintenance crews swarm over it in preparation for decades of future operations.

Approximately every 10 years tanks like this one are taken out of service for inspection, maintenance, and upkeep says Senior Master Sgt. Eddie Gibson, the 173rd FW fuels management superintendent. This time the project is designed to ensure

the tank is viable for another 40 to 50 years of service, he adds.

“We are upgrading plumbing and valves, adding audible alarms for safety including low and high levels, as well as other general maintenance,” he says.

Two small hatches on either side of the main tank allow access to the interior of the tank where a crewmember pressure washes the floor. He is tall and his head nearly touches what looks like a ceiling inside the tank—it’s actually a pan that floats on top of the fuel in the tank in order to minimize fuel evaporation.

Around the concrete base of the tank workers apply a joint compound to any small cracks that have developed, and the lattice work of pipes show

fresh welds in several places; all of this is work that can only be done on an empty tank free of any flammable fuel vapors.

This tank is very large and stores over 600-thousand gallons of fuel; taking that capacity offline is the product of lengthy planning.

“We brought in 100-thousand gallons of temporary storage before we took this tank down,” says Gibson. “We also worked to keep the downtime to eight weeks.”

He adds that if everything goes according to plan it should be transparent to the flying mission—which naturally depends on a ready supply of jet fuel.

This summer’s planned maintenance is too long to list, but includes valves, audible alarms, low and high level alarms, interior coating, and pipe reconfiguration to improve efficiency.

He estimates that crews will complete the work in mid-September, thus paving the way to renovate the smaller 150,000-gallon tank next summer.

Gibson says these upgrades ensure

the flying mission continues and he adds that future plans include other upgrades, which will ensure the fuel supply goes uninterrupted into the foreseeable future.

The 173rd FW is the sole schoolhouse for F-15C formal training and its robust flying schedule relies heavily on the ability to have adequate fuel.



At the 173rd Fighter Wing the main fuel storage tank stands empty for about two weeks while crews perform maintenance to ensure its safe operation for the next decade.



A contractor pressure washes the floor of a massive 600-thousand gallon fuel tank, which stands empty with hatches opened, at the 173rd Fighter Wing in Klamath Falls, Oregon.

NEWS

1249th Engineer Battalion lays foundation for future growth of Camp Umatilla

Story and Photos by  
Spc. Michael Germundson  
115th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

**UMATILLA, Oregon** - Located 180 miles east of Portland nestled next to the Columbia River, Camp Umatilla dates back to WWII. At its height, the location’s expanse was equal to that of Bend, Oregon and served as a retired U.S. Army Chemical Depot. Today, the site covers 20 square miles and is dotted with 1,000 storage bunkers from wars past. Primarily, it serves as a training facility for the Oregon Army National Guard and, with the help of the 1249th, has plans for growth. The Oregon Army National Guard has finalized a deal for 7,500 acres, and plans to build a level three training facility that will work in tandem with the Naval Weapon System Training Facility Boardman just down the road. While this practical work is completed, members of the 1249th have the opportunity to use this historic training site for quality engineering training.

“The 1249th was identified as a great asset to begin laying the groundwork and start building the initial Military Operations on Urban Training (MOUT) site,” said Lt. Col. Manuel Robledo, Executive and Administrative Officer, Oregon Training Command. “The Oregon Guard is committed to Umatilla; it will allow us to shoot, move and communicate whereas our relationship with the Naval Weapon System Training Facility Boardman (NWSTFB) will allow for training on crew-served weapons.”

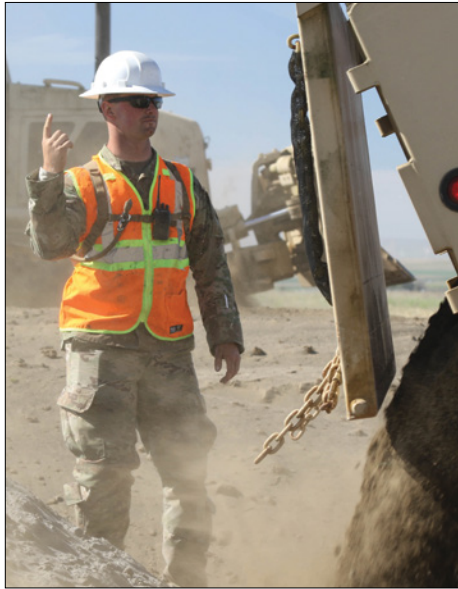
The battalion contains both vertical and horizontal engineer elements as well as their own support (A FSC) and headquarter (HHC) companies. Each element is spread throughout Camp Umatilla during the training period with their own respective missions that build toward the Oregon Training Command’s own goal: growth. This type of exercise allows Soldiers to get away from administrative tasks and focus on their boots-on-ground training.

