



July / August 2008

Jim Willis, Director

www.oregon.gov/odva

# Families Remember The Fallen at Afghan-Iraqi Memorial

By Tom Mann

In honor of fallen service members, family, friends, and veterans gathered at the Afghan-Iraqi Freedom Memorial May 29, to unveil five new names engraved on the wall, bringing the total names on the wall to 114 since combat operations began.

Speakers spoke of honor and sacrifice on a sunny Salem day, but the words could not console the families whose tears were visible on cheeks and through sunglasses. Mothers, fathers, wives, and sisters held on to each other as the names of the fallen were called out. The Grand Ronde Color Guard, the Patriot Guard Riders, the Oregon Department of Veterans' Affairs staff, and veterans from throughout the state stood in support of the newest Gold Star families.

After the ceremony, which included a flyover by the Oregon Army National Guard, family and friends took etching paper and graphite to make rubbings of the names on the wall – one more memory of their fallen heroes.

Each Memorial Day and Veterans Day names are added to the Afghan-Iraqi Freedom Memorial if necessary. This Memorial Day, the following names were added:

- Sgt. Joshua C. Brennan
- Sgt. Zachary W. McBride
- Sgt. Mikeal W. Miller
- Pfc. Joshua A.R. Young
- LCpl. Dustin L. Canham

Cover Photo: Sarah McBride works on a rubbing of her brother Zachary's name from the Afghan-Iraqi Freedom Memorial wall.

PHOTO BY DAN LONG



# Veterans Services Task Force to Hold Town Halls in 17 Cities

The Governor's Task Force on Veterans Services will hold town hall meetings in 17 Oregon cities to take input from veterans and the community regarding veterans services, gaps in those services, and improvements that can be made for Oregon veterans.

"We are very excited to get on the road and talk with the veteran community," ODVA Director Jim Willis said. "The tour will bring us to nearly every corner of the state," he said.

With the signing of Executive Order 08-08, Governor Ted Kulongoski formed the Task Force to compile, review and evaluate current veterans policies, procedures and programs. The Task Force is charged with developing recommendations for improvements to ensure that Oregon veterans have access to the services they need.

SEE TASK FORCE ON PAGE 3

## IN THIS ISSUE

- Director's Message ..... Page 2
- Blue Star Memorial ..... Page 3
- Desegregation Anniversary ..... Page 5
- Women Veterans' Conference ..... Page 6
- Reunions ..... Page 8
- MOH Recipients to Attend Gala ..... Page 9
- Veterans' Service Officers ..... Page 12

## Director's Message



# IN MEMORIAM

During the first week of June, Oregon's veteran community suffered the loss of two of our veteran advocate champions of the first order. Walter Crews, age 79, passed away at his home in Aurora on June 1st and Richard "Dick" Lucht, age 75, passed away at his home in McMinnville on June 5th.

Both of these distinguished veterans had been very active in the State Legislature on behalf of their fellow veterans and both served as members and as chair of the United Veterans' Groups of Oregon (UVGO).

Walter was a retired U.S. Air Force Master Sergeant and Dick was a U.S. Navy Seabee and was honorably discharged at the rank of 3rd Class Petty Officer. Both Walter and Dick were Korean War veterans and were very proud of their service.

Walter was a member of the Non-Commissioned Officers Association (NCOA) and had served as State Chairman of that group. During his membership, Walter

earned nearly every award for service that can be bestowed by the NCOA. He also served as a member of the Governor's Advisory Committee to the Director of ODVA from March of 2000 until March of 2008. During his service on the committee he was elected Secretary, Vice Chair and Chair of the group. Walter also served as the state Secretary-Treasurer of the Korean War Veterans' Association (KWVA).

Walter is survived by his wife Bernice. Services were held for Walter on June 8th in Aurora.

Dick was a member of Disabled American Veterans (DAV) and in addition to serving as the State Commander, he was serving as the National Executive Committeeman for Alaska, Idaho, Oregon and Washington at the time of his death. Dick was also a member of AMVETS, American Legion and VFW. Dick was appointed to the Governor's Advisory Committee to the Director of the Oregon Department of Veterans' Affairs in March of 1993 and served until March of 2001. He held the offices of Secretary, Vice Chair and Chair of the committee during his tenure. Dick's favorite veterans' cause was the Oregon Veterans' Home in The Dalles. It was Dick's hard work with the Oregon Legislature that led to the creation of the Home that opened in 1997.

Dick is survived by his wife Nita. Services for



Walter Crews

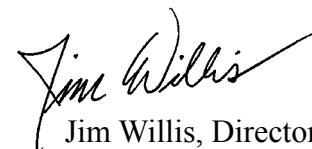


Dick Lucht

Dick were held on June 9th in McMinnville.

The many cards of condolence received by both of these families and the attendance at their services were a testament to how broadly these great veterans had touched the lives of their fellow veterans and their families. They both believed strongly in service above self and lived their lives in that fashion until their final days. I join the Governor and the men and women of the Oregon Department of Veterans' Affairs when I say thank you and may you rest in peace.

In closing let me say, in memory of both Walter and Dick, how much we appreciate your continued support for the Oregon Veterans' Home and the great senior veterans and their spouses who live there in dignity and honor. May we also remember to take a moment to honor our country as it celebrates its 232nd birthday this July 4th.

  
Jim Willis, Director

## Military Veterans Appreciation Days

The Oregon State Fair is once again recognizing servicemembers and veterans. Veterans Appreciation Days is slated for Friday August 22 and Saturday August 23. The Fair in

Salem runs through Sept. 1 (Labor Day) and features free parking for all eleven days.

The Oregon Department of Veterans' Affairs (ODVA) will staff a booth to meet and greet veterans attending the Fair. The Fair will honor Oregon's military servicemembers and veterans with free admission on Veterans' Appreciation Days. Simply provide a copy of the 2008 Veterans Voucher at the gate for admission.

Big-name concerts will stage entertainers sure to light up the stars in the capital city of Oregon. Big stars include Tracy Lawrence, Gary Allan, Poison, Weird Al Yankovic, and Willie Nelson. Concerts are held at the L.B. Day outdoor Amphitheatre and the Indoor Pavilion.

