



**142nd Fighter Wing
Airmen mobilized
for deployment
Page: 4**



**Oregon & Canadian
infantry Soldiers learn
winter survival
Page: 8-9**

Oregon Sentinel

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE OREGON NATIONAL GUARD

Oregon Airmen train with civil counterparts at PATRIOT South exercise



*Story and photos by
Staff Sgt. Zachary Holden,
Oregon Military Department Public Affairs*

PERRY, Georgia - Buildings are crumbling, citizens are disoriented, and a town is on the brink of chaos. A natural disaster of unprecedented proportions has struck the area, and local emergency response crews have become overwhelmed. This is the scenario that was laid forth for a team of Air National Guard Security Forces personnel during the PATRIOT South 19, held in part at the Guardian Centers in Perry, Georgia, March 5-7, 2019. PATRIOT is a National Guard Bureau-sponsored domestic operations (DOMOPS) annual training exercise. It brings together over a thousand participants from more than 30 states, coming from multiple local, state, and federal civilian organizations, along with members of the armed forces, in order to train together on large scale disaster response scenarios. This year, Security Forces Airmen from the 142nd and 173rd Fighter Wings (FW) of the Oregon Air National Guard had the opportunity to participate in what for some, is a once-in-a-lifetime experience. "I've been in [the military] for about 23 years, and this is the first time I've been able to partake in an exercise of this size," said Chief Master Sgt. Jason Schroeder, the Security Forces manager for the 142nd Security Forces Squadron.

Staff Sgt. Vincent Gutierrez (center) with the 142nd Security Forces Squadron, Oregon Air National Guard, participates in crowd management training at the Guardian Center of Georgia during the PATRIOT South exercise, March 4, 2019. PATRIOT is a domestic operations disaster-response training exercise conducted by National Guard units working with federal, state and local emergency management agencies and first responders.

Story continued on Page 12

102nd Civil Support Team takes part in BAYEX19

*Story and photos by
John Hughel
OMD Public Affairs*

SAN FRANCISCO, California - The picturesque American landmarks of The Golden Gate Bridge, Alcatraz and other San Francisco Bay Area attractions are vividly outlined through the morning fog, yet stand in stark contrast to the disaster scenes California, Oregon and other National Guardsmen responded to during BAYEX2019, a one-week training exercise held from Jan. 28 to Feb. 1, 2019. Working with their neighbors to the south, the Oregon National Guard's 102nd Civil Support Team (CST) integrated with the California National Guard's 95th CST, along with other regional first responders, during a series of simulated chemical attacks.

BAYEX19 was designed to simulate an attack of unknown agents at multiple sites around the scenic backdrop of the San Francisco Bay Area, a popular tourist attraction where people interact on a daily basis. These agents are often dispensed as chemical, biological, radiological or nuclear in nature when fully 'weaponized' and used as a direct threat on the public. The purpose of having other



Oregon Army National Guard Maj. Richard Hosmer, 102nd Civil Support Team deputy commander, prepares to dispatch first responders from the California and Oregon National Guard CST into a training area at Fort Baker, Golden Gate National Recreation Area, San Francisco, Calif., Jan. 30.

teams training together was to cultivate interoperability and build on 'best practice scenarios' while supporting other regional first responders working together. As the director for the Bay Exercise, Maj. Nathan Serena, deputy commander

of the 95th CST, based in Northern California, said that the main goal of the exercise was to incorporate as many partnerships as possible from out of state.

Story continued on Page 13

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COMMAND

Oregon National Guard prepares for multiple deployments

With 2019 in full swing, I'd like to reiterate the confidence I have in our Oregon National Guard Citizen-Soldiers, Airmen and Civilians. We face some very eventful and challenging months ahead and I am confident we will meet and exceed all expectations.

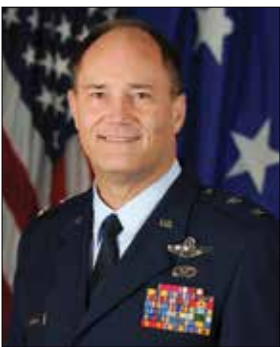
With deployments underway and more on the horizon, our Soldiers and Airmen have been preparing for these missions. We expect to see more than 1,900 of our Oregon Guard members collectively commit to 12-16 months of overseas operations. We have not seen this many Oregonians deployed simultaneously in almost a decade. We are intensely focused on ensuring our Soldiers and Airmen are equipped, trained and ready to meet the demands of these deployments.

I recently had the opportunity to visit training being conducted across our formations. I had the pleasure of spending time with the 3rd Battalion, 116th Cavalry Regiment, at the Orchard Combat Training Center in Boise, Idaho, as they kicked-off their gunnery prior to summer training.

Members of the 1st Battalion, 186th Infantry Regiment, and the 1st Squadron, 82nd Cavalry Regiment, participated in TOW missile training and I saw firsthand the efforts these Soldiers are putting into the safe employment of this weapon system. Many of them will take this knowledge with them in their upcoming mobilization overseas.

During this time, we cannot lose sight of the support and sacrifices made on the part of our families and employers. Even though they do not get a paycheck or wear a uniform, they are an equal part of the Oregon National Guard. Their efforts and willingness to support what we do for the State of Oregon and United States, whether across the globe or in our backyard supporting our communities, are essential to our success. Please thank them for letting you serve.

I could not be more pleased with the Guardsmen that make up our great organization and I know that we are sending out the best of the best every time we are



Major General Michael E. Stencel, Adjutant General, Oregon National Guard

called to duty. I am proud to be the Adjutant General of the Oregon National Guard. We cannot meet our obligations to the war fight, the home front or our partnerships without your hard work and dedication and I hope you are as equally fulfilled by being a part of this organization. With anticipation and great expectations for the months to come ... buckle up, it's going to be an exciting year!

Always Ready! Always There!

Oregon National Guard honors Secretary of State Dennis Richardson

Photos by John Hughel,
Oregon Military Department Public Affairs



Above: Maj. Gen. Michael Stencel (far center), Adjutant General, Oregon, salutes the American Flag during a 21-volley Rifle Salute and playing of Taps as full military honors are rendered during the State Funeral service for Dennis M. Richardson, Secretary of State of Oregon, at the Oregon State Capital, Salem, Oregon, March 6, 2019.



Above: The remains of Dennis M. Richardson, the Secretary of State of Oregon, are transferred by the Oregon National Guard Military Funeral Honors Team following his formal memorial service held in the House of Representatives chambers at the Oregon State Capital, Salem, Oregon, March 6, 2019.



Right: Maj. Gen. Michael Stencel, Adjutant General, Oregon, presents the American Flag to Cathy Richardson, during the State Funeral for her husband Dennis M. Richardson, Secretary of State of Oregon, at the Oregon State Capital, Salem, Oregon, March 6, 2019.

Joint training helps prepare for disaster response

Story and photo by
Sgt. 1st Class April Davis,
Oregon Military Department Public Affairs

SALEM, Oregon – Nearly 30 Oregon National Guardsmen and a representative from the Oregon Office of Emergency Management participated in a three-day Joint Reception, Staging, Onward Movement, and Integration (JRSOI) course taught by U.S. Northern Command instructors, Jan. 7-9, 2019, at the Anderson Readiness Center in Salem, Oregon.

JRSOI is the process for receiving and tracking military personnel and assets deployed into the state to assist with domestic recovery operations following an emergency or disaster. The JRSOI process ensures that the right people and equipment get to the right place at the right time to aid in relief efforts. The JRSOI course emphasizes integrating military support into civil operations under a unified incident command.

"The National Guard is a resource to the state and we are only in support of the state and the Office of Emergency Management," said Don Zwart, an instructor with U.S. Northern Command. "The ultimate goal of JRSOI is to integrate that force, capability or resource into the incident commander's plan for that response."

Classroom instruction was followed by group breakout sessions in which teams would apply the lecture concepts to real-world scenarios and present their findings to leadership. The best practices students learned during the course will help the Oregon National Guard refine standard operating

procedures for any emergency.

Participants said the training is imperative due to the risk of a potential "mega-thrust" earthquake and tsunami from the Cascadia Subduction Zone off the Pacific Northwest coastline.

"In a Cascadia type event, the ability to help and save the citizens of the State of Oregon is dependent on our ability to bring forces, military or civilian, into the state that can help," said Oregon Army National Guard Lt. Col. Michael Moffit, in charge of planning and training exercises (J7) for the Joint Domestic Operations Command (JDOC).

Soldiers and Airmen with emergency response roles across the state had the chance to brainstorm solutions for overcoming complex challenges that a Cascadia event could generate.

"I think this is a useful course for anyone involved in emergency management, but especially those personnel who are integral to producing an emergency response plan that the Oregon National Guard may inevitably use following an event like the Cascadia Subduction Zone," said Oregon Air National Guard Master Sgt. Nick Choy, medical administrative noncommissioned officer in charge (NCOIC) with Detachment 1, 142nd Medical Group, part of the CBRNE Enhanced Response Force Package (CERFP).

The Oregon JDOC staff learned doctrine and planning tools to improve upon existing emergency operations plans. The Oregon



Members of the Oregon National Guard discuss plans for Joint Reception, Staging, Onward Movement, and Integration (JRSOI) during a course taught by U.S. Northern Command instructors, January 8, 2019 in Salem, Oregon.

National Guard currently operates under a Joint Emergency Operations Plan and Operation Plan Smokey (specifically for responding to wildfires), as well as having defined roles within OEM's Cascadia Playbook.

"This is an opportunity for the joint staff and components to come together and work on JRSOI planning that will be used in the wide spectrum of everything that we do in Oregon from OPlan Smokey all the way to a major Cascadia event," said Oregon Air National Guard Lt. Col. Martin Balakas, the JDOC director. "It gives us the framework to more strategically position our planning to ensure that our response is as effective as it can possibly be and that we retain our National Guard standard of being ready, relevant and reliable."

COMMAND

Prigmore becomes first woman to command Oregon Air National Guard

Story by John Hughel,
Photos by Sgt. 1st Class April Davis,
Oregon Military Department Public Affairs

SALEM, Oregon – Oregon Air National Guard Brig. Gen. Donna M. Prigmore assumed command of the Oregon National Guard’s Air Component during a change of command ceremony, Jan. 5, 2019, at the Anderson Readiness Center in Salem, Oregon. She succeeds Brig. Gen. James R. Kriesel who is scheduled to deploy in support of joint operations in Africa.

Prigmore is the first woman to command the Oregon Air National Guard (ORANG). In her new role as the Air Component Commander, she will be responsible for more than 2,400 military and civilian personnel who support the operational effectiveness and mission readiness of the two Oregon-based fighter wings, the 173rd FW in Klamath Falls and the 142nd FW in Portland.

Maj. Gen. Michael Stencel, Adjutant General, Oregon, presided over the change of command ceremony. He highlighted Prigmore’s background, noting her knowledge and experience working in both wings, which make her an ideal candidate for the current mission challenges.

Prigmore was keenly aware of the opportunity to lead the state at this critical juncture in the ORANG’s nearly 80-year history as she addressed those in attendance.

“I assume this trusted position with enthusiasm, gratitude, eagerness, but most important of all, with great humility,” Prigmore said. “To the men and women of the



Oregon Air Guard, let me convey that as your next leader, as an organization, we will continue to say focused on the future.”

Part of that future will involve looking toward the next generation of aircraft that will supersede the F-15 Eagles flown at both fighter wings. It also involves developing cyber

capabilities and growing opportunities with other institutions. With her vast experience and working in the community, Prigmore hopes to leverage added potential for the Oregon Air National Guard.

“Expanding our partnerships with organizations like the FBI, the Oregon Fusion Center, Bonneville Power Administration, and the Oregon Technology Institute...just to name a few,” Prigmore said.

When she began her military career in 1982, Prigmore first enlisted to serve on active duty in the Air Force as an electronic technician. Subsequently, after four years on active duty, she joined the Arizona Air National Guard and in 1990 and obtained her officer commission from the Academy of Military Science in Knoxville, Tennessee.

Additional assignments eventually took her to Oklahoma with the 137th Air Lift Wing, serving as a cost analysis officer and later to the 176th Wing in Alaska, first as the services flight commander and then chief of public affairs. Her proficiency and comprehensive work background eventually brought her to Salem, Oregon, in 2002, at Joint Force Headquarters Public Affairs.

She has more than 12 years of command experience and has served as the vice commander for both the 173rd and 142nd Fighter Wings. Prigmore served one-year as the executive officer for the vice chief of staff National Guard Bureau, Washington, D.C. Then most recently in August 2018, she was promoted to her current rank and became the Oregon National Guard’s Assistant Adjutant General – Air. In her civilian career, she is the senior manager, Passenger Terminal Experience at the Port of Portland.

While looking toward the future, Prigmore acknowledged the vital importance of the current dual missions engaged at both Klamath Falls and Portland.

“Oregon is prime real estate for fighter pilot training. We have the best air training space in the country. It also comes with the responsibility for the 142nd Fighter Wing and the aerospace control alert mission,” she noted while



Brig. Gen. Donna M. Prigmore, incoming commander of the Oregon Air National Guard, assumes command from Maj. Gen. Michael E. Stencel (left), Adjutant General, Oregon, as Chief Master Sgt. Mark McDaniel, State Command Chief, looks on during a change of command ceremony, Jan. 5, 2019, at the Anderson Readiness Center in Salem, Oregon. Prigmore is the first woman to command the Oregon Air National Guard.

describing the large fleet of F-15’s assigned at the 173rd FW, the only F-15 schoolhouse in the country, and at the 142nd FW in Portland for critical NORAD operations.

“The downside during today’s change of command is losing someone with over 28 years of experience,” Stencel said, as he described Kriesel’s contributions to the Oregon Air National Guard and the U.S. Air Force. “He has been on multiple deployments and has served both with the 173rd Operations Group before he lead the Air National Guard here in Oregon.”

In his outgoing remarks, Kriesel described the challenges that every Airman must be ready to train towards and continually embrace.

“What is the future? Without question, state and federal mission requirements are not slowing down and global varsity-level challenges will continue – it is imperative that resilient Airmen continue to be fit, deployable and can establish trusted partnerships with our coalition partners.”

In full afterburner mode, Kriesel takes off for his next adventure

Story by John Hughel,
Oregon Military Department Public Affairs

SALEM, Oregon – The global demands placed on Service Members in the U.S. Air Force goes beyond securing air superiority and moving equipment and cargo. Rapid transnational mobility is essential to supporting other American military branches, as well as coalition partners in worldwide conflicts, and when called to respond to humanitarian disasters.

As he quickly shifts from the Commander of the Oregon Air National Guard to his new deployed assignment with the Combined Joint Task Force - Horn of Africa (CJTF-HOA), Brig. Gen. James A. Kriesel described these responsibilities to those in attendance during the change of command ceremony as he relinquished command to Brig. Gen. Donna M. Prigmore, on Jan. 5, 2019, at the Anderson Readiness Center in Salem, Oregon.

“To the men and women of the Oregon Air National Guard, you define readiness, execute the homeland mission, and deploy as total force warfighters,” he said, while elaborating the increased role all Service Members face as 21st Century Airmen. “We are all part of an agile, deployable military, lethal as required – ready to support our allies and partners.”

