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Oregon bids farewell to one of its sons

By Maj. Arnold V. Strong
State Public Affairs Officer

Eagle Scout. National Honor Society member. Dual Major at a leading Pac-10 University. Loyal soldier, friend of the Iraqi people, and special friend of the children of that war torn nation.

Spec. Nathan Nakis was the first citizen soldier of the Oregon National Guard to be killed in combat since the Second World War.

On December 16, 2003, Nakis was killed while driving a transport vehicle



Photo courtesy of B-52nd EN website

Spec. Nathan Nakis in Iraq, 2002.

filled with members of Bravo Company, 52nd Engineers, returning from an M249 Squad Automatic Weapon qualification range. Nakis swerved to avoid an obstacle in the middle of the road – an “object” that turned out to be a hole in the asphalt that appeared to be an Improvised Explosive Device (IED), – clearly a potential life-threatening hazard. During the evasive maneuver, the truck hit an oil slick and spun out of control, rolling over and killing Nakis and wounding several others.

In emotional and somber ceremonies commemorating his life in Iraq, Fort Carson, Colo., and in Sedro-Woolley, Wash., Nakis was remembered as a model soldier, a passionate young man and a citizen that had made an early decision to make a difference in the world.

“Growing up, he was always playing in the dirt, dressing up in camouflage and playing soldier.” Said his mother at a reception following his funeral. “He was one kid who you knew would be a soldier.”

In a packed high school gymnasium, approximately 500 people from Sedro-Woolley, Wash., remembered their special friend as a ‘son of the

community’. Also attending the memorial were Governor Ted Kulongoski, commander-in-chief of the Oregon National Guard, and Brig. Gen. Raymond Byrne, Jr., Acting Adjutant General of the Oregon National Guard, who both offered heartfelt commemorations of Nakis and the role he played in building hope for the citizens of Iraq. As the Governor departed from the event, a duet of “I’ll Fly Away” echoed through the building.

Nathan Nakis was born in Sedro-Woolley, Wash., on April 12, 1984. He graduated from Sedro-Woolley High School in 2002, maintaining a 3.75GPA, and was a member of the National Honor Society. An Eagle Scout with the Boy Scouts of America, he had enrolled in the School of Forestry at Oregon State University in Corvallis, Ore. It was his goal to earn a dual degree; in Forest Engineering and Civil Engineering.

Nakis enlisted in the Army National Guard in 2001. After moving to Oregon, Nathan transferred to Bravo Company, 52nd Combat Engineers (Heavy), based in Albany, Ore. In April the unit

See **Nakis**, page 7

Medford pastor awarded Bronze Star

By Paul Fattig
Reprinted with permission from
Medford Mail Tribune

Ron Prosize chuckled when the cardboard box from Iraq arrived at his home.

“It was an Amazon box,” said the Medford resident. “In Iraq, soldiers are able to order online. So they probably got this box from someone who had received some books. “That box really signified the conditions we were working under over there,” he added.

But the Bronze Star medal the box contained was not scrounged up.

Lt. Col. Ron Prosize, 45, a chaplain with the Oregon Air National Guard’s 173rd Fighter Wing based in Klamath Falls, was awarded the medal for “exceptionally meritorious performance of duty during Operation Iraqi Freedom,” according to the July 29 citation signed by Maj. Gen. Walter

See **Prosize**, page 7

Oregon Guard member one of three to receive Purple Heart since WWII

By Staff Sgt. John Driscoll,
1249th Engineer Battalion Public Affairs

Staff Sgt. Brian Dooley was presented with the Purple Heart by Oregon Governor Ted Kulongoski during a ceremony at the state capitol in Salem, Ore. The award was presented in the governor’s ceremonial office on Dec. 30, 2003. Dooley was awarded the Purple Heart for wounds he sustained in action near Mosul, Iraq on Sept. 11, 2003. He is the first Oregon Guard member serving on active duty to have received the medal since WWII.

Dooley’s mother, Mrs. Fern Nickels, his brother Ray Nickell, Oregon’s acting adjutant general, Brig. Gen. Raymond Bryne Jr., Command Sgt. Maj. Donald

F. Newman, and the 1249th Engineer Battalion’s executive officer, Major Alaine Encabo were in attendance, along with several other Oregon National Guard members.