Download the 2008 Veterans' Voucher from the ODVA website dedicated to the Oregon State Fair, [www.oregon.gov/ODVA/StateFair.shtml](http://www.oregon.gov/ODVA/StateFair.shtml). Veterans are urged to attend the Fair, especially on Veterans' Appreciation Days!

Call the Oregon State Fair at 503-947-3247 or go online at [www.oregonstatefair.org](http://www.oregonstatefair.org) for admission prices, hours, special discounts, and scheduled theme days. Discounts are available for those who purchase tickets in advance. Ticket sales began June 14 through the State Fair and at all participating Safeway TicketsWest outlets, online at [www.ticketswest.com](http://www.ticketswest.com).



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Veterans'  
Appreciation  
Days

August 22 & 23, 2008



# Blue Star Memorial Adorns Albany Veterans Site

by Christopher Dauterman

A new Blue Star Memorial has been erected at the Linn County Veterans memorial, making it the 63rd in the state. Begun in 1945 following World War II, Blue Stars recognized families with members serving in the military.

The event began with a dedication flyover, followed by American Legion Post 10's Color Guard posting of the Colors. Jim Willis, Director of the Oregon Department of Veterans' Affairs, emceed the event. Charles L. (Larry) Deibert, Civilian Aide to the Secretary of the Army, delivered the featured keynote address.

A former U.S. Army captain and helicopter pilot, Deibert was awarded the Distinguished Service Cross for heroism during the Vietnam War. He spoke of the sacrifice of the men and women serving in the all-volunteer armed forces.

The addition of the Blue Star Memorial signifies another step towards the restoration and development work of the volunteer memorial association. These volunteers have worked tirelessly with the Albany Parks and Recreation Department to improve what was once a small war memorial near the southwest corner of Timber Linn Memorial Park.



Also providing remarks at the event were Ed Hodney, Director, Albany Parks and Recreation; Jan Iseli, Chair, State Blue Star Memorials; Sherry Cossey, State President Oregon State Federation of Garden Clubs, Inc.; and Norma Winter, Director, Santiam District Garden Clubs. Bob Gore of the Veterans of Foreign Wars, provided a military tribute.

In 1917, Army Capt. Robert L. Queissner, of the 5th Ohio Infantry, designed and patented the blue star flag. Blue Star Memorials were first placed nationwide in 1945 after World War II. During that war, the practice of displaying the service flag became widespread. The Blue Star Mothers of America was founded in 1942 as a veteran service organization and was part of a movement to provide care packages to military members serving overseas and also provide assistance to families who encountered hardships as a result of their son or husband serving during the war.

The association continues to sell bricks to anyone wanting to commemorate a person's military service. To purchase a brick, call Bob Gore at 541-974-6936.

# Veterans' Remains Given Honors at National Cemetery

EAGLE POINT – The first 14 identified veterans' remains were given military honors and interment at Eagle Point National Cemetery on June 19. Three of the 14 remains are World War I veterans, while the remaining 11 span from World War II to Vietnam.

"We are working diligently to locate, identify and provide proper military burials for these veterans' remains," said Oregon Department of Veterans' Affairs Director Jim Willis. "It is very important that we honor these veterans by laying them to rest in Oregon's national cemeteries."

Of 3,490 remains found at the Oregon State Hospital, seven have been identified as veterans. Further research is being conducted.

"My department is working with the federal VA to help determine which of these remains are those of veterans so that we can ensure they are properly laid to rest with full military honors," Willis said. "We will continue to work on this issue until all of our veterans are found and properly honored for their service."

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## TASK FORCE FROM PAGE 1

Town hall meetings already have been held in Burns, Bend, Florence, Philomath, Portland, Aloha, and Myrtle Point. "After the tour is complete, the Task Force will gather again in August to begin prioritizing the various initiatives," Willis said. "We then will bring these initiatives to the Legislature next January for action."

The Town Hall meetings will begin at 7 p.m. and will be held in the following locations:

- July 1, Roseburg**  
National Guard Armory, 111 NW General Ave.
- July 10, Eugene**  
Lane Community College, Building 19, Room 250.
- July 14, Camp Rilea/Warrenton**  
Astoria Event Center, 894 Commercial St.
- July 17, La Grande**  
National Guard Armory, 401 12<sup>th</sup> St.
- July 18, Pendleton**  
National Guard Armory, 2110 NW 56<sup>th</sup> Drive.
- July 19, Madras**  
Jefferson County Commissioner's Conference Room, 66 'D' St.
- July 24, Hood River / The Dalles**  
National Guard Armory, 1590 12<sup>th</sup> St.
- July 28, Ashland**  
National Guard Armory, 1420 E. Main St.
- July 29, Klamath Falls**  
Kingsley Field, 222 Arnold Road, Kingsley Field, Room TBD.

# VA Medical Center Hosts Welcome Home Celebration for OIF/OEF Vets

Nearly 800 veterans of Operations Iraqi and Enduring Freedom, and their families, were welcomed by Portland's VA Medical Center and treated to a day at Portland's Oaks Park on May 31. Families were served a free picnic-style lunch and also given free access to the park's amusement rides.

As the guests were lined up for lunch, dignitaries reminded them of the importance of taking care of all veterans through improved and increased benefits and programs. Oregon Sen. Ron Wyden said he is working to improve veterans' benefits, especially the GI Bill.

"Military volunteers who dodge the same bullets at the same time should receive the same benefits," Wyden said. "I want to make sure all of our men and women in uniform are treated with the same respect."

Currently, National Guard and Reserve members who have served in the Middle East

since "9/11" receive fewer benefits than those in the regular armed forces. Wyden has guided the GI Bill through the Senate and into the House of Representatives for consideration.

In part, the bill recognizes the service of all veterans – not just primarily career-service veterans. If passed it will fully reward active duty service performed by National Guard and Reserve by giving them educational benefits based upon all of their active service since "9/11" instead of just one tour.

ODVA Director, Jim Willis thanked and praised all veterans for their service and said, "You've done all you've been asked to do and now we want to help you and your families. You all deserve and should receive every benefit we can offer."

Numerous information tables were hosted by organizations, businesses, and colleges that offered information and assistance to veterans.