Just hours before heading out the door, Kriesel emphasized that these demands also require resiliency, which is, “the secret sauce critical to success or failure in peacetime, natural disasters and combat operations.”

Over the course of his career, “staying in the fight” has defined not only his assignments but also the pace he has brought to these roles. Soon after completing college at the University of Washington in 1986, he graduated from the U.S.A.F. Officer Training School in 1989 and began flying the A-10 Thunderbolt, piloting combat missions during Operation Desert Storm in 1991. Eventually, he transitioned to flying F-15 Eagles, and in time, joined the Oregon



Photo by Sgt. 1st Class April Davis, OMD Public Affairs

Brig. Gen. James R. Kriesel, outgoing commander of the Oregon Air National Guard, gives his parting remarks during a change of command ceremony at the Anderson Readiness Center in Salem, Oregon, January 5, 2019.

Air National Guard in 2009.

No stranger to intense situations and quick to volunteer for vigorous assignments, Kriesel deployed to Iraq during his helm as the Oregon Air National Guard commander in May of 2018, simultaneously “wearing three hats,” during the four months in country.

As the senior ranking Air Force general officer, one of his roles was the deputy-commanding general of the combined joint task for Operation Inherent Resolve. At the same time, he served as the deputy commander for the 9th Air Expeditionary Task Force-Levant.

“Everyday I was responsible for synchronizing air power to defeat the ISIS Carafate while building on good partnerships with our Iraqi host,” he said, describing the special balance with integrating seventy-nine coalition partners with host nation forces, all the while, synchronizing air missions for direct support with constant U.S. Army operations.

The “third hat,” Kriesel said, came as the Director of Coalition Aviation Advisory and Training Team (CAATT), which supports the aviation capabilities of the Iraqi forces in

the struggle to defeat ISIS combatants.

“On a daily basis I took on all three of these roles,” said Kriesel.

As U.S. and coalition partners arduously extract the last holdouts of ISIS fighters from Syria and Iraq, Kriesel reviewed the effects and lasting impacts of these joint combat endeavors.

“When trying to help empower the Iraqi Air Force, there were logistical breaks (in Iraq). Coalition partnerships helped bridge these resource gaps, empowering the Iraqi military’s success.”

Heading into his next adventure in East Africa, Kriesel will build on these lessons learned, expanding coalition accountabilities as he assumes his new role as the Deputy Commanding General, Combined Joint Task Force-Horn of Africa (CJTF-HOA).

“The geostrategic importance of Djibouti cannot be overemphasized,” he exclaimed, while detailing the vast size of the mission and area of responsibility within the African continent.

Referencing the sheer scale and area of coverage with his current CJTF-HOA assignment, Kriesel compared U.S. land size and places to stress the physical size of the area of operation.

“You can easily fit the entire (land area) United States over four times inside the continent of Africa,” he said, drawing on parallel benchmarks. “From the tip of Djibouti, all the way down to the far end of Somalia is like the extent of Maine to Miami!”

In detailing this broader mission scope, Kriesel described three areas of prominence that require the full attention of coalition partnerships in the East Africa region.

“It’s about bringing authentic solutions to combat terrorist activities, training to build comradeship and fostering coalition partnerships through the joint, interagency-inter governmental process.”

For this assignment, Kriesel’s aim is to build on his past success with his mission in the CJTF-HOA, while promoting regional

security and long-term stability. This also involves preventing conflict in the region and safeguarding the U.S. and other coalition interests.

To promote these longer-term security and stability goals, coalition partners need to continue to foster trust with local communities through civic-minded projects. From establishing clean water resources to building schools and improving medical treatment clinics, the U.S. and coalition partners will remain engaged in multiple East Africa countries.

“For general officers, the opportunities for assignments like these are few, so you’ve got to excel in the joint and coalition environment,” Kriesel stated, explaining the expectations with the CJTF-HOA assignment. “I think my background and experience allowed someone like myself to be ready to take on this type of assignment.”

In a broader sense, this is the same impression he worked to impart during his leadership role for the Airmen of the Oregon Air National Guard.

“Resiliency is the key for our Airmen, the pace in both global and domestic operations (here) at home is not slowing down,” Kriesel said, stressing readiness and resolve for all currently serving military members. “This is why we need to be good teammates; we have to support each other to accomplish the task; at home or downrange.”

In summarizing his time as the Oregon Air National Guard Commander Kriesel said, “We wear the uniform to get ready to do something,” stressing the demands that all Citizen-Airmen need to embrace.

These include all aspects of training, physical fitness, leadership development and targeting educational accomplishments.

“I want our Airmen to know that importance of setting clear goals,” he said, when describing his leadership expectations for all serving Oregon Air Guardsmen. “By allowing (our) Airmen to attack their mission, with the resources they have and can build upon: success is inevitable!”

NEWS

Oregon Air Guardsmen mobilized to support critical overseas assignments

Story and photos by
Master Sgt. John Hughel,
142nd Fighter Wing Public Affairs

PORTLAND, Oregon - For nearly two decades, Citizen-Airmen have been responding to overseas contingency operations following the 9/11 attacks. The assignments have been as varied as the Airmen that have been called upon to fulfill them, all the while building new global partnerships and strengthening traditional alliances.

As 112 Oregon National Guardsmen from the 142nd Fighter Wing prepare to deploy, they continue to fill critical overseas missions with the United States African Command (AFRICOM), the United States Central Command (CENTCOM) and other international destinations. They were formally recognized for these newest challenges during a mobilization ceremony held March 2, 2019, at the Portland Air National Guard Base in Portland, Oregon.



U.S. Senator Ron Wyden delivers remarks to mobilizing Oregon Air National Guardsmen at the Portland Air National Guard Base, March 2, 2019.

For the members of the 142nd, the deployment window will range over the course of the next year beginning this month, as others will leave in the weeks to follow. A majority will serve tours up to 6 months and almost all will be home by September of 2020.

Addressing the Airmen, their families and co-workers in attendance at the mobilization ceremony, Maj. Gen. Michael Stencel, Adjutant General, Oregon, described the challenges and responsibilities for those deploying as well as those 'keeping the home fires burning.'



A formation of Airmen from the 142nd Fighter Wing preparing to deploy render a hand salute during the playing of the National Anthem during their mobilization ceremony, March 2, 2019.

"For some of you, this will be your first deployment and you, as well as your families, will face challenges that you have never experienced," Stencel said, describing the opportunities for the Airmen to grow while family and friends support their sacrifice.

He also called upon experienced Airmen to step up to new demands, "Your leadership skills will be put to the challenge and in the process, you will rise with the occasion and grow as leaders."

The significance of the ceremony reinforced the commitment and continued service of Oregon National Guard members over the years. These Service Members play a critical role in preserving freedoms abroad as they leave their full-time civilian jobs and families.

During his remarks to the Airmen, Oregon Air National Guard Col. Adam Sitler, 142nd Fighter Wing commander, drew the extended line from the 1700's to this present-day deployment.

"When I think of the iconic symbol of the National Guardsman; with one hand on the plow and the other on a musket, ready to leave the field and defend his country, I know that as we mobilize today, we are still playing this most vital role for our nation," said Sitler.

This is not the first deployment for many of the Airmen being mobilized. Tech. Sgt. Jeffrey Jacobs will be leaving later this year on his second deployment but this will be his first mobilization as an emergency management specialist.

"Prior to joining the Air Guard, I was deployed to Kuwait when I was on active duty working in Security Forces at Kuwait International Airport, performing vehicle and security checkpoint," he said.

After a six-year break in service, Jacobs

joined the 142nd Fighter Wing in 2013 and became part of the Civil Engineer Squadron. This deployment to support CENTCOM operations will allow him to foster some of those new skills.

"This will be the first time doing the emergency management job, even though I have been the assistant on [the Portland Air National Guard] base over the past few years," he said.

His duties will include setting up detection systems for possible chemical and biological hazards and training for other threats on an everyday basis.

"Making those recommendations to the commander; who should be in protective gear, for how long, factoring in weather conditions, but also interacting with the command center to warn the local citizens of any dangers," Jacobs said, in describing some of the threats and conditions he has trained for prior to deploying.

The investment with years of training, the means and equipment to be able to do so at home, will play a pivotal role during the deployment for many of the Airmen heading overseas.

Acknowledging the tools and assets the Airmen will need to continue to do their overseas mission, U.S. Senator Ron Wyden said that, "under his watch, you will always have those resources."

"Though we don't have the big active duty bases like on the East Coast with the facilities and means so readily available, what you do have is all of us; your immediate family and your Oregon family," he said.

As they build new proficiencies working with international partners, the Airmen will hopefully return with a newfound appreciation for the sacrifices they made along the way.

"As you head out abroad, you do so taking your unique skill sets and years of experience," said Oregon State Treasurer Tobias Read, describing the range of tasks the Airmen will face.

The biggest challenge most Airmen and their families will face are the missed birthday parties or graduations, and those important day-to-day moments that can't be captured using video chats or mobile devices. Representing Oregon Governor Kate Brown during the ceremony, Read wanted the deploying families to be reassured that they would have support during this deployment.

"To your families, I encourage you to reach out to your Air Guard community and lean on each other for support as you carry on without your loved ones and we will all be here with you to welcome them home again," said Read.



Maj. Gen. Michael Stencel, Adjutant General, Oregon, greets members of the 142nd Fighter Wing following their formal mobilization ceremony, Portland Air Base, March 2, 2019.



Chief Master Sgt. Ronald Anderson (center), Chief Master Sgt. of the Air National Guard, pauses for a photo with Staff Sgt. Crystal Lopez (left) along with her twin sister Christian Lopez (right) following the unit's mobilization ceremony.

2-218th Field Artillery Battalion hosts high school students for recruiting event

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

WARRENTON, Oregon — Oregon Army National Guard Soldiers with the 2nd Battalion, 218th Field Artillery Regiment, 41st Infantry Brigade Combat Team, partnered with recruiters to organize a "Guard for a Day" (GFAD) event to integrate potential recruits into unit activities over a drill weekend, March 1-2, 2019, at Camp Rilea in Warrenton, Oregon.



Itzel Gallardo participates in a computer simulated live fire training scenario with the help of 2-218th Field Artillery Battalion Soldiers during the "Guard for a Day" recruiting event, March 2, 2019.

The GFAD participants, all high school students considering enlistment, were given the opportunity to ask questions of service members and to become familiar with the equipment used by the artillerymen as they conducted occupation training.

"The purpose of this event is to get younger generations to come out to see what we do for the State of Oregon and to incorporate them into the unit so they feel like they're part of a team," said Sgt. 1st Class Bryan Farrell, the senior fire direction NCO for the 2-218th. "It allows them to spend some time away from their computers to see what we do on our drill weekend."

Students also learned how to operate weapon systems, how to escape a rolled tactical vehicle and how to maneuver during a simulated firefight lead by soldiers of the 2-218th.

"Everyone's been amazing," said Jeremiah Green, a student at Sprague High School in Salem. "I've thought of joining the military before and after being here today I'm now considering joining the National Guard."

The training not only benefitted the potential recruits but also served to raise morale among the artillerymen.



Combat medics of the 2-218th Field Artillery Battalion demonstrate casualty first aid during a training simulation for the "Guard for a Day" recruiting event, March 2, 2019 at Camp Rilea.

"I think the Soldiers had a lot of fun working with the students because they get to showcase their job," said Staff Sgt. Lyndsay Ettig, a GFAD coordinator. "Sometimes we forget that our jobs are special, and you can tell that these Soldiers are getting excited about their job again as they demonstrate and explain what they do."

The GFAD event primarily focused on the merits of teamwork and was meant to give the students a more realistic idea of what life in

the Guard is like, all while the unit practiced the vital skills needed for time-sensitive occupation and placement procedures.

"We tried to focus on sharing the camaraderie, the teamwork and the passion within the unit," said Capt. Dwayne Dehlbom, commander of Headquarters and Headquarters Battery, 2-218th. "Even if they don't end up being artillerymen, if they choose to put on the uniform, we want them to feel a part of the team."

NEWS

Bengal Guard bridges international relationships in border security

Story and photos by

Sgt. 1st Class April Davis,

Oregon Military Department Public Affairs

BELLINGHAM, Washington – A delegation of 22 members of Border Guard Bangladesh (BGB) visited the Pacific Northwest for an information exchange known as Bengal Guard, Sept. 10-21, 2018, as part of the Oregon National Guard's State Partnership Program and sponsored by U.S. Pacific Command's Joint Interagency Task Force – West.

"I think it's a very good thing that from a country in Southeast Asia we have come far west to America and working together will definitely always have a good impact in the protection of human rights under any circumstances, doing good for the people in general," said Lt. Col. Monzurul Hassan Khan, commander of a BGB battalion.

Members of the BGB, Oregon National Guard, and U.S. Border Patrol spent two weeks working together, sharing knowledge and best practices in border security. Bengal Guard included tactical technique exchanges, tabletop exercises, and a tour of the Canadian-U.S. border guided by the U.S. Border Protection Office of Border Patrol in Blaine, Washington.

"It's an opportunity for us to all come together and have a familiarization event," said 1st Lt. Joshua Taylor, Bengal Guard coordinator for the Oregon National Guard State Partnership Program. "Being so close to the Canadian border is great because we are able to get boots on the ground and see what actually happens on the border."

Experts from the U.S. Border Patrol Blaine Sector shared some tactical perspectives on border security scenarios. This was the second year that members of U.S. Border Patrol have participated in Bengal Guard. The participants collaborated and gained a better understanding of the unique circumstances each country faces on their prospective borders. They discussed topics such as counter-insurgency, drug smuggling, human trafficking, humanitarian assistance, and refugees.

"I'm glad that we were chosen to be a part of this," said Harold Loomis, special operations detachment agent with U.S. Border Patrol Blaine Sector. "I think that by extending our hand of friendship to other countries, and this international partnership that we have, it's a great opportunity to learn on both sides and to create a bridge



Brad Denson, Point Roberts director with Blaine Sector of the U.S. Border Protection, gives a tour of Peace Arch Park at the Canada–United States International Boundary to members of the Border Guard Bangladesh (BGB) during the Bengal Guard 2018 engagement event, Sept. 19, 2018, near Blaine, Washington.

that links us in the job that we do and the security of both our nations."

Lt. Col. Monzurul Hassan Khan agreed, saying that the experience has been very beneficial. "We have come to know each other, learning things from each other, exchange of our ideas and views," he said. "It is about two nations, about people, how do you work, how do we work, our different command structure and organization."

Loomis said organizational structure was a common discussion during Bengal Guard. "How we are actually developed as a national security measure compared to their structure," said Loomis. "One of the main differences is that we are civilian law enforcement."

The BGB is a paramilitary border security organization that polices Bangladesh's border regions in times of peace, and defends the border in times of war. The BGB is much like a blend between the National Guard and Border Patrol, whereas the U.S. has separate law enforcement versus military entities for those different functions.

"Establishing who does what, in what role, is good for them (BGB) to see and

they have asked us a lot of great questions about it," said Taylor.

"We didn't have much of an idea about the National Guard, so now we have come to learn how do they operate, under which organization do they work inside the United States," said Lt. Col. Monzurul Hassan Khan. "So, we have common things between us that we do response to national emergencies. Going back home we can use those ideas for better service to our nation."