“I want you to know that I’m never more proud than I am on days like today... Sgt. Dooley, you represent exactly what George Washington and the founding fathers had in mind.” Governor Kulongoski said before presenting Dooley with the award.

“They believed that the best way to protect liberty was to have a citizen’s army; men and women who put on the uniform, fight for our nation’s freedom, then return home. That’s exactly what you have done. You’ve seen and experienced the worst of war and the

See **Dooley** page 7



Photo by Tech. Sgt. Nick Choy, State Public Affairs Office

Sgt. Brian Dooley is interviewed by John Cappell from KATU News shortly after receiving the Purple Heart medal from Oregon Governor Ted Kulongoski. Dooley was awarded the medal for injuries received September 11, 2003 while escorting a convoy in Mosul, Iraq.

Your Letters

This is your chance to air your thoughts about any subject! Send your rants and raves on any topic, or current affair issue via e-mail to the following address: sentinel-letters@mil.state.or.us

Support comes from unlikely sources and unexpected times

Greetings Y'all!

I had a most amazing experience the week of December 8-12 that I wanted to share with my fellow soldiers. It reminded me why I joined the Oregon Army National Guard. It's not for the pay, or the many benefits that I receive as a soldier. It's not even for the honor, glory or prestige, or the cool clothes and the fact that I get to roll around in the mud and play with weapons. The reason I'm here is because I love my country. Politics, partisanship and whatever happens in the White House aside, I will continue to love my country. And that's why I tell this story with a renewed sense of patriotism.

On December 11, 2003, after jamming my brain full of personnel training as part of the G-1 workshop that was taking place at Camp Rilea that week, I was ready to hit the town and have some fun. Accompanied by two of my very dear friends, Sgt. Terry Noll of PSS, and Spec. Janile King, Readiness NCO of the 2/HHC 141 SPT BN (FAST 2), we found a quaint little place to grab some liquid refreshment and warble a bit o' karaoke. It was called The Portway in Astoria.

After knocking back a few sodas (no, really!), belting out a little No Doubt and a little Dixie Chicks, and before my rousing rendition of Meatloaf's "Paradise by the Dashboard Light", the lady that was running the karaoke show paused and asked everyone to stand in remembrance of "two of our boys from Oregon" who had been killed in Iraq. Fear and alarm gripped us as the three of us realized we had friends and acquaintances in Iraq. She then asked that we all join her in singing "God Bless the USA".

Looking around at all the tear-streaked faces of the patrons, I huddled close to my two companions. My thoughts immediately turned to my only honest guy friend, Spec. Joseph Spear of 1-162 whom I had met during my deployment to the Olympics in Salt Lake City, Utah. If something happened to him, who would tell me what guys are really thinking when they say "I'll call you"?

Janile was visibly shaken, and I knew she was also thinking

about Joe as well as her friends Sgt. Corey Jackson and Sgt. Raymond Noble, both of B-52. The only words she could force out were "those are my friends over there." This, coming from an independent woman who stands taller than most men that I know, drives a truck, and packs a SAW with enough ammo to obliterate an entire Battalion on her own. To see this tough-as-nails woman begin to tear at the idea of losing our beloved comrades was too much, and I felt the tears begin to well in my eyes. I looked around and witnessed others holding one another and saw the bartender, Sally, and was shocked to see her standing alone behind the bar, lighter in hand, tears streaming down her face, and singing. I stepped toward her and asked if she was okay. She gave a half-hearted smile and simply stated that her own son was also "over there".

After the song was over, the microphone was then passed to a patron named Eric, who said that his son, Spec. Christopher Jones also of B-52, had been wounded in action. He spoke of how proud he was that his son was serving his country, and asked that we keep the soldiers in our hearts, thoughts and prayers. The end of his speech was met with a deafening chant of "USA! USA! USA!"

