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Oregon Sentinel

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE OREGON NATIONAL GUARD

The Oregon National Guard Responds to the COVID-19 Global Pandemic



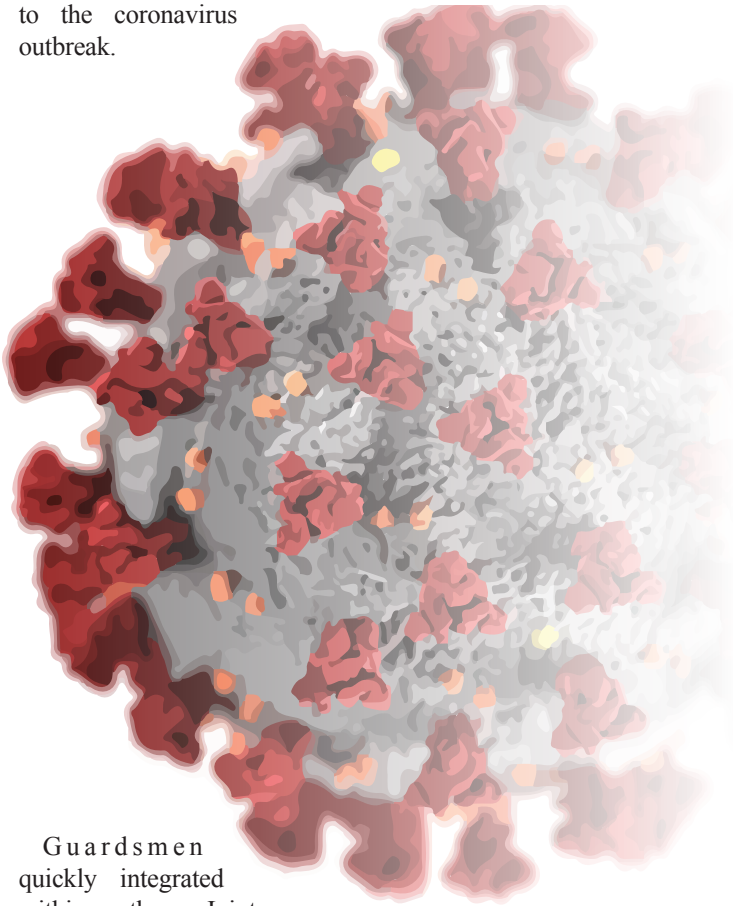
Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Zach Holden, Oregon Military Department Public Affairs

Oregon Army National Guard Soldiers prepare items for shipment and delivery at the Oregon Department of Administrative Service (DAS) in Wilsonville, Oregon on April 1, 2020. The DAS facility is organizing supplies that will be delivered to all 36 counties across the state in response to the Coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak.

Story by John Hughe
Oregon Military Department Public Affairs

SALEM, Ore. - On February 28, 2020 with the announcement of the first presumptive case of the novel coronavirus by the Oregon Health Authority (OHA), Oregon joined an increasingly longer list of states responding to the sweeping global pandemic. The flu-like symptoms, which often include; a fever, coughing, breathing difficulties, and fatigue, were first reported in Wuhan, the capital city of Hubei Province, China on December 1, 2019.

On March 8, seven new cases were reported in Oregon, bringing the total of believed cases up to 14 as Governor Kate Brown declared a State of Emergency, freeing up additional state resources. Within two days, she declared a series of “urgent new rules” to help mitigate the spread of COVID-19 throughout the state. Oregonians quickly adapted new preventive procedures to everyday life, such as social distancing, keen attention to “20-second hand washing,” and teleworking from home: all became commonplace as ‘the new normal’ to everyday life, all-the-while the Oregon National Guard was transitioning to provide a vital role in responding to the coronavirus outbreak.



Guardsmen quickly integrated within the Joint Information Center (JIC) in Portland and the Emergency Coordination Center (ECC) in Salem, helping establish accurate information and timely reactions to the media and public, to include recommendations, resources and ongoing medical findings. As the Public Information Officer for the Oregon Office of Emergency Management, Cory Grogan became the manager for the JIC in Portland.

“Everyone here is stepping up and working extra hard to share information and keep Oregonians as safe and healthy as possible,” he said, describing the initial long hours and consecutive days of work when speaking with Sarah Wexler, the Director of Strategic Communications for Governor Brown. “The team is competent, level headed, hard-working, and selfless to put their other jobs and their personal lives to the side to support this effort.”

With an assembly of state and federal agencies all working together as a team, the Incident Command Structure employed by the JIC and ECC, mirrored the same model as the Federal Emergency

Story continued on Pages 2 & 3

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Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Zach Holden, Oregon Military Department Public Affairs
Oregon Army National Guard Soldier 2nd Lt. Steven Tjoelker prepares a shipment of 140 Oregon Ventilator to be sent to New York, April 5, 2020.

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Send electronic submissions, story ideas or questions to: Sentinel-Editor@mil.state.or.us. Hard copy submissions can be sent via U.S. Mail to: Oregon Sentinel Editor, P.O. Box 14350, Salem, OR, 97309.

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COMMAND

Oregon Guardsmen respond to COVID-19 while sustaining federal missions

Oregon reported the first positive test of COVID-19 on Friday, February 28. Since then, our lives have been forever changed. The Oregon Military Department has entered uncharted territory as we have adapted to not only meet our federal mission, but also to serve and support our communities and state during the COVID-19 pandemic.

I cannot tell you how proud I am to be part of an amazing organization that is uniquely postured to support domestic response while simultaneously performing overseas assignments. As civilians and Service Members, we bring an unparalleled range of skills that our state and communities can leverage and rely on.

To support the COVID-19 response, we have teamed up with Governor Brown and a broad range of partner agencies to perform all facets of support. We established a distribution center to effectively manage and distribute Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and other COVID-19 related supplies to medical providers across the state; we delivered PPE to thirty-six counties, nine tribes, and two tribal agencies; we assisted with both the set-up of the Oregon Medical Station at the Salem Fairgrounds and tents to support the Veterans

Home in Lebanon. OMD members are also providing medical professionals, logistics and information management specialists, Joint Operations Center members and Emergency Coordination Center personnel. Even with all of that, we still have hundreds of additional Soldiers and Airmen standing ready to respond when needed.

Meanwhile, we continue to sustain our federal missions while meeting safety and physical distancing requirements through teleworking, telecommuting rotations and using appropriate PPE. Multiple Army and Air Guard units are deployed overseas protecting our national interests abroad. 1-168 Aviation, our Chinook helicopter unit from Pendleton, recently departed for their overseas deployment. We are still training and producing the finest F-15 pilots in the world, and protecting the skies of the Pacific Northwest and Southeast United States.

Everyone is impacted: our team, families and loved ones. We have members of our team who have tested positive and recovered. In fact, we may all know someone close who has been exposed and certainly share concern for exposure in the future. We even have had teammates who have lost family members



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

to COVID-19. Jobs have been lost, and the financial impacts, now and in the future, remain an ongoing concern for all of us.

The impacts of this are profound and felt by everyone. I am constantly impressed with the flexibility and innovation we continue to demonstrate and bring to this crisis. You are all part of an amazing community, a Guard family who is concerned for their local communities, state and nation. As we traverse this unknown landscape, we will continue to be asked to support the fight in new and dynamic ways. You are answering the call during this time in our history and are appreciated.

Thank you for all you do. I'm so proud to lead and work alongside such a fine group of people. Keep the faith, stay safe and healthy, and remain: *Always Ready! Always There!*

STANDARD PRECAUTIONS



Clean your hands often with soap and water and/or hand sanitizer.



Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth with unwashed hands.



Avoid close contact, putting distance between yourself and other people.



Stay home if you're sick, except to get medical care.



Cover coughs and sneezes.



Wear a face mask if you are sick.



Clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces.

Continued from Front Page

Management Agency (FEMA). This structure allowed the Oregon National Guard and Oregon Military Department to instantly fall into other areas of support as the coronavirus began to grow exponentially by mid-March.

As the confirmed cases grew to more than 50, planning and preparations to increase hospital beds and testing sites quickly became apparent to the OHA. With the outbreak of over a dozen cases at the Oregon Veterans' Home in Lebanon, a team of Oregon National Guard CERFP (CBRNE - Enhanced Response Force Package) members set up large tents to be used as a temporary testing facility for COVID-19 on March 17. The testing was to screen more than 200 staff and caregivers at the facility.



Photo by Aaron Perkins, Oregon Military Department Public Affairs
Oregon Military Department staff, state maintenance crew and Providence Seaside hospital maintenance crew, help erect military tents at the emergency entrance parking lot at Providence Seaside Hospital, March 18, 2020.

Kelly Fitzpatrick, director of the Oregon Department of Veterans' Affairs, said, "At the Lebanon Veterans' Home, our highest priority remains the health and safety of our honored residents and hard-working staff. We are grateful to our partners at the Oregon National Guard and Oregon Health Authority for their ongoing support in helping us continue to follow established infectious disease prevention protocols and public health guidelines."

The following day in Seaside, members of the Oregon Military Department, working together with the state maintenance staff from Camp Rilea and Providence Seaside Hospital maintenance crews, set up military tents at the Providence Seaside Hospital.

The site was prepared for testing and triaging members of the local

community based on potential "flattening the curve" models engaged early around the state.

By the next day on March 19th, Oregon National Guardsmen were now at the Oregon State Fairgrounds assisting OHA to establish the Oregon Medical Station. This mobile facility had the capacity to provide an alternate site for 250 patients currently in nursing home care. OHA officials also announce 13 new cases, bringing the state's total to 88.

As the impact of the virus evolved in all areas of the state, Oregon Guard Soldiers and Airmen transitioned into a variety of support roles to combat the growth of cases.

"Currently about 200 members of the Oregon National Guard have been mobilized to directly assist in a variety of areas including logistical, communications, and other operational support

for the COVID-19 response," said Stephen Bomar, Director of Public Affairs for the Oregon Military Department. "We are all part of one team working together to ensure the safety of our communities throughout Oregon."

Guardsmen continued to work in conjunction with other state partners, working with the Oregon Department of Administrative Services (DAS) to deliver 150 military cots along with blankets and hygiene packs to La Grande, Oregon, on March 26. The supplies were requested by Union County Emergency Management to support the ongoing medical response in Oregon.

As the data of evidence that Oregon was beginning to 'flatten the curve' through aggressive social distancing, Governor Brown directed many of the much needed ventilators to New York state which had become the global epicenter of the COVID-19 pandemic.



Photo by John Hughel, Oregon Military Department Public Affairs
Oregon Army National Guard Sgt. Krystle Marchell and Pfc. Amaya Mullen deliver PPE to Assisted Living Facilities in the Portland area, April 18, as part of the COVID-19 response.

COMMAND

A clear example of the dual nature of the National Guard's Citizen-Warrior role during this current operational period was the distribution warehouse established at Wilsonville, where Soldiers and Department of Safety Standards and Training (DPSST) staff began working in conjunction with FEMA, DAS and other state agencies.

The warehouse was quickly established with members having similar skills sets to fill the unique domestic operational needs and to build-in long term logistical services.