# Grand Ronde Tribe Honors Local Veterans

The Confederated Tribes of the Grand Ronde honored 53 veterans this past Memorial Day with Governor Ted Kulongoski as the keynote speaker. At right, Gov. Kulongoski and ODVA Advisory Committee member Gene LaBonte stand in front of the Marine monument. The following names were added to the veteran memorial located in Grand Ronde:

## Marine Corps:

*Alan S. Ream, Ted Kulongoski, Eric Hansen, William E. Felt, Walter A. Ramage II, Jason Hermens and Daniel W. Gurr.*

## Air Force:

*Kiamichi Isham, Alva N. Jackson, Justin T. McDonald, Donald S. Taylor, Nora L. Smith and Bill Stam.*

## Navy:

*Donald L. Shenk, Robert C. Duncan, Dennis Ellis, David E. Fox, John R. Bauhach, Robert C. Godfrey, Max H. Gordon, Richard Hedrick, Michael A. Ostensen, Alvin W. Hilderbrandt, Kenneth G. McIntosh Jr., Robert C. Morey, Ivan L. Petersen, Roy Pomroy, William J. Soderberg, Arthur W. Soderberg, George Davis, Wes Weathers, Ira M. House and Bill White.*

## Army:

*Emery J. Billings, Bryan B. Bigham, Wayne Chulik, Kenneth W. Green, John C. Henderson, William H. Hurl, Charles E. Miller, Darrell K. Miller, Robert Olson, Michelle R. Ring, Curt Russell, Ernest Schmidt, Jimmie L. Shaw, Larry F. Parker, Christian M. Tinney, Ernest Walden, Curtis L. Wright, Clifford Day, Max Hoffman and Victor H. Banke.*

PHOTO BY ROBIN STECKLEY



## “Veterans’ Night at the Elks” is a Place for Veterans to Meet and Seek Services

With no local veterans organizations, veterans in the Monmouth and Independence communities may have felt a little isolated. They were not able to connect with each other or to veterans services to help them. However, that changed in February with the implementation of Veterans’ Night at the Elks.

Originated by Paul Evans, Policy Advisor to the governor, and the Oregon Department of Veterans’ Affairs, Veterans’ Night at the Elks connects veterans to service providers, such as ODVA, the Oregon Employment Department, the Oregon Military Department, and the U.S. Department of Labor.

Every Thursday from 2 to 6 p.m., veterans meet with service providers to find out information about VA claims and health care, employment, and reintegration. From 6 to 10 p.m., veterans are invited to meet with other area veterans and service organizations, such as American Legion, AMVETS, and the Veterans of Foreign Wars.

“This is a great outreach program,” said Jim Willis, Director of the Oregon Department of Veterans’ Affairs. “It’s important that veterans can access these vital services and get a chance to visit with other veterans in the community. I especially appreciate the leadership of ODVA Salem Claims Office Manager Dave Cooley in this effort.”



**Gina Thomas, a Veteran Service Officer with the Oregon Department of Veterans’ Affairs (ODVA), assists a Navy veteran with benefits at the Independence Elks Lodge.**

Veterans’ Night at the Elks is a pilot project that may be expanded to other cities if successful. Willis added that many veterans who otherwise may not have been helped have been provided with services they had not yet received. “If we can help just one veteran get the benefits he or she deserves, we’ve done some good,” he said.

The cities of Independence, Dallas, Monmouth, and Polk County communities have also supported the effort. “Getting local support from the cities and county is very important to making this a successful project,” Willis said. “This is a team effort between federal, state, and local government with community veteran advocates.”

PHOTO BY CHRISTOPHER DAUTERMAN

## President Signs Heroes Bill

### Home Loan Program Secured by Feds

President George W. Bush has signed House Resolution 6081, the Heroes Earnings Assistance and Relief Tax Act of 2008, which among other things secures Oregon’s state veterans’ home loan program.

The bill increases the issuance limit on mortgage revenue bonds to \$100 million for veterans in Oregon, Alaska and Wisconsin. This means the state veterans’ home loan programs in these states will be able to maintain a stable funding source for these loans.

“We are very pleased this bill passed and has been signed,” Director of the Oregon Department of Veterans’ Affairs Jim Willis said. “Guaranteeing the future of our home loan program ensures veterans in Oregon will have a way to achieve the American dream of owning a home,” he said.

Prior to the bill’s passage, there was concern that states veterans’ home loan programs would run out of money due to loaning money right to the cap, which had been \$25 million. With the increased cap of \$100 million, these home loan programs will continue to have money to loan well into the future.

“This issue has been on our radar for some time,” Willis said. “I want to thank our congressional delegation for their hard work, our partners in Wisconsin and Alaska, and the President for supporting this legislation.”

# ODVA to Celebrate Desegregation of the Armed Forces

The Oregon Department of Veterans' Affairs and the Oregon Military Department will celebrate the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the desegregation of the armed forces Saturday July 26, at 10 a.m. at the Anderson Readiness Center in Salem.

On July 26, 1948, President Harry Truman signed Executive Order 9981, which states, "It is hereby declared to be the policy of the President that there shall be equality of treatment and opportunity for all persons in the armed services without regard to race, color, religion, or national origin."

While desegregation did not happen overnight, the military services began moving toward desegregation after President Truman's Executive Order, eventually leading to an integrated force.

"Most people don't know that the military was the first institution in America to abolish the indefensible act of segregation," said Jim Willis,



**The United States Armed Forces has been desegregated since the 1948 "Executive Order 9981," signed by Harry S. Truman.**

Director of the Oregon Department of Veterans' Affairs. "While we've not yet eliminated racism in our country, we need to celebrate accomplishments such as the desegregation of the armed forces to reinforce the message that we cannot stand divided."

Oregon Adjutant General, Maj. Raymond F. Reese, has served in the integrated military for most of his adult life. "Nearly 40 years ago my command lost five soldiers in engagements with the North Vietnamese Army. One was a black sharecropper's son, one was a redneck from Tennessee, one was a Puerto Rican from New York, one was a drafted upper-middle class medic from St. Louis, and one was a Mexican-American from the Rio Grande Valley," he said. "Their honorable service and sacrifice is an indelible statement about and affirmation of the right of all Americans regardless of race to the privileges of citizenship in this great democracy."