I looked over at my fellow soldiers, and felt a resurgence of pride at being a part of something larger than just myself. We were in civilian clothes. These people didn't know who we were. This wasn't some grandiose gesture to appear patriotic for the sake of me and my two friends. I felt like the proverbial fly on the wall, peeking in on someone else's private world. I also saw the sincerity in each and every one of them. At that moment every thought and silent prayer in the room was turned toward the soldiers that are doing their part to defend this great country. It was also at that moment that I was reminded why I am a soldier.

Recently, it was announced that Spec. Nathan Nakis of B-52 was killed in Iraq. With the memories of that night in the bar in Astoria fresh in my mind, Nakis' death was yet another reminder that we all need to do all we can to support each other; at home and abroad.

I encourage everyone to pray for one another, and write to your fellow soldiers overseas - they would love to hear from us. And to all of my fellow Guard members; be proud of who you are, and the decision you have made to be a part of the best-trained military in the world! Hooah!

Pvt. 1st Class Amber Y. Carson,
HHC(-) 41st SIB(e), S-1 Section

Soldier on the ground in Iraq debunks myths and rumors

What a bunch of crap. I have read about the Town Hall and the disgraceful behavior of some of the people back in Oregon. I wonder if they know how foolish they actually appear?

Adequate food? We have two mess halls and snack shops here on post. Anyone who isn't getting fed is too lazy to get to the mess hall and eat. It is the responsibility of every soldier to eat and to tell their leadership when they are hungry.

Soldiers are not getting clothes and spouses are having to send them clothes?. What's going on here is that soldiers decided to send stuff home to save space. (Violating a lawful order to take all their gear...probably so that there would be room for their X-box or movies). While it is true that we did not get a full issue of DCU's before we left, we have been issued a third set while here along with a third set of boots, and enough t-shirts to choke a horse. Contrary to Lt. Col. Sundquist I *do* know how to request gear through the system and do so all the time. I can read a reg as well as the next Joe and have been doing this a little bit.

Water? We have water coming out our ears! I have had to bitch to get them to come and get it sometimes. We have always had the water buffalo and any shortage of water has been due to soldiers being panty-wastes about drinking water that isn't perfect, but still safe.

Weight-loss? Did you see these guys before we left? There are a few that are on the weight control program right now...I RUN THE DANG THING! This is a serious problem as this job requires a high degree of fitness. LIFE requires you be fit if you want to live past the age of the average couch potato. I will say in closing that I think that there are ways in which the Army treats the National Guard that are not fair or right. None of these issues were addressed in the Town Hall meeting. On a personal note...whomever the soldier was who was complaining to their wife that I applied for the rugby team needs to come see me. Although in my weight-depressed, dehydrated, sick, malnourished state I don't know how I could have ever been able to compete. (That's called sarcasm). If that soldier wants to learn how to play I will be glad to take them out on the field and show them what a real sport is all about.

Staff Sgt. Allen Nyquist
B-Co., 52nd Engineer BN,
Mosul, Iraq

Tell us what you think!

Your feedback is very important to us. It lets us know how we're doing, what stories you'd like to see, and what issues you want us to cover in the future. Address your comments, feedback and ideas to:

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The Oregon Sentinel

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

Guard members and their families are encouraged to submit any articles meant to inform, educate or entertain readers of the *Oregon Sentinel*, including stories about interesting Guard personalities and unique unit training. Letters to the editor are also welcome. All letters must include the author's name, address and daytime phone number. Names may be withheld in print upon request, but all letters must be signed. Letters may also be edited prior to use. Submission deadlines are the first work day of each month. Please see your unit Public Affairs Representative, or contact the State Public Affairs Office or any of the *Sentinel* staff members listed below.

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Command Focus

Brig. Gen. Raymond C. Byrne, Acting Adjutant General, State of Oregon

If you were to compare the current issue of the *Oregon Sentinel* with a copy of the AZUWUR from five years ago, the content is significantly different. This issue of the *Oregon Sentinel* reflects how involved members and units of the Oregon National Guard are in events that have national and international implications.

I recently met with soldiers from Lima 151st Aviation preparing to deploy for training prior to deploying to Iraq to conduct maintenance operations for an aviation unit. My comments to them reflect concerns I have for soldiers and families whether going about your daily life or rules of the road for a deployment.