To facilitate future convoy training, horizontal engineers of the 224th Engineer Company, from Newport, Ore. cut maneuver trails that intersect with a three acre battalion sized assembly area. The 224th used a 120M Motor Grader to cut the first section of maneuver trails between the old storage bunkers.

According to Captain Joseph Zimmerman, commander of the 224th, the heavy equipment operators gained valuable experience while increasing the capability of Camp Umatilla to provide convoy maneuver trails rarely seen at other training sites.

“This project is a lot of fun,” Zimmerman said, “Soldiers get to do the job they signed up to do and that keeps them wanting to come back for more.”

Further down the road, vertical engineers of the 442 Engineer Utility Detachment (EUD) worked diligently on their own



Spc. Mckinley Keener with the 224 Engineers, Oregon Army National Guard, directs a dump truck to empty its load of soil at Camp Umatilla.



Mechanics with 224 Engineer Maintenance Company, inspect an M916 Tractor Truck before an early mission at Camp Umatilla as part of an effort to make large improvements to the training ground infrastructure at Camp Umatilla.

project: building a permanent three-room structure that will allow Soldiers to hone basic combat skills such as entering and clearing a room.

According to Cpt. Keith Lyman, commander of the 442 EUD, the structure they were erecting is set to be the first permanent block and mortar building on the designated MOUT site. Up until now, any training on site required the use of CONEX shipping containers to simulate buildings. Consisting of three phases, the unit is now in their final phase of construction, which has spanned the past several months. To get this far they had to transfer their equipment to the site from

Pvt. Adrian Ortega, an equipment operator new to the 224th Engineer Company, enjoyed the experience he gained from shooting his M4 during weapon familiarization training. “It’s been fun so far, but it’s so hot out here,” said Ortega.

In addition to honing their abilities as engineers, time was also allotted for practicing basic Soldier skills. Going into a field environment, each Soldier is issued a weapon, and expected to master it.

Beyond the individual weapons, most Soldiers were expected to know how to operate crew-served weapons. Most commonly, the two systems used in convoy

operations are the M249 and the Browning M2 .50 Caliber machine gun. While Camp Umatilla itself does not have a range capable of hosting the M2, just down the road the Naval Weapon System Training Facility Boardman (NWSTFB) does, and is the only one in Oregon. Having access to both locations allows Soldiers the rare opportunity to train on multiple weapon systems.

The M2 familiarization was led by Sgt. Timothy Savunen, an Allied Trade Specialist with A Company, Forward Support Company. Savunen joined the Army National Guard after serving as a Marine and led a class of 15 Soldiers in the proper operation of a weapon system; loading, unloading, and how to safely react to a jammed weapon.

“This is my passion: weapons, tactics and training,” said Savunen.

“The M2 is part of my truck,” said Spc. James Connin. “Being familiar with how to load, unload and shoot is important. This is our second year shooting and it takes a while, but it comes back and you start to remember the steps.”

By the end of their annual training, the engineers completed building a Battalion sized staging area, a three room shoot house, and a system of maneuver trails around the growing training site.

The leaders and individual companies were evaluated on their Mission Essential Task List (METL) and conducted several training scenarios to improve perimeter defense. Skills and communication were improved at the individual and team level and several Soldiers experienced annual training for the first time.

“The goal right now is to build Camp Umatilla up to be the premier training facility of the Oregon Army National Guard within Oregon,” said Lt. Col. Andrew Vidourek, 1249th battalion commander.

Vidourek added “With it being right down the road from Naval Weapon System Training Facility, Boardman, this means we can maximize our training for METL tasks ranging from crew-served weapons to convoy operations, and command post exercises, in addition our engineer METL tasks. We understand to get there will take diligent work over a long period of time, but it will mean a lot of training opportunities for our Soldiers, and we’re ready for the challenge.”