"It helps having specific experience in warehouse management; in-depth knowledge in using Excel spreadsheets, inventory and management associated with one's Military Operational Specialty but more allied with their civilian skills," said Army National Guard Lt. Col. Philip DeMontigny, Task Force Assurance Commander.

He compared much of this 'Can Do' approach to what he witnessed with service members finding and filling key roles during his deployment in the wake of Hurricane Katrina along the Gulf Coast in 2005.

"We had carpenters that built showers in 24 hours, we had bus drivers moving soldiers that drove city buses, we had certain skill sets that you might find with active duty (members) but more than likely, you're going to find them in the guard."



Photo by John Hughel, Oregon Military Department Public Affairs
Oregon Army National Guard Soldiers Sgt. Krystle Marchell ground guides a forklift operated by Staff Sgt. Odighizuwa Belafontino as pallets of medical supplies are loaded for distribution as part of the COVID-19 response, April 14, 2020 at the Kliever National Guard Armory, Portland, Oregon.

The warehouse operations are providing the 'Big 5 main items' of PPE: face mask, gloves, gowns, face shields, and N95 mask, said DeMontigny.

"Our main effort right now is that we are properly receiving and shipping PPE and other ancillary items from here (in Wilsonville)," he explained. "We have a formula that has been developed by the OHA that drives the spread sheet, allocating all the items and tracks accountability."

The first shipment took place on April 13, as deliveries and distribution to seven main hubs moved these items around the 36 counties, nine Tribal Nationals and two

Tribal Health agencies around the entire state.

"It's somewhere between Operation Smokey with fighting wildland fires, and the potential support of a natural disaster like the Cascadia Subduction Zone," DeMontigny remarked about the approach to countering the COVID-19 response.

One of the distribution centers is near the Portland International Airport at Kliever National Guard Armory, and is the County Assistance Team (CAT) Portland, one of seven regional hubs in the state, and part of Task Force Assurance. The team consists of 13 members and is flexible to meet a variety of the state's rising needs.

"A typical distribution day consists of 7-15 pallets," said

2nd Lt. Craig Mehrmann, a platoon leader assigned to the 141st Brigade Support Battalion and the Officer in Charge of the Portland hub, allocating deliveries to seven Portland metro counties. "We're delivering to several high density areas and set up to make daily deliveries, but it is able to react to the fluxes every day."

"It was unexpected, and we weren't sure how it would affect us in the United States and in Oregon in particular as it built up across the world," he said, describing the unseen challenges that the COVID-19 outbreak can encompass.

With a background in Public Health from Johns Hopkins University, Mehrmann is one of these uniquely poised Guardsmen, trained and educated to respond to the COVID-19 epidemic. He joined the National Guard four years ago and is working toward a Doctorate in Naturopathic Medicine.

"Ironically, this is very good timing for me to be part of this response, as I've studied health policy and systems, humanitarian assistance, population dynamics, and crisis response."

As the mission is constantly evolving, the flow of PPE from FEMA is based on usage and the accounting of the materials. Tracking and accountability are key factors in maintaining the critical supply for any second or third wave of COVID-19 outbreaks.

To avoid using PPE from the national emergency stockpile, Airmen from both the 142nd Wing and 173rd Fighter Wing, along with Soldiers with the Allied Trade Section have been busy making PPE for fellow service members for the foreseeable future needs.



Photo by John Hughel, Oregon Military Department Public Affairs
Oregon Army National Guard Soldiers from the Allied Trade Section are hard at work making Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) to help support fellow Guardsmen needs during the COVID-19 outbreak, Apr. 7, 2020, at Camp Withycombe, Clackamas, Oregon.

"While our federal mission is to go and fight our nation's wars, a lot of our Guardsmen are enjoying helping their own state during disasters," said State Command Senior Enlisted Leader for Oregon, Command Sgt. Maj. Robert Foesch.

Flexibility and being able to transition to other areas of support is essential as the COVID-19 continues to alter the workflow for members of the Oregon National Guard.

As the state mission and other assignments are changing in this new era of living in the time of the coronavirus, Foesch stressed that Soldiers and Airmen need to take care of themselves, their families, and continue to adhere to all the new health guidelines.

"We cannot afford to lose focus or our attention when it comes to well-being and safety issues," he said. "This means maintaining our physical fitness to be both ready for future missions but to reduce stress and manage all of these new and unforeseen challenges."

COVID-19		
AS OF 24 APR 2020		
	CASES	DEATHS
GLOBAL	2,763,080	193,665
NATIONAL	890,719	50,031
STATE	2,127	83

*Data from <https://www.worldometers.info/coronavirus>

Social distancing critical to controlling COVID-19

Story and photo by
Staff Sgt. Alexander Frank
142nd Wing Public Affairs

PORTLAND, Ore. - In times of national crisis, it's easy to become emotionally overwhelmed and forget to take your own mental health into consideration. The rapid onset of COVID-19 across the world has brought a multitude of financial and personal stresses for Airmen and their families.

On Wednesday, March 25, 2020, Secretary of Defense, Mark Esper, placed limitations on large scale gatherings and encouraged military members to telecommute whenever possible.

While social distancing is imperative to limiting the spread of the COVID-19 virus, it's equally important to maintain social connections and ensure mental resilience during these trying times.

Heather Gauthier-Bell, Director of Psychological Health at the 142nd Fighter Wing, stresses the importance of maintaining mental resilience.

"It's something that's vital to everyone to be able to continue to do your day-to-day job and the overall mission," said Gauthier-Bell. "Without mental well-being everything else kind of just falls apart."



Danielle Frank, a military spouse, uses video conferencing technology to stay in contact with family during COVID-19 quarantine, Gresham, Oregon, March 27, 2020.

At the forefront of mental resilience is practicing self-care.

"Make sure you're doing some kind of exercise, eating well, and getting enough sleep," said Gauthier-Bell.

By taking care of yourself, you limit the impacts that stress and isolation can place on your mental well-being.

Be sure to develop a strong time-management system. Much of the recent quarantine measures have drastically

affected our daily routines and altered the way we connect with others and relax. Creating a schedule and making time to digitally connect with family members can go a long way in developing a sense of normalcy.

Technology can be an important tool in maintaining daily interactions with friends and family. Zoom, a popular video conferencing service, has become a popular

way to bring friends and family into daily activities.

"People are getting creative," said Gauthier-Bell. "I've seen people doing game nights over Zoom, and people doing tea or coffee over Zoom. A big piece of it is using technology that we have to stay connected and feel like you're with people."

Sometimes it can be as simple as finding a way to fill the time.

"Try to create a routine for yourself and

your family," she said. "A lot of people just don't know what to do."

Some positive ways you can fill the time include completing home projects, cleaning, reading, listening to podcasts, and limiting how much media you consume.

When the stress of the day seems to add up, taking a few moments for yourself can make all the difference. Practicing deep breaths, meditation, or just stepping outside for some fresh air can help you reset and refocus.

For those that feel overwhelmed with the current crisis, there are a variety of resources for Airmen and their families.

"I have a 24/7 cell-phone, I can FaceTime with people, use WhatsApp, I can text people, so people can utilize that," said Gauthier-Bell.

In addition to wing resources, Airmen can also utilize Military OneSource and the Military Helpline to access various telehealth options.

Ms. Gauthier-Bell can be reached 24 hours a day, 7 days a week at 971-201-5036.

Military OneSource can be reached at 1-800-342-9647, and the Military Helpline can be reached at 1-888-457-4838 or by texting "MIL1" to 839863

NEWS

OYCP adapts to COVID-19 to ensure students stay on track

Story by Chris Ingersoll
Oregon Military Department Public Affairs

BEND, Ore. – The Oregon Youth Challenge Program (OYCP), normally an in-residence program those considered “academically at risk,” which includes students who are failing in school, not attending, or those who have dropped out, operates much like a military academy. Students volunteer to move out of their home environment, and get immersed in a highly structured environment that sets them up for success. However, like most other schools in Oregon, they are having to adapt to the closure of schools due to COVID-19.

The main focus of the shift has been to make sure that teachers are able to conduct distance learning and check in often with students, making sure they are getting what they need to continue their success. OYCP worked closely with the Bend La Pine School District and the Central Oregon Intergovernmental



Photo by Sgt. 1st Class April Davis, Oregon Military Department Public Affairs

Oregon Governor Kate Brown poses for a photo with cadets as she tours the Oregon National Guard's Youth Challenge Program during her visit to the alternative high school, March 9, 2017, in Bend, Oregon. The Oregon Youth Challenge Program is an accredited alternative high school similar to a military academy where cadets (students) live on site for five months while earning high school credits, a high school diploma, or their GED.

Council to put something in place to keep the cadets academically engaged for the extended period of time and quickly settled on Google Classroom.



Photo by John Hughel, Oregon Military Department Public Affairs
Cadets of the Oregon Youth Challenge Program listen to remarks by Jasmyrn Troncoso during her ceremony, as she becomes the newest deputy district attorney for Deschutes County, Aug. 5, 2019, at the Oregon Youth Challenge Program (OYCP) campus, Bend, Oregon.

“The teachers then very quickly created curriculum for each subject and loaded it onto Google Classroom, then invited our students to join,” said Dan Radabaugh, Director, Oregon Youth Challenge Program. “We also made sure all of the teaching staff have the

ability to telework.”

Of the 165 students that went home as a result of COVID-19, 152 wish to continue with the program, while 139 will use Google Classroom, 13 will have education packets mailed to them. Each student will also have regular calls from their platoon staff to ensure they are well and staying on track with their goals.

“OYCP would very much like to bring the current class back to the facility and resume activities on site, but with the current circumstances, our focus will be to meet all National Guard Bureau program requirements with the cadets participating from home,” said Radabaugh. “Our goal at OYCP is to deliver what these cadets signed up for: high school credits, a GED or a diploma. One way or another we would like to see this class graduate on 17 June 2020.”



Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Zach Holden, OMD Public Affairs
Cadet Karlyn Dobson, class 2019-2 of the Oregon National Guard Youth Challenge Program (OYCP), speaks during the graduation ceremony for class 2019-02, Redmond, Oregon, Dec. 18, 2019.

Redmond Non-Profit receives award from National Drug Control Policy

Story by Aaron Perkins
Oregon Military Department Public Affairs
Photos by Master Sgt. Brandon Dye
Oregon National Guard Counter Drug Program

WASHINGTON D.C. – A well deserved award was given to Children Learning through Education And Research (CLEAR), a Redmond, Oregon based non profit for its excellence in youth and adult drug education and prevention, February 6, 2020. The White House Office of National Drug Control Policy (ONDCP) Director Jim Carroll, recognized individuals and initiatives of the High Intensity Drug Trafficking Areas (HIDTA) program for outstanding work in reducing drug trafficking and production in the United States. CLEAR Alliance received HIDTA's national award for “Outstanding Public Safety/Public Health Collaborative Effort” for its Tobacco Marijuana & E-cigarettes Course (TMEC) and instructor training.

The HIDTA program, which includes 33 HIDTAs in 50 states, Puerto Rico, the U.S. Virgin Islands, and the District of Columbia, provides assistance to specific agencies operating in areas determined to be critical drug-trafficking regions of the United States. CLEAR Alliance supports two coalitions: the Redmond Area Community Coalition (RACC) and the Oregon Statewide Coalition (OSC). CLEAR Alliance has also recently entered into a collaboration with the Oregon National Guard Counter Drug Program to further expand their reach.