First, situational awareness, knowing what is going on around you and looking, whether actively or passively, for subtle differences in your environment. Second, Take care of your buddy. We all need someone to assist us in being successful in our daily life. Third, every day make something better. That is, constantly improve your relationships with others, and your home and work environment. Fourth, don't cut corners. You may be in a rush to get something done either at home, at work, or in a relationship. Take the time to do it right. Lastly, stay in touch with those at home and those who matter to you. Life is all about relationships and sometimes they require maintenance.

Currently, we see the 2nd Battalion, 162d Infantry, currently at Ft. Polk, La., over half-way through its training preparation for deployment to Iraq in

April 2004. The 82nd Rear Operations Center, currently in LSA Andaconda, in Bagdad, Iraq, is doing its best to improve local security.

War has its costs. The Governor of Oregon, Ted Kulongoski and I, attended the funeral of Specialist Nathan Nakis, a member of Bravo Company, 52nd Engineer Battalion killed in Iraq. He was the first deployed Oregon Army Guardsman killed in a combat zone since World War II. The Governor and I also presented the Purple Heart Medal to Staff Sgt. Brian Dooley, also from B-Company. The level of disruption to soldiers, airmen, and their families are without precedence since World War II. We must redouble our efforts as an organization to insure that they receive the level of support they deserve.

The Oregon National Guard is a very capable organization made up of skilled



professionals. The tasks that we must accomplish during the coming year are not insurmountable, but require us, as an organization, to keep a clear focus.

From the Editor

Maj. Arnold V. Strong, State Public Affairs Officer, Oregon National Guard

As we start off the year with another issue of the *Oregon Sentinel*, we are looking forward to more opportunities to help tell the stories of the successes and challenges of the Oregon National Guard. It has been a challenging winter thus far. With the news of the death of Spec. Nathan Nakis and the combat casualties from within the same unit,

there can be little doubt of the extraordinary sacrifice National Guard members make in times of crisis. In the past few issues of this publication we have tried to highlight the extraordinary work all of our members are achieving. Whether it be the efforts of those forward deployed, the training excellence of our members here at home, the volunteer work of our family support programs, or the accomplishments of the support staff here in Oregon, our focus in the field of public affairs is on telling your story to a wider audience. However, all of the articles we publish come from you and we need your help learning what is going on in your unit.

Recently, there has been some concern expressed about the balance between Air and Army stories profiled in these pages. This is among the simplest of issues to resolve: send us your story and send us your photos. The bottom line is this: *we need more content*. If you have any questions please call us directly at any of the phone numbers or email addresses listed on page 2, or contact your Public Affairs or UPAR representative directly. The Oregon Sentinel is published approximately every six to eight weeks. We would prefer to have photo and story content by the first of each month for publication consideration. Our focus remains on the airmen and soldiers of

the Oregon National Guard, their families and communities, and the training and operations with which they are involved. If given the opportunity to share a story about the accomplishments of an enlisted member or the profiling of a senior leader, we will side with publishing the story about the enlisted troop first. This is your official publication; one that is favorably received from Oregon to Washington, D.C.; and we want to sing the song of your accomplishments. Help us to do this and you will help us show the world what we already know – we are the best National Guard organization in the country.

Kingsley Field fills need for bone marrow donations

By Senior Airman Nikki Jackson
173rd Fighter Wing

In November of 2003, Kingsley Field held a bone marrow registration drive, open to all military personnel, their dependents, and federal civilian employees. The event was held in conjunction with the C.W. Bill Young/DoD Marrow Donor Program; one of more than 91 donor programs in the United States under the Marrow Donor Program. The effort was initially established to recruit volunteers from the armed forces and federal employees.



There are over 70 blood-related diseases that use bone marrow donations for treatment. These include Leukemia, Aplastic Anemia, and Hodgkin's Lymphoma. In the event a person is diagnosed with one of these diseases, immediate family members are screened as possible donors. However, 75% of donations come from volunteer donors, like the four million volunteers registered with the National Marrow Donor Program.