Spc. Gabriel Mischke, 442 Engineers, Oregon Army National Guard, strikes the joint of fresh laid block that will become a permanent three-room shoot house at Camp Umatilla.

Camp Rilea in Warrenton, Ore., conduct a three-day drill to prepare the site for a concrete foundation, and finally lay down blocks.

“A highlight leading up to annual training was a flight in a CH-47 Chinook helicopter from Camp Rilea to Camp Umatilla,” Lyman said, explaining that several of his Soldiers got the chance to fly out to meet their equipment which had been transported ahead of time. “Overall it’s been a good mission; there’s been a lot of military occupational specialty (MOS) training and the motivation is high.”

One of Cpt. Lyman’s most experienced Soldiers, Sgt. Steve Jared, lead the vertical project and has years of construction experience both with the military and with the civilian sector, giving him a unique perspective on the project.

“Most Soldiers don’t lay block as civilians; here they get to learn a new trade, and it allows them to work in tandem and improve communication,” said Jared.

The project has also been successful for the unit because there has been ample opportunity for Soldiers to learn skill sets outside their given specialty. Receiving and exchanging new knowledge benefits units by keeping Soldiers engaged and motivated.

While the training has been productive, it has also presented challenges. Umatilla’s flat plains make it prone to howling winds and its aired climate makes for hot summer days and cold nights.



Pvt. Dominic Draheim (left), Sgt. Tyson Breuer (center), and Spc. Ryan Barnes, members of 224 Engineer Company, 1249th Engineers, Oregon Army National Guard, stop to discuss the current grade of a six acre leveling project at Camp Umatilla



FEATURES

From Oregon Youth ChalleNGe Program to Oregon’s newest deputy district attorney

Story and Photos by John Hughel,  
Oregon Military Department Public Affairs

**DESCHUTES COUNTY, Oregon** - Three weeks after their induction into the Oregon National Guard’s Youth ChalleNGe Program (OYCP), 160 Cadets, having just finished their ‘red stage’ training, sit anxiously in several precise rows inside one of many classrooms at the OYCP campus on August 5. They, along with many of their instructors, and other dignitaries, to include Oregon Secretary of State Beverly Clarno, are about to be part of a special ceremony; honoring one of their own and her journey back home to Oregon.

As she stood in front of her peers and family to take the oath of office, Jasmyn Troncoso became a newest deputy district attorney for Deschutes County, completing the latest milestone in her unique 13-year excursion. Following her Youth ChalleNGe graduation in 2006, she later attended Mt. Hood Community College, then worked in the fashion industry, only later to enroll at Loyola Marymount University at Los Angeles, California, completing both undergraduate and finally her law degree in May of 2017.

While directly addressing the cadets during the ceremony, Deschutes County District Attorney John Hummel, emphasized the impact of the Youth ChalleNGe program as he applauded Troncoso. Hummel specially requested that the ceremony be conducted with the cadets at OYCP since the program played such a pivotal role in her success story.

“I know that some of you may have been getting bad grades in school, and some of you might have even gotten into some trouble with the law...and you might have been close to giving up, but you didn’t give up,” he said.

In emphasizing his point about ‘never giving up,’ Hummel described Troncoso’s story and how it paralleled many of their lives. “In Oregon, we don’t give up on people,” he stressed to the cadets. “You need to know that you have the entire state pulling for you and we’re here to help you because we want to see you become as successful as Jasmyn.”

The mission of the Oregon National Guard’s Youth ChalleNGe program is to “provide opportunities for personal growth, self-improvement and academic achievement,” for Oregon High School drop outs and students no longer attending school. The highly structured training and educational program foster success through an intense non-traditional environment.



Cadets of the Oregon Youth Challenge Program list to remarks by Jasmyn Troncoso during her ceremony, as she becomes the newest deputy district attorney for Deschutes County, Aug. 5, 2019, at the (OYCP) campus, Bend.

Following her oath of office, Troncoso spoke openly to the cadets and staff, describing the lasting influence the program has made in her life.

“The story I often tell when I’ve come back here (to OYCP) is that I tried to leave the program just three hours after I started,” Troncoso said, recalling her early hectic and intense beginning to the program.