The goals of the coalition are to increase partnerships and leadership for RACC and to build sustainability for drug education efforts that prevent and reduce youth and adult substance abuse and impaired driving in Redmond. Both coalitions, the RACC and the OSC, implement fact-based drug education in schools and driver education programs, and promote drug-free messaging.

The OSC then works to disseminate this educational work across the state of Oregon.

When asked about the recent award and Guard collaboration with CLEAR, Oregon Air Guardsman and Counter Drug Director of Support, Master Sgt. Brandon Dye said, “Were a force

multiplier, and there is no cost associated with us,” he continued, “Our focus has been a lot on prevention, as there hasn't been a prevention team in about seven or eight years in this state. We're really lucky to have CLEAR Alliance in Oregon, as they go around and teach at various locations with science based education about the effects of vaping, marijuana and other substance use.”

In the spirit of collaboration and



CLEAR Team accept the awarded on stage during the presentation for the HIDTA.



CLEAR Team members gather for a group photograph with the High Intensity Drug Trafficking award.

education, Sgt. Dye has been able to conduct classes in high schools in central and southern Oregon, where he's estimated he has instructed about one thousand students so far in the last six months. Dye mentioned, “It is a three hour course that is broken up over three days at each school. We bring in about thirty kids per class and go over all the facts of the use of these substances.” he continued, “We don't preach to the kids to do, or not do drugs, just the facts of their effects on you, if you do use them.”

For Dye it was a great honor to receive the HIDTA National prevention award for CLEAR Alliance and the Oregon National Guard Counter Drug program. Oregon's program is a model for other states to follow in their mission of prevention and reduction of drug use and deaths across communities in America.

NEWS

Oregon National Guard recognized for flood rescues

Story and photos by
Oregon National Guard Public Affairs Office

SALEM, Ore. – Oregon Governor Kate Brown thanked members of the Oregon Army National Guard Feb. 14 for their search-and-rescue efforts during recent flooding in the state.

Brown had declared a state of emergency for Umatilla, Union and Wallowa counties because of flooding. Three Oregon Army National Guard helicopters were initially called out by Umatilla County to support search-and-rescue operations. Two Pendleton-based CH-47 Chinooks provided aerial reconnaissance and an HH-60M medevac Black Hawk based out of Salem supported the rescue of five people the first evening.

Thanks to Oregon Army National Guard flight crews, 54 people, 10 dogs, one cat and one rabbit were rescued and transported from the flooded areas via helicopter.

“I couldn't be more proud of your Oregon National Guard members and their efforts supporting flooding this month,” said Maj. Gen. Michael Stencel, Oregon adjutant general. “They truly embody our core values of character, competence, courage and commitment while demonstrating that we truly are part of our communities.”

The governor recognized the Salem and Pendleton flight crews and presented them with medals.



Oregon Army National Guard Capt. David Sous, a pilot with G. Company 1-189 Aviation (left) stands with fellow service members as Oregon Gov. Kate Brown presents them with medals on Feb. 14, 2020, for their service during one of Oregon's largest search-and-rescue operations.

In Salem, members of G. Company, took part in the largest search-and-rescue operation in Oregon's history,” said Stephen Bomar, director of public Affairs, Oregon Military Department. “They did an amazing job supporting the community and saving lives.”

The governor recognized the Salem and Pendleton flight crews and presented them with medals.



Gov. Kate Brown (center) along with Maj. Gen. Michael Stencel, Oregon Adjutant General (far left), gather for a group photo after presenting medals to members of the Oregon National Guard and Oregon Military Department for their support during flooding operations in Eastern Oregon.

Army Combat medics conduct valuable training in Oregon

Story by Paul Rushing
Oregon Military Department Public Affairs

WARRENTON, Ore. – Combat Medics from the 41st brigade, 82nd Brigade and the Enhanced Response Force Packages (CERFP) traveled to Camp Rilea in Warrenton, Oregon to train on a procedure that will allow them to do in field blood transfusions.

The 75th Ranger Regiment's Ranger O Low Titer (ROLO) Whole Blood Program was recognized by the Army Materiel Command as the individual military winner of the annual Army's Greatest Innovation Award at the Association of the United States Army Global Warfare Symposium in Huntsville, Alabama on March 14.

According to a story by Maj. Tony Mayne on the Army website, “The ROLO Whole Blood Program would not be possible without the dedicated Army Medical Department team committed to providing Soldiers better trauma casualty care on the battlefield,” said Mayne.

The program categorizes all blood group O members of the unit and then tests them to ascertain possible donors. At the point of injury (POI), whole blood with low anti-A and anti-B IgM titers presents a low/ risk of acute hemolytic transfusion reaction when given to Soldiers that are not of the same blood group.

If a casualty is in bad enough shape to require a battlefield blood transfusion, they likely need surgery. The hope is that blood transfusions will keep critical casualties alive long enough to get them to the surgery or surgeries that will ultimately save their lives.

Sgt. John Esposti, a ‘68W’ Combat Medic with the (CERFP) in the Oregon Army National Guard said, “It is truly and amazing experience to train on an option that will put skills in our inventory to save our Battle Buddies lives.”

“We also trained on pharmaceutical options that are coming available to us,” he said.

Soldiers who donated on the battlefield usually returned to combat within minutes.



Oregon Army National Guard helicopters conduct search-and-rescue operations over flooded areas of Eastern Oregon during the heavy rains of early February 2020. The state declared a state of emergency in Umatilla, Union and Wallowa counties.

Oregon Civil Defense Force Volunteers Needed



Are you interested in supporting the State? Need a little more to do to keep you occupied? Want to stay connected with the Oregon National Guard? Want to be of service to the citizens of Oregon during emergencies?

Here's your chance to serve by joining the Oregon Civil Defense Force

We need volunteers for/to:
Assist in maintaining, operating, and training our HF radios in the State Armories around the state.

Assist the Oregon National Guard with their state missions such as:

1. Emergency training
2. Crowd control
3. Parades
4. Natural disaster training
5. Traffic control for special events and any other activity as directed by TAG.

For more information and an application, email us at: marilyn.woodward@state.or.us



Photo by Lt. Col. Jonathon Vanhorn, 41st IBCT Brigade Senior Physician Assistant
The 41st Medics train on first aid procedures at Camp Rilea, in Warrenton, Oregon.

FEATURES

Preparing for Peace Keeping

Story and photos by Sgt. Aaron Berogan
 First Army Public Affairs

FORT BLISS, Texas. – Whether it’s blistering hot, freezing cold, or rain soaking from head to toe, nothing is stopping the training of the 2nd Battalion, 162nd Infantry Regiment, 41st Infantry Brigade Combat Team, Oregon National Guard as they prepare to assume duties with NATO’s Kosovo Force mission.

The unit is preparing for a peacekeeping mission in Kosovo, a mission very different than the training for combat most of the Guard Soldiers of this Infantry battalion have previously experienced. First Army Observer Coach/Trainers were with them every step of the way to evaluate their progress in this new dynamic.

“It’s pretty exciting to me,” Sgt. Patrick Gunn, assistant to team lead for the Liaison Monitoring Team, 2nd Bn., 162nd Inf. Regt. “This is the deployment I

am definitely looking the most forward to. I’ve never done this before and I’m looking forward to the mission, working with foreign militaries, and being part of NATO.”

The Kosovo Force, or KFOR, mission has existed since 1999. Originally set up following the end of NATO’s 78-day air campaign, which aimed to push Yugoslavian forces out of Kosovo, KFOR is made up of nearly 4,000 troops from 28 different countries. KFOR is currently deployed in the Balkans to maintain a safe and secure environment, freedom of movement for all citizens in Kosovo and to facilitate the Euro-Atlantic integration of the Western Balkans. The United Nations, the European Union and



A Oregon National Guardsman, of the 2nd Battalion, 162nd Infantry Regiment, 41st Infantry Brigade Combat Team, walks a perimeter road of the training range at Fort Bliss, Texas.

other international actors continue to support the development of a stable, democratic, multi-ethnic and peaceful Kosovo.

To this end, the transition from a combat environment to a peacekeeping role requires an approach that emphasizes integration of forces with the local populace.

“I’ve deployed twice before to Iraq and Afghanistan,” explained Gunn. “This is a completely different role, completely different mindset. We are going to Kosovo to blend into the community, to be a part of the population and talking to them versus a combat role. This is nothing that I’ve done before.”

During this process members of the unit are being split into two different teams. One team’s training mirrors the mission they will have patrolling what is known as Kosovo’s Administrative Boundary Line that separates Kosovo from Serbia. There, teams set up

entry control points and ensure that there is safety and security as well as freedom of movement for the citizens of Kosovo. The second team is called a Liaison Monitoring Team. This team

will do what are called “pulse patrols.” These patrols go from location to location to interact with the residents of Kosovo and help with any humanitarian needs.

With the unit split evenly between Soldiers who have deployed before and those who haven’t, Gunn’s experience is a resource for Soldiers such as First Lt. Parker Mooney, giving him the comfortability to focus on the mission at hand.

“Every day as I learn more about the mission, I get more excited,” said Mooney, Liaison Monitoring Team Officer in Charge, 2nd Bn., 162nd Inf. Regt. “I’m kind of at the point where I just want to be over there. I feel like as I have talked to family, most don’t know where Kosovo is located. But as part of the LMT we get to be in the community and see the change of positive impact.”

As with any overseas deployment,

families are foremost in the minds of these Citizen-Soldiers. Sgt. Cody Clyde, team leader for the Liaison Monitoring Team, 2nd Bn., 162nd Inf. Regt., says despite the time away from his family, their mutual sacrifice can serve as an inspiration to his children to live a life that serves others. Clyde has been serving for ten years, with this being his second deployment, serving past his initial enlistment contract to continue that model of service.

“I want to be an example to my children,” explained Clyde. “I want them to see me put on the uniform, and when they are older I hope they are proud. I hope it inspires them to go into some service to the country, whether it’s military or Peace Corps. I want them to seek opportunities to go out and do things for their communities.”

Building Strong Bonds of Partnership The partnership between First Army and the 2nd Bn., 162nd Inf. Regt., for KFOR has been a strong bond built over more than year.



Specialist Ethan Welch, a Rifleman with Delta Company, 2nd Platoon, 2nd Bn., 162nd Infantry Regt., 41st Infantry Brigade Combat Team, Oregon National Guard, uses the Advanced Combat Optical Gunsight to watch for anything suspicious during a training exercise at Fort Bliss, Texas.

“We start early to build rapport and trust,” said Capt. Jeremy Kinder, Bravo Team Chief, Observer Coach/Trainer, 2nd Battalion 357 Infantry Regiment, 189th Combined Arms Training Brigade, First Army.

“We want them to know we have their best interests at heart and will help make them successful. We learn about them inside and out. We know their friction points and where they shine. Whether it’s Active, Guard, or Reserve, we are one Army, one fight.”

The attention to detail in training that First Army offers with training has been noticed by their partners.