To become a prospective donor, Kingsley Field personnel went through the standard registration process, involving a consent form, and the donation of a small vial of blood. The blood is then sent to the DoD testing



Photo by Staff Sgt. Jennifer Shirar, 173rd Multimedia

Master Sgt. Stephanie Gooderough (r) draws a sample of blood from Senior Airman Shelly Edick during the 173rd Fighter Wing's bone marrow donation drive.

laboratory in Kensington, Maryland, for Human Leukocyte Antigen (HLA) typing. Once the preliminary tests are conducted, the volunteer will be put on a list of potential donors. If a match is found, the donor is subject to more blood tests and a physical examination, the results of which are reviewed by the transplant center's doctors and the physicians of the DoD Marrow Donor Program. Upon satisfactory results, the donor is then admitted to either Georgetown University Medical Center in Washington, DC, or Fairfax Inova Hospital in Fairfax, VA, for the surgical procedure. The surgery is a relatively simple procedure, performed under general or local anesthesia, consisting

of marrow being extracted from the back of the pelvic bone with a needle and syringe. Most donors report slight soreness in the lower back for a few days following the procedure, but not enough to restrict them from normal activity.

This event was made possible by the efforts of three Kingsley Field guard members; Senior Master Sgt. Victor Ford, a bone marrow recipient and cancer survivor, Tech. Sgt. Lance Caldwell, and Master Sgt. Mary Keller. The trio worked for nearly eight months to get the program to Kingsley Field. At the end of the day, 116 base personnel had given their time, as well as their blood, in the hope of saving lives.

Tops in Blue is looking for talented Air Force personnel

Prepared by Oregon Sentinel Staff

USAF Services and Tops in Blue (TIB) are looking for a few good performers to represent the Air Force around the world through music and entertainment. If you have what it takes and you love to sing, dance and entertain, this is the opportunity you've been waiting for. Applications are now being accepted through February 10, 2004. The submission should include a VHS videotape of the applicant performing, TIB application, TIB letter of commitment, and a letter of intent from the individual's commanding officer.

The contest will be held at Lackland AFB, Texas March 14-22, 2004. The categories include male vocalist, female vocalist, instrumental, dance, musical variety, and non-musical variety.

All full-time Air Force, Air National Guard, and Air Force Reserve members are eligible to participate.

For more information, contact Dean Herrera at (503) 335-4748, or via e-mail at: dean.herrera@portland.af.mil.

Letters From The Front



Oregon to Colorado to Kuwait to Saudi Arabia

I am writing from Eskan Village in Riyadh, in Saudi Arabia. These days it is the home of Alpha Co., 1st Battalion, 162nd infantry. Our normal home in Hillsboro, Ore. is a far cry from here. In the months since February when we were activated, we have traveled to Ft. Carson, Colo.; itself a challenging and frustrating assignment for our post-mobilization training; and although we were all eager to move on to wherever we were going, most soldiers would agree that this was some of the most challenging training they had been a part of in some time.

We trained in everything from Urban Operations (UO) to security operations and lots of weapons training. From Ft. Carson, we headed off to Kuwait, still unclear of exactly what contributions we would make. When we arrived, we were given the task of securing the SPOD, also known as the seaport of debarkation. The SPOD is the only deep water port in the country of Kuwait and 90% of the equipment deployed for



Operation Iraqi Freedom came through this port. In our time there over 60 US and coalition ships came through with a value of approximately \$1 billion each. This security assignment was an amazing opportunity for my soldiers and I to work with other US and coalition forces. It is not an exaggeration to say that on a daily basis, most of our soldiers worked with Navy, Marine Corps, Coast Guard and/or Kuwaiti organizations. As the LSO (Landward Security Officer) there, I had Coast Guard, MP and Romanian security elements working for me and I reported through a Navy chain of command. We also conducted multiple missions into Iraq during our time in Kuwait, mostly convoy and personnel escort missions into southern and central Iraq. The operations were supporting missions to repair and upgrade the infrastructure and to bring much needed supplies and humanitarian aid into Iraq.

Most of the infrastructure in Iraq is inferior, inoperative, neglected or just plain cannibalized. Of course, there were some sites that were damaged as coalition forces passed through the area during the invasion but this was really only a small percentage. Most soldiers agreed it was an enlightening experience just to be in Iraq. None of us were really prepared to see the state of the country and its people. The change was dramatic as we drove through the border into a small village of mud huts and

donkey carts in what could only be described as a third-world country.