In detailing many of the attributes of the program, Troncoso praised the structure, discipline, and support that she discovered she personally needed as she quickly thrived within the environment of the Youth ChalleNGe organization.

“What I discovered about myself is that I found stability in the structure here even though it was a tough program, and like many of you, I was scared yet excited about the challenge,” she said, recounting the first stage of training to the cadets. “You all have made the best decisions of your life by being here, without a doubt.”

For Troncoso and many other graduates of the program are quick to credit the staff and instructors as key advocates to their success.

“I was kinda’ tricked into staying that first day by Larry Demarr,” she said, recalling a significant moment as a cadet. “He told me to give it a day and we could talk about my decision to stay in the program the next day.”

What Troncoso didn’t know was that Demarr was scheduled to have the weekend off. When he returned a few days later, he was pleased to see she had worked through the early issues.

“There is a lot of complaining from some kids in the ‘red stage,’ as they feel like their lives are over because they have no freedom,” he said. “With some kids, you have to ‘Ice Them,’ by leaving them alone, this allows them to come into their own.”



Oregon District Attorney for Deschutes County John Hummel congratulates Jasmyn Troncoso after she completes the oath of office, Aug. 5, 2019.

Demarr said that the process for many cadets early on is breaking down some those initial barriers. “So with Jasmyn, ‘a little tough love’ was all she needed and I knew she would make it after that point.”

Like many of the instructors at OYCP, Demarr has found his calling with the Youth ChalleNGe program. A Marine Corp and National Guard veteran, he was working as a correctional officer before starting at OYCP 15 years ago. This distinct fusion of experience allows him a perceptive into many of the uncertainties facing the cadets in his care.

“I was seeing these inmates at an older age, come back after doing the same things again and again,” as Demarr described the recidivism cycle so common within the criminal justice system. “I knew then, years before I came here (at Youth ChalleNGe), that I wanted to get to them before they got to that stage.”

When Troncoso entered OYCP, she was had been attending High School in Salem and Gresham, Oregon. She would be the first to admit that she had a rebellious streak and was underperforming in school, carrying just a 1.22 (GPA) grade point average.

“With my step-father’s job in Austria, my sister and I had been going to school in Vienna. The schools there were phenomenal and coming back to Oregon at this time in my life was such a sudden contrast,” said Troncoso.

It’s one of the reasons she credits the Youth Challenge program with turning her life around. “This place (OYCP) pushes the cadets to their limits. It didn’t take me long to understand that I need the discipline and this type of structure in my life.”

“With all her accomplishments, Jasmyn still finds time now to be a mentor and advocate for the program,” said Demarr, explaining a recent situation with a current cadet. “One of our kids thought all I was doing was giving him the ‘Used Car Salesman’ approach to the program. So I had Jasmyn talk with him on the phone and she was able to give him the ‘raw deal’ and talk to him in a way that he could understand about how important this program was for her and can be for him too.”

As the program and facility are growing, OYCP will expand to 240 students by July of 2020. The need for this type of program is more relevant now than ever before.

“We’re able to transform lives and give these kids the tools they need for a lifetime,” said Demarr. “It’s not that they need to become a lawyer but they need to see themselves in her.”

The perseverance to finish the program was an important breakthrough for Troncoso, said Jenny Morrow, Jasmyn’s mother. “The OYCP was the first thing she had ever started and finished in her life. She really dug her heels in and finished the program even though early on, she was ready to quit.”

During her time at OYCP, her natural tenacity was refocused and defined. She would eventually become a team and squad leader during her 6-months in the program.

“Jasmyn is the most argumentative person you’ve ever met,” said Morrow, laughing at their irreplaceable mother-daughter relationship. “But it’s what makes her such a good prosecutor. Yet she is very compassionate, as she wants to help those that were in her position in the past.”

Morrow said she is happy to have her back home in Oregon but was quick to explain how important it was for Jasmyn to attend college in Los Angeles.

“She really found herself in California,” said Morrow. “But she also wanted to come back to Oregon because she felt a need to give something back to this community.”

Having passed the Bar exam in California just 18 months before, Troncoso turned around and passed the Oregon exam prior to being hired the job in the Deschutes County district attorney’s office.