All veterans, especially veterans of color, are invited to attend the ceremony. The Anderson Readiness Center is located at 3225 State Street Salem. For more information, please contact Mike Allegre at 503-373-2389.

## Veteran Earns High School Diploma

By Mike Allegre

In front of nearly 1,500 people, including 296 graduating seniors from Hillsboro High School, on June 6, Jim Mockley finally received his diploma and became a member of the class of 2008. The rest of the story is that at age 55, it had taken him 38 years to receive it.

Through a legislatively mandated program administered by the ODVA and the Oregon Department of Education, Mockley was able to receive his diploma because his military service precluded him from earning it in 1970.

Mockley said getting his diploma is very humbling. "This is their night. These are graduates who stayed in school for 12 years and most know where they're going, which wasn't me in 1969 when I joined the Army."

A data technician for Qwest Communications, he has worked in the telecommunications field for 38 years. Mockley joined the Army in September 1969, and was given a medical hardship discharge when his dad suffered a stroke and could no longer manage their dairy farm. After wanting to serve in the military, as his dad had, the 17 year-old Mockley returned home to work and later earn his GED in 1972.

Mockley is a few credits shy of a bachelor's degree in business management from the University of Phoenix. "My wife has earned her Masters degree and has inspired me to graduate," he said.

Following the processional to seat the 2008 graduating class, Hillsboro School's Superintendent Jeremy Lyon welcomed the guests and congratulated the seniors. With Mockley seated on stage with other distinguished guests, Lyon told the story of a young man who didn't graduate, but was compelled to serve his country and fulfill his responsibilities to his family. He then brought the crowd to its feet after saying, "It is now my honor to introduce

to you another graduate of the class of 2008, Mr. James M. Mockley."

Later, when the final diploma was handed out, Mockley was then called forward to receive his. Fellow-graduate Radu Bobirnac said he and his classmates are very happy for Mockley.

"I love it. He's very brave," Bobirnac said, "and bravery isn't something that always requires one to go into battle. It's something you do that is extraordinary or uncomfortable. He deserves his diploma," he said.

"Like my wife said, this is one more thing I can scratch off of my bucket list."

**At right: Jim Mockley proudly displays his high school diploma as he stands along side of fellow graduate, Brittany Roach.**

PHOTO BY MIKE ALLEGRE



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# Tri-State Women Veterans Conference a Big Success

By Robin Steckley and Mike Allegre

Women veterans from Washington, Oregon, Idaho, Alaska, and Arizona came together for the nation's first ever Tri-State Women Veterans' Conference in Pendleton, April 18 and 19. The event drew more than 360 female veterans ages 24 to 87.

The two-day conference offered workshops, special guest speakers, a variety of vendors, and entertainment. Val Conley, Oregon's Women Veterans Coordinator and Administrator of the ODVA's Veterans' Services Division feels that each state should provide an outreach event that is specific to the needs and concerns of women veterans.

"There are many services and programs that are available to women who served in the military and most aren't aware they exist," Conley said. "Some women don't realize that they are in fact veterans."

Margaret Thorngate, the Region 2 Representative for the WAVES national organization, wrote Conley to praise the conference organizers.

"The Memorial Service and Oregon National Guard presentations were very touching. We learned a lot about today's military and some of them learned how it was in World War II," Thorngate wrote. "It was a great exchange of information and age did not seem to make a difference."

In another letter, Katheryn Shamrell of Portland saw the reaction to the event from another women's view.

"I sat with 84-year-old Muriel Whalley both days, as she shared her memories of going across the English Channel to Normandy on a landing craft and working as a telephone operator. She sang for the GI's on the ship before they left England because she knew the lyrics of every popular song. Muriel kept a stiff upper lip as she sang the 'White Cliffs of Dover' because

as she looked out at the sea of soldiers before the Battle of the Bulge, she knew many would never see those cliffs again. But, in over 60 years she'd never cried about it until she heard the Two Sisters Trio sing the song on Friday night. Then she again saw the faces of those boys looking up at her."

Each veteran was presented with the Oregon Honorable Service Medal, which honors the military service and sacrifice of Oregonians.

The Department has partnered with other state and federal agencies to host biennial women veterans' conferences in Oregon for the last 16 years. In an attempt to provide greater access, Oregon Women Veterans' Conferences

have selected various locations for the every-other-year conferences such as Salem, Albany, Portland and Grand Ronde.



PHOTO BY ROBIN STECKLEY

*Tzena Scarborough, an Army veteran, lights a candle for the fallen at the April 18-19, 2008 Tri-State Women Veterans' Conference.*

## Deschutes County Fair Free for Vets

Deschutes County Fair officials will be honoring the service of all veterans by offering them free admittance to the fair, July 30 to August 3, in Redmond.

The free pass is only for the veteran and is good for admission on all four days. Veterans will need the proper identification to gain free entry. That identification includes a copy of their DD 214, a veteran's organizational membership card and photo ID, or a valid military ID card for all active duty personnel, Guard, Reserve, and retired military members.

The fairgrounds are located off of Highway 97 on Yew Avenue. If you have questions, call 541-385-3214 or Deschutes County Fair and Expo, 541-548-2711. To reserve RV parking on-site, call 541-548-2711, ext.7949.

## 6th Annual TROOP AND VETERAN'S APPRECIATION DAY

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*Combining community efforts in Oregon & Washington*

# Sailors' Agent Orange Win Reversed by Appeals Court

by Tom Philpott, *Military.com*

A federal appeals court has delivered a stinging defeat to 'Blue Water' sailors and Coast Guard veterans of the Vietnam War who have been fighting for disability compensation from illnesses they contend resulted from shipboard exposure to deadly herbicides including Agent Orange.

A panel for the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Federal Circuit ruled 2-1, on May 8, that the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) acted lawfully and reasonably in 2002 when it cut off Agent Orange-related disability payments and began to deny new claims from veterans who served on ships off the coast of Vietnam but never actually 'set foot' in-country.