“I think First Army has done a really great job of identifying and focusing on the key points of what everybody’s roles will be overseas,” explained Gunn. “They have been ensuring we are ready for those jobs, and anything extra that may come our way, so we can do our mission and come home safely.”

Clyde’s bond with First Army go back even further.

“In both deployments First Army has been the validators and mentors for my units training,” explained Clyde. “They have been very good at helping us shine where we are strong and help us strengthen our shortcomings. It’s clear they want us to be successful as we go to deploy overseas and they focus on us being mission-ready before we leave.”

For Mooney, the partnership he has noticed with First Army has been a positive one.

(Continued on page 7)



Specialist Tanner York, Riflemen, 41st Infantry Brigade Combat Team, 2-162nd Infantry Battalion, Delta Company, 2nd Platoon, Oregon National Guard, makes a radio call in to his command team about an approaching vehicle to the entry control point during an exercise at Fort Bliss, Texas.

FEATURES



Soldiers of the 2nd Battalion, 162nd Infantry Regiment, 41st Infantry Brigade Combat Team, Oregon National Guard, await the landing of helicopter. The Solders are at Fort Bliss, Texas training with First Army for their deployment to Kosovo as part of the Kosovo Force mission (KFOR).

“This has been my first interaction with First Army,” said Mooney. “They adapt to our needs as our strengths and weaknesses appear. They do what it takes to make us shine and tighten up anything we may need so we get the most effective training.”

This attention to detail stands out because it wasn’t always this way before a deployment.

“In previous deployments the first time we ever saw any partnership or mentorship was late in the game at a mobilization site,” said Lt. Col. Kyle Akers, Battalion Commander, 2nd Bn., 162nd Inf. Regt. “With First Army they have been with us since we were identified for this mission more than a year ago. They helped us forecast

what was coming our way so we could maximize training and benefit our Soldiers.”

Because they have had mentorship from not only First Army, but from the 1st Battalion, 297th Infantry Regiment of the Alaska National Guard, which the unit will replace, Akers feels confident in the roles of his teams in Kosovo.

Being National Guard, many of the Soldiers believe they are bringing some helpful

skill sets from their civilian careers into this specific mission. Gunn is a security contractor in his civilian career, which he believes helped him develop skills to interact with the local populace in Kosovo during patrols.

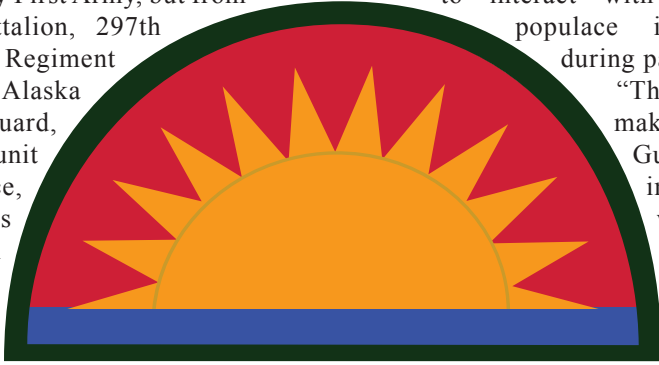
“That’s what makes the Guard unique in a lot of ways,” explained Gunn. “I know there are a lot of unique

skill sets in our teams that are going to be an added bonus for this deployment.”

Mooney also believes his civilian career, which involves a lot of planning, forward thinking, and interacting with people will help him achieve success as the Officer-in-Charge of the Liaison Monitoring Team.

“My skill sets I developed as a sales executive are playing right into that,” said Mooney. “The planning aspect and comfortability of talking with people, identifying their needs, and developing deeper levels of connection will be very helpful.”

The 2nd Battalion., 162nd Infantry Regiment is deploying with their brigade headquarters, the 41st Infantry Brigade Combat Team, from the Oregon National Guard.



Soldiers of the 2nd Battalion, 162nd Infantry Regiment, 41st Infantry Brigade Combat Team, Oregon National Guard, walk roads at Fort Bliss, Texas, during a patrol training exercise. The Kosovo Force mission exists with NATO in order to maintain and safe and secure environment with freedom of movement for all. The exercises mirrored some of the conditions the 2-162nd may face while in Kosovo and patrolling roads.

OREGON NATIONAL GUARD COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND REGIONAL EVENTS

Oregon Guardsmen compete in 2020 Chief Biathlon Championships in Utah

Story by Staff Sgt. Tim Beery,
128th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment
Photos by Sgt. 1st Class Zach Holden
Oregon Military Dept. Public Affairs

MIDWAY, Utah – Crisp mornings and sunny days set the tone for a week of fierce competition as Soldier-athletes from 22 states convened at Utah’s famed Soldier Hollow Resort for the 2020 Chief National Guard Bureau Biathlon Championships Feb. 28-March 5.

The normally quiet resort and town were abuzz with activity as competitors traversed winding trails, climbed relentless slopes on Nordic skis, and flew down monolithic hills at breakneck speeds while maintaining the physical strength and mental discipline to fire custom .22 rifles at targets ranging from the size of a quarter to that of a grapefruit from 50 meters away.

“Biathlon is a really strange sport,” said Maj. Barbara Blanke, a veteran member of the Utah National Guard Team and top-place finisher in the Master Women’s 7.5 km sprint competition. “It combines the rigors of cross-country skiing – a very demanding athletic event – with rifle-precision marksmanship.”

Biathletes cross-country ski between 7.5 and 12 kilometers during any given event, while regularly climbing hills with well over 25 feet in vertical rise, on average, and then immediately apply their marksmanship skills.

“Athletes will ski from the course and go directly into the target area and shoot targets with an elevated heart rate,” said Capt. Matt Hefner, the National Guard Bureau sports director of the biathlon. “Sometimes, those heart rates are between 160 and 170 beats per minute. That creates a stressed shoot, and they’re on skis while doing it.”

Ready and Resilient (R2) is the Army’s strategy for strengthening individual and unit personal readiness by fostering a culture of trust through shared trial. This event for Soldiers is inspired by that



Soldiers of the Oregon National Guard Biathlon team test out the track at Soldier Hollow, Utah prior to the 2020 Western Regional National Guard Biathlon competition, January 8, 2020.

mantra and builds upon it through challenges and competition.

“As company commanders, we try to get our soldiers to shoot with an elevated heart rate and being exhausted,” said Hefner. “This sport forces that on them. It’s fantastic!”

Historically, Soldier-athletes who compete and train for the biathlon have

demonstrated higher physical fitness and marksmanship scores than their counterparts. Hefner attributes that to the dedication required by this event.

“Those who compete do tend to have higher PT scores and are better marksmen than their fellow soldiers,” Hefner said.

As physical readiness proliferates while training in this grueling sport, another benefit for competitors is building relationships with teammates and opponents.

“You want to do well, but you want other people to do well, too,” said Spc. Siena Ellingson, a member of the Minnesota National Guard team and first-place finisher in

both the women’s pursuit, open sprint, and team relay races. “I race most of the year; this race is different. The camaraderie is different in this setting. Having your teammates’ support, but also the support of the competing athletes and states, is huge.”

“It’s easy to become addicted to this sport,” Sgt. Maj. Shawn Blanke said during the closing ceremony.

... I look out at



this group and I see a bunch of tremendously fit marksmen and Soldiers who serve their country and do amazing things.”

The top 10 females and males will move on to form the All-Guard team and compete at the U.S. National Races in Yellowstone this spring and in the Chilean Military Championships in Chile in the summer.

National Guard biathlon athletes (above and below) prepare for the 2020 Western Regional National Guard Biathlon competition, January 9, 2020.



Capt. Amanda Marie Zayas (above), with the Oregon National Guard biathlon team, waxes her skis in preparation for the 2020 Western Regional National Guard Biathlon competition, January 9, 2020.



Capt.. Jared Hoffer, with the Oregon National Guard biathlon team, zeros in his rifle in preparation for the 2020 Western Regional National Guard Biathlon competition, January 9, 2020.



Spc. McKinley Keener (above), with the Oregon National Guard biathlon team, waxes his skis in preparation for the 2020 Western Regional National Guard Biathlon competition, January 9, 2020.

Lt. Col. Connie Opsal (left), with the Oregon National Guard biathlon team, practices at SoldiersHollow, Utah prior's to the 2020 Western Regional National Guard Biathlon competition, January 8, 2020.



OREGON AIR NATIONAL GUARD

Kingsley Field honors namesake Lt. David R. Kingsley with new flagship

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

KLAMATH FALLS, Ore. – The 173rd Fighter Wing at Kingsley Field sought to honor its namesake, 2nd Lt. David R. Kingsley, by unveiling an aircraft painted in memory of his sacrifice 75 years ago, Jan. 10, 2019.

Dubbed the Heritage Jet, paint crews worked to include items directly drawn from Kingsley’s time in WWII where he was a bombardier on the crew of a B-17 bomber.

Kingsley sacrificed his life in the execution of that duty, saving the life of a wounded tail gunner, Michael J. Sullivan, by taking off his parachute and strapping it on the wounded man as their badly damaged aircraft lost altitude. With that decision Kingsley was forced to remain on the aircraft as it crashed. He was awarded the Medal of Honor for “conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity in action at the risk of life above and beyond the call of duty,” states the citation.

During the ceremony, 173rd Fighter Wing Commander Col. Jeffrey Edwards said the closest we may get to the man himself is captured in a personal journal.



Photo by Senior Master Sgt. Jennifer Shirar, 173rd FW Public Affairs

Patti Mills, the niece of 1st Lt. David Kingsley, shares a story about her uncle during a dedication ceremony January 10, 2020 at Kingsley Field in Klamath Falls, Oregon.

Edwards AFB lends Kingsley Field hand in historic project

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

KLAMATH FALLS, Ore. – Located about halfway between Los Angeles and Death Valley lies one of the most historic air force bases in the country. Edwards AFB, so named in honor of Capt. Glen Edward, a test pilot who died while testing the original flying wing aircraft, has made a lot of history. Chuck Yeager broke the sound barrier there and Arthur “Kit” Murray flew the same X-1 aircraft higher than anyone had ever gone the same year.

Today that same base is helping the 173rd Fighter Wing in Klamath Falls, Oregon, commemorate some of its own history.

For a host of reasons including temperature control, ventilation and even oxygen supply the paint barn at the wing isn’t suitable for painting whole aircraft and so the project needed a place that could solve all of those issues. Edwards stepped up and volunteered a bay in their dedicated corrosion control facility, or what we call a “paint barn”.



Photo by Senior Master Sgt. Jennifer Shirar, 173rd Fighter Wing Public Affairs

The team of Airmen and community members who helped visualize and execute the creation of the new F-15 Eagle flagship for the 173rd Fighter Wing are recognized during a dedication ceremony January 10, 2020 at Kingsley Field in Klamath Falls, Oregon.

“On the yellowed pages is David R. Kingsley’s handwriting annotating each mission that he had,” Edwards said. “On April 29th it talks about his first raid, ‘lots of flak—got a piece in the nose and missed me by two inches it seemed like it was glass off the nose, then I come to the wing-fast and a piece hit me on the hand—the pain did not stay with me,’” read Edwards directly from the pages of the journal.