“For someone who has been practicing law for just a few years, Jasmyn is mature beyond her years,” said Hummel. “When I interviewed her for the prosecutor job what impressed me from the beginning was her competency and confidence.”

With a county population of nearly 200,000 and rapidly growing, Hummel said Troncoso will be part of a team of five lawyers working

on violent crimes in Deschutes County. “Her case load will be around 85 cases but she already had been working on many of these types of situations as a prosecutor in Los Angeles.”



Oregon Sec. of State Beverly Clarno, address cadets and others attending Jasmyn Troncoso’s oath of office ceremony at the Oregon Youth ChalleNGe Program campus, Aug. 5.

As the day’s event concluded at the Oregon Youth ChalleNGe Program campus, Sec. of State Clarno took a moment to address the cadets, stressing the importance of personal determination.

“Like some of you might have experienced, my childhood was really terrible, but I decided that I was going to be a survivor no matter what,” she described to the cadets. “The reason I’m Secretary of State today is because I made important choices, just like Jasmyn has, and like so many of you made by being in this program.”

For Troncoso, her experience with the OYCP has brought her full circle in life too. The desire to come back home to peruse her career has also allowed her to still be connected to the program as a mentor and advocate for others in the region.

“I wanted to give something back to Oregon,” she said. “Because it (the State of Oregon) has done so much for me and I am grateful to have this opportunity now to make a difference for others.”



(Left to right) Oregon Sec. of State Beverly Clarno along with Jenny Morrow, Jasmyn Troncoso and John Hummel, District Attorney for Deschutes County, gather for a photograph together following Ms. Troncoso’s ceremony.

FEATURES

Kingsley Field SARC recongized as Coordinator of the Year for NGB

Story and Photo by  
Tech. Sgt. Jason Van Mourk  
173rd Fighter Wing Public Affairs

**KLAMATH FALLS, Oregon** – Ms. Amber Spotten, Kingsley Field Sexual Assault Response Coordinator (SARC), was named the 2019 Department of Defense Exceptional SARC of the Year for the National Guard Bureau and will receive her plaque, July 20, 2019 at the SARC Annual Refresher Training in Arizona.

“I do what I do because I believe in this program and what it stands for,” she said.

Spotten has been the full-time SARC at Kingsley Field for almost three years now. When asked what changes she implemented in the program or how it was run that led up to her being selected for the award, she answers with a thoughtful look on her face. “I just do the best I can for the members I serve and am passionate about doing my job. I believe that survivors deserve the best resources available.”

The SARC serves as the installation’s primary point of contact for integrating and coordinating sexual assault victim care services for eligible recipients as part of the Air Force Sexual Assault Prevention and Response (SAPR) team. A large part of the job is building relationships and networking with people on and off base.

Spotten said she was used to being someone who worked behind the scenes, so being at the forefront of a program has been a new role for her.

She said a critical skill for all service members is self-awareness and self-care—knowing how much stress they can handle and how to cope when things just become too much for them, and that goes for herself as well.

Her version of self-care is being active and enjoying the outdoors. “I got into running, and really enjoy it,” she said with a smile. Paul, her husband, joins her on many marathons and running events. “If you had asked me in 2005 if I would ever do a marathon, I would have laughed and I would not have believed I would have enjoyed, let alone accomplished, these types of events.”

Now they both take part in Half Ironman competitions involving running, swimming, and biking, which take them all around the state and region. To a certain extent, the sports remind her of the military community. “Being around a group of people that are all out there to do the same thing, the camaraderie, the friendship, and the support is amazing,” she remarked. “Everyone is struggling but still cheering each other on.”



Amber Spotten, the 173rd FW Sexual Assault Response Coordinator at Kingsley Field, poses for a portrait in her office July 13, 2019. Spotten was selected as the 2019 Department of Defense Exceptional SARC of the Year for the National Guard Bureau.

Spotten has worked to bring that sense of community to Kingsley Field, overcoming personal and professional stressors in an effort to bring the base and the local town together to work together and achieve the SAPR goals.

“How did I get to this point?” she asks rhetorically. “Sometimes you don’t realize where you’re going to end up. Then all of a sudden it seems that all of the steps and the things that you’ve taken have led to the point that you are at, and it works out for the best.”