The decision reversed a 2006 ruling by the U.S. Court of Appeals for Veterans Claims in the case of Haas v. Nicholson. That panel unanimously rejected as "unduly restrictive" VA's interpretation, by revised regulation, of qualifying "service" in Vietnam under the Agent Orange Act.

The U.S. military sprayed herbicides over Vietnam from 1962 through 1971 to strip away

foliage under which enemy forces could hide.

Over the last two decades, Congress and VA expanded the list of illnesses linked to Agent Orange exposure and for which veterans can receive disability compensation. The list of ailments includes prostate cancer, type-2 diabetes, non-Hodgkin's lymphoma, certain soft-tissue sarcomas, chloracne and skin conditions, Hodgkin's disease, various respiratory cancers, leukemia and multiple myeloma.

VA officials worried that if the 2006 Haas decision survived a government appeal, the pool of veterans eligible for disability pay, if they contract illnesses tied Agent Orange, would jump by 830,000 and VA benefit costs would rise by \$3.3 billion over 10 years.

But from 1991 until early 2002, the VA was paying Agent Orange-related claims filed by sailors who only served off waters of Vietnam, said Barton F. Stichman, an attorney with the National Veterans Legal Services Program.

Haas served on an ammunition supply ship, USS Mount Katmai from August 1967 to April 1969. The ship operated off Vietnam, but didn't dock there and he never went ashore. By 2001,

Haas had developed type-2 diabetes, peripheral neuropathy and loss of eyesight, which he claimed were caused by herbicide exposure off Vietnam.

His regional VA office denied the claim, saying service connection couldn't be established because Haas had not gone ashore. The Board of Veterans Appeals agreed. It turned out VA had reinterpreted the Agent Orange Act of 1991 regarding the phrase "service in the Republic of Vietnam," requiring at least a brief visit on land to be considered exposed to Agent Orange and eligible for disability pay for herbicide-related ailments.

The veterans' claims court reviewed Haas' appeal with a three-judge panel so the decision would affect all claims filed by Blue Water veterans. It found the VA was being too restrictive, in part because ships along the coast might have been exposed to at least as much toxin from windborne coastal area spraying as service members deemed exposed from brief visits ashore.

Learn more about the lawsuit online at [www.nvlsp.org](http://www.nvlsp.org) or at [bluewaternavy.org](http://bluewaternavy.org).

# National Guard Reintegration Team Builds for Tomorrow

By Christopher Dauterman

Across America, war veterans are coming home to a new life. These war veterans possess an instinctive sense of self-direction instilled by honorable duty in the U.S. Armed Forces. Returning home, they seek new pathways to fulfill the next chapter in their lives.

Many war veterans have found that the challenge of returning to civilian life is just another test. It is more than a test of the honor, courage, and commitment; it is the test of life.

It is a test that has been passed by millions of war veterans nationwide. From the greatest generation of World War II, to the forgotten generation of Vietnam, the men and women of the U.S. Armed Forces clearly understand that life is full of curves. Along those curves, there are lessons learned.



In Oregon, the National Guard Reintegration Team works to straighten those curves. Known as Team Oregon, team members provide, "post-mobilization support to commanders and soldiers by establishing a centralized point of contact on the multitude of agencies that provide support and benefits to soldiers and their dependents". The team is full of committed veterans who have banded together to build a better pathway for servicemember support.

The mission "actively assists demobilizing Oregon National Guard members transition back to their families, their job or school, and their community." Since the establishment in early 2005, the team has expanded to assist war veterans of all branches of service. In other words, servicemembers are not denied access to services based on their military branch.

One of the main reasons the team was formed was to reduce the time lag of wounded soldiers being delayed on medical hold. As war veterans transitioned back to U.S. military bases, those with injuries and wounds would be held back. Leaders were also finding that servicemembers

SEE TEAM OREGON ON PAGE 9

**Lending A Helping Hand**

**Oregon Department of Veterans' Affairs**

**Claims and Counseling**

- Service-Connected Disability
- VA Health Care Enrollment
- Vocational Rehabilitation
- GI Bill
- Pension
- Dependent and Survivor Benefits

Whether you're just back from a combat zone or have been home for 60 years, you may be eligible for federal VA benefits. Give the Oregon Department of Veterans' Affairs a call so we can direct you to the Veteran Service Officer nearest you!

800-692-9666

# Upcoming Military Reunions and Events

**69th Infantry Division Association** is having its 61st reunion August 12-17, in Washington DC. For more information, contact Robert Heisler, 1104 Chemawa Loop NE, Keizer, OR 97303. Email [rbrtheisler1@netzero.net](mailto:rbrtheisler1@netzero.net).

**USS Boxer Veterans Association** is having its reunion August 20-23, in Gaithersburg, Maryland. Call Dick Yanko, 610-356-4874.

**1st Infantry Division "Big Red One"** is having its reunion August 20-21, at the Crowne Plaza Hotel in Colorado Springs, Colorado. For information, contact the Society of the First Infantry Division, 1933 Morris Road, Blue Bell, PA 19422. Call 215-661-1969; email [Soc1ID@aol.com](mailto:Soc1ID@aol.com).

**84th Infantry Division** is having their 63rd reunion, August 29-31, in Branson, Missouri at the Lodge of the Ozarks, 3421 W. Highway 76. Room rate is \$75 plus tax. Hotel deadline: July 30. For reservations call 417-334-7535, specify "84th Infantry Reunion." Reservations encouraged, but not required to attend the reunion. For information, call Daryl Mitchell, 417-725-1053.

**USS Badoeng Strait (CVE-116)** is having its reunion in September 2008. For information call Henry Trotter, 210-658-3447; email [hctrotter@yahoo.com](mailto:hctrotter@yahoo.com)

**USS Fulton AS-11** is having its reunion in September in Las Vegas, Nevada. For information, contact Richard Hartman, 400 Bellevue Ave. #305, Newport, RI. Call 401-846-6536, or 401-855-5998; email [rhnkhs@verizon.net](mailto:rhnkhs@verizon.net).

**USS Maddox Destroyer Association Reunion:** September 3-7, in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma. Contact Cliff Gillespie, 2118 Hines Road, Jennings, LA 70546. Call 337-616-8450; email [cwgilles45@aol.com](mailto:cwgilles45@aol.com).