Edwards returned the journal to the lecturer and held up a copy of a letter from the wounded gunner saved by Kingsley’s selfless act of heroism to Kingsley’s oldest surviving brother, Tommy, in 1945.

“Tommy, I am more than grateful that my life was spared by your brother Dave giving up his life so that I could live,” he read. “I am not ashamed to admit when I think of Dave I also have tears come into my eyes, if it weren’t for me getting wounded Dave’s life would have been saved,” read Edwards.

That history is the inspiration for the paint scheme adorning the Heritage Jet.

“Every piece you see here has a reason it’s there,” said Lt. Col. Micah Lambert, the 173rd Maintenance Group commander, as he pointed to the jet. He explained the name “Sandman” stenciled on the nose of the F-15 was the name of the aircraft Kingsley was assigned to. There is additional nose art of the squadron and group he was assigned to. The underlying paint scheme is modeled after the B-17 with mottled green and brown camouflage on the top and light grey paint

on the bottom. The wings both have black and white “invasion stripes” denoting a friendly or allied aircraft during WWII.

Perhaps the most striking element is a portrait of David R. Kingsley set over Crater Lake one of the most iconic features of Southern Oregon.

The final element of the ceremony involved having two of Kingsley’s nieces pull shrouds



Photo courtesy Master Sgt. Paul Allen

Local Klamath Falls, Oregon artist Chris Young paints an image of the Medal of Honor in three-dimensional relief on the new flagship of the 173rd Fighter Wing fleet, December 23, 2019.

reason for the ceremony and the Heritage Jet project saying, “What he did was care for people at a level most of us will never get to know, he cared for his teammates, he cared for others and he never gave up.”



Photo by Senior Master Sgt. Jennifer Shirar, 173rd Fighter Wing Public Affairs

Oregon Air National Guard Lt. Colonel Micah Lambert, 173rd Maintenance Group commander, explains the significance of the details painted on the F-15 Eagle during a dedication ceremony January 10, 2020 at Kingsley Field in Klamath Falls, Oregon.

said. “They don’t really make B-17 colors anymore so we had to put a special order. They have to shut down the production line and then do spray-outs and testing to make sure they are matching our federal paint standard codes.”

None of that presented an issue but as you may sense, a problem did arise. Half of special-order paint arrived and the other half went missing.

“We received some of the colors but not the catalyst that needed to go with it and then we received some of the catalyst without the colors,” said Allen.

As the team would learn, one of the crates of paint was damaged in shipping and was slated for disposal because it was leaking—a total loss. The team needed the paint right away and couldn’t wait for a new batch to arrive. The solution to the problem involved a two-hour trip into Las Vegas.

“The place that is manufacturing our custom-made paint is only two hours away in Southern California,” said Allen. “We were able to just jump in the truck, haul

butt to LA, haul butt back and we were spraying orange by noon,” he said with a chuckle.

The rest of the colors they secured the rest by working with Edwards Maintenance Group to borrow some of the colors they had in stock, Edwards is a test base and keeps many more colors on-hand than a typical base.

“They had it in stock because they are a big facility and they are painting all sorts of random, various aircraft because it’s such a diverse airfield,” he said. Another fortunate turn of events for the Heritage Jet project.

With that obstacle in the rear-view mirror the remainder of the project went smoothly.

Allen said he enjoyed the project and so did his team, “The camaraderie between the guys to see them buy into what it was all about and the sentiment behind what DRK did and being able to paint an F-15 in the likeness of his B-17 aircraft,” he added. “You saw the extra effort come out of them—they knew what it was all about.”

The crew included Staff Sgts. Drew Sorlien, Tim Bodner, Cameron Curtin, Jeff Southern, and Derek Larman.

OREGON AIR NATIONAL GUARD

Special Tactics Airmen participate in Southern Strike 2020 exercise

Story and photo by Tech. Sgt. Emily Moon
142nd Wing Public Affairs

GULFPORT, Miss. - For the first time, the 125th Special Tactics Squadron (STS), assigned to Portland Air National Guard Base, Oregon, was invited to participate in Southern Strike 2020 taking place in Gulfport, Miss. Jan. 30 through Feb. 13, 2020.

Southern Strike 2020 is a large Joint Force exercise put on by the Air National Guard Bureau and is located at the Combat Readiness Training Center (CRTC) in Gulfport, Mississippi.

This exercise provides special operators a unique training opportunity in a location that enables combat effectiveness by working with various Joint Task Force entities in Mississippi and the Gulf of Mexico.

This year’s exercise allowed Special Tactics Airmen to collaborate with thousands of service members from different military branches, civilians, and even Dutch foreign partners. The special tactics training helped reinforce the key missions of global access, precision strike, personnel recovery, and battlefield surgery operations.

“Making sure we get valuable realistic repetitions of our real world mission set, and exercise that capability with all of the assets, helps in our own goal to prep our force as we come out

of conversion and exercise our mission to be fully capable going into 2021,” said Lt. Col. Robert Effler, 125th STS Commander.

The 125th STS worked directly with the Mississippi Air and Army National Guard, the Navy Reserves, Air Force Special Operations Surgical Teams (SOST), and Dutch special operations forces. Dutch SOF teams were specifically interested in training with Special Tactics Airmen as they have trained with Army Special Forces before and wanted to try something new, Effler said.

Special Tactics SOSTs also played a big role in this year’s exercise. Having SOST on board with Special Tactics Airmen helps mitigate medical risk factors on deployments where they perform lifesaving surgeries and medical care en route to a Role 2 medical facility. The SOST lead said they were invited to come to Southern Strike from the 125th STS.

“I’ve never done an exercise with a guard [Special Tactics Squadron] before, so it’s been good integrating with them as we are getting ready for deployment,” said the SOST lead. “It broadens our experience, which is good because we could be attached to anybody when we’re down range, so the more reps we get with people state-side, the better.”



142nd Fighter Wing Redesignates to the ‘142nd Wing’

Story by Staff Sgt. Alexander Frank
142nd Wing Public Affairs

PORTLAND, Ore. – The 142nd Fighter Wing has been redesignated the 142nd Wing as of March 6, 2020.

The move from a fighter wing to a wing is meant to better articulate the broad capabilities of the 142nd and the Airmen who accomplish the mission.

For Col. Adam Sitrler, the 142nd Wing Commander, the rebranding is a reflection of the increasingly varied capabilities of the organization.

“The wing redesignation is an important step to recognize the diverse mission sets within the 142nd,” said Sitrler. “In our case, we are fortunate to have a special warfare mission, and a fighter aircraft mission. When a wing has multiple mission areas, the proper designation is ‘Wing’ which reflects both the special operations and the fighter mission.”

The move does not alter the core-mission of the 142nd, but instead seeks to clarify the broad skillset the wing has available.

“We are still fully committed to flying fighters, and we’ll continue to excel in that mission area,” said Sitrler. “We are fortunate to have one [of] the two Air National Guard Special Tactics Squadrons, [and] the 125th Special Tactics Squadron will continue to thrive, now and into the future.”

Throughout the nearly 80-year history of the organization, the wing has been rebranded several times. Each time, choosing a name that reflected the mission and capabilities of the era.

The modern 142nd can trace its lineage to the 371st Fighter Group, a P-47 Thunderbolt fighter group that fought during WWII. It wasn’t until May 24th, 1946, that the group relocated to Oregon and gained the 142nd numerical identifier.

The constant across the many names attributed to the 142nd is the “fighter” designation, symbolizing the organizations flying mission. Across generations, the 142nd has been defined by the fighter mission, yet as critical as the fighter mission is, it doesn’t summarize what the modern 142nd is capable of.

Maj. Dawn Choy, the 142nd Wing Historian, knows the history of the wing well, and understands that forging a stronger future lies in understanding the past.

“It’s important to know and learn from our past,” said Choy. “The unique lineage and honors gained throughout the years [will] always remain part of the 142nd Wing’s history. By knowing how we got here, we can be better decision-makers to determine where we go.”

As the mission and capabilities of the 142nd have evolved, it’s clear that the “fighter” moniker fails to encapsulate the roles of our Airmen and the mission at large. The inclusion of a special operations mission gives the 142nd the opportunity to choose a name that symbolizes the multifaceted strengths of the organization.

“Change is constant and that is certainly true for the 142nd,” said Sitrler.

“The addition of the 125th Special Tactics Squadron into the wing is worthy of redesignating the organization to capture our full complement of war fighting capability. The 142nd Wing is the most accurate description of who we are.”



Members of the Special Operations Surgical Team (SOST), 720th Special Operations Group, work with the 125th Special Tactics Squadron, Portland, Ore. and the Dutch Special Operations Force (SOF) at the Southern Strike 2020 exercise in Gulfport, Mississippi, February 9, 2020.

SOSTs participated in 125th STS’s own independent unit exercise, Advanced Seminole, last year, and continue to work with various special operations units across the globe to provide medical care in combat zones when there isn’t enough time to evacuate injured personnel to a large medical facility.

For all Special Tactics units involved, Southern Strike 2020 provided the opportunity to conduct tactical level integration, increase lethality, exercise

scenarios built from current global crises and enhance interoperability with joint partners and allies.

“I think we’re doing extremely well. We were fortunate to conduct Advanced Seminole just six months ago, which was a unit level exercise independent of any major exercise, but here we have access to all the ranges and air support entities,” said Effler. “There is always room for improvement, but the unit is performing well and definitely exceeding my expectations.”

173rd Fighter Wing creates masks in response to COVID-19

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

KLAMATH FALLS, Ore. – As the COVID-19 pandemic makes inroads in the United States military officials at the highest levels adopted new Centers for Disease Control guidance to require military members to wear masks when required to work inside a six-foot radius of others.

The Department of Defense sent this requirement to bases including, Kingsley Field, April 6, with the expectation that it would be fully adopted within eight days.

Thanks to some quick thinking on the part of senior leadership Airmen at Kingsley Field all have masks available to them one day later. An unconventional approach coupled with a willingness to pitch in and help saw more than 575 masks created from whole cloth—not to mention old ABUs, flight suits and a few worn out OCPs as well.

“It’s extremely impressive how Team Kingsley came together to get this done,” said Col. Brad Orgeron, the 173rd Fighter Wing vice commander. He went on to describe the process of finding a design that met CDC requirements, namely controlling spray through the fabric, which was also feasible for Airmen to construct quickly with material on-hand.

“Everybody pitched in to help,” said Lt. Col. Micah Lambert, the 173rd Maintenance Group commander. “We did an all-call on the app and Col. Edwards sent out an email saying ‘we’re gonna produce these tomorrow,’ and we went after it, and every shop you walked around folks were doing these “arts and crafts” projects—making these 10x6 squares of ABU material or felt.”

The maintenance conference room table was stacked with old ABUs as Airmen worked to break them down into cloth squares suitable for sewing into a mask. Downstairs the same thing was happening as a number of crew chiefs worked with razor



Staff Sgt. David Ingerson uses a razor blade to cut cloth for a mask, April 6, 2020.

blades to cut fabric squares. Across the tarmac in the Aircrew Flight Equipment office the sound of sewing machines marked the next phase of construction where the squares were sewn together to form the protective mouth and nose cover.