She joined active duty Air Force in July 2000 and said her first duty station set the bar for her expectations of a work center. She rarely worried about being vulnerable because her colleagues always looked out for her. “To this day, this is what I expect for others to experience in their work centers,” said Spotten.

She left active duty after finishing her Bachelors degree in Social Psychology to work as a psychosocial rehabilitation worker and joined the Idaho Air National Guard at Gowen Field.

“I fell in love with helping people,” she said. “There’s nothing for me that’s more gratifying than helping someone go from a really terrible spot to go to ‘I can breathe, I’m okay.’”

background to help and be a good support in our military culture,” she added.

Spotten said Kingsley’s relationship and integration with the greater community is vital to the success of the SAPR program and her role as the SARC; being able to go out in to the community and get their involvement in wanting to make both Kingsley Field and Klamath Falls a safer place took a lot of effort. Between meetings, phone calls, town halls and unit visits, Spotten worked to educate and bring together both the town and the Airmen.

“There’s no way I would have been able to get the program to where it is without the base and its members and our local community,” she added.

Spotten said that winning the award was both a surprise and an honor.

The award itself is presented by the Department of Defense to each service branch, five in all for this program. “It’s nice to be recognized for the hard work that is being done, not just by our team, but by all of the SAPR teams across the National Guard,” she said. “We’re all fighting the same fight, and we’re all fighting it together.”

Lt. Gen. Daniel Hokanson takes over as Army Guard Director



Air Force Gen. Joseph L. Lengyel, chief of the National Guard Bureau, congratulates Army Lt. Gen. Daniel Hokanson, who became director of the Army National Guard in a ceremony June 21, 2019, at the Herbert R. Temple Army National Guard Readiness Center, Arlington Hall Station in Arlington, Virginia. (Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Pete Morrison)

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

**ARLINGTON, Virginia** – Army Lt. Gen. Daniel Hokanson took the reins as director of the Army National Guard in a ceremony Friday at the Herbert R. Temple Army National Guard Readiness Center, Arlington Hall Station in Arlington, Virginia.

Outgoing director, Army Lt. Gen. Timothy Kadavy, is set to become the vice chief of the National Guard Bureau, pending Congressional confirmation.

“I’ve watched [Lt. Gen. Kadavy] work hard for the United States Army, work hard for the Army National Guard,” said Air Force Gen. Joseph Lengyel, chief of the National Guard Bureau, who hosted the ceremony.

“He did a great job.”

Hokanson served as the NGB’s vice chief prior to taking on his new duties as director of the Army Guard.

“Dan [Lt. Gen. Hokanson] has trained his whole life to be here and to know everything about the Army National Guard, to know everything about the joint force, to know everything about the National Defense Strategy to come here and make the biggest contribution we can as the operational combat reserve of the United States Army,” said Lengyel.

A 1986 graduate of the United States Military Academy at West Point, Hokanson served in the active component as a helicopter pilot and took on a variety of leadership roles before transitioning to the

Oregon Army National Guard in 1995.

“[He is] an academy graduate, deployed to Panama, deployed to Iraq, led a brigade in Iraq, led a brigade in Afghanistan. He’s done all that and had the strategic jobs,” said Lengyel.

Hokanson served as the adjutant general of the Oregon National Guard as well as the civil affairs officer and then deputy commander of U.S. Northern Command.

But, he said, he’s looking forward to the challenges ahead as director of the Army Guard.

“Gen. Lengyel, I want to personally thank you for allowing me to serve as the 21st director of the Army National Guard and for all I have learned from you over the past three-and-a-half years as your vice,” Hokanson said during the ceremony. “I am sincerely humbled by this incredible opportunity and look forward to continuing to serve the Soldiers, civilians and families of our Army National Guard.”

For Hokanson, many of those challenges are very different from what were faced in the past.

“As the Army Guard approaches its 383rd birthday later this year, I cannot help but notice our ties to that history,” he said. “From the first muster in 1636 to today, our world has seen an incredible transformation and the introduction of new frontiers never imagined by those who gathered that December day in Salem, Massachusetts.”

But many things remain the same.