Kuwait is a fairly well kept, clean country and the changes are immediate as you cross the border [into Iraq]. Many of us struggled with seeing children on the side of the road asking for food and water, hoping for a handout. It was an experience to see just how little the people of Iraq had. The people overall were friendly although the dangers were always there. You always had to be very careful and watch out for crowds. I always felt a little nervous driving in urban areas. Vehicle-borne explosives and roadside bombs were a daily event and here we were driving through these areas. We saw a few crowds and demonstrations that made a few of us uneasy. The Iraqi people seemed happy to have the Americans there, but there was frustration over no opportunities and the slow progress in rebuilding. However, every once and awhile, you had a personal interaction with an Iraqi citizen and their friendliness and hospitality would surprise you. On one mission we stopped at a house that used to belong to one Iraqi advisor known as 'Chemical Ali'. We sat down with the family that was there and visited with them for a few minutes. A little girl came up to us and held up an Iraqi Saddam note and said "Saddam dead" and smiled.

The second mission in July was a short term mission to do convoy security into central Iraq to ensure delivery of humanitarian supplies and equipment



from camps in Kuwait. As you all have seen from the news, there are continual threats on the MSR (main supply routes) in Iraq.

In September we transitioned back to Saudi Arabia. Although we thought this assignment would be a little more comfortable, the dangers here are more apparent than we thought. In the time we have been here we have had bombings in the same city we are located, cars discovered just a couple miles away that were loaded with explosives, Al-Queda cells raided in town, and more threats than I can count. The mission here is the same as Kuwait...Force Protection. We secure the entire base for all the US forces that live and work here. This place is almost like a regular army post. There is even a small PX and commissary. Even as a commander, I feel like I am on an active post with all the briefings, suspense's, meetings, programs, etc.

Of course, as you can imagine, the weather and the heat has been a

challenge. We saw enough rain when we first arrived in Iraq to barely get the ground wet and only recently in Saudi Arabia have we seen rain at all. It was quite a shock to go from Oregon in February to Colorado in the snow and freezing temperatures to the deserts of the Middle East. It really is amazing how you actually can get used to it. When it hits 100 at night, we start to think that is comfortable. These days the temperatures have begun to drop. Today was a chilly 70 degrees, almost enough to put a jacket on. The temperature will bottom out in January before rising again.

The soldiers have much more to do here than in Kuwait. Probably a good thing since we don't go off post as often due to the threats. Because we are on an active post, there are many organized sports events and social events for the soldiers to participate in.

The soldiers are looking forward to coming home to Oregon. The mission has been a challenge at times and as you can imagine with force protection, not so challenging at other times. That is part of the nature of a force protection mission, but these soldiers are professionals and I am quite proud of the work they are doing. I consistently receive compliments regarding the professionalism and military image they project. They are always out there in the heat and the sun doing the job they were trained for and they do it well.

Capt Michael Wegner,
Commander, Alpha Co., 1-162 IN

New Year brings new outlook and body armor

Happy New Year from Iraq. Last year ended well. We now have the Army's newest protective equipment (body armor) and the members of the 82 ROC and their families are feeling much better. This is a big step and took hard work to make it happen. Thank you from my family to all those who helped make this happen. Please push this out to the families, media and our elected officials so they know the "big army" has now given us the best protective equipment the military has to offer.

Things are moving fast and furious for us with all the units preparing for redeployment and all the new units who are scheduled to come and live and work on LSA Anaconda, near Balad, Iraq. We still have all the missions of ensuring the base operations keep on going, even with all these units coming and going. This is not an easy task.

Overall, for everything that has happened during this deployment, it has been a good year. Our unit has gone through many changes. We started out thinking we would all be home for Christmas and New Years during our demobilization and then on leave in January. Then the order came down for units to be 365 days "boots on the ground" and that is when many of the ups and downs started. It is a natural thing. The unit is growing tired of being away from their families, home and being here with each other for so long. It is not something that many National Guard units do very often. We are working through this situation. Any unit who is put in this situation will have these ups and downs... it is part of life and up to the leadership within each unit to help

the soldiers work through them. Not doing the job you are trained to do is another issue that adds fuel to the fire for the 82 ROC. Again, leadership at all levels; NCO and Officer; must assist in taking the unit through these issues as they come up. Some advice: Address any problems head-on right when they happen so they won't grow into something larger and more complicated.