As a military organization, improving efficiency in command and control processes is important with time-sensitive operations when lives are on the line. Instructors from the Oregon Army National Guard's 249th Regional Training Institute covered operational techniques for the BGB officers. The tabletop exercises focused on actioning intelligence and the Military Decision Making Process (MDMP).

"This is a great opportunity for us, so now we can compare the things we have learned that the U.S. has taught us and there are so many differences we can take the good out of it and implement it in our country," said Lt. Col. Khandaker Saiful Alam, BGB director of border intelligence. "It's a great

experience for me as a member of border forces Bangladesh and I'm very fortunate to come here to get advanced knowledge."

For the enlisted participants, Airmen from the 142nd Security Forces Squadron, Oregon Air National Guard, led tactical exchanges in patrolling, checkpoint operations, vehicle searches, and drug seizure. Pararescue Airmen from the 125th Special Tactics Squadron also conducted medical first responder familiarization.

Bengal Guard provided a unique professional development opportunity for all members of the BGB and the Oregon National Guard as they became familiar with each other's culture, customs, and shared commonalities. The participants bonded over shared meals and cultural activities throughout the exchange.

"The main objective of Bengal Guard, first and foremost, is to continue to build enduring relationships with our state partner, Bangladesh, but also build cultural awareness and work on things like NCO professionalization," said Taylor. "Our cultures may be different, but we are so similar. We are all human."

This was the third iteration of the annual Bengal Guard event encompassing a border security emphasis. However, the Oregon National Guard and Bangladesh have been state partners since 2008 and have conducted many information exchanges over the years with a Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief (HADR) focus.

"The State Partnership Program is a phenomenal program and distinct opportunity for the National Guard," Taylor said. "It's very fulfilling to create those relationships and be part of something larger than yourself."



Members of the Border Guard Bangladesh (BGB) plan simulated operations during a table-top exercise as part of Bengal Guard 2018 in Bellingham, Wash., Sept. 20, 2018.

173rd Fighter Wing welcomes home 270th ATCS deployers from Iraq

Story and photos by

Tech. Sgt. Jefferson Thompson,

173rd Fighter Wing Public Affairs

KLAMATH FALLS, Oregon - The 270th Air Traffic Control Squadron welcomed home a team of 15 Airmen from a six-month deployment to Iraq, Jan. 4, 2018 at Kingsley Field in Klamath Falls, Oregon.

A demobilization ceremony served to officially welcome back the Kingsley Field Airmen, after they provided radar approach and finals control at the busiest airfield in

Iraq—Al Asad Air Base.

The 15-member team joined efforts with the Wyoming Air National Guard out of Cheyenne to form a 30-member team, which Capt. Alex Fugate, the air field operations flight commander, oversaw.

"We had these guys do so many things outside their AFSC; these guys were out there on their off-time helping put up tents or digging trench lines to run cables and other things to help make the base more robust," said Fugate. "Every one of these guys was a volunteer so when you go back to our roots as the guard and the militia it's that same spirit of volunteerism that you see, all of these people wanted to be there."

He went on to say that he took pride in their "attitudes, their optimism and their motivation".

Fugate gave an example of the more than 60 year-old radar system requiring a repair that only depot maintenance out of Pennsylvania could provide. The radar would have to be shipped back to the East Coast incurring costs and down time. Instead, Tech. Sgt. Mark Chinander, a radar maintenance technician from the 173rd Fighter

Wing, submitted a proposal to have him and his team do the work.

They were granted approval, but the job was slated to take two days, far too long to be without a radar in a war zone. Instead, Chinander and his team practiced on a non-working set and whittled the downtime to nearly four hours, which was beneficial because they had to do it twice. The first time they did the repair it took three-and-a-half hours; the second time was significantly faster.

"We did it in the middle of the night and we got it done in 45 minutes," said Chinander.

This was in addition to a robust primary mission.

"In contrast to managing flying in Oregon, they were managing much more complex airspace in a far less friendly environment," said Maj. Gen. Mike Stencel, the Oregon Adjutant General. "They provided 24-7 radar approach control, precision approach radar services and tactical air navigation support for a wide variety of military aircraft."

Those aircraft included unmanned aerial vehicles, helicopters, as well as cargo aircraft and fighter jets.

Today these Citizen-Airmen have returned to their respective professions and their families having supported the call to service overseas. They have also returned to their home stations, the 270th Air Traffic Control Squadron where they manage

air traffic for the 173rd Fighter Wing and the Klamath Falls International Airport, Klamath Falls, Oregon.



Brig. Gen. James R. Kriesel (center), Oregon Air National Guard commander, thanks Capt. Alex Fugate, who led 15 members from the 270th Air Traffic Control Squadron during a deployment to Al Asad Air Base, Iraq, during a demobilization ceremony, Jan. 4, 2019.



Chief Master Sgt. Mark McDaniel, the state command chief for the Oregon Air National Guard, congratulates Senior Airman Jacob Enyart of the 270th Air Traffic Control Squadron during a demobilization ceremony, Jan. 4, 2019.

NEWS

1186th Military Police Company takes advantage of longer drill weekends

Story by Spc. Timothy Jackson,
115th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

WARRENTON, Oregon - The constant sideways rain accompanies Oregon Army National Guard Soldiers with the 1186th Military Police (MP) Company as they train at Camp Rilea Armed Forces Training Center in Warrenton, Oregon. The MP Company, made up of 154 Soldiers from Salem and Hood River, operated together during a four-day period, beginning on Jan. 31, as they prepared for their mission essential task list (METL) certifications this year.

The roar of High-Mobility Multipurpose Wheeled Vehicles (HMMWV) was only matched by the nearby Pacific Ocean's waves. As a loud simulation grenade exploded, a team of military police raided a two-story building at the mock village set up for military operations in urban terrain (MOUT) training.



Photo by Spc. Timothy Jackson, 115th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment
Oregon Army National Guard Sgt. Ken Clark, a team leader with 1st Platoon, 1186th MP Company, 821st Troop Command Battalion, gives his team a pre-mission brief, February 1, 2019.



Photo by Spc. Timothy Jackson, 115th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment
Oregon Army National Guard Spc. Steven Garibay, a military policeman with 1186th Military Police Company, 821st Troop Command Battalion, conducts room clearing at Armed Forces Training Center in Warrenton, Oregon, February 1, 2019.

Having recently assumed command of the 1186th, Capt. Caleb Tomulty observed his Soldiers training in the challenging weather conditions throughout the extended weekend.

"We're working on going through all our squad and platoon level subtasks over the course of this weekend," said Tomulty.

The company recently switched from doing monthly two-day drill weekends, to bi-monthly drill weekends. They use a half-day on the front end and a half-day on the back end of drill for travel, with three full days in between to conduct training.

As a team leader with 1st platoon, 1186th MP, Sgt. Ken Clark remarked that the longer drill weekends allowed for a more robust training period, bringing together Soldiers from Salem and Hood River. Prior to the change in drilling format, the two groups only trained together during their two weeks of annual training.

"It gives us the availability to work with a broader array of individuals, and we get to see people we don't usually see," said Clark.

The MOUT training is an example of the company using the longer weekend to work at full capacity. Each platoon dismounts into the village in different iterations, all accompanied by realistic sounds and conditions from blank ammunition rounds, simulated explosions and mortar rounds. Each group reacts to assaults by ambushing opposing team forces. Afterwards, during an after action review, the Soldiers examine what they have learned from the experience.

"The MOUT training gives a more three dimensional environment to the training rather than just looking at it on paper. A big thing with training is to remind the Soldiers that we live in a three dimensional world, and if you're not training in a three

dimensional world Soldiers forget to look up and look down," said Clark.

The shift in drill scheduling allows the entire company to train together at least five times a year before they reunite again for annual training.

"More training time means we get to build more cohesiveness between our platoons, platoon leaders, and platoon sergeants, as they conduct the operations," said Tomulty.

As the Platoon Sergeant of 3rd platoon 1186th MP, Sgt. 1st Class Christopher Baxter, welcomed the four-day training opportunity and foul weather with a smile.

"If it ain't raining, we ain't training," said Baxter.



Photo by Spc. Michael Germundson, 115th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment
Oregon Army National Guard Sgt. 1st Class Cristopher Baxter, platoon sergeant of 3rd platoon, 1186th Military Police Company, 821st Troop Command Battalion, reviews training plans with his Soldiers, Feb. 1, 2019.

Baxter stated that the damp atmosphere and conditions helps prepare the company mentally, because when they go out on missions they're not always going to have the best conditions available.

"It's not always going to be sunshine and perfect 75 degree weather," said Baxter.

1st Battalion, 186th Infantry Regiment fires-up for deployment

Story and photos by
Staff Sgt. Anita VanderMolen,
115th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

YAKIMA, Washington - In preparation for mobilization, Soldiers with the 1st Battalion, 186th Infantry Regiment, 41st Infantry Brigade Combat Team, conducted a multi-faceted training exercise at Yakima Training Center, March 12-17, 2019.

Oregon Army National Guard Soldiers, who will deploy later this year, were familiarized with firing .50-caliber machine guns using the Common Remotely Operated Weapon Station (CROWS), urban operations, and infantry maneuvers using live-fire and maintaining safety.



Sgt. Kevin Birdsell, with C Company, 1st Battalion, 186th Infantry Regiment, clears a building during pre-deployment training at Yakima Training Center, March 14.

Soldiers with Delta Company conducted live-firing with the CROWS. The system allows Soldiers to stay in vehicles when firing occurs.

"It allows the Soldier to operate weapons used in the turret without actually being in the turret," said Spc. Michael Jones, a gunner.

The CROWS is versatile and precise. It can implement a variety of weapons on a variety of vehicles.

"It is safe and extremely accurate," said

Pfc. Jay Tetone, a gunner. "It is intended to keep the Soldier out of harm's way."

Accuracy is only as good as the operator. It takes training to be able to operate the total system. With basic knowledge, any Soldier can take the controls.

"The CROWS is user-friendly. The basic knowledge needed to fire is simple to do and easy to understand," Tetone said.

The station consists of a display unit, switch panel unit, control grip, joystick and screen as a secondary source of information.

"It's like a video game. The now-generation can easily adapt to that technology," said Spc. Christopher Burcell, a gunner.

Soldiers also conducted room entering and clearing training in the Shoot House.

Four-time veteran, Master Sgt. Patrick Lynch, a chief instructor with the 249th Regional Training Institute at Camp Umatilla, was one of the trainers at the Shoot House.

"We started training with a single team, entering a room and making sure it was clear, then we moved on to squads entering and clearing," Lynch said.

The process is taken in steps making sure the Soldiers know their job and trust others to know theirs. Confidence also comes from positive reinforcement given by Lynch.

"You know the squad leader is ready. You know the team leader is ready and he knows you are ready. Then go!" Lynch told one team.

Standard operating procedures are necessary for teams to act as a cohesive unit and to ensure safety and success.

"We are learning this is how it's done. This is what we are doing and there is no deviation," said Spc. Ian McGowan, a saw-gunner.

The Soldiers train at a crawl, walk, run pace.

"We begin with a dry run, then simulation, then with live-fire," Lynch said.

The live-fire rounds are marking cartridges, like a paintball, leaving chalk marks where they hit. The Soldiers are close together while simulating scenarios.

"There is going to be a lot of confidence building with live-fire 'clacking' off not even two feet away," said McGowan.

Infantry units are known as 'boots-on-the-ground.' The third part of training stressed infantry maneuvers on foot with live rounds and pop-up targets.

"They are doing in-place support, overwatch, including an assault element, and maneuvering toward the village," said Spc. Dylan Dees, an operations assistant with Headquarters and Headquarters Company, who was part of the range pop-up target team.

Each position had the pop-up targets to shoot. Safety is at the top concern for all training.

"The main thing is to maintain maximum safety. We are using live-fire," Dees said.

Soldiers said these tactics, techniques, and procedures are important training to help them prepare for a deployment.

"This is some of the better training I have experienced. Reaction targets are very beneficial to training," said Sgt. Collin Kim, the assistant operations NCO with Headquarters and Headquarters Company.



Pvt. Miles Connolly, with D Company, 1st Battalion, 186th Infantry Regiment, loads .50-caliber rounds at Yakima Training Center during pre-deployment training, Mar. 13.

Oregon Veterans honored

Story by Mike Allegre,
Veterans Care Centers of Oregon



Staff Sgt. Troy Koski and Sgt. 1st Class Roger Montavon hold one of the shadowboxes that they presented at the Oregon Veterans Home.

THE DALLES, Oregon - Six residents at the Oregon Veterans' Home in The Dalles were honored in a ceremony on Nov. 15, 2018, when two Soldiers of the Oregon Army National Guard presented the military medals and other awards to five veterans. A World War II medic who served in the south Pacific, a retired colonel with more than 26 years of service, a veteran of the Cold War, and three Vietnam veterans received their military awards in shadowboxes.

Sgt. 1st Class Roger Montavon and Staff Sgt. Troy Koski, made the official presentation of the shadowbox containing the medals. Both Soldiers are assigned to the Fort Dalles Readiness Center. The veterans home staff had procured the medals and other items for the Guard members to present to the five former Soldiers on behalf of the staff.

The recipients included Pfc. George "Skip" Fisher, Sgt. Nicky Goddard, retired Col. Bill Holt, Pfc. Ken Talbot, and Tec-5 Kelly Winston.

Another resident, Specialist-4 Gregory Payne, was unable to attend the ceremony. Winston's medals were presented posthumously to his daughter, Mary Jacobs, of Hood River. Winston was a World War II veteran who passed away in October.

In 2017 and 2018, Oregon Soldiers and Airmen volunteers helped to present 30 residents their medals in shadowboxes during four separate ceremonies at the veterans homes in The Dalles and Lebanon.

NEWS

173rd Fighter Wing Vehicle Maintenance keeps things running through winter

Story and photo by
Tech. Sgt. Jefferson Thompson,
173rd Fighter Wing Public Affairs

KLAMATH FALLS, Oregon - The Klamath Basin sits at more than 4,000 feet of elevation and gets its fair share of snow during the winter months. Thanks to plowing operations the 173rd Fighter Wing continues to train pilots all through the winter months without delay.

If a snowstorm deposits more than one-half-inch, plowing operations begin no matter the time and as often as not it's the middle of the night.

A significant part of winter readiness is having all of the snowplows ready for that next big storm and the mechanics at the vehicle operations work hard to ensure they are ready.

It's a job that is growing increasingly more interesting as the years pass, for one thing many of the parts for the older plows are not available any longer and these mechanics cast a net far and wide trying to find a vendor or maybe a cast off from another base they can scavenge for parts.



Senior Master Sgt. Issac Nunn, guides a snow plow in need of repairs into the vehicle operations garage, Jan. 5, 2019, at Kingsley Field in Klamath Falls, Ore.



Tech. Sgt. Jacob Graham, a vehicle operations mechanic with the 173rd Fighter Wing, removes a cotter pin from a damaged plow roll-over assembly, Jan. 8, at Kingsley Field in Klamath Falls, Ore.

That may make one wonder if it makes more sense to upgrade the fleet to newer models with readily available parts.