**Red Warrior Reunion 1/12th Infantry Regiment, 4th Infantry Division Reunion:** September 4-6, in St. Louis, Missouri. Those assigned to the unit from 1966-70 may contact Roger Hill, PO Box 210, Lena, IL 61048; 815-369-2330; or [thearmypast@mchsi.com](mailto:thearmypast@mchsi.com).

**10th Corps** and attached units, serving from 1950-53, is having its reunion September 4-7, at the Rogue Regency Inn, Medford, Oregon. For information, call John Pimentel, 541-476-7898.

**Farragut Navel Training Station** is having its reunion September 6, at Farragut State Park, Athol, Idaho. Overnight camping is available, and reservations can be made at 208-683-2425, Ext. 21. For information, call Janice Lauer, 208-660-0660, or Bob Moore 208-683-5707.

**USS Merrick AKA-97** is having its ship reunion September 7-11, at the Oxford Suites Hotel, (Jantzen Beach) in Portland, Oregon. For reservations, call the hotel at 1-800-548-7848. Mention the *USS Merrick* reunion for the group rate. For information, call Richard Bonn, 503-982-7117, email [hpolete@yahoo.com](mailto:hpolete@yahoo.com), or Hank Polete, 360-735-7438, email [dcbonn@wbcable.net](mailto:dcbonn@wbcable.net)

**483rd Bombardment Group (H) Association** is having its reunion September 8-14, in St. Peters/St. Charles, Missouri. For information, contact George Stovall, 825 NE Lawndale Place, Corvallis, OR 97330. Call 541-758-0009, email [gstovall@peak.org](mailto:gstovall@peak.org).

**Veterans of Battle of The Bulge** is having its reunion September 9-14, at the Ramada Hotel in Columbus, Ohio. For information, call 503-854-6008.

**USS Canopus** is having its reunion September 11-14, in Jacksonville, Florida. For information, contact Richard Retin, 2245 Wintercreek Way SE, Salem, OR 97306. Call 503-689-1712, email [usscanopus@mail.com](mailto:usscanopus@mail.com).

**USMC Motor Transport Association** is having its reunion September 14-17, in Kilauea, Hawaii. For information, contact Terry Hightower, PO Box 1372, Jacksonville, NC 28541. Call 910-324-7281, email [secretary@usmcmta.org](mailto:secretary@usmcmta.org).

**The Society of the 3rd Infantry Division** is having its 89th reunion September 18-21, in Columbus Georgia at the Sheraton Hotel 4 Points, 5351 Sydney Simons Blvd., Columbus, GA. For reservations call, 1-706-327-6868. For information call Linda Irvine at 360-663-2521, email [info@thereunionbrat.com](mailto:info@thereunionbrat.com).

**USNR Midshipmen's School** is having its reunion September 18-20, in Springfield Illinois. For information, contact Ken Boyd, 16608 La Palma Lane, Edmond, OK 73012. Call 405-330-4707, email [kb@clickworld.net](mailto:kb@clickworld.net).

**Navy Net Tender/Layer** is having its reunion October 2-4, at the Seattle Airport Marriot Hotel. Anyone who has served on a Net Tender, Net Gate Tender, Net Cargo Ship or Net Depot during WWII, Korea or Vietnam is welcome to attend. For information, contact Harlan Roth, 11820 SW Belmont Terrace, Beaverton, OR 97008, 503-643-1424.

**USS Brice Canyon AD36** is having its reunion October 9-12, at the Portland Holiday Inn. For information, call Mike Nesbitt, 619-562-5690, email [thenezz@cox.net](mailto:thenezz@cox.net).

*To submit Reunion Information please mail to: Public Information Department of Veterans' Affairs  
700 Summer St NE  
Salem, OR 97301  
Email: [shaffes@odva.state.or.us](mailto:shaffes@odva.state.or.us)  
or fax 503-373-2362.*

## WAVES Looking for Members

Would you like to enjoy camaraderie with former service friends, make new service-connected friends, and at the same time support our troops in the services as well as veterans' activities? Welcome Aboard! You are invited to join WAVES National, a non-profit, non-sectarian, and non-partisan organization for women who have served or are serving in one of the sea services.

Local state units hold monthly meetings, and WAVES National holds great biennial conventions in various cities and states throughout the nation. Join us and "sea" what we are about!

Oregon State Director: Mildred (Mickey) Kalinauskas, 541-758-1333

Portland, Unit 70: President Diana Parkison, 360-402-6177

Willamette Valley Unit 138: President Carrol Donohue, 541-689-1463

North Bend Unit 96: Co-Presidents Jackie Collison or Rebecca Rice, 541-756-1160

Southern Oregon Unit 46: President Sharon Vail, 541-826-6488

### Oregon Department of Veterans' Affairs

**Veterans' Home Loans - Veterans' Benefits - Conservatorship  
Oregon Veterans' Home (skilled nursing & rehabilitative care)**

**503-373-2000 or 1-800-828-8801**

**ODVA Website: [www.oregon.gov/odva](http://www.oregon.gov/odva)**

ODVA complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). The ADA provides that no qualified person with a disability shall be kept from participation in, or be denied a benefit of the services, programs, or activities of ODVA because of that disability. This publication is available in alternate formats. For this service, or concerns regarding ADA, contact the ADA Coordinator at 503-373-2380.

#### HIPAA Statement

The Oregon Department of Veterans' Affairs (ODVA) complies with the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996, known as HIPAA. You may obtain a copy of the ODVA Notice of Privacy Practices anytime by way of the following:

- \* Access ODVA's website at [www.oregon.gov/odva](http://www.oregon.gov/odva)
- \* Call ODVA at 1-800-828-8801 ext. 2141 or 503-373-2141
- \* Write to ODVA's Privacy Officer to have a copy mailed to you; or
- \* Ask for a copy the next time you visit ODVA.



were hesitant to talk about medical issues for fear of being placed on medical hold, lengthening their time away from home.

Servicemembers are surviving attacks that in years past would have taken their lives. Family members are transitioning into head of households or what is commonly referred to as breadwinners. Many times, this transition occurs while their loved ones recover in hospitals across the nation.