“With all the changes nearly four centuries have brought with them, what has made the National Guard great remains the same – that’s our people,” Hokanson said, adding that close to 30,000 Army Guard Soldiers are currently deployed worldwide.

“Nearly 5000 more are directly supporting homeland defense and emergency response missions [at home],” he said. “Our units compose 39% of the Army’s operational

force and we’ll continue to engage across the full spectrum, performing our missions of homeland defense, [supporting the] warfight and building partnerships.”

Hokanson said one of his primary focuses as director is to provide support for the Soldiers of the Army Guard.

“For all of us here in the Army Guard directorate, we must continue to do everything we can to support Soldiers and their formations throughout the 54 [states, territories and the District of Columbia],” he said.

But, he said, it’s the leaders and commanders of the Army Guard who ensure success and mission completion.

To our leaders and commanders at every level, thank you,” he said. “Your leadership and dedication, your selfless service directly contributes to our readiness and lethality and ensures mission success.”

Those leaders also take on one of the most important roles in the Army Guard, said Hokanson.

“You are charged with one of our greatest responsibilities, to manage our talent and develop the next generation of leaders who will take our places and continue to serve and protect our states and nation,” he said. “This awesome responsibility cannot be taken lightly.”

And with that, Hokanson said it was time for him to get to work in his new role.

“I’d like to share the simple observation that people may not remember what you say, but they will never forget what you do,” Hokanson said. “It’s time for me to get to work with all of you to support the 54 states, territories and the District of Columbia and ensure our nation’s Army National Guard remains Always Ready, Always There.”

Lengyel added that Hokanson is certainly up to the task.

“I think he’s going to be a great director of the Army National Guard,” he said.



## AZUWUR

## Bend's Bob Maxwell, nation's oldest Medal of Honor recipient, dies



Story Courtesy of "The Bulletin"  
by Gary A. Warner

Robert Dale "Bob" Maxwell, a longtime Bend auto shop teacher who received the Medal of Honor for jumping on a grenade to save his fellow soldiers during World War II, died Saturday. He was 98.

"He was a very humble, quiet person," said Dick Tobiason of Bend, a close friend. "He smiled whenever he talked about veterans, the flag, country, and patriotism. He loved being an American."

Tobiason said Maxwell died of natural causes at May 11, about 9:45 p.m. He had moved into Partners in Care Hospice in Bend earlier in the day. Details of memorial services are pending. Tobiason said it was Maxwell's wish to be buried next to his late wife, Beatrice, in Terrebonne Pioneer Cemetery.



Bob Maxwell, the oldest living Medal of Honor recipient, listens during an unveiling ceremony for the Oregon Medal of Honor Highway sign on U.S. Highway 20 northwest of Bend on Monday, Jan. 15, 2018. The Medal of Honor Highway recognizes the 26 Medal of Honor recipients connected with Oregon. (Joe Kline/Bulletin photo)

bravery in which the recipient was killed or died soon after from wounds.

With Maxwell's passing there are just three living Medal of Honor recipients from World War II.

#### A fighting Quaker

Maxwell was born Oct. 26, 1920, in Boise, Idaho. As a child, he moved to Quinter, Kansas to live with his grandparents. During the Depression, Maxwell's family traveled to Oregon to pick fruit, then returned to Kansas with a plan to permanently move to the Willamette Valley. On the trip back, money ran low and the family settled in Colorado.

Maxwell was drafted in 1942 during World War II. Though a Quaker, he declined conscientious objector status and was inducted into the Army in Larimer County, Colorado. Trained to string heavy wire for telephone lines at the battlefield, Maxwell rose to become a technician fifth grade, wearing two stripes — the equivalent of a corporal.

Sent to Europe, Maxwell took part in the Allied invasions of Sicily and the Italian mainland at Anzio. Maxwell was wounded in Italy, receiving a Silver Star and Purple Heart.

While recovering from his wounds at a hospital in Naples, Maxwell heard of the D-Day invasion of France on June 6, 1944. He was ordered to rejoin his unit, part of the 7th Regiment, 3rd Infantry Division, in time for Operation Dragoon, a follow-up invasion of Southern France near Marseilles on Aug. 15.