They are quick to point out, however how valuable these machines are, "they are easy to work on because they are all-mechanical and they rarely break down," said Senior Master Sgt. Isacc Nunn, the shop superintendent.

However the natural enemy of snow plows are the uneven surfaces hidden beneath smooth snow and when a plow inevitably runs into them it causes damage that these mechanics have to fix.

A day in early January is an example as Nunn flags in an O.D. Green snowplow with damaged roll-over gears. The "roll-over" as the plow operators refer to it is the mechanism which rotates the plow and allows it to push snow either to the right or left by rotating vertically 180-degrees.

For this repair Master Sgt. James Childs points to several parts waiting by the snowplow, "we were able to find these from a company in Canada." However, there is one part they couldn't find and he'll make that in-house.

The ability to do that stems from a depth of experience few shops share.

Tech. Sgt. John Walling quickly tabulates some of that experience, "If you add up me, Sergeant Childs, Sergeant Nunn, [Master] Sergeant [Michael] Krouse—we probably have at least a hundred years of experience between the four of us." Each of those four grew up working on cars and machinery long before they were old enough to join the ranks of Kingsley Field Airmen.

The fact that they have the equipment to make the parts is also rare and stems from a time when they needed a part that was damaged in the line of duty and they couldn't find it anywhere. Childs is an accomplished machinist and he knew he could make the part with the proper tools, their commander at the time agreed and they purchased a milling machine and metal lathe that get used quite often.

"I think we are pretty fortunate not only to have the background experience that we all bring to the table but also having management support us and buy us this equipment," said Childs. "We're set up

so that we can pretty much deal with anything that comes through our door," added Walling.

Getting this particular plow out the door requires Childs to build a new support beam with brackets and a shaft support. It takes several days as he works around his primary responsibilities, to cut, weld and machine a new part. But unless the next big snowstorm arrives with in a day, this snow plow will be ready for it.



Master Sgt. James Childs, 173rd Fighter Wing vehicle maintenance shop, uses a cutting torch during fabrication of a support bracket for a roll-over snow plow, Jan. 14, 2019, at Kingsley Field in Klamath Falls.

3-116th Battalion hosts 'Guard for a Day'

Story and photos courtesy
Recruiting and Retention Command

BOISE, Idaho - The 3rd Battalion, 116th Cavalry Regiment, hosted 23 potential recruits for a "Guard for a Day" event during gunnery training in March at the Orchard Combat Training Center near Boise, Idaho. The recruits got to

experience what training would be like if they decide to enlist into the battalion, including the rare opportunity to watch an M1A2 SEP V2 main battle tank during live-fire. The recruits met with Oregon Army National Guard Soldiers to learn about their jobs and recruiters were also on hand to answer questions about enlistment benefits.



1249th Engineer Battalion Retirees

SAVE THE DATE
Lets get together! Essayons!

Hall of Honor Ceremony and
Christmas Dinner at the Oregon Gardens
Friday, December 9, 2019

Please email Col. (ret.) Bill Schutz at: william.j.schutz@gmail.com
You can also email CSM (ret.) Bill Van Natta at: bcgoduck@msn.com
(Send us your phone number and address)

Oregon logisticians transfer equipment to Washington Guard



Story and photo courtesy
Deputy Chief of Staff Logistics (G4)

JOINT BASE LEWIS MCCHORD, Washington – Oregon Army National Guard Soldiers from multiple units participated in a Joint Inventory and Technical Inspection, Feb. 11-15, 2019, at Joint Base Lewis McChord (JBLM), Washington

Primary staff from both Oregon and Washington took part in the unit transfer of Bravo Company, 898th Brigade Engineer Battalion (BEB), to JBLM.

Representatives from 82nd Brigade Troop Command and Property Book Office; 1249th Engineer Battalion; Bravo Company, 898th BEB; Field Maintenance Shop-Salem; Combined Support Maintenance Shop-Clackamas; Surface Maintenance Manager and United States Property and Fiscal

Office Logistics assisted with the inventory and transfer process.

Their technical, mechanical and property expertise made a successful lateral transfer of 624 items valued at \$34,565,698.54 from Oregon to the Washington Army National Guard. Much of this equipment included Strykers, Dozers, Buffalos, Huskees, Skid Steer, Grader, weapons, optics and electronics.

"A shining example of a well-organized, rehearsed and planned effort by Maj. Ortega, Ms. Moody and their staffs," said Lt. Col. Tannis Mittelbach, Assistant Deputy Chief of Staff Logistics, Oregon Army National Guard. "The clear and constant communication with the Maintenance Chiefs and Washington's 81st Brigade S4, Property Book Office, UTES and Maintenance Shop created a collaborative team effort."

FEATURES

Oregon Army National Guard Soldiers learn arctic survival from northern neighbors

Story and photos by
Sgt. 1st Class April L. Davis,
Oregon Military Department Public Affairs

Lights from headlamps in the distance dart across the blue snow horizon, mirroring the shooting stars above in the brilliant Canadian winter night sky. Through the darkness, Canadian Army Reserve Soldiers lead the way towards camp, breaking trail with their snowshoes through six feet of untouched snow.

Nearly 40 Oregon Army National Guard Soldiers with 2nd Battalion, 162nd Infantry Regiment, 41st Infantry Brigade Combat Team, traveled to British Columbia, Canada, January 24-28, 2019, to participate in the Westie Avalanche Exercise alongside more than 90 Soldiers with the Royal Westminster Regiment (R WESTMR R), 39th Canadian Brigade Group (CBG).

Westie Avalanche is an introduction to arctic warfare focusing on winter survivability, cold weather tent operations, and light infantry winter mobility. The purpose of the exercise is to build winter survival skills while cultivating relationships between North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) allies.

“Through active participation in light infantry engagements we continue to build our ability to conduct our mission in any environmental situation alongside partner NATO nations,” said Oregon Army National Guard Lt. Col. Kyle Akers, commander, 2-162nd Infantry Battalion.

Akers emphasized that 2-162nd Infantry Battalion Soldiers must be effective and ready to serve in any condition or terrain. However, Oregon Army National Guard Soldiers don’t often get a chance to train in adverse winter conditions, an environment Canadian Soldiers are familiar operating in.

“It’s one thing to be able to tactically operate, but its another thing to be able to sustain yourself throughout prolonged operations in arctic conditions,” said Canadian Army Reserve Maj. Greg Chan, commander of Alpha Company and operations officer for the R WESTMR R. “We thought it would be a good exercise to invite elements of 2-162 up here and showcase some of the skills that we have and share our knowledge with you.”

Canadian Army Reserve Lt. Col. Chuck MacKinnon, commander of the R WESTMR R, emphasized the importance of understanding different interoperability perspectives.



Canadian Army Reserve Cpl. Devin O'Reilly (right), with Alpha Company, Royal Westminster Regiment, 39th Canadian Brigade Group, teaches Oregon Army National Guard Soldiers how to secure a tent kit inside a toboggan in preparation for the Westie Avalanche Exercise, January 25, at the Chilliwack Armoury, in Chilliwack, British Columbia, Canada.

“The U.S. is our partner and the reality is we both end up operating together in places around the world,” said MacKinnon. “Our armies are now intermingling so much, and what I found overseas is that we approach the same problem with two different perspectives. Understanding what we both bring to the picture and how we think differently is a huge advantage.”

The Oregon and Canadian Soldiers gained real-world interoperability experience by fully integrating with their peers. Each Oregon Soldier was paired with a Canadian Soldier to encourage the exchange of knowledge and skills.

“With Soldiers on both sides being integrated, they’re more likely to learn those different perspectives in a very short period of time,” said MacKinnon. “They both get to understand the different language we have: cultural references, acronyms and terminology, having different equipment, understanding how the different command and rank structures work.”

The Canadian and U.S. Soldiers worked shoulder-to-shoulder and camped together in combined ten-man infantry squads, known as toboggan or tent groups.

“They all integrated at every level and I think there was great sharing of information,” said Chan. “They [U.S. Soldiers] got to experience some of what Canada has to offer, but also learned a lot of the critical Soldier skills to survive in a winter environment.”

Oregon Army National Guard Staff Sgt. Eric Givens, training noncommissioned officer with Delta Company, 2-162nd Infantry Battalion, said the Oregon and Canadian infantrymen worked really well together.

“It was just as if we were Canadians,” said Givens. “Being integrated into their daily operations felt like I was part of the Canadian Army.”

The Oregon Guard Soldiers spent the first day of training, January 25, at the Chilliwack Armoury becoming familiar with the Canadian Army’s arctic tent/toboggan kits, and learning proper procedures for tent group operations.

“They were open to informing and teaching us; giving us ample time to get hands on experience with their equipment,” said Givens.

The Soldiers received classes on cold weather clothing and gear in which the objective is to stay comfortably COLD: Clean, Overheating (avoid it), Layered, and Dry. The forecast for the weekend predicted



Canadian Army Reserve Soldiers with the Royal Westminster Regiment, 39th Canadian Brigade Group, and Oregon Army National Guard Soldiers with 2nd Battalion, 162nd Infantry Regiment, 41st Infantry Brigade Combat Team, camp in the snow during Westie Avalanche Exercise, January 26, at E.C. Manning Park, British Columbia, Canada.



Oregon Army National Guard Staff Sgt. Eric Givens (right), with Delta Company, 2nd Battalion, 162nd Infantry Regiment, 41st Infantry Brigade Combat Team, and Canadian Army Reserve Cpl. Avery Whitty-Kirker, with Royal Westminster Regiment, 39th Canadian Brigade Group, use knives to feather kindling sticks as part of a fire making class taught by the 4th Canadian Rangers Patrol Group during Westie Avalanche Exercise, January 26, at E.C. Manning Park, British Columbia, Canada.

highs around 30 degrees Fahrenheit and lows dipping down below 20. The Soldiers packed their rucksacks and assault packs in preparation for their frozen adventure, only taking what they could manage to carry on their backs.

“You pack to survive, but you also have to count out your weight per pound,” said Givens. “You have to decide if you want to be uncomfortable while moving, carrying more weight, or uncomfortable while stationary and packing less layers and thermal barriers.”

On Friday evening, the Canadian-U.S. formations were bussed to E.C. Manning Provincial Park where they had to establish a hasty campsite. The Canadian Soldiers blazed a trail through the snow with snowshoes and toboggans as though they were walking on clouds. The Oregon Soldiers’ boots sank deep through the soft snow as they were weighted down with heavy rucksacks.

“We were all cold and tired, but we laughed and made jokes about it, and in that moment you wouldn’t want to be anywhere else,” said Givens. “As infantry Soldiers, there was camaraderie in sharing the misery of being cold together.”

Together, the U.S. and Canadian Soldiers worked under the cover of darkness to stake down their tents in the snow and set-up camp. Relief from the cold finally came when the tents were up, the stoves and lanterns were lit, and the Soldiers could finally cram together in their sleeping bags.

“Even though we wore different flags, I was cold, and they were cold too,” said Oregon Army National Guard Staff Sgt. Dionicio Vega, with Charlie Company, 2-162nd Infantry Battalion. “Everyone was dying to get that stove lit and that was our most important task. Once it was lit, there was a level of comfort and peace that came over.”

The Soldiers didn’t stay “cozy” for too

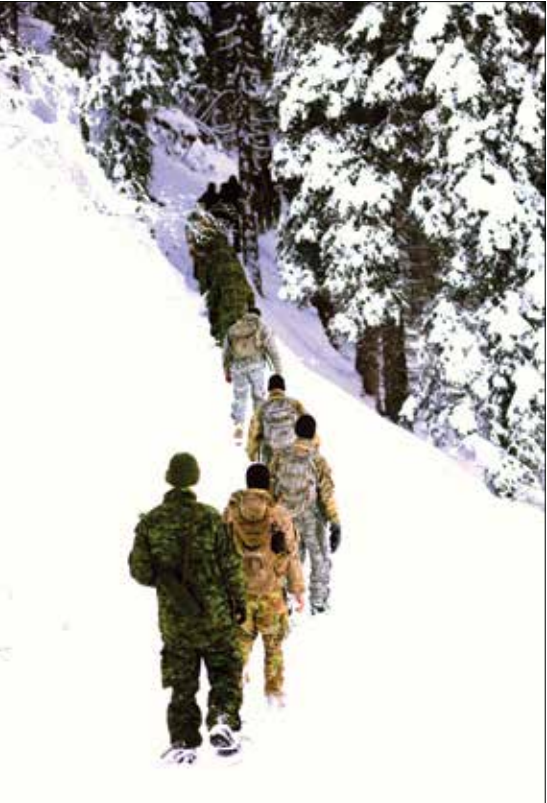


Oregon Army National Guard Sgt. Paul Mannelly (center), with Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 2nd Battalion, 162nd Infantry Regiment, 41st Infantry Brigade Combat Team, and Canadian Army Reserve Soldiers with the Royal Westminster Regiment, 39th Canadian Brigade Group, pull a toboggan along their snowshoe march during the Westie Avalanche Exercise, January 27, at E.C. Manning Park, British Columbia, Canada. Nearly 40 Oregon Army National Guard Soldiers traveled to British Columbia to participate in basic winter survival skills training and work shoulder-to-shoulder with Canadian Army Reserve allies.

long. Tag, “you’re it” ... as their buddy woke them up in the middle of the night for a turn at pulling fireguard, manning the stove and lantern. That “tag” from their buddy came again too soon the next morning as they were woken up early to begin the day’s events.

Over the course of the next two days, the units rotated through winter mobility training, including cross-country ski lessons and snowshoeing. Several Soldiers had experience downhill skiing and snowboarding, but many of them had never been cross-country skiing and were surprised to learn how strenuous it can be.

“Cross-country skiing really slowed us down,” said Vega. “I don’t want to do that again, but I was a real fan of snowshoeing and I will probably buy my own and pick it up as a hobby back home.”



Canadian Army Reserve Soldiers with the Royal Westminster Regiment, 39th Canadian Brigade Group, march with snowshoes alongside Oregon Army National Guard Soldiers with 2-162nd Infantry Battalion during the Westie Avalanche Exercise, January 27, at E.C. Manning Park, B.C. Canada.

Most of the Oregon Soldiers had never been snowshoeing before this experience. Their introduction to it was a 12-kilometer march along a steep, narrow path that winded around frozen Lightning Lake. Canadian and American Soldiers took turns hauling the toboggans up and down the peaks and valleys of the mountain path, shadowed by towering trees drooping with the burden of heavy snow.

“We were simulating an infantry movement, as close as possible, but without weapons,” said Givens. “The Canadians set the pace and we were hustling.”

There was little time to rest their aching muscles as the winter survival lessons continued on through the evening. Eight instructors from the 4th Canadian Rangers Patrol Group (4th CRPG) taught the Soldiers how to make fire in winter conditions, tips for survival food, and how to construct snow shelters. The 4th CRPG assists the Canadian Armed Forces with national security



Canadian Ranger Sgt. Emily Coombs, with Ucluelet Patrol, 4th Canadian Rangers Patrol Group, teaches techniques for making fire to Oregon Army National Guard Soldiers and Canadian Army Reserve Soldiers during Westie Avalanche Exercise, January 26, at E.C. Manning Park in British Columbia.

and public safety missions in sparsely populated, coastal and isolated areas of Western Canada.