Some members of the unit have and will get a chance to go home on R & R environmental leave, but many will not. This is something that is not by choice, but by design of the program because of the late kick-off for the rotation of soldiers. The follow-on rotations shouldn't have these growing pains, and it should get better in the future. It is something to look forward to if you are on the next OIF rotation.

The last thing I would like to mention is Mike Shiley, a freelance KATU (ABC) reporter who is covering units from Oregon. You can all check out his stories on www.KATU.com under the Iraq Diary link located on the left hand side of the website. Please take a look and see what some of the Oregon units in Iraq are doing. We have also filmed some interviews and they will be mailed back to KATU via DHL so you might turn on KATU in the next few weeks and see members of the 82 ROC on the air!

Maj. Scott Farish,
82 ROC Public Affairs Officer

Guardsmen retire with over century of experience

By Cpt. Eric J. Walstrom
State Public Affairs Office

Three Oregon guardsmen, who together share 105 years of military service, are retiring this month.

Chief Warrant Officer Ken Hiigel, 1st Sgt. Cliff Conser, and Staff Sgt. Floyd Jones, who were referred to as "trailblazers in Oregon aviation" recalled some of their most memorable moments working with the varied aircraft in the Oregon Guard inventory.

Hiigel, with 38 years of service, remembered flying the OV-1 Mohawk, a personal favorite.

"We had that aircraft for a long time here in Oregon," says Hiigel.

Jones, who has 31 years of service, recalled one of his career highlights in 1993 when the Oregon National Guard turned over the Mohawk to the active duty Army.

"We took the Mohawk to South Korea the long way," says Jones. "The planes flew across the U.S. and up to Greenland, and through Europe and Asia."

Conser and Jones both enrolled at Lane Community College's aviation program in 1970. Conser has worked on various types of aircraft throughout his 38 years of military service. But simply working on the helicopters and airplanes wasn't enough for him. In 1976, he was involved in the Mount Jefferson glacier rescue which earned him the Valley Forge Medal for heroism.

Personality Profile

Schull forges new friendships, extends good-will across cultures

Story and photo by Mike Shiley,

KATU News,

Embedded Reporter with the 82nd ROC
(reprinted with permission)

Today I met Major Mark Shull from Sandy, Oregon. Immediately thoughts of the Vietnam-era movies, *The Deer Hunter*, *Full Metal Jacket* and *Platoon* came to mind. Shull is the prototype badass gentleman-hero from some Vietnam-era novel. Bald, big, tough. Shull is 6'2" and 220 and built like a linebacker. His most intimidating characteristic is his ability to stare a hole right through someone. "He is the crazy one on this base," said a Sergeant that wisely asked to not to be named.

This base and its people operate inside the "wire" or gate. Until about three weeks ago, much of the base had never been outside the wire. The 4th Infantry Division, located at another base, conducted the patrols outside.

Shull was given a simple responsibility. Assemble a work crew and cut the high cane reeds that grow around the 11-mile perimeter of the base. The high cane growing in the canals gave the insurgents a safe place to hide, store weapons and ammo, and a base to attack the base. Clearing the cane would increase the visibility from the guard towers and stop attacks before they began.

He approached the mission with simple innovation and courage. He would go outside the gate and recruit local Iraqi labor. Should be simple, right? Wrong.

At that time, the base had been attacked 96 straight days in a row as they are in the heart of the Sunni Triangle, the place were most of the mortar attacks, suicide bombings and grenade attacks originate from in Iraq. No one went outside the gate because it was just too dangerous..

Shull bravely decided to test the naysayers who warned him against directly interacting with the locals on a daily basis outside the base. He grabbed a Humvee and a few foot soldiers and drove out into the Triangle to complete his mission. He drove the back roads around the base, met the local people, visited the schools, and saw their desperate living conditions.