The invasion went smoothly, and the 3rd Infantry Division moved north through France. On the night of Sept. 7, 1944, Maxwell's unit was in Besancon, France. Their position was attacked in the dark by German soldiers, who lobbed a "potato-masher" stick grenade into their midst.

With seconds to act, Maxwell grabbed a blanket and fell on the grenade, which exploded under his body.

Though severely wounded, the blanket took enough of the blast to save his life. His action was credited with saving the lives of four American soldiers, including a battalion commander.

For his action, Maxwell received the Medal of Honor. Maxwell eventually received two Silver Stars, two Purple Hearts, a Bronze Star, the French Croix de Guerre and the French Legion d'honneur.

#### Back to Oregon

Maxwell was officially awarded the Medal of Honor at a ceremony at a military hospital in Denver in April 1945. He was then sent to Fort Lewis, Washington, where he was discharged. One of his grandmothers and two uncles had moved from Kansas to Creswell, in Lane County, a small town 13 miles south of Eugene. Maxwell moved to Lane County and used the GI Bill to gain certification as an expert in automotive technology.

Saying they were tired of the rain in Creswell, Maxwell's relatives moved to Powell Butte. Wanting to be close by, but in a less rural area, Maxwell landed a job as a mechanic at a Ford dealership in Redmond. One day, a co-worker suggested he meet a local woman named Beatrice — though she preferred Bea.

The couple were married on Aug. 12, 1951, at the Redmond Christian Church. Maxwell taught auto repair and service at Bend High School and Central Oregon College, later renamed Central Oregon Community College. In 1966, the couple moved to Lane County and Maxwell taught at Lane County Community College. The couple would often go to Parker, Arizona, for the winter. In 1996, they moved back to Bend for good.

#### Tributes

"I was honored to call Bob Maxwell a friend," said U.S. Rep. Greg Walden, R-Hood River. "Bob's legacy will live on in the hearts and minds of everyone he interacted with and will forever be cherished in the country that he sacrificed so much to protect."

Gov. Kate Brown called Maxwell "a true hero."

"I'm in awe of, and grateful for, his service to our nation," she said.

U.S. Sen. Ron Wyden, D-Ore., whose parents fled Nazi Germany before World War II, thanked Maxwell for what he did overseas and at home.

"Bob was a true hero whose legacy includes bravery on the battlefield and service to students in Oregon classrooms," Wyden said.

Secretary of State Bev Clarno, a Redmond resident who knew Maxwell, mourned his passing.

"It was an honor to know Bob and count him as a friend. He was a true American hero who served his country and community valiantly," Clarno said. "He will be greatly missed."



In 1958, Bob Maxwell took over as an auto mechanics instructor at Bend High, then took his talents to Central Oregon College, where he was an instructor for nine years. (Courtesy Dick Tobiason)

It was only later in life that Maxwell became active in veterans programs, serving as a director of the Bend Heroes Foundation. Projects included the Bend Parade of Flags, Bend Heroes Memorial, WWII Veterans Historic Highway, Oregon Medal of Honor Highway, Wreaths Across America, and the Character Development Program at Bend High School. A bridge in Deschutes County is named for him.

There are 70 Medal of Honor recipients alive today. Twenty-nine of the 3,505 Medal of Honor medals went to men connected with Oregon.

They served in 10 countries from the Civil War to the Vietnam War.

According to the Congressional Medal of Honor Society, with Maxwell's death, the oldest Medal of Honor recipient is now Charles H. Coolidge, 97, of Tennessee. An Army technical sergeant in World War II, he received the Medal of Honor for combat in France in October 1944.

Beatrice Maxwell died in 2015. Maxwell is survived by his four daughters: Verda Marie Maxwell, of Molalla; Linda Ann Maxwell, of Bend; Bonnie Loree Spies, of Eugene; and Sharon Rosanne Maxwell, of Bend. Tobiason said earlier this month that Maxwell also had seven grandchildren and eight great-grandchildren.



At the time of his death, Maxwell was the oldest living recipient of the nation's highest military honor, which is bestowed for "conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity at the risk of life above and beyond the call of duty."

During World War II, servicemen received 464 Medals of Honor. A majority, 266, were awarded for



World War II veteran Bob Maxwell, the country's oldest living Medal of Honor recipient before his death, rides in a parade in 2015. (Bulletin file photo)