“The instructors training us in these techniques are some of the best in the world,” said 1st Lt. John Rohrer, intelligence staff officer for 2-162nd Infantry Battalion, who volunteered to lead the U.S. Soldiers for this mission. “It was some of the highest quality training, learning how to survive in arctic conditions from winter survival experts who work for the Canadian government in the far north.”

Part of the exercise included establishing a tactical bivouac in austere conditions. As the sun went down over the camp on Saturday night, January 26, the Soldiers were instructed to forego their tents and build their own survival shelters where they would be sleeping in the snow for the night. The sharp winter night air stung their lungs as they feverishly dug through the snow to make arctic beds.

“We were already in our tents warming up and finally getting a chance to eat, so we weren’t too excited to get back out in the cold,” said Vega. “But as soon as we got out there, all of us started working together on one task and we knocked out the first snow cave in 45 minutes. We immediately started working on another one.”



Oregon Army National Guard Spc. Dakota Cunningham, with HHC, 2-162nd Infantry Battalion, inspects a snow shelter built by Canadian Rangers to learn techniques for building his own shelter to sleep in, January 26, at E.C. Manning Park in British Columbia, Canada.



Oregon Army National Guard Staff Sgt. Eric Givens (center), with Delta Company, 2nd Battalion, 162nd Infantry Regiment, 41st Infantry Brigade Combat Team, learns to cross-country ski alongside Canadian Army Reserve Cpl. Lawrence Viola (right), with Alpha Company, and other Soldiers of the Royal Westminster Regiment, 39th Canadian Brigade Group, during Westie Avalanche Exercise, January 26, at E.C. Manning Park, British Columbia, Canada.

Vega said making snow shelters alongside the Canadian Soldiers ended up being his favorite part of the entire exercise because it was unique.

“Many of us were doing this for the first time and we only had 40 minutes of training on it,” said Vega. “We asked for the Rangers’ expertise and the Canadian sergeants’ experience and it felt good to know that we were doing it right.”

Clouds of steam hung in the air above their heads with every breath and every word spoken on that frigid, sleepless night. The goal was to build the Soldiers’ confidence, to recognize that they can endure extreme cold weather conditions.

“From a tactical perspective, it’s always good to enhance Soldiers’ skills and situational awareness in an unfamiliar environment,” said Rohrer. “You’re forced to learn a new skillset, such as awareness for how to manage and regulate your body heat. The more times you do that, the better you get at the mechanism of adapting and the learning curve won’t be as steep the next time.”

Givens, with ten years of service and two deployments (Iraq and Afghanistan), said he has a newfound confidence that he can operate in any conditions and any climate after this training.

“I feel like I can confidently challenge different weather and elevations now, and maybe even go backpacking in extreme cold weather at Mt. Hood or Mt. Bachelor,” he said.

The training was also a chance to develop and/or refine standard operating procedures (SOP) for winter operations. Soldiers representing every company in the 2-162nd Infantry Battalion participated in the exercise with the objective to take their new knowledge and experience back to their units and train others.

“Unknowingly, the Canadians taught us to trust our own equipment,” said Givens. “We never had the chance to use our [Extreme Cold Weather System] equipment to its full capability and this was the perfect opportunity to test it. So, I plan to develop a cold weather SOP with everything I’ve learned for the Soldiers in my unit.”

Working and living together in austere cold weather conditions, the U.S. and Canadian Soldiers discovered they

have more commonalities than differences with their Pacific Northwest neighbors. Many of them made new friends that they plan to stay in touch with.

“The two militaries are pretty similar, at the end of the day we are just guys, doing the same job,” said Canadian Army Reserve Cpl. Riley Turner, with Alpha Company, R WESTMR R. “Being around staff sergeants and seeing different leadership styles was a good learning experience. We worked well together and I made new friends [pointing towards Vega].”

Vega agreed saying, “We are the same, there’s really no difference. Two armies can come together. We may be different armies wearing different flags, but we all came together at end of the night joking about the same things and we overcame some stereotypes. So, I feel more Canadian and hopefully Corporal Turner feels a little more American.”

The Oregon Soldiers said they want to continue this relationship with their Canadian partners and are looking forward to more opportunities to train with them again in the future. A sentiment the leadership in both the 2-162 and R WESTMR R also share.

“This unique opportunity and relationship will help posture our units for future engagements with our different platoons and companies across the formation,” said Akers. “We are committed to building readiness and an enduring, mutually beneficial partnership with the R WESTMR R and the 39th CBG.”

“It’s a great opportunity for members of the R WESTMR R to work with a partner nation and just be better infantry Soldiers and better prepared for future deployments,” said Chan. “The more interoperability training that we can do always benefits our troops. It helps them become familiar beforehand, so the first time we’re working together is not when we’re deployed overseas.”

This was the second time that the 2-162 Infantry Battalion and R WESTMR R has partnered-up for a bi-lateral training engagement. In April 2018, the two units jointly planned and executed a multi-day infantry exercise known as “Cougar Rage” at Joint Base Lewis-McChord, Washington.

“These training opportunities have turned out to be very beneficial lessons for both organizations, as well as the troops participating. You can’t put a price on its value,” said Canadian Army Reserve Maj. Pavel Dudek, plans officer for the 39th CBG. “We want to continue this relationship with our Oregon National Guard partners and expand on it. We hope it will be enduring in nature.”

OREGON AIR NATIONAL GUARD

Oregon Airmen provide snapshot of operations to Air National Guard's top leaders

*Story and photos by
Master Sgt. John Hughel,
142nd Fighter Wing Public Affairs*

PORTLAND, Oregon - As the stubborn winter weather kept its chilly grip on the Pacific Northwest, Airmen of the 142nd Fighter Wing provided a warm welcome to the top leaders of the Air National Guard during the Regularly Scheduled Drill (RSD) weekend, March 2-3, 2019.

Acting as the official host, Oregon Air National Guard Col. Adam Sitler, 142nd Fighter Wing Commander, introduced Lt. Gen. L. Scott Rice, the Director of the Air National Guard along with Air National Guard's Command Chief Master Sgt. Ronald Anderson, to the unit's Airmen during a tour of the Wing.

During the tour of the base, Sitler emphasized to the top Air National Guard leadership team the critical mission tasking and operations the unit provides to the U.S. Air Force in defense of homeland security for the Pacific Northwest region of the nation.



Lt. Gen. L. Scott Rice, Dir. of the Air National Guard, talks with Capt. Amy Aranda (center) and Capt. Gabbe Kearney (right) during his tour of the 142nd Fighter Wing.

"This is a great honor for the 142nd Fighter Wing to host Lt. Gen. Rice, Chief Anderson, and many of the key staff members from the Air National Guard Readiness Center," he said. "Our senior leaders have been seeking feedback from the field, which is why they schedule visits to Wings like ours."

Formulating, developing and coordinating the policies of the Air

National Guard, Lt. Gen. Rice is responsible for implementing the plans and programs affecting more than 105,000 Guard members and civilians.

The reach of his accountabilities extends over all 50 States, and additionally includes the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, Guam and the Virgin Islands. This includes more than 90 wings and 175 geographically separated units across 213 locations.

During the daylong tour of the Air Base, Rice was able to talk directly with Airmen and senior leaders to discuss operational requirements and gain insight into specific mission duties. This included a briefing of the Aerospace Control Alert facilities, aircraft maintenance, followed by visits to Civil Engineering and Security Forces Squadrons.

When visiting the 125th Special Tactics Squadron, Rice and Anderson reviewed and asked questions in regard to ongoing details involving the career fields with Guardian Angel and Special Tactics Squadron (STS) units. Rice noted the importance of the dual mission that the STS has, especially acknowledging the "DOM-OPS (domestic operations) responses."

"I want to recognize how well your team has 'connected the dots' when it comes to responding to these homeland emergencies and the logistical challenges,"

he said, describing how hurricane response has enabled the unit to reach out to other Air Force units to accomplish this critical mission.

These types of readiness issues were also brought to light during a town hall meeting with Airmen. While answering questions, Rice discussed how streamlining administrative process builds the flexibility that "21st Century Airmen need to get out



Air National Guard Lt. Gen. L. Scott Rice, Director of the Air National Guard, answer questions from Airmen of the 142nd Fighter Wing during a town hall, March 2, 2019.

the door and to do [your] job."

"It is important that having equipment and resources available to do the mission, but changes to contingencies from the Air Force will foster support in theater with members deploying in teams of three or more in the future," he said.

In echoing Rice's concerns during the town hall meeting, Chief Anderson said that, "to be here today to talk about the work the EOD (Explosive Ordnance Disposal) or STS or any of the other missions you all have and the diversity of operations here is pretty incredible."

As the Command Chief Master Sergeant for the Air National Guard, Anderson plays a pivotal role as advisor to the Director of the Air National Guard. This includes matters that affect the health and welfare of the force, professional development, and overall morale.

"That's really what we need General Rice to do; is to spend his time and energy to focus on what our Air National Guard needs to continue to grow," Anderson elaborated. "We're thinking all aspects

for future missions; so that each of you has what you need in today's fight and for tomorrow's fight too."

Following the town hall meeting, Sitler said, and was encouraged by the range of questions and feedback that he felt was beneficial to all the service members in attendance.

"Our Airmen were able to express their concerns about delayed receipt of orders for federal mobilizations, healthcare benefits relating to mobilization status, resourcing for skills training, and a number of other items," he said.

After the base tour and town hall, Lt. Gen. Rice and his staff had front row seats to a unique deployment ceremony held on base as 112 Airmen from a wide variety of skill sets and professions from the 142nd were formally mobilized.

The Airmen are preparing to deploy in stages over the coming weeks with United States Africa Command (AFRICOM) and United States Central Command (CENTCOM) and other international missions.

"You're right there, on the tip of that spear as many of you prepare to deploy and head out the door," Rice said, during his concluding remarks at the town hall. "We ask a lot of our Guard members; we ask you to take care of yourself, your families and jobs so that you can focus on your Air National Guard mission and continue to be part of something bigger than yourself."



Chief Master Sgt. Ronald Anderson (center), Chief Master Sgt. of the Air National Guard, talks with Explosive Ordnance Disposal technicians assigned to the 142nd FW Civil Engineer Squadron during a tour of the Portland Air National Guard Base, Mar. 2, 2019.

Sentry Aloha provides unique backdrop for combined combat training

*Story and photo by
Senior Airman John Linzmeier,
154th Wing Public Affairs*

JOINT BASE PEARL HARBOR-HICKAM, Hawaii (AFNS) — More than 800 Airmen, Sailors and Defense Department civilians from nine states completed exercise Sentry Aloha, a large-scale fighter exercise, Dec. 19, at Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam.

The Hawaii Air National Guard exercise is held several times a year to provide aircraft with dissimilar combat training among participating flying and support units. The fighter aircraft consisted of the 199th and 19th Fighter Squadrons' JB Pearl Harbor-Hickam-based F-22 Raptors, Oregon Air National Guard F-15 Eagles and Navy F-18 Hornets from China Lake, California.

The back-to-back combat training included in-air refueling by KC-135 Stratotankers from Iowa and Wisconsin Air National Guard air refueling units, a component that enables U.S. and partnered aircraft to operate virtually anywhere on the planet. Lt. Col. Matthew Ohman, Sentry Aloha exercise director, said the refueling capabilities boosted the fast-paced training.

"Exercises like this gives us a chance to just be part of the bigger picture and it builds confidence," said Chief Master Sgt. Donald Strickland, 128th Air Refueling Wing chief boom operator, "especially for our younger pilots and boom operators. It gives them exposure to other types of receiving aircraft



An F-15 Eagle assigned to the 142nd Fighter Wing waits to take off on an afternoon sortie during Sentry Aloha-19.

and to see how quickly it all happens, opposed to the routines we're used to at our home station. This helps us know what to expect when it's actually time to deploy."

The integration of Hawaii's fifth-generation Raptors and visiting fourth-generation fighters enabled aviators to enhance their aerial tactics and prepare for a multitude of war-fighting scenarios. The Department of Defense relies on joint efforts, such as exercise Sentry Aloha, to maintain air dominance and preserve the peace and stability throughout the Pacific region.

"Sentry Aloha is not only unique in its location in beautiful Hawaii, but it also provides some of the best joint training the Air Force has to offer," said Ohman. "The focus of Sentry Aloha is to develop unit-specific, tailored scenarios that ensure the majority of tactical learning takes place in the airspace,

not in the trenches of mission planning. This is unique from Flag exercises, which have inflexible scenarios given to units when they attend."

While JBPH-H maintains fifth-generation fighters, it still upholds a permanent supply of aircraft-ground equipment to cater for visiting fourth-generation aircraft. Senior Master Sgt. Noel Demello, Sentry Aloha maintenance planner, said the readily-available equipment significantly lowers expenses

because it reduces the need to airlift personnel and large-volumes of supplies used to generate aircraft.

Unlike past iterations of the exercise, more than 20 personnel from the 154th Mission Support Group were activated to operate the HIANG's dining facility and provide around-the-clock meals, including 'midnight chow,' for hundreds of Airmen. Tech. Sgt. Priscilla Kim, 154th MSG dining facility manager, said this was the first time her Airmen have been asked to take on a tasking this large and it provided them much-needed experience for upcoming deployments, slated for next year. The freshly-cooked meals also saved time for exercise participants and cut down costs of overall training.

Due to the unpredictable nature of aircraft operations, mission planners always need to be prepared to for the possibility of an

aircraft mishap. Sentry Aloha flights were suspended for one day on Dec. 12, in response to a civilian aircraft crash into the waters by Honolulu airport. The pilot, an exercise contractor, was able to successfully eject before impact and received care within minutes of landing.

"I was extremely proud to see how well we worked together after [the aircraft] went down shortly after takeoff last week," said Ohman. "It was awesome to find out civilians from the community pitched in almost immediately to lend a helping hand in his recovery until the Coast Guard arrived. These extraordinary efforts by normal citizens is truly what makes me proud to be an American."

The 199th Fighter Squadron is part of the 154th Wing, the largest wing in the Air National Guard. The Hawaii Air National Guard is comprised of nearly 2,500 Airmen whose federal mission is to be trained and available for active duty Air Force operational missions.

"Continual participation in events like this make us a stronger force," said Col. Sean Sullivan, Oregon Air National Guard's 142nd Operations Group commander. "These exercises are essential, not only for the pilots, but for the training and expertise of the maintainers, the aircrew flight equipment (Airmen), and our airfield managers. It's a lot more than the pilot flying the airplane to make that happen, and these exercises are a crucial part of us continuing to get better, as a team and as an Air Force."

OREGON AIR NATIONAL GUARD

Commander of Air Combat Command pays a visit to the 173rd Fighter Wing

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

KLAMATH FALLS, Oregon – The commander of Air Combat Command, made his first visit to the 173rd Fighter Wing, Feb. 4-6, 2019, to see operations at the sole provider of F-15C air superiority pilots in the U.S. Air Force.

General Mike Holmes is responsible for all the combat units in the Air Force and as such is very significant stakeholder in the wing’s mission, which makes it natural for him to come and see operations here despite the fact that this training mission falls under the auspices of Air Education and Training Command.