Vietnam veteran Jim Willis sees this as an important step in supporting the men and women serving in the longest all-volunteer war in American history. "In the years after the Vietnam war, we had far too many veterans who would only speak to those who had been in the war," stated Willis, the Director of the Oregon Department of Veterans' Affairs.

Willis understands that creating mechanisms to move folks in the right direction is significant at a dangerous time in U.S. history. Describing the importance of the team, Willis said, "History will prove that the work being done by Team Oregon is necessary and will make a brighter tomorrow for the future lives of the men and women who took up arms in defense of our most

precious American possession, freedom."

Greater challenges are ahead for Oregon; in 2009, National Guard forces will deploy 3,500 soldiers to the Global War on Terror (GWOT). "Team Oregon" will work closely with Guard leadership, soldiers, and families prior to, during, and after their deployment - to help them not only be successful soldiers, but to again be successful citizens upon return.

**"History will prove that the work being done by Team Oregon is necessary and will make a brighter tomorrow..."**  
— Jim Willis

Integrating wounded servicemembers back into the ranks has become a priority at the highest levels of the Department of Defense. Navy Adm. Mike Mullen stood up the Joint Staff Wounded Warrior Integration Team in late April and appointed his strategic plans and policy chief, Marine Lt. Gen. John F. Sattler, to head it up.

The new team reports to Admiral Mullen every two weeks and will include recommended changes or improvements. In early April, Mullen stated, "We haven't changed the processes to represent the fact that we are a nation at war, and certainly a military at war," Oftentimes, wounded servicemembers are fulfilling their entire enlistment contracts and some can be provided re-enlistment opportunities.

This shift works for some, for others career assistance works on behalf of servicemembers seeking employment when they return from the war. The Career Transition Assistance Program (CTAP) is a key component to the Oregon efforts. CTAP collaborates with private and public employers alike.

Team members are COL (Ret) Scott McCrae, Director; LTC (Chaplain) Daniel Thompson, Deputy Director; SGM (Ret) Barry Vertner, Operations NCOIC; SFC Phillip Jacques, Reintegration Area Manager; SSG (Ret) Luke Wilson, Reintegration Area Manager; SSG Kevin Coady, Medical Hold Liaison; SGT Benjamin Heir, College Veteran Center Liaison.

Veterans can call the 24-hour toll-free number at 1-888-688-2264. Information can be found online at [www.orng-vet.org](http://www.orng-vet.org) and [www.oregon.gov/ODVA](http://www.oregon.gov/ODVA).

## Celebrating America's Heroes at the Military Gala

### *All Military Gala*

by Christopher Dauterman

Ten Congressional Medal of Honor recipients from around the United States will be guests of the second annual Oregon All Military Gala—an evening of honor and gallantry, Aug. 23, at Salem's Convention Center.

Keeping with the event theme, the event's keynote speaker will be Congressional Medal of Honor recipient and Vietnam War veteran Nick Bacon, 1st Sgt., USA (Ret). He also received the Distinguished Service Cross, Legion of Merit, Bronze Star, Combat Infantry Badge, Purple Heart, and many other medals and ribbons. Bacon currently serves on the President's National Hire Veterans Committee.

Jim Willis, Director of the Oregon Department of Veterans' Affairs, will be the event's master of ceremonies.

In 2007, the first-ever Oregon All Military Gala was a grand success with more than 400 attendees who honored all five branches of the U.S. Armed Forces and the U.S. Merchant Marines. Army Staff Sgt. Christian Bagge, a double amputee, Operation Iraqi Freedom veteran and Oregon native, shared his inspirational story of perseverance, determination, and the true meaning of family love.

Proceeds from the gala were donated to

**Col. (Ret.) Larry Brown, his wife, Col. (Ret.) Carol Brown, and grandson Andrew, stand with World War II veteran, George Sakato. Sakato, who holds the Congressional Medal of Honor, flew in from Colorado to attend last year's 2007 All Military Gala.**



the Army Emergency Relief Fund, Navy-Marine Corps Relief Society, Air Force Aid Society, and the Coast Guard Mutual Assistance Fund. Proceeds from the 2008 Gala will be donated to Wounded Soldier projects.

The Salem-based Marine Corps Family Foundation will again host the gala. The Foundation is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization and led by Connie Riecke.

It was created in 2004 when Operation Santa USMC grew from a local volunteer outreach to a national project of contributors who sent Christmas gifts to over 6,000 deployed Marines in Iraq and Afghanistan who spent the holidays away from home.

Individual tickets are \$75 and a table for eight can be purchased for \$500. Premiere Sponsorships start at 'Sponsoring a Soldier' and guest for \$150. Businesses and organizations can sponsor an entire table for \$650, which includes two additional tickets. The title sponsor for the event is the Confederated Tribes of the Grand Ronde.

To be part of the 2008 Oregon All Military Gala event, email Riecke at [riecke@marinecorpsfamilyfoundation.org](mailto:riecke@marinecorpsfamilyfoundation.org) or, call 503-409-5905. Tickets and sponsorships can be purchased online at [www.marinecorpsfamilyfoundation.org](http://www.marinecorpsfamilyfoundation.org).



# Friends of the Home

Donations to the Oregon Veterans' Home Trust Fund continue to be received. We deeply appreciate the thoughtfulness and generosity of an ever-growing number of Friends of the Home. To become a friend of the Home, use the gift form on page 11, and make a tax-deductible donation today. Those who contributed during the months of April and May, 2008 are listed below:

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# Small Business Administration Thanks the Men and Women Who Have Sacrificed for Our Freedom

By Harry DeWolf, Portland SBA District Director

Flying our flag can represent a demonstration of thanks for the men and women who have served and sacrificed in defense of our freedoms. In this spirit, the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) has chosen to honor and support the men and women of our armed services, veterans, and their spouses with the launch of SBA's new Patriot Express Loan Pilot.

Patriot Express provides more opportunity to members of the military community than our other programs. Veterans, active duty personnel who are in the military's Transition Assistance Program, and all National Guard and Reserve members are eligible. In addition, the spouse, or the widowed spouse of a service member who died while in the service, or the spouse of a military member with a service-connected disability are eligible to participate in Patriot Express.