“I’ve done about 100 so far,” said Tech. Sgt. Thomas Howard, an AFE technician, shortly after 11 a.m. between setting down a sewn piece and grabbing two pieces of cloth.

Several reasons made it necessary for the base to undertake this project, the supply system is overwhelmed with mask requests as is the civilian supply chain, making that a dead-end.

Although the base has some mask reserves, these need to be preserved for medical staff as well as community support as the Oregon Air National Guard remains ready to respond to the state’s call should the crisis worsen.

Finally, the wing’s mission is to provide trained air superiority pilots to the U.S. Air Force and the Air National Guard and the sooner these masks are ready the sooner the base returns that core mission.

“It’s going to be great tomorrow to hear the sound of jets flying in the Klamath Basin as we get back to flying our day-to-day business,” said Orgeron.

FEATURES

Oregon CERFP conduct basics of hazardous operations training

Story and photos by
Staff Sgt. E. James Omelina
115th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

WARRENTON, Ore. - The biting cold onshore breeze stabs through the buildings at Camp Rilea on the Oregon coast, just south of Astoria. The salt stained air is brightly lit by the steel grey sky. It is definitely inclement weather.

The cold weather helps keep service members cool inside the level B hazmat suits they have to wear to practice operations in a hazardous environment, according to Sgt. Aaron J. Stiner with the 102nd Oregon CERFP “A soldier can lose 5 to 15 pounds of body weight while working in a level B hazard suit.”



Oregon Army National Guard Pfc. Benjamin Ruehs with the 102nd CERFP is sprayed off in a hasty decontamination tent at Camp Rilea near Warrenton, Oregon, Jan. 26, 2020.

The 102nd Oregon Chemical Biological Radiological Nuclear (CBRN) Defense Enhanced Response Force Package (CERFP) is a part of the Homeland Response Force, established by the Department of Defense. According to the National Guard Bureau, the 102nd CERFP provides incident response at the direction of the Oregon State Governor. The mission of the CERFP is to save lives and mitigate human suffering during an emergency.

“This is an introductory course for CBRN response elements. This is where they learn the basics of disaster response” said Capt. Brian W. Bodie, the operations and training officer for the 102nd Oregon CERFP, “there is an academic portion where they learn about things like spill response. And then there is a hands on part where they learn to put on and move around in the suits that will protect them. They learn to put the suits on and take them off and how to help their buddies out.”

The level B suits are bulky and consist of thick rubber boots, a non-permeable water proof overall with a hood, rubber gloves, and a mask that can be hooked up to a Self-Contained Breathing Apparatus consisting of an air tank and hose, or a Powered Air-Purifying Respirator. The



Oregon National Guard Spc. Melissa Benitez with the 102nd CERFP, learns how to properly remove a hazardous material suit with the help of her fellow Soldiers at Camp Rilea near Warrenton, Oregon, Jan. 26, 2020.

suits are taped up and the mask, boots, and gloves are secured to the Soldier, or Airman using a special chemical resistant tape.

“So we actually got dressed, we put on our boots and then we put on the suit and the boots and then we got taped down by our battle buddies. We put on the mask, which is, like, really tight on my face. And we went out we put on air tanks. I was pretty nervous about that. But it wasn’t that scary,” said Spc. Melissa Benitez with C co. 741st Brigade Engineer Battalion.

The Soldiers and Airmen completed training that would certify them to assist during an emergency involving chemical, biological or radiological hazards. This training is required to be a member of the 102nd Oregon CERFP.

“The class was really hard but I passed the written test this morning. You have to study. And then we did the hands on. It was pretty exciting,” said Spc. Benitez.

The Hazardous Operations training course consists of classroom instruction and use of the specialized equipment. It also includes a comprehensive written test. And a hands on evaluation where students suit up. Students are certified by nationally accredited emergency management organizations. This training is a foundation for careers in the civilian world of emergency management.

“If a service member is interested in a career in emergency management, these are foundational skills that are going to look great on their resumes. If you were going to pay for a civilian course like this at PCC



Oregon Army National Guard Pfc. Benjamin Ruehs with the 102nd CERFP, finishes removing his hazmat suit after his simulated hasty decontamination at Camp Rilea near Warrenton, Oregon, Jan. 26, 2020. The CERFP spent the weekend receiving training and certification in hazardous incident response.



Oregon Army National Guard Soldiers with the 102nd CERFP, prepare to simulate the decontamination process while using self contained breathing apparatus (SCBA) equipment at Camp Rilea near Warrenton, Oregon, Jan. 26, 2020. The 102nd CERFP spent the weekend receiving training and certification in hazardous incident response.

(Portland Community College) it could cost thousands of dollars,” said Capt. Bodie, “we are able to bring those instructors from PCC out here and offer it to our service members at no cost [to the individual]. It’s a great benefit, and it’s great training.”



Oregon Army National Guard Soldiers with the 102nd CERFP prepare to simulate the decontamination process while using self contained breathing apparatus (SCBA) equipment, Camp Rilea, Oregon, Jan 26, 2020. The 102nd CERFP (Chemical, Biological, Radiological, Nuclear Enhanced Response Force Package) spent the weekend receiving training and certification in hazardous incident response.

FEATURES

ORANG Fighter Pilot is first in world to fly F-15 Eagle with a cervical prosthetic disc

Story and photos by
Tech. Sgt. Steph Sawyer
142nd Wing Public Affairs

PORTLAND, Ore. - It’s a rainy December afternoon at Portland Air National Guard Base in Oregon (PANG). In the operations building, pilots are suiting up and getting ready to step for their afternoon sorties. Among them is Col. Todd Hofford, a 27-year Guardsman, and a seasoned F-15 Eagle fighter pilot with 2,500+ hours of flying under his belt. Although there have been many such days at PANG for Hofford, this one is significant. Three years of unyielding patience, effort, and perseverance have led up to this day: this is Hofford’s first official flight since having cervical disc replacement surgery.

Hofford’s return to flying status is not only a personal milestone, but one for the U.S. Military and the world medical community also, because Hofford happens to be the first fighter pilot in the world to return to flying a high G fighter jet post disc replacement surgery.

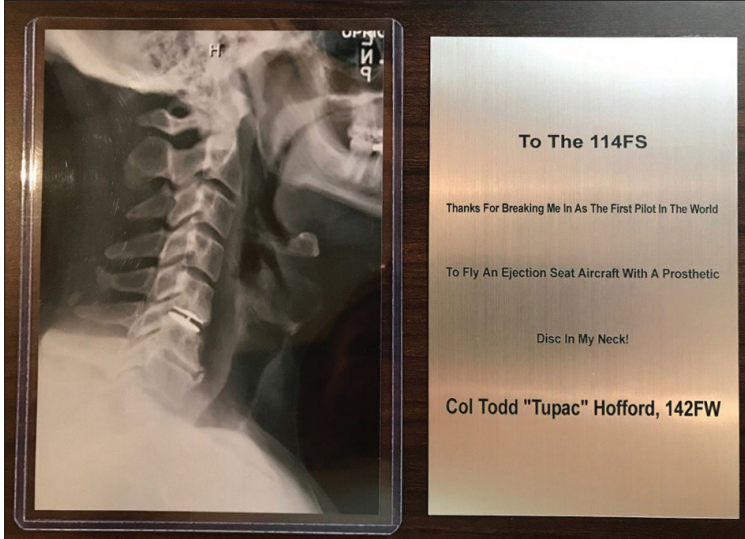
For pilots of fighter jets, cervical injuries are commonplace. While degenerative disc disease to include herniations can occur in anyone, the extreme conditions fighter pilots are exposed to significantly increases the rate of occurrence.

In fact, it’s stated in a 2018 dissertation titled Fighter Pilots’ Physical Performance and Spinal-injury Induced Flight Duty Limitations and published by the University of Jyväskylä in Finland that the overall rate of spinal disorders reported in fighter pilots over their lifetimes ranges between 89% and 93%.

To get a better idea, the average human head weighs approximately twelve pounds. The Joint Helmet Mounting Cubing System (JHMCS), designed to enhance a pilot’s situational awareness through technology adds another 6. For a pilot pulling 9Gs, that is a pressure of 9 times the force of gravity; your 18 pound head is now a 162 pound head which the bones and muscles of the neck must support and maneuver. Over time, this takes a toll on the spine.

For Hofford, the herniation in his cervical spine was made evident by a knot in his back where the muscles were trying to compensate for the compromised disc. He then started to notice pain in his arms and tingling in his fingers. When these symptoms surfaced in 2014, Hofford worked with civilian and flight doctors to try to correct the problem through physical therapy.

One day in August 2016, Hofford lost strength in his right arm completely. It became clear that surgical intervention was necessary in order to correct the herniation in his cervical spine.



Courtesy photo from Col. Todd Hofford

Col. Todd Hofford, 142nd Wing Vice Commander, Portland Air National Guard Base, Ore. presented a plaque to the 114th Fighter Squadron at Kingsley Field Air National Guard Base, Ore. where he requalified to fly the F-15 Eagle post cervical disc replacement surgery. The plaque features a post-operative x-ray of Hofford’s neck, November 2019.

Historically, the medical procedure that has been performed to correct a disc herniation is known as a spinal fusion, or an anterior cervical discectomy and fusion (ACDF), wherein the herniated disc is removed and the bones on either side of the disc are fused together.

With single level spinal fusion surgery, pilots historically have been able to recover and return to flying, but the known problem with this procedure is that by taking two vertebrae that are designed to move and fusing them together, some range of motion is lost. This results in increased intradiscal pressure and hypermobility of the adjacent segments. This means there is increased movement in the segments next to the fusion to compensate for lack of motion at the fused section. This inevitably causes an increase in wear, and as a result these adjacent segments often go bad, requiring additional corrective surgery.



Col. Todd Hofford, 142nd Wing Vice Commander and newly reinstated F-15 Eagle pilot, pauses for a photo at the Portland Air National Guard Base, Oregon, Feb. 6, 2020.

The mobility limitations and the increased rate of degradation of the sections adjacent to a spinal fusion are the issues that drove medical professionals to look to motion preserving artificial disc replacement surgery.

Col. John Hall is the Air National Guard Assistant to the Command Surgeon, PACAF, and a board certified, fellowship trained orthopedic spine surgeon in private practice in a level one trauma center in Flagstaff, Arizona. Hall, having performed the third most prosthetic disc surgeries of any Spine Surgeon in the United States, is enthusiastic about what disc replacement could mean for military pilot’s abilities to return to flying after surgery and the possibility of increased quality of life well into retirement.

Unlike spinal fusions, a disc replacement doesn’t hinder natural movement of the spine. This lessens the likelihood of needing more surgeries in the segments next to the prosthetic disc because the body won’t have to compensate for lack of mobility.

“We now have the ability to put a new disc in the neck or the back that actually moves for those patients,” says Hall. “It restores normal motion at that level and it reduces the rate of adjacent segment degeneration in the neck by 80%.”

Disc replacement surgery is relatively new, however. It’s been practiced in the U.S. for approximately 12 years, and in Europe for about 20 years. Because it’s new, the Air Force only allows for pilots with cervical artificial discs to fly low G aircraft only. That is, pilots who have undergone this medical procedure are not authorized to fly fighter jets.