U.S. Air Force Gen. Mike Holmes, the commander of Air Combat Command, looks on as Master Sgt. Joe McKenzie Jr., a 173rd Maintenance Group quality assurance technician, shows him the rear landing gear on an F-15 Eagle, at Klamath Falls, Ore., Feb. 5, 2019.

Over three days he visited with Airmen and got up close and personal with the F-15 aircraft where 173rd Fighter Wing Airmen took him from the top wing surface to beneath the landing gear bay.

Holmes is a command pilot with more than 4,000 hours in F-15 variants A, B, C, D, and E—that’s every F-15 in the U.S. arsenal.

“I flew the F-15C ... before converting to the Strike Eagle, but all of that was before 9/11,” he said.

With that in mind Kingsley maintainers gave him a first-hand view of the modern configuration of components and wiring in the F-15C. Considering his level of experience combined with his degree in electrical engineering it presumably makes it easier to grasp the myriad boxes with bundles of wires spider-webbed across them.

It is rare for the ACC commander to visit this AETC wing, but Holmes explained to a group of local civic leaders that the entire inventory of U.S. Air Force combat aircraft fall under his purview including 173rd Fighter Wing F-15s. In a manner of speaking he’s here to look at his airplanes. It also provided a chance to meet with one unit of the 173rd Fighter Wing who many are surprised to find out does fall under his command—the 270th Air Traffic Control Squadron.



U.S. Air Force Gen. Mike Holmes, the commander of Air Combat Command, stands under the distinctly green lights of a 270th ATCS mobile air traffic control tower while Master Sgt. Michael Moore details how it’s used when deployed, Feb. 5, 2019, at Klamath Falls, Ore.

The 270th ATCS has a robust deployed mission supporting combatant commanders by providing air traffic control services in the area of operations, and Holmes made it a point to stop by and see some of their members, several of whom had just returned from a six-month deployment to Al Asad Air Base, Iraq.

After meeting with Airmen, senior non-commissioned officers, commanders and local civic leaders it was time to take a ride of his own and Col. Geoff Jensen, the operations group commander, took him

aloft in the back seat where he saw the ample range space Kingsley Field utilizes as well as its clear flying weather.

“As an experienced pilot Gen. Holmes appreciated the limited impact of civilian traffic in the local area and valued the close proximity of great airspace to the airfield,” said Jensen after the flying the general to the range space. His trip ended later that day marking the end of yet another high-profile visit to Kingsley Field, closely following the Secretary of the Air Force, Heather Wilson.

173rd develops local leadership course

Story and photo by
Senior Master Sgt. Jennifer Shirar,
173rd Fighter Wing Public Affairs

KLAMATH FALLS, Oregon - The 173rd Fighter Wing, Oregon Air National Guard, rolled out a locally developed Squadron Commander’s Course, here in January. Twelve current squadron commanders and junior officers participated in this three day course, designed to equip them with lessons learned and command tools as they work in leadership roles.

The Squadron Commander Course is designed to alleviate some of the learning curve associated with stepping into a command role.



Lt. Col. William Wilkenson (left), 173rd LRS commander, and Maj. Eric McDaniel, 173rd FW Installation Deployment Officer, discuss a briefing they just heard at Klamath Falls, Ore., Jan. 24.

“After the first year of taking command of the wing there were so many things I said ‘this would have really helped to know when I started,’ and so I challenged a [group of people] and the result is this course,” said Col. Jeff Smith, the 173rd Fighter Wing commander.

Focusing the course at the squadron leadership level aligns it with the initiative tasked by the Chief of Staff of the Air Force, Gen. David Goldfein, to revitalize squadrons.

“The squadron is the beating heart of the United States Air Force; our most essential team,” Goldfein said in a letter to Airmen. “Our vision demands that ‘squadrons be highly capable, expeditionary teams who can successfully defend our nation’s interests in both today’s and tomorrow’s

complex operating environments.” Overall feedback from the course attendees has been positive.

“The Squadron Commander Course was an amazing opportunity for current and future 173rd Fighter Wing leaders to gather and facilitate discussions that will strengthen Kingsley’s future,” said Lt. Col. Jason Nalepa, 114th Fighter Squadron commander. “The course not only provided the next generation of commanders the required tools, but facilitated an open environment for the sharing of experience.”

The first day of the course included discussions on performance reports, documentation, and resource management led by local wing subject matter experts.

“It definitely made me realize how much responsibility commanders have and their impacts on Airmen in an organization,” said Major Eric McDaniel, 173rd FW Installation Deployment Officer. “It was great to learn all the different resources and contacts across the wing that are available for advice.”

The second day of the course covered the unit manning document, force management, details of leading a civilian work force, and question and answer session with the wing Chief Master Sgts.

“My favorite portion of the course was Senior Master Sgt. (Meghan) McMackin and Master Sgt. (Amy) Whaling’s UMD/UPMR discussion, because proper management of these documents is the easiest, most effective way to take care of our Airmen,” said Major Joshua Downs, 173rd Maintenance Squadron commander.

The final day of the course included discussions on ethics, discipline, and support resources such as legal, public affairs, and the chaplain’s office. The class capstone was a leadership challenge exercise where the students were able to take the information they had learned over the course of the three days and apply it to hypothetical situations.

“Each a lesson was important and critical in its own way,” said Nalepa. “A commander requires a full tool kit to tackle a myriad of challenges throughout their career.”

‘SLED Talks’ inspires communication with Airmen

Story and photo by
Senior Master Sgt. Jennifer Shirar,
173rd Fighter Wing Public Affairs

KLAMATH FALLS, Oregon -- The 173rd Fighter Wing Commander, Col. Jeff “Sled” Smith, has started a new program to communicate with Airmen across the base. Labeled “SLED Talks”, a play on the name of the highly popular TED talks, these are small group discussions held with 12 or less individuals on a routine basis.

“I hope to inform our Airmen about what I’m hearing with respect to the future of the F-15, possible future mission options, and timelines,” he said. “I also hope to inspire them to reflect on the amazing team they are part of.”

The discussions take place every week Smith is here, and he hopes to reach as many Airmen as possible, scheduling multiple sessions a week.

Airmen that are interested in attending one of the discussions, should volunteer through their supervisors to attend. Smith says the goal is to have members from a variety of shops in each meeting. “This serves two purposes—it allows the mission to continue without too much disruption, and it brings diversity of thought, perspective, and experience into the room,” he adds.

The inspiration for this program springs from the need of a wing commander to communicate with his Airmen. Smith notes that the traditional, large-audience commander’s calls were not popular and people didn’t feel like they could ask questions in that large group forum. However, without the commander’s calls Airmen “do not feel like they are connected with command and are not as well informed on current events, future mission options, or command goals and vision,” he says. “I had to find a happy medium to reach people.”

That happy medium came from a challenge by the commander of the Air Education and Training Command, Lt. Gen. Steve Kwast. In a commander’s intent video, Kwast encouraged leadership at all levels to sit down with their Airmen in small group settings of 12 or less and have discussions.

“This is where real learning happens, this where people can voice their opinion,” he said.

“As I have quickly learned, the small group forum is awesome—people have been interactive and ask a lot of questions,” says Smith.

Participants seem to agree.



173rd Fighter Wing Commander Col. Jeff Smith address a small group conversation at Kingsley Field in Klamath Falls, Oregon, Feb. 21, 2019.

“I feel the small group format is very effective,” said Master Sgt. Joseph Mckenzie, a recent participant in the SLED Talks forum. “We tend to be more open to engage in communication and cultivate around ideas and information when facilitated around informal interpersonal interaction; it means a lot to know that the highest leader within our local chain of command has taken the time out of his day to pass along unfiltered information in a small group setting.”

Discussions vary based on the audience and current events. However, typical topics include current base issues, what the future looks like, and professional development. “This is a chance for me to tell you where we are and where we are going,” says Smith.

“The most important thing I took away from the SLED Talks was a mutual sense of ‘knowing,’” said Mckenzie. “Being part of table top conversation with the base commander, and getting information from the source is a reassurance that regardless if we know, don’t know or know a little bit, at least Kingsley Field as a whole is on the same page. As I advance in my career and hopefully move up through the ranks I will for sure integrate this type of communication into my leadership style.”

FEATURES

Oregon Airmen train with civil counterparts at PATRIOT South exercise

Continued from Front Page

Schroeder added that receiving this training now, is absolutely critical for his Airmen to be prepared in the event they are called to respond to a real-world disaster.

When civil first responder resources are stretched too thin, a state’s governor has the ability to activate the National Guard to provide assistance.

“Being a part of the National Guard, we take an oath to our state,” said Schroeder, explaining that, when activated for domestic response, his unit goes in to assist setting up operations to provide “safety and security for the people affected in the area.”

Members of Oregon police and fire agencies joined the Oregon Airmen in Georgia, continuing a developing partnership.

“Any time we see a major natural disaster, we see the Guard there helping us,” said Lt. Damon Simmons, Portland Fire & Rescue. Simmons believes these types of exercises are important for various agencies and departments, so their first introduction isn’t in the middle of a catastrophe.

“We’re going to need them to have worked with us before, so they understand our procedures, they understand exactly how we operate,” said Simmons. “So, when the public needs us, when we’re called to serve, we’re one team working together to get people what they need, in their time of need.”

Traditionally, Security Forces units haven’t had medical



Security forces Airmen from Georgia, Oregon, and West Virginia Air National Guard practice crowd management training at the Guardian Center of Georgia during the PATRIOT South exercise, Mar. 4, 2019. PATRIOT is a domestic operations disaster-response training exercise conducted by National Guard units working with federal, state and local emergency management agencies and first responders.

responsibility to Disaster Medical Assistance Teams (DMAT) providing Urban Search and Rescue (USAR) capabilities.

USAR is one of the operations that Security Forces can assist with during disaster response, providing security for emergency responders, so teaming up seemed logical.

“We need each other to be able to go and do our door-to-door mission during a natural disaster that displaces a lot of people, or causes an evacuation,” said Reed.

In addition to developing new working relationships with fellow Airmen, Reed also commented on the great opportunity he and his medics had in training with their civil counterpart from Portland Fire & Rescue.

“With [Simmons] expertise as a field EMT, he’s been helping us round out our

medical skills in different types of disaster situations,” Reed said.

Emulating Simmons’ thoughts, Reed expressed the importance of knowing and working with fellow emergency responders ahead of an actual disaster, “not knowing who

all the people who have a seat at the table are, and not training with them, would definitely be a detriment to the [response effort].”

“We’re here to help, care, aid, and comfort those affected,” said Schroeder, commenting on what the ultimate purpose of the PATRIOT exercise for his Security Forces was, to assist civilian populations in times of need.



Pvt. Cable Morgan, a combat medic, along with other Soldiers with the Fort Stewart Winn Army Community Hospital MEDDAC, practice loading and unloading litter patients on and off a UH-72 Lakota medevac helicopter during the PATRIOT South 19 exercise, March 2, 2019.

“The Airmen have done great, they’ve bonded together well with [new agencies]...they’re motivated and really want to do this,” added Schroeder.

“This is going to pay off in the long run if there is a natural disaster in the future.”

The National Guard is unique in the armed forces with its dual mission of supporting communities stricken by natural disasters, as well as defending our country in overseas operations.

However, there is one ideal that holds true for all members of the armed forces as well as civilian emergency responders.

“We’re all here to serve, and that’s the bottom line,” said Simmons.



A UH-72 Lakota medevac helicopter with Delta Company, 1-224 AVB, District of Columbia National Guard, departs with simulated patients during civil disturbance response training at the Guardian Center of Georgia during the PATRIOT South 19 exercise, March 5, 2019.

personnel embedded within their teams during DOMOPS. Tech. Sgt. Breland Reed, a medical technician with the 142nd FW CBRNE Enhanced Response Force Package (CERFP), would like to see that change.

“CERFP is shifting. We’re transitioning from a CBRNE response to an all-hazards response unit,” said Reed, explaining that the shift would increase their



Soldiers with the Fort Stewart Winn Army Community Hospital MEDDAC practice securing a simulated patient onto a litter for loading into a UH-72 Lakota medevac helicopter during the PATRIOT South 19 exercise, March 2, 2019.



Officer Anthony Zanetti with the Portland Police Bureau, Portland, Ore., instructs Air National Guard security forces members from Georgia, Oregon, and West Virginia on crowd management techniques at the Guardian Center of Georgia during the PATRIOT South exercise, March 4, 2019.

FEATURES

National Guardsmen confront chemical attacks during Bay Area exercise

Continued from Front Page

“With BAYEX, we wanted to bring as many teams together as possible. So we have Civil Support Teams from Idaho, Nevada, Oregon, and Southern California joining our team here in Northern California,” he said.

This included working side by side with local, state and federal agencies to include; the FBI, U.S. Coast Guard, San Francisco Office of Emergency Management, the California State Office of Emergency Management and several other organizations.

Civil Support Teams are instrumental in providing significant personnel and equipment to assist local and state agencies in the event they become overwhelmed by major disasters or a large-scale terrorist attack. Specifically, CST units have the technical capabilities to identify chemical, biological, radiological, nuclear, and explosive (CBRNE) materials.

The biggest challenge, said Serena, was coordinating not only the multiple agencies participating, but also synchronizing five different incident sites while implementing the training requirements spread-out during the week.

from neighboring states to play an active role at multiple, actively used sites around the San Francisco Bay Area.

Building on a sense of teamwork, Oregon National Guard Maj. Richard Hosmer, 102nd CST deputy commander, said that working in California multiplies the scope and mission capabilities.

“In the event of a large scale disaster, all the teams coming together could sustain operations for over a week,” he said. “When we combine all the other local agency partners, we’re able conduct relief and process operations until more teams can come behind us.”

National Guard CST’s consist of nearly two dozen, full-time Soldiers and Airmen and are designed to sustain operations in a 72-hour time frame. Maintaining a level of readiness allows these members to respond rapidly in the required timelines. By combining teams from out of state for BAYEX19, this ability to maintain a weeklong mission in various locations was put to the test.

“This is also a requirement by the National Guard Bureau that we train with other CST’s for real-world contingency actions,” Hosmer said.

Hosmer added that coming down to train in California with other CST’s accomplished multiple training requirements in one exercise.

For the Oregon Guard members, one of the test scenarios was integrating into a combined team to search around the Fort Baker recreational area. When the group found an unknown chemical substance in a shuttered

WWII storage bunker, they thoroughly moved from room-to-room to analyze the simulated contamination to ascertain the substances.

Spending nearly an hour in their chemical suits, Oregon National Guard Sergeants Jeffery Mayes and Kayla Carey conducted testing and verification of several unknown materials. In these types of situations, communication and common training techniques are critical to ensure that proper identification of any substances is documented for familiarization.

Earlier in the week, training sites for BAYEX19 were established at a Bay Area Rapid Transit (BART) station, the Oakland–Alameda County Coliseum, and the legendary Alcatraz Prison. Oregon team members also took the lead during an exercise around the historic artillery bunkers at Fort Baker, isolating materials scattered along nearby hiking areas with all-encompassing views of The Golden Gate Bridge.