Patriot Express incorporates the best parts of our SBA 7(a) loan program (a higher guarantee and lower maximum interest rate) and our SBA Express product (simplified processing and greater availability), to create the most compelling and attractive product available through the SBA.

Patriot Express loans can go up to \$500,000 – well above the SBA Express maximum of

\$350,000. Because it is an Express loan product, lenders and borrowers benefit from expedited and streamlined processing; in most cases they will get an answer in a day or so.

In addition, many of our largest lenders participate exclusively or primarily through our Express programs. By making Patriot Express similar to SBA Express, we have dramatically expanded the points of access for veterans.

Unlike SBA Express, which carries a 50 percent guaranty, the loans carry an 85 percent SBA guaranty for loan amounts up to \$150,000, and a 75 percent guaranty from \$150,000 to \$500,000. All SBA Financial assistance programs have credit and policy requirements that all applicants must meet. Among those is an adequate equity investment in the business, evidence of ability to repay the loan from earnings, a reasonable amount of collateral and acceptable credit histories.

For a list of lenders participating in the Patriot Express programs please check our website at the following address: [http://www.sba.gov/localresources/district/or/or\\_orplpelp.html](http://www.sba.gov/localresources/district/or/or_orplpelp.html) For more information contact Dennis Lloyd, Director of Lender Relations, at [charles.lloyd@sba.gov](mailto:charles.lloyd@sba.gov) or phone 503-326-5205 or Russ Hooker Lender Relations Specialist at [Russell.hooker@sba.gov](mailto:Russell.hooker@sba.gov) or phone 503-326-5200.

PHOTO BY TOM MANN



**Tino Ornelas, Chairman of the Oregon Department of Veterans' Affairs Advisory Committee holds the award he received from the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) for Veteran Small Business Champion of the Year.**

## Magazine Subscription Program

Thanks to the generosity of donors to the Magazine Subscription Program, veterans residing at the Oregon Veterans' Home enjoy reading current magazines.

The generosity of the individuals listed below is greatly appreciated by our veteran residents. They have recently joined dozens of previous donors who support this meaningful program.

- Susan Briggs
- Thomas and Norma Bright
- Otto Ewaldsen
- Edward M. Kelly
- Ron Lake

For information concerning the Magazine Subscription Program, please contact Linda Adams at the Oregon Veterans' Home by calling 1-800-846-8460 or 541-296-7152 or e-mail to: [ADAMSL@odva.state.or.us](mailto:ADAMSL@odva.state.or.us).



### Oregon Veterans' Home Gift Form

*"Give to those who have already given of themselves"*

Please designate my donation: In memory of: \_\_\_\_\_  
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Gift amount:  \$35-\$64 (1 Oregon Veterans' Home Remembrance Pin)  
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Please send my "Oregon Veterans' Home Remembrance Pin(s)" to:

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Card #: \_\_\_\_\_ Expiration Date: \_\_\_\_\_

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Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Please print this form and mail it with your donation to: Oregon Veterans' Home  
c/o ODVA  
700 Summer St NE  
Salem OR 97301-1285

**THANK YOU FOR SUPPORTING THE OREGON VETERANS' HOME!**  
**"The Place Where Honor Lives"**

# VETERANS' SERVICE OFFICERS

County	Telephone Number	Service Officer
Baker	541-523-8223	Jane Chandler
Benton	541-758-1595	Don Johnson
Clackamas	503-650-5631	Janice Harlan-Raisl
Clatsop	503-325-2429	Kenneth H. Rislow
Columbia	503-366-6580	Joseph Pyle
Coos	541-396-3121 Ext. 362	Mary Ann Sackett
Crook	541-447-5304	Sid Carter
Curry	541-247-3205 Ext. 205	Frank Van Meter
Deschutes	541-385-3214	Keith Macnamara
Douglas	541-440-4219	Mary Newman
Gilliam	541-384-6712	Paul Conway
Grant	541-575-1631	Bruce B. Makela
Harney	541-573-6024	Guy McKay
Hood River	541-386-1080	Patrick Scranton
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Jefferson	541-475-5228	Tom Weiss
Josephine	541-474-5454	Lisa Shipley
Klamath	541-883-4274	Kathy Pierce
Lake	541-947-6043	G. Don Boone
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Morrow	541-922-6420	Juanita Cox
Multnomah	503-988-3620 Ext. 26123	Katie Pereault
Polk	503-373-2085	ODVA
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Tillamook	503-842-4358	Steve Weld
Umatilla	541-278-5482	Peggy Raines
Union	541-962-8802	Timothy H. Jederberg
Wallowa	541-426-3155 Ext. 241	Renee Beaudoin
Wasco	541-506-2502	Patrick Scranton
Washington	503-846-3054	Doug McEllven
Wheeler	541-763-3032	Paul Conway
Yamhill	503-434-7503	Debbie Gill

Service Organizations	Telephone Number	Service Officer
American Legion	503-412-4771	Greg Demarais
American Veterans (AMVETS)	503-412-4767	Bill Talley
Blinded Veterans Association	541-265-9087	Frank Armstrong
Disabled American Veterans	503-412-4750	Jay E. Woodbury
Military Order of the Purple Heart	503-412-4770	Jennifer Burt
Paralyzed Veterans of America	503-412-4762	Ken Fink
Veterans of Foreign Wars	503-412-4757	Jack Zule

State Offices-ODVA	Telephone Number	Service Officer
Salem	1-800-692-9666 or 503-373-2085	Gus Bedwell Dave Cooley Steve Lee Rita Nickleberry Mitch Sparks Gina Thomas Doug Yerke
Portland	503-412-4777	Deanna Barnes DeJay Hartman Ron Kincaid Linda McMillan Ed Van Dyke Gordon Padgett

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Meetings of the Advisory Committee are held in the Director's Conference Room, Oregon Veterans' Building, 700 Summer Street NE, Salem, Oregon.

Special needs will be met for those who have a disability. For arrangements and meeting dates, please call 503-373-2383.

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Changes can also be e-mailed to: [stecklr@odva.state.or.us](mailto:stecklr@odva.state.or.us)

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