After learning about the benefits of disc replacement compared to spinal fusion, Hofford underwent surgery in September 2016. He made a full recovery and was cleared by a civilian Neurosurgeon to fly, but later found out that the military would not clear him to return to flying the F-15.

Hofford knew that if he wanted to fly the Eagle again, he was going to have to make a case for himself and find people who had the necessary skill set and expertise to advocate for him.

“I was determined to turn this around,” says Hofford. “I knew it was going to take time. I needed to be patient.”

Hofford worked with Mr. Randy Ziobro, physical therapist, Duro Health CEO and developer of Fit4Flight, a program designed to prevent and treat injuries caused by the strain of flying military aircraft.

Fit4Flight was brought to Portland Air National Guard Base in November of 2015. Since the program’s implementation, pilots involved in Fit4Flight have been able to maintain their flight status by working actively to prevent and address issues before they interfere with their ability to do their jobs. Ziobro’s concept for the program encompasses the entirety of a pilot’s career, from hire all the way into retirement.

“It’s about flying the Eagle and having mission readiness on 100% status for their spine,” says Ziobro. “But it’s about what their life after the military is going to be also.”

After Hofford’s surgery, Ziobro worked with him to ensure and enable post-operative recovery as well as monitor and address symptoms, should they arise. The goal was to put Hofford on track for full recovery in order to achieve the waiver to fly again.

In addition to his involvement in Fit4Flight, Hofford was also monitored and evaluated by Col. Hall who, through his unique experience, believed that getting these devices approved for flight in fighter aircraft stood to benefit both pilots and the military as a whole.

“I think I’m the only person in the world who has more than 300 hours in fighters and has put in more than 400 artificial disc replacements,” says Hall. “I realized with my experience in tactical aviation and as a spine surgeon, there was a possibility that we would be able to return these people to their full flying duties.”

For Hall, the opportunity to work with a pilot who has had the surgery and was willing to go through the arduous process of becoming cleared to fly presented the opportunity to impact the lives and careers of future fliers.

“With advances in the field of medicine in general and spine surgery in particular, we found that aviators were getting the gold-standard surgery – artificial disc replacement” says Hall. “But by doing so, it was costing them their careers, and to me that was unacceptable. So my motivation was to try to evaluate the ability to safely marry this new technology with the demands of fighter aviation.”

In 2016, Hall began a near three-year process with Hofford to get him cleared to fly the F-15 with the prosthetic in his neck. Hall researched extensively the world-wide scientific literature regarding the ability of these discs to withstand the rigors of tactical aviation, and used computer modeling to analyze crash scenario data, a proxy for the forces that the neck would experience during an ejection sequence.



Col. Todd Hofford, 142nd Wing Vice Commander and newly reinstated F-15 Eagle fighter pilot, prepares for his first official flight since undergoing cervical disc replacement surgery, December 4, 2019, at the Portland Air National Guard Base, Oregon.

“At the end of the day, I felt that although returning someone to tactical aviation with an artificial disc in their neck was not entirely risk free, the risk profile was very low,” says Hall.

He worked with the Acceleration Branch at the 711th Human Performance Wing at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base, Ohio; the Medical Standards Directorate of the Air Force in Washington D.C. as well as the Aeromedical Consult Service (ACS), the Surgeon General of the Air National Guard, and the Chief of Aerospace Medicine of the Air National Guard.

After several meetings, PowerPoints, conference calls, and reviews of the scientific data, Hofford arrived at Hall’s practice in Flagstaff for a full physical exam and x-rays. Next, Hall put him through an F-15 reevaluation in the centrifuge at Wright-Patterson AFB to see how well his neck would stand up to the forces one would experience in flight. Hofford passed these evaluations with outstanding results.

Based on Hofford’s physical performance, Hall and his team elected to grant him an unrestricted waiver to return to flying the F-15. Hofford is now the first member of a study to evaluate his physical condition as he continues to fly.

For Hofford, obtaining this waiver means being able to continue serving his country and the state of Oregon as an F-15 fighter pilot.

“It’s a privilege and an honor to be able to fly, fight and win in one of our weapon systems,” says Hofford. “I’m connected to the mission. I get to be part of protecting the homeland, and that’s extremely meaningful.”

Hofford continues to work with Fit4Flight and has remained asymptomatic so far.

Since Hofford’s requalification and return to flight, five more pilots have begun the process of being evaluated to return to fighter aviation post disc replacement surgery.

FEATURES

Youth Military Ball brings together Guard families from across the state

Story and photos by Aaron Perkins
Oregon Military Department Public Affairs

SALEM, Ore. - Glitz, glamour, lights and food – as well as a rocking good time from across multiple decades of music, were had at the annual Oregon National Guard Youth Military Ball, held at the Willamette Heritage Center on Jan 25, 2020. A packed house of guard families and kids came out to socialize with one another while taking in an eclectic mix of music from the performing DJ.

The theme of this years ball was “Dancing Through the Decades.” The event is reminiscent of a typical high school dance, except you see some adults wearing military dress uniforms, as well as attendees wearing outfits that are specific to the theme of the ball. The 1920’s era flapper seemed to be the theme of choice for most this year. There was also a smattering of other decades. You had the 60’s hippie, 80’s dance clubber, all the way to modern



day chic added to the mix. As the music progressed throughout the evening, the attendees were able to participate in some entertaining dance completions conducted by the Military Teen Panel, and a fun

ceremony to honor some select military families in attendance.

One of the honored families, Army Guard Staff Sgt. Joel Jones, a senior wheel mechanic from Detachment 1H, 145th Brigade Support Battalion out of La Grande, Oregon and his wife Kelly who were in attendance for their second time at the ball, shared their thoughts about this unique event.

“I like it, I think it’s a good deal that it gives the kids something to do. They get to put together this entire event and connects them with other military kids,” said Jones.

Kelly his wife, echoed his sentiments.

“We’re in a unique position where we’re not on [active duty] bases so they don’t see each other every day, this connects them with interactions,” she said.

The ball has been a special event for the past seven years in the state of Oregon. For the Lead Child & Youth Program Coordinator and a contractor with DysTech (Dynamic System Technology, Inc.), Hank Bauer, this ball is all about the military kids and their families in Oregon.

“Our mission is to take care of the guard-member’s kids, and with that taking care of the family. We provide different programs, events and resources to military youth whose parent is serving in the National Guard. We allow the youth to get the opportunity to connect with each other in this state, which they would not tend to be able to do otherwise,” said Bauer.



Military youth and families dance at the Youth Military Ball, held at the Willamette Heritage Center, Salem Oregon on January 25, 2020.



Kids work on arts and crafts during the Youth Military Ball, held at the Willamette Heritage Center, Salem, Oregon on January 25, 2020.

“It’s great for them to be in a room all together and realize they’re all going through the same thing,”said Bauer, referring to parents who may be currently deployed. “We provide that stabilization a little bit. A place where they feel welcomed and included -- so that’s really special.”

Bauer’s big takeaway of their program for those who are unaware of it, is that if the guard-member’s family is supported, then that is a success for the member and their mission when deployed. It brings home the notion that their child is being involved and acknowledged with the sacrifice that they are enduring.

The ball is all put together by the Oregon Military Teen Panel, who are selected through an application process, in which they then become the spokespersons for military connected youth in the state. The youth work year-round, representing all branches of service during community presentations, leadership seminars, various service-learning projects and public awareness

campaigns.

Another enthusiastic supporter of the event is Oregon Air National Guard Lt. Col. Joe Lontai, a State Partnership Program officer, attending his fourth ball, and was eager to talk about the impact of



the special evening. “Absolutely I would recommend this event to other Guardsmen. It is one of the highlights of the year coming together as a family,” he continued. “The kids know they are part of the team and are appreciated.”

The youth program and ball has reached many service members across the state, helping support and build important connections with other guard families. It’s annual attendance is a strong metric to show how important coming together, and meeting fellow guardsmen can be.

“For young [Guard] families, they should know that they have a greater network than they can probably encounter on a drill weekend. So we see each other in a different setting, which helps bring the families together,” said Lontai.



Attendees take a moment for a selfie during the Youth Military Ball at the Willamette Heritage Center, Salem, Oregon on January 25, 2020.

FEATURES

Air Force F-86 ‘Sabrejet’ reassembled at the Oregon Military Museum

Story and photos by John Hughes
Oregon Military Department Public Affairs

CLACKAMAS, Ore. - The vivid sheet metal finish and the distinctive profile of the F-86 Sabre jet reflects a unique era in U.S. military aviation history. As the first swept-wing U.S. fighter jet used in combat, the Sabre was fully capable of opposing their swept-wing Soviet MiG-15 counterparts during high-speed dogfights over the skies of Korea from 1950 to 1953.

As the Oregon Military Museum is methodically preparing for its grand re-opening, one of the centerpiece exhibits will be an F-86 that was recently reassembled at the museum’s home at Camp Withycombe. The transonic jet, which has been in storage during renovations, will represent two distinct pieces of Oregon military history for visitors.

During the Korean War future NASA astronauts John Glenn, Buzz Aldrin, and Wally Schirra flew the airframe. In total, there were 40 Korean War ‘Aces’ and one of the last to earn this title was U.S. Air Force Capt. Clyde A. Curtin, assigned to the 335th Fighter-Interceptor Squadron and a native of Portland, Oregon.



Mark Smith and his partner Karen Barrow with Century Aviation work with a team of volunteers, as they reassemble an F-86 Sabre jet at the Oregon Military Museum, Camp Withycombe, February 25, 2020.

For the next 20 years, aircraft number 12892 was retired before being acquired by the Oregon National Guard. Since 2012, it has been disabled and in storage as the Museum has undertaken an extensive renovation process.



One of the wings of the F-86 is moved into place as the aircraft is reassembled on Feb. 25.

The Oregon Air National Guard also flew the F-86 during the same period. On February 10, 1951, the 123rd Fighter-Interceptor Squadron was federalized and reassigned to the 325th Fighter-Interceptor Wing of the Western Air Defense Force.

Aircraft number 12892 has an interesting history. With a team of local volunteers overseen by the restoration team from Century Aviation, the jet was assembled over the last week of February of 2020. They specialize in working with museums as consultants to restore, install and handle aviation artifacts.

Oregon Military Museum Director and curator Tracy Thoenness was excited yet anxious seeing the aircraft reassembled. Watching the aircraft being reconstructed, she described its significance while describing key aviation details of the Korean War.

“Clyde [Curtis] recorded his 4th and 5th ‘Kills’ a week before the Armistice (July 27, 1953), and his aircraft was just a few serial numbers away from the F-86 we are restoring here for the Oregon Military Museum,” she explained. “Both this aircraft and the one Curtis flew were part of the same production series and were assigned to the 4th Fighter Wing, the most successful aviation unit during the war.”

The airplane served on the U.S. inventory until 1956 and then acquired by the Republic of Korea until 1963.

Century Aviation has worked on restoration undertakings all over the country to include projects at the Museums of Flight in Seattle and most nobility on the ‘Spruce Goose’ at the Evergreen Aviation & Space Museum in McMinnville, Oregon.