The addition of working with combined teams allows all members to enhance skill sets by sharing previous experiences. Newer service members can rapidly reduce their learning curve by teaming up with other CST Soldiers who have expanded proficiencies or have other experience working in different geographic areas.

The training requirements to become a CST member are extensive, said First Sgt. Don Giesbrecht, 101st CST, Idaho National Guard. “Being on a CST team (for new members) in just the first year takes six to eight months to become proficient.”

For other members, such as science officers, the training can take more than a year and a half to complete. To bring the full capacities of what CST members can accomplish takes training exercises like BAYEX19.



The Golden Gate Bridge stands in the distance from during the Bay Area exercise at Fort Baker, San Francisco, California, Jan. 30, 2019. National Guard CST teams worked with local first responders in a series simulated chemical incidents around the San Francisco Bay area during a week-long exercise.



Oregon Army National Guard Lt. Col. Randall Lynch, 102nd CST commander (right) reviews a training plan with the Fire Chief of Richmond, Calif. during BAYEX19, Jan. 31, 2019.



Oregon 102nd CST members search a training area for unknown chemical agents at Fort Baker recreational area, Calif., Jan. 30, 2019.

Looking out over the City of San Francisco from the Golden Gate National Recreation Area at Fort Baker in Sausalito, the Civil Support Teams had the flexibility to spread out over a large area, a necessity when working with radiological sources.

“Fort Baker provides an interesting training location with great scenery,” Serena said. “In the past, we have had wonderful success working with the National Parks Service.”

Training with other CST units is a critical element to enhance mission capabilities. In the event of a terrorist attack on a large target or multiple areas, other CST members from other states would be needed to immediately assist. The design of the BAYEX19 training allowed teams

“We have a whole spectrum of technology that we can bring to bear; we can identify chemical, biological agents, along with some radiation, and in select instances explosive ordinance,” Giesbrecht said. “Most teams are certified in rope rescue and confined space operations when you total it up, we’re quite a package!”

The exercise concluded with nearly 50 simulated casualties being contaminated on a Ferryboat at the Richmond, California pier. Local firefighters working with the CST members set up two decontamination processing stations to treat both victims and first responders. As they moved through the wash and ambulatory assessment stations, resources and personnel were simultaneous put to the test.

“The critical objective is interagency cooperation,” Serena noted, as he described the main objective of the Bay Area exercise. “Just getting that time with other teams, how we all operate differently and building a familiarization with each other is key.”

As important as the training conditions and sites are for readiness, these new relationships will help provide the foundation for working together in possible real-world situations.

“This is the most important part of this exercise,” Serena said. “We know that if there is something really big, we will be requesting out of state assets to come in and support us.”



Oregon Army National Guard Sgt. Kayla Carey (right) 102nd Civil Support Team conducts testing for unknown agents during training at San Francisco, California, Jan. 30, 2019.



National Civil Support Teams bring simulated casualties through an initial decontaminated station in Richmond, California, Jan. 31, 2019.



Members of the Richmond, California Fire Department and other first responders escort and assist simulated casualties through a fire hose sprayed chemical decontamination workstation during the Bay Area training exercise, at Richmond, California, Jan. 31, 2019.

FEATURES

Testing the limits: Oregon Soldiers push themselves towards medical careers

Story by John Hughel,
Oregon Military Department Public Affairs

SALEM, Oregon - “Citius, Altius, Fortius,” is the legendary tripartite motto for the modern Olympic games. Translated from Latin, it means, “Faster, Higher, Stronger,” encompassing the gains in human accomplishment and one’s endless chase for constant improvement. Although the refrain is often linked with the vigor of athletic excellence, it can justly be applied to a trio of Oregon Army National Guard Soldiers (ORNG) and their pursuits within the field of medicine.

As accomplished Soldiers with years of successful military service, ORNG Captains Tommy Vu and John Avery Harrell, and Sergeant Zach Bolte are striving for higher challenges, pushing the limits of time and training in their quest towards advanced medical schooling. The three Citizen-Soldiers have taken their experience from deployments, past training exercises, and real world skills, and are committing themselves to becoming Medical Doctors (MD) and Physician Assistants (PA).

For outsiders, it might be easy to see their well-established accomplishments and quickly overlook a level of proven success. Yet for each of these Soldiers, from Capt. Harrell’s adeptness as a Black Hawk pilot, or Capt. Vu’s proficiency in Health Service administration, and Sgt. Bolte’s feats as a combat medic; their journey to advanced medical training has already been tested under fire during overseas deployments.

In August 2018, Harrell and Bolte started medical school at the Oregon Health Sciences University (OHSU) in Portland, Oregon. For Capt. Vu, having completed a biology degree in 2009, he was able to take advantage of a unique Army program, propelling him back to school to complete a Master’s in Physician Assistant studies.

Operational Distinction

During their mobilization with G Company, 1st Battalion, 189th Aviation, in support of Operation Inherent Resolve, both Harrell and Bolte served together during the 11-month deployment. The unit was split into three locations in the area of operations as Harrell first arrived in Kuwait and Bolte in Iraq. They both ended up in the third forward deployed location (Syria) later in the cycle before returning to Oregon in December 2017.



Photo courtesy Sgt. Max Bolte

Oregon Army National Guard Sgt. Zack Bolte, a medic with C Company, 7th Battalion, 158th Aviation, pauses for a photo during his 2013 deployment in Kosovo.

“Even our bunks were set up beside each other,” Harrell laughed, as he recalled the unique series of coincidences he and Bolte had in common. Beyond serving together in Syria and with their unit back home in Salem, the two had traversed through the same training sites, and ironically as far back to their college days at the University of Oregon, in Eugene.

“We didn’t know each other at the time, but we discovered later that we were in the same Human Physiology program in college,” Harrell said, describing the Simultaneous Guard Program and his eventual commission in 2011. “I think we might have been a year apart, but I’m sure

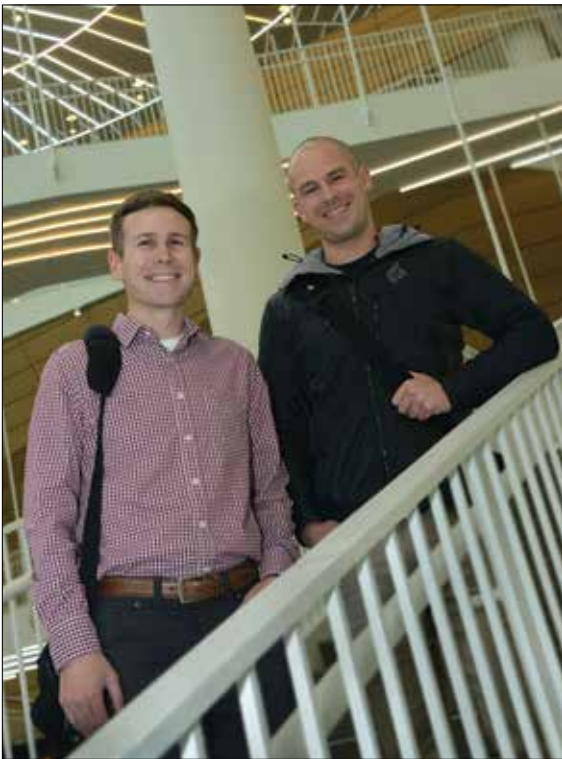


Photo by John Hughel, Oregon Military Department Public Affairs

Oregon National Guard Soldiers and Oregon Health Sciences University medical students Capt. John Avery Harrell (left) and Sgt. Max Bolte (right) pause for a photo after their afternoon classes at the OHSU Life Sciences Building, Portland, Ore., March 5, 2019.

we had classes together and didn’t know it.”

After receiving his commission, he was off to U.S. Army Aviation Center at Fort Rucker, Alabama, for nearly 18 months of flight school instruction, specially focusing on flying the Black Hawk helicopter for the medevac unit.

For Harrell and Bolte, the time together during their 2017 deployment had them extremely focused on the mission. After Harrell’s team had moved from Iraq into Syria, he led the build up of a medevac site in eastern Syria. Moving his two platoons to new sites as operations continued to move ISIS fighters further south and east in Syria, his team moved to more sites than any other medevac in theater. By the end of the deployment, Harrell had flown more than 100 combat hours, completing 10 medevac missions as the pilot in command.

It was during their down time when the two Soldiers really began to connect on the next phase in life.

“I lean on him, he knew the process, he proofread my personal statements and applications, we practiced interview questions...we really bonded,” said Harrell.

While Harrell was flying the missions, Bolte was putting his skills to work, performing multiple life-saving medevac missions. A seasoned noncommissioned officer (NCO), he led training and medical classes for his fellow medics, along with allied partners, ensuring they maintained their skills at the highest levels.

The drive to become a medical first responder began at a young age for Bolte, as well as a keen interest in the performance of the human body. He started his education at the University of Oregon but transferred back to Oregon State University, in his hometown of Corvallis, and enrolled in the paramedic program.

“In high school, I set my sights on becoming a paramedic,” Bolte said, looking back at his under graduate days. “I wanted to know more about the human body and going to school was fun...a lot more fun than working.”

Eventually, he returned to Eugene and graduated from the University of Oregon in 2010. It was only after college that he enlisted in the Oregon Army National Guard in 2011 as a ‘68W’ combat medic specialist.

After finishing his Army medic school, like Harrell, he spent time at Fort Rucker, Alabama, taking on additional training in the flight medic course. This training was instrumental in his first overseas mobilization to Kosovo in 2013 when

the medevac C Company, 7th Battalion, 158th Aviation. While deployed, his platoon leader selected him to lead training for multiple NATO forces teams, adapted his training style to assimilate coalition partners from the Ukraine to Germany on best practice techniques.

Two years later in 2015, during the Operation Maple Resolve training exercise at Camp Wainwright, Alberta, Canada, Bolte would put some of these same teaching techniques to use as he coordinated cross training with Canadian medics on U.S. medevac doctrine and medical protocols. He preformed multiple training missions and one real-world medevac mission from Camp Wainwright to the Edmonton hospital.

“He’s a great teacher and was instrumental during the Maple Resolve exercise, guiding the Canadian’s on how a designed medevac flight crew is set up and works as a single entity,” said Capt. Daniel Russell, commander of G Company, 1-189 Aviation.

Capt. Russell has known Bolte and Harrell before he became the company commander and has watched them develop as forerunners for other challenges. Knowing that they both applied to medical school was not out of the realm of possibility for either Soldier.

“Their personalities in many ways are quite different,” Russell elaborated. “I’ve known Avery (Capt. Harrell) since we first joined the unit. He’s humble and soft-spoken, but I watched him become more assertive and grow as a leader, especially since the recent deployment because he was put in change of multiple platoons in multiple locations.”

As careful, detailed and diligent as Harrell’s personality is, Russell described a few of their distinctions.

“He’s (Bolte) outgoing and a natural teacher, and was quick to make friends with his other medical counterparts during the (Maple Resolve) training,” Russell laughed, recalling his contagious disposition. “He got the nickname ‘Hero’ because he ended up getting most of the flying missions; both training and real-world, mostly by chance during the exercise in Canada.”

Pathways to new challenges

The unique circumstances that brought Harrell and Bolte to study at OHSU, will allow them to stay in uniform, as they transfer to Medical Command in Salem, retaining their affiliation with the Oregon National Guard. For Capt. Vu, the pathway to elevating his military medical career was through the Interservice Physicians Assistance Program (IPAP).

Before becoming a member of the Oregon National Guard, Vu first served with the Nebraska Army National Guard, deploying to Kuwait in 2010 and Iraq in 2011 as a Medical Service administrator. Though he thrived in the responsibilities, he quickly realized he wanted a more active role with direct patient care.

“The desire to treat and directly assist patient recovery made me realize that I wanted a personal connection,” he said.

A graduate of the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, Vu discover the Army’s IPAP and applied after returning from his Iraq deployment. Phase I in the program was at Fort Sam Houston, Texas, consisting of basic medical science courses and develops a student’s knowledge of critical medical concepts. For his Phase II, he spent more than a year at Fort Polk, Louisiana, supporting the base medical rotations requirements to graduate with a Master’s in Physician Assistant (PA) studies in 2014.

“I was really lucky, the Army National

Guard only has about 10 seats each year for this program,” said Vu. “It was over two and a half years of school, all paid for by the military, all the while, I was on active duty and finished with ‘Zero’ education debt.”

Now as a PA with the Oregon Army National Guard’s 1249th Engineer Battalion, Vu has 12 medics under his guidance and is quick to profess the benefits of the IPAP.

“I want to get my troops the best resources and training available; whether it’s to become a PA or enrolling in other medical schools, it is all about developing our Soldiers,” said Vu.



Photo courtesy Capt. Tommy Vu

Army National Guard Capt. Tommy Vu, displays his diplomas upon completing his Physician Assistance degrees in 2014 from the Interservice Physicians Assistance Program.

The ability to not only keep Army Guardsmen in uniform but to advance their skills is a win-win for the ORNG.

“We (Harrell) both have the same approach toward being in the Guard,” said Bolte. “It would be easy for us to get out of the Guard and just go to medical school and come back in later, but we like being part of this organization.”

For Harrell, he sees his grandfathers as having foreshadowed his own career. Both of his grandfathers served in WWII, one was a bomber pilot and the other was a submariner who eventually became a physician.

“In essence, that became my philosophy as an aviator; to get medical care as quickly as possible to where it’s needed,” he said, echoing the spirit of the ‘Dustoff’ motto, synonymous with life-saving aeromedical evacuation, “When I have your wounded.”

For all three of these Soldiers, practically for Harrell and Bolte, they also share a determination much like one of their more famous University of Oregon alums and Track and Field Olympian, Steve Prefontaine.

“To give anything less than your best is to sacrifice the gift,” Prefontaine said, when describing his desire to surpass previous distance running achievements. It’s the same ambition found in all three Soldiers: to not rest on today’s accomplishments, but an aspiration to test one’s own limits while pushing towards new challenges.



Photo courtesy Capt. John Avery Harrell

Oregon National Guard Capt. John Avery Harrell pauses for a photo with his wife inside a HH-60 Black Hawk prior to his 2017 deployment.

FEATURES

“Get Ready, Begin” Oregon Soldiers try out the new Army Combat Fitness Test

Story by Capt. Jessica Clarke,
Joint Force Headquarters Public Affairs
Photos by Sgt. Jennifer Lena,
115th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

SALEM, Oregon - Since 1858, the U.S. Army has maintained fundamental physical fitness standard for Soldiers. Over the years, with multiple revisions, and changes, the importance of physical fitness is a benchmark to gauge the readiness of the force.

According to Gen. Stephen Townsend, head of U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command, “The current Army Physical Fitness Test measures muscular strength and endurance, but the existing fitness test does not adequately measure the physical attributes needed for the battlefield.”

To prepare 21st Century Soldiers for challenges on the battlefield, the U.S. Army is in the field testing phase of the new Army Combat Fitness Test. The Oregon Army National Guard’s 741st Brigade Engineer Battalion (BEB), 41st Infantry Brigade Combat Team, is one of just 63 selected battalions taking part in the testing phase.

The participants are made up of all three U.S. Army components: Regular Army, the Army Reserve and the Army National Guard.

“I think it is great that this battalion is going to help the Army,” said Lt. Col. Russell Gibson, commander of the 741st BEB. “We get to help Oregon in the

process of the implementation, and we get to help the Soldiers.”

The purpose of the test is to improve Soldier physical readiness, reduce injuries, and enhance mental toughness and stamina. The test consists of six events measured from 60 to 100 points. Each event is consecutively performed with just a few minutes of rest in between:

- Three repetition maximum deadlift; deadlift the maximum weight of 140 to 340 pounds a total of three times.
- Standing power throw; requires a Soldier to throw a 10-pound medicine ball overhead and backwards for distance.
- Hand-release pushup; complete as many as possible in two minutes.
- Sprint-drag-carry; which includes a 50-yard sprint, 50-yard backward sled drag, 50-yard lateral shuffle, 50-yard kettlebell carry, and 50-yard sprint.
- Leg tuck; completing as many as possible in two minutes.
- Two-mile run; measured for time.

The test is scored in three categories: black “heavy,” grey “significant,” and gold “moderate.” Scoring requirements are determined by the physical demands of the unit or the individual’s occupation, regardless of age or gender,” said ACFT project officer, Sgt. 1st Class Gared Ward, Bravo Company, 741st BEB.

“The sprint-drag-carry is the one that makes you try harder. You’ve got to dig a little deeper. The test is designed to mimic movements a Soldier may experience while deployed,” said Ward. “Being able to duck, dive, run, jump, pull yourself up, and get out of the way of harm is a better way to be when you are in that [combat] situation.”

Unique to the ACFT, all graders must be certified in order to administer a test. A mobile training team from the U.S. Army Physical Fitness School instructed a three-day grader certification course



Oregon Army National Guard Soldiers with the 741st Brigade Engineer Battalion conduct the drag exercise of the sprint-drag-carry portion of the Army Combat Fitness Test, March 2, 2019, at Camp Rilea in Warrenton, Oregon.

in December 2018. Seventy-four Oregon National Guard Soldiers, as well as 17 Soldiers from other states, completed the course to become certified graders. There are three levels of grader certification: grader, master grader, and master grader instructor.

Capt. Raymond Jones, with 2nd Battalion, 641st Aviation Regiment, participated in the grader certification course. Normally scoring in the 285-295 range on the APFT. He said that he feels the new test is a solid measure of Soldier fitness and worth implementing.

“I passed every event, but there are some things I need to work on. I need to work on the hand-release pushups and the standing power throw,” he said.

In March, 219 Soldiers from the 741st BEB took the test for the first time. Despite the unusually cold conditions, the Soldiers were positive about starting the test.

“It was a lot more rigorous and intensive. Everyone was a lot more exhausted compared to the old APFT,” said Spc. Aedan Stein, a combat engineer with the 741st BEB.

Stein recommended cross-training or high intensity interval training to help prepare for the test.

“The ACFT will definitely help prepare Soldiers for combat and all around readiness due to the extensive requirements,” said Stein.

Many of the leadership team during the testing phase showed excitement about the new test and the benefits it brings for Soldier fitness and readiness.

“This test will allow commanders to assess where their Soldiers are as far as their physical skills go,” said 1st Lt. Dakota Olson, 741st BEB, officer in charge of the ACFT testing. “That way we can reassess what training needs to be implemented.”

Ward said the battalion is scheduled to take another test in September to compare scores with the March testing.

“Soldiers will be more aware of what to train for after this first test.”

Once the field testing is complete the results will be sent to the National Guard Bureau to finalize the test standards. The ACFT is scheduled to become effective October 1, with all Soldiers taking the test by October 2020.

Gibson said training is an important step in preparing for the test. Practice and technique go into all of the test events, but it is something we can achieve. “Let’s get after this challenge!” said Gibson.



Soldiers with the 741st Brigade Engineer Battalion conduct the leg tuck portion of the Army Combat Fitness Test, March 2.

Oregon Army National Guard Soldier selected for West Point

Story and photo by
Staff Sgt. James Omelina,
115th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

HILLSBORO, Oregon - Dedication, motivation, and a sense of direction can pave the way to success. Oregon Army National Guard Pfc. Sydnie Rissel has a goal that stretches beyond most high school seniors with a long history of producing U.S. Presidents and national leaders.

“I knew I wanted to go to college, I knew what I wanted to major in, I just didn’t want to do what everyone else was doing,” said Rissel.

After she graduates from school, she will be sworn in as a cadet at West Point Military Academy, New York, on July 15, 2019. The Hillsboro High School senior is part of the split-train option and went to U.S. Army Basic Combat Training (BCT) as a junior and made the decision to attend a service academy when she was a sophomore.

“There is no military tradition in my family, I just expressed an interest in joining. My grandmother took me to the closest academy for a closer look,” she said.

Rissel said that after taking a trip with her grandmother to the United States Air Force Academy in Colorado Springs, Colorado, she knew that attending a service school was something she wanted to do after high school.

“I wanted to do this, and I wanted this to



Hillsboro High School Senior and Oregon National Guard Pfc. Sydnie Rissel is preparing to entry the U.S. Army Military Academy at West Point after graduation.

be my lifestyle someday.”

With the assistance of Colleen Johnston, an English teacher at Hillsboro High School, Rissel was able to streamline the West Point nomination process.

“What’s cool about Sydnie is that she realizes there is a future self out there and that future self is dependent on her being able to take on her current responsibilities. I think she has made her future self very proud,” said Johnson.

Between her junior and senior years of

school, Rissel joined the Oregon Army National Guard, meeting all the enlistment criteria, then completed BCT at Fort Jackson, South Carolina.

Rissel said that joining the National Guard while still in high school would help increase her chances of being selected for school at West Point, even though the training was challenging at times.

“We all came from different walks of life and sometimes it was difficult to get us all to work together, but when we did work together, we were really successful,” she said.

During Boot Camp, Rissel said that her greatest challenge was the demanding physical fitness testing. Prior to leaving for BCT she was doing about 15 push-ups a day, but by the end she was up to 50, preparing herself for the next step at West Point.

“I’m trying to find time to do school and work, but also get time to work out. I want to keep up on the training that I learned in Basic,” she said. “It’s a bit of a struggle but I want to keep in shape.”

Earning a nomination to West Point is not easy. According to West Point Academy career guide, the United States Military Academy at West Point is the oldest of the service academies. It was founded in 1802. Cadets can be nominated by individual members of Congress, or by being nominated by a parent or step-parent who is a career service member. Oregon U.S. Congressman Earl Blumenauer

officially nominated Rissel.

“I’m a little nervous about the academic portions. I’ve always excelled at academics, and I know I can do well,” she said.

Rissel says she is planning on studying biology and is looking forward to competing for a spot in the medical field.

“I want to go to medical school. I’m going to try for it, but we’ll see,” she said.

According to the West Point Public Affairs Office, only two percent of each graduating class from West Point will be allowed to enter medical school upon graduation. Participants must be endorsed by the U.S. Military Service Academy Medical Program Advisory Committee and seek their own admission to a medical school.

Preparing to be a West Point cadet, her teachers and recruiters have been advising and encouraging her throughout this two-year process.

“Mrs. Johnston looked over so many of my essays and has done so many recommendations for me,” said Rissel. “My platoon sergeant at drill and my recruiters have been helping me this whole time.”

Rissel is dedicated to her goal and, with the assistance from her teacher and fellow Guardsmen, she is preparing for the demands that await her at West Point.

“This is one of the best decisions I have ever made. I couldn’t think of anything better for me to start my career,” said Rissel.

AZUWUR

Harvey Fink: A sphere of influence throughout Oregon’s military



Photo courtesy of the Fink family
A young Harvey Fink during his active duty service as a weatherman.

Story by Master Sgt. Nick Choy,
with contributions from
Capt. Heather Bashor,
Oregon Air National Guard Public Affairs

PORTLAND, Oregon – A year ago, the Oregon Air National Guard lost a man who many in the organization referred to as a good friend, supporter, and mentor. Portland business owner and philanthropist Harvey Fink passed away on February 2, 2018, and while he has been gone a year, his sphere of influence throughout the organization lives on in the myriad of lives he touched and influenced in positive ways.

“I think my father’s biggest contribution to helping grow future leaders was in role modeling selflessness,” said Lawrence Fink, youngest of Harvey’s three sons.

“My father was truly passionate about the people associated with the military and particularly the Oregon National Guard, and there was hardly anything my father would not give to help that community be successful,” Fink added.

Lawrence, who served as a member of the active duty U.S. Army, and in the Washington and Oregon National Guard, said that his father’s reputation as a trusted business partner also gained him special access to many up and coming leaders in the Oregon Air National Guard — even serving as a close personal mentor to many.

Retired Maj. Gen. Garry Dean was one of those individuals close to Harvey. Dean served as the first African-American squadron commander, then wing commander for the 142nd Fighter Wing in Portland, Oregon.

“Harvey Fink was an amazing American and embraced the Oregon National Guard,” Dean said.

Dean, who went on to serve at U.S. Air Force Pentagon, and eventually in a two-star billet as commander of the 1st Air Force at Tyndall Air Force Base, said Harvey Fink often referred to him as his “adopted” fourth son.

“When I think about Harvey, I think of goodness,” Dean said. “He was gracious to everyone, he stood up for what he believed, and stood for the values that make our nation great. I was glad to call him a friend and mentor.”

Brig. Gen. Donna Prigmore, commander of the Oregon Air National Guard agreed. She recalled the first time she met Harvey Fink via phone shortly after the attacks of September 11, 2001, when he called with an idea.

“Hi, my name is Harvey Fink,” Prigmore recalled him saying. “I want to place a full-page color ad in the Oregonian

to show my appreciation for the men and women of the 142nd Fighter Wing for what they’re doing,” he said to her.

According to Prigmore, Harvey was true to his word. About a week later, a full-page color ad came out in the Oregonian thanking the Airmen for their service.

“That day was the beginning of what became a lifelong friendship between me and Harvey,” Prigmore said.

Prigmore said Harvey spent much of his personal resources and time taking care of the military and surrounding community. Over the years, he attended National Guard conferences held all over the country, sponsored networking events for the military and local community, and used his business and political connections to assist the Oregon Guard.

“Harvey was a man with a huge heart for people, and especially for military folks,” Prigmore said. “He was the best ambassador the Oregon National Guard ever had. He relentlessly spoke highly of the Guard’s [sic] contribution to our local, regional and national communities.”

“Much of Harvey’s beliefs were forged through his younger years, as some of Harvey’s family members were Holocaust survivors, which led to a deep appreciation for the United States and all its liberties and privileges,” Prigmore said.

Lawrence said his father also had a unique way of holding space and helping to guide folks through times of ambiguity and uncertainty.

“I believe this is also an important trait for our future leaders to build especially when thinking about the new generation of Soldiers entering our armed services,” Lawrence said.

Oregon’s former Adjutant General, and now Assistant to the Secretary of the Army, retired Maj. Gen. Raymond F. Rees, who himself served as a mentor to future leaders of Oregon’s military, also found himself the recipient of Harvey Fink’s mentorship.

“A lot of what goes on in any agency is about relationships,” Rees said. “Even though we think of community relations in the Portland area includes Portland, Harvey was visionary enough to include the city of Vancouver.”

Rees spent a career serving in various command positions throughout the Oregon National Guard, North American Aerospace Defense Command (NORAD), United States Northern Command (NORTHCOM), National Guard Bureau, and the active duty U.S. Army. He started his military career with two tours in Vietnam.

Rees said Harvey was a master at facilitating relationships and opening up opportunities for people. In one instance, Harvey introduced his close personal friend and founder of the McCormick & Schmick’s restaurant chain, Bill McCormick, to Oregon Guard leadership as the agency was preparing



Photo by Master Sgt. Nick Choy
Harvey Fink (far right) joins Oregon National Guard leaders and a delegation from the Vietnamese Army for dinner at Jake's Seafood as part of a State Partnership Program event in April 2013. From left: Current Adjutant General of Oregon, Maj. Gen. Michael Stencel (when he was a brigadier general serving as Assistant Adjutant General-Air); Bill McCormick, owner of Jake's Seafood and co-founder of McCormick & Schmick's (a long-time friend and business associate of Fink's); Senior Captain Mai Tat Thang, American Desk Officer, Vietnam People's Army; Lt. Gen. Tran Quang Khue, Deputy Chief of General Staff for the Vietnam People's Army; former Adjutant General of Oregon, retired Maj. Gen. Raymond F. Rees; and Fink.

to commemorate Australia-New Zealand Army Corps Day, or (ANZAC Day).

McCormick accompanied the delegation from Oregon to Port Moresby in April 2005. Rees said McCormick made quite an impression on his Kiwi hosts — later that year, McCormick would be appointed U.S. Ambassador to New Zealand, a post he held until January 2009.

A true patriot, Harvey just wanted to make a difference and help, Rees said.

Over the years, Harvey forged deep, lasting friendships with many throughout the Oregon Air National Guard — to the point where he was invited to, or attended, most senior-level retirements, changes of command, dedications and special events.

“In his inner being, Harvey was proud to be an American,” Rees said. “He may have been too old to serve directly in the military during the post-911 timeframe, but he found a way to serve his country and the military nonetheless.”

Harvey had served as an active duty member of the 4th Weather Group at Patrick Air Force Base, Florida. He also served some time in Greenland with the 8th Weather Reconnaissance Squadron. Lawrence remembers his father relating stories about going polar bear hunting during his time there. He said his father had scored high enough on his entrance exam to have his pick of assignments, and had chosen to be a weatherman, which required a two-year college degree, but was eventually waived for Harvey.

While Harvey only served four years in the military, and was honorably discharged in September 1952 as a staff sergeant, his dedication to the Oregon Air National Guard and the many deep friendships he developed over the years resulted in his being awarded the rank of “Honorary Colonel” by the former Air Director of Staff, retired Col. Ronald Kessinger — recognition

which Harvey was very proud.

Every day for many years, Harvey walked the block or so from his store, Fink’s Luggage & Repair Co., on SW 12th Avenue to another downtown Portland icon — Jake’s Seafood, for lunch. Over his usual seafood platter and iced tea, he would dispense sage advice from his dedicated table unto elected officials, corporate bigwigs, budding businessmen and women, and members of the military. On his lapel, he proudly wore a small silver colonel rank, and gladly related the story of how he was named a colonel by the Oregon Air National Guard. Behind what became known as “Harvey’s table,” were many framed photos of Oregon’s business leaders, military members and elected officials Harvey had met and mentored over the years.

A year ago in February, during a celebration of life held at this same downtown restaurant, business and military leaders and corporate executives who had joined Harvey for “working lunches” over the years, now traded their favorite stories and memories about him with current and former elected officials and top brass from the active duty military and Oregon National Guard — an earshot away from Harvey’s favorite table in the next room. The mood was light and jovial — an atmosphere Harvey would have approved of and perhaps even insisted upon.

Following a dinner featuring some of Harvey’s favorite menu items, individuals spoke about their personal stories and amusing Harvey-related anecdotes. There were mostly laughs and even a few tears, but the overall feeling was that of gratitude for having known him, and having “served” with him in the Oregon Air National Guard.

Harvey Fink at Jake's Seafood, wearing his “Honorary Colonel” pin on a National Guard jacket.



Photo courtesy of the Fink family