“We started our own business 28 years ago after working on the ‘Spruce Goose,’ said Mark Smith. Along with his partner Karen Barrow, the company is based out of East Wenatchee, Washington but they spend a majority of time on the road.

The work they undertake is often threefold: from building replicas to disassembling and reassembling aircraft, and frequently working as consultants to larger projects.

“Our specialty is the beginning of flight with the Wright Brothers up to WWII; steel tube and fabric but as soon as I say that then we’re working on an F-18 Hornet or like we are doing here with the F-86.”

For the F-86, they did not need to manufacture any of the parts as the airframe was well preserved during its time in storage. Like most local projects, they rely on a few skilled volunteers to help on the final assemblage of the airframe.

“Normally it’s nice to have about four or five volunteers on a project like this but often the word gets out that something exciting is happening so those numbers can swell pretty quickly,” Smith grinned. “With a project like this, sometimes you get more than enough ‘helpers.’



The weapons system on the F-86 Sabre is opened for inspection during the aircraft's final assembly.

“The preservation and restoration is important to any artifact that a museum has for its collection,” said Barrow. “Preserving that legacy can peak someone’s interest to know more about a particular period of time and what that article represents.”

With many unique pieces, presentations and exhibits, the Oregon Military Museum hopes to capture that same level of excitement when the renovations are completed for the public.

“With all the different eras represented here, there will be so much to see and learn from: to the archives, library, and exhibits, when it comes to Oregon’s military history- there is going to be so much to look to at,” Barrow emphasized.

“When the museum opens, people will have a blast!”



The two larger sections of the F-86 Sabre jet are brought together by a hoist and the aircraft is reassembled on February 26, 2020, at the Oregon Military Museum at Camp Withycombe, Clackamas, Oregon.

AZUWUR

From the Farm to the Skies: Silverton resident and WWII pilot remembered

AZUWUR OREGON NATIONAL GUARD

Story by Aaron Perkins
Oregon Military Department Pubic Affairs

SILVERTON, Ore. – Former WWII pilot Arthur L. Gregg passed away just a month shy of his 101st birthday on January 16, 2020. Gregg was one of Oregon’s oldest WWII veterans. Born on February 16, 1919, Gregg grew up on a farm in Fredrickstown, Ohio, watching planes fly over his family farm while dreaming of becoming a pilot one day himself.



After a few years of college, Gregg could see that the world was changing and that war was brewing once again. Instead of being drafted, he decided to enlist in the Army Air Corps in April 1941 and was determined to become a pilot.



A photo of Art Gregg, one of the state’s oldest World War II veterans, during his time in the military is shown in a book at his home in Silverton. (Photo: MICHAELA ROMÁN / Statesman Journal)

“It was obvious that the U.S. was going to be drawn into it, that’s when I decided that I wouldn’t be drafted. I enlisted.” Gregg said, last year during his 100th birthday celebration.

Reflecting on her father’s service during his 100th birthday last year, Gregg’s daughter, Ann Snelling said, “He was in engineering school for less than six weeks, well, Pearl Harbor happened, and that changed everything”. She continued, “Many of the guys that he had gone through pilot training with had gone to various places, and he was one of the later people to be assigned. He wanted to be part of the action.”

After the Pearl Harbor attack, Gregg then applied to become a pilot. He began at Randolph Field in San Antonio, Texas for pilot training, then to Kelly Field for advanced training. He received orders in April of 1942, and shipped out on an aircraft carrier to New Delhi India, then onto a base stationed 20 miles south of Ledo, India, where he served as a P-40 pilot in the China, Burma, India theater.

The majority of his duty was flying the India-China Ferry – commonly referred to as “The Hump” – which was to escort larger planes carrying cargo to troops in China and protect them from enemy fighters. The base was under constant threat of being attacked by the Japanese, as it was a strategic location in the supply chain for bringing supplies to the allies in China.

“I think it’s incredible,” said son-in-law Le Snelling, last year at Gregg’s 100th. “We lost a lot of airmen in

combat in World War II. The attrition rate was pretty high. ‘The Hump’ was a dangerous place to fly because of the altitude and the mountain peaks.”

In 1943 Gregg was assigned to Selfridge Field in Michigan after completing 69 combat missions and earning a Distinguished Flying Cross. It was there he spent the rest of World War II training French pilots and rose to the rank of Captain.

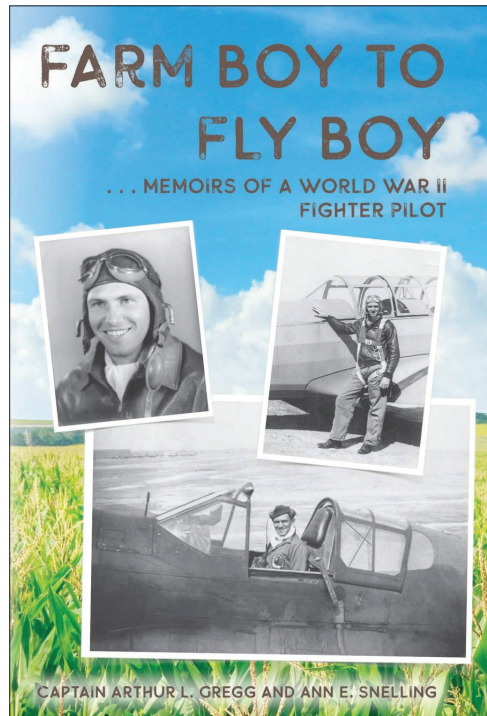
Life after the military

He returned home to the family farm after being discharged in 1945, and purchased a farm not far from his parents, where he worked until he sold the land and moved with his wife to Silverton, Oregon in 1994. Besides farming Gregg was active on the local township and fire district boards, along with teaching Sunday school and his local church. When his wife Marguerite passed away in 2004, after 58 yrs of marriage, Art moved in with his daughter and son-in-law outside of Silverton.

Another highlight of his life, that coincided with the celebration of his 100th birthday last year, was

the revised publication of his memoirs entitled “Farm Boy to Fly Boy”. Which was his firsthand account of the life of one World War II fighter pilot who flew the “hump” in the India-China-Burma theater.

He is survived by his son Charles (Joyce) Gregg of Springfield Ohio, daughter Ann (Le) Snelling of Silverton, stepdaughter-in-law Ruth Ewers of Salt Lake City, brothers Stanley and Carrol of Ohio. There are 7 surviving grandchildren, 10 great-grandchildren, and 1 great-great grandchild.

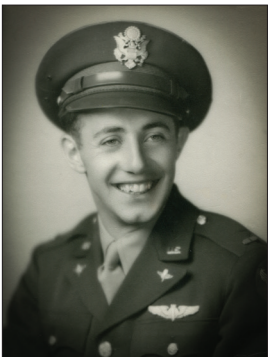


The book published by Captain Arthuer L. Gregg and Ann E. Snelling, about his memories as a fighter pilot in WWII.

Pausing to honor an extraordinary calling to serve

Story by John Hughel
Oregon Military Department Pubic Affairs

BEAVERTON, Ore. - Who doesn’t love a good story, especially one that’s right in your own back yard? Service members of the military have all met an older veteran or two during their careers with a distinct experience that resonates uniquely from others. Recently, I was fortuitous to meet one of those veterans that answered two separate but powerful callings to serve others.



At age 99, Vincent Cunniff has seen the world change on a variety of levels, particularly in the world of aviation and flight, something he would become

exceptionally familiar with serving in the United States Army Air Force (USAAF) during World War II.

On February 27, 2020 family members and staff at Sisters of St. Mary Oregon surprised Cunniff, who is now a resident at Maryville retirement community, with an award ceremony to honor his efforts during his service in the USAAF.

When the Japanese attacked Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941, Cunniff was an engineering student at Oregon State University and learned of the surprise assault after returning from mass. He was also a member of the ROTC taking part in a rapid mobilization; from the campus going into imminent Blackout conditions at night, and soldiers and cavalry bivouacked on campus at Bell Field.

Cunniff would eventually join the USAAF or as he described, “the stepchild of the Army,” during the build-up during the war years. He became an armaments officer, commonly known as a “bombardier,” responsible for the German military and industrial aerial targets while assigned to the 392nd Bomb Group out of Wendling, England.

During the spring and summer of 1944, Cunniff flew 30 combat-missions aboard the B-24 Liberator surviving some of the most horrific air battles in the history of the USAAF. He eventually returned to the U.S. to start pilot training and had just finished the first level of instruction when the war ended in August 1945.



Photo courtesy of Sisters of St. Mary Oregon
Vincent Cunniff along with his bombing crew during WWII.

For his service, Cunniff was awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross, Air Medal, and the ETO Medal for service in the European Theater of

Operations. Yet during the surprise ceremony held at St. Mary’s other service awards were presented that he was unaware he had earned.

The idea for the ceremony came from family members Susan Blake, Cunniff’s niece and Dennis Kreutzer, whose mother and Cunniff were cousins and neighbors growing up in Marshfield, Oregon.

Kreutzer reached out to Oregon Army National Guard Staff Sgt. Josh Flores with the Honor Guard to assist in presenting the medals in a symbolic manner. After a few phone calls and emails, it became my distinct fortune as a member of the Air Force to present these new awards to Vincent Cunniff.

As many staff members came together to take part in the surprise, Cunniff was welcomed into a room of several friends and family members and a local television affiliate KGW-8 for the awards ceremony. The event was deeply touching to everyone involved as I read the orders and pinned on four of the awards sent to Cunniff by the U.S. Air Force.

The end of the war meant there was not as much need for pilots.

Cunniff, like so many other veterans at the time, now faced new decisions. One of the promises he made to himself during his time in flying combat missions was entering the priesthood.

“If I flew and lived through the war, I would strive to be a candidate for the priesthood,” he described to Stacy Kean when she interviewed him for a recent account of his war years for the “Spirit Newsletter.”

After one mission, in particular, Cunniff said he pulled a fatal piece of shrapnel from the front of his flak jacket near his chest, “It’s a strange thing that I survived,” he recalls now, reflecting on his war experience.

Cunniff would eventually enter the seminary in Denver and was later ordained as a priest in 1953, making his way back to Portland. His service as a Catholic Priest took him to Medford, Oakridge, St. Joseph in Salem, Immaculate Heart in Stayton, St. Peter’s in Eugene, St. Peter’s in Portland and Our Lady of the Dunes in Florence.

His philosophy to serve as a priest, much like his desire to serve his nation during the war was simple, “The Lord didn’t look for the brilliant ones, and he took fishermen--for people who answered the call.”

His experience during the war influenced his life too, looking for ways to “settle our differences without war.”

As his life has come full circle and he enjoys his golden years in the company of those at Marysville, it was enjoyable to see his community of faith acknowledge him for the choices he made after serving in the military.

While pinning his medals, it was a delight watching his sense of surprise of the moment, mixed into his recollections of his military service to those on hand.

“My combat years are really engraved in my memory, both the good and the bad,” he said to those honoring him. “The good ones, like today’s are the ones that really matter.”



Photo courtesy of Sisters of St. Mary Oregon
Dennis Kreutzer (left) with Vincent Cunniff look at photos from his time in the military and when he was an ordained priest.