He started cutting deals for cutting cane. He drove the dusty farm roads looking for the poor and hungry. When he found them, he hired them to clear cane swath-by-swath, job-by-job. Major Shull worked out a complex formula for payment based on the thickness and the height of the cane. He paid by the job, not by the day, so the faster they worked, the more they earned.

"America and Iraq are friends"

- Maj. Mark Shull

When Shull made a deal for cutting cane, he wrote the details on a small piece of yellow paper that the farmer gave back to him cash payment when the job was done.

It wasn't long before word spread around the villages that 'Meester

Shull' was hiring Iraqis and paying U.S. dollars. He became very popular very fast. Kids run down the road yelling "Meester Shull, good man, Meester Shull, good man".

Shull is tough, though. He makes the workers line up in formation and he calls role. Anyone gets out of line and they don't get work. Anyone tries anything crazy and they will be looking down the



Major Mark Shull of Sandy Ore. makes a deal with locals to have them cut cane. The farmers, who are mostly out of work, will receive payment when the task is completed.

business end of his ever-present M-16. Shull and the four soldiers that are with him don't take any shit. In the middle of the Sunni Triangle, you don't take any chances.

Some days, there are as many 60 hungry farmers mobbing him for work, wanting to be paid for past work and begging for food. Shull also carries candy for kids, cigars for the men, shampoo for the women and toothpaste for anyone who needs it, which is just about everyone.

Shull also makes time to visit the schools along his route. He meets with the principle first to ask with there are any school needs. Then he goes to every classroom and meets the kids, hands out more candy and shampoo and gives each class a very special message. The message is friendship. Shull, the imposing presence that he is, strides into every class decked out in his full battle gear: body armor, Kevlar helmet and

his M-16. After the candy handouts, he grabs some chalk at the old chalkboard and writes:

"America and Iraq are Friends". He then turns to the class and has them repeat the phrase in English. He repeats this in every class in the school.

Watching Shull deliver his English lesson, I wonder if these young kids have ever actually been told that Iraq and America are friends; a seemingly simple and obvious idea. So simple that it has probably been overlooked. Not with Major Shull, he makes sure his kids get the message.

As the late afternoon sun throws its rays across the farm fields, Shull is done for the day. Since the beginning of the program, attacks at the base have dropped from 300 in about 100 days to zero in the last two weeks. Today, he has paid out over \$250 and many families will eat tonight because one man was courageous enough to cross the line.

Oregon Army National Guard members 'learn the ropes' of Fast-Roping

Story and photo by

Staff Sgt. Rebekah-Mae Bruns,
39th Brigade Public Affairs Office

FORT HOOD, TEXAS - "It's a different way to the battlefield," said Sgt. 1st Class Pete Salerno, a platoon sergeant and Fast Rope Infiltration, Extraction System (FRIES) master of Monroe, Ore.

FRIES, commonly known as 'Fast Rope' to soldiers, is typically reserved for use by Rangers and Special Operation Forces to maneuver into urban areas and roof tops with helicopters, rope, and little else. As a general rule, no one is allowed to receive the fast rope training except those elite forces. But the Army faces challenges with the Global War on Terror and the implied term of 'Total Force' is being put to the test. In an unprecedented shift, the Oregon National Guard is 'learning the ropes'.

Company B, of the 2nd Battalion, 162nd Infantry, based out of Corvallis, Ore., was chosen for the mission due to the number of ranger qualified

soldier's who have prior active service time, according to Brig. Gen. Ronald Chastain, commander of Arkansas' 39th Infantry Brigade, with whom the 2-162 now trains alongside.

"There are very few Ranger qualified soldiers in the Arkansas Brigade," said Chastain. "It's quite an accomplishment (fast roping) for those (Oregon) soldiers. It's exciting stuff."

The technique, most likely gained its greatest notoriety in the movie "Black Hawk Down," a docudrama based on the 1993 United Nations mission to remove the Somali warlord Muhammad Farrah Aidid from power. The elite Army Rangers and Delta Force fast roped into the urban setting of Mogadishu to help carry out a United Nation's mission that later went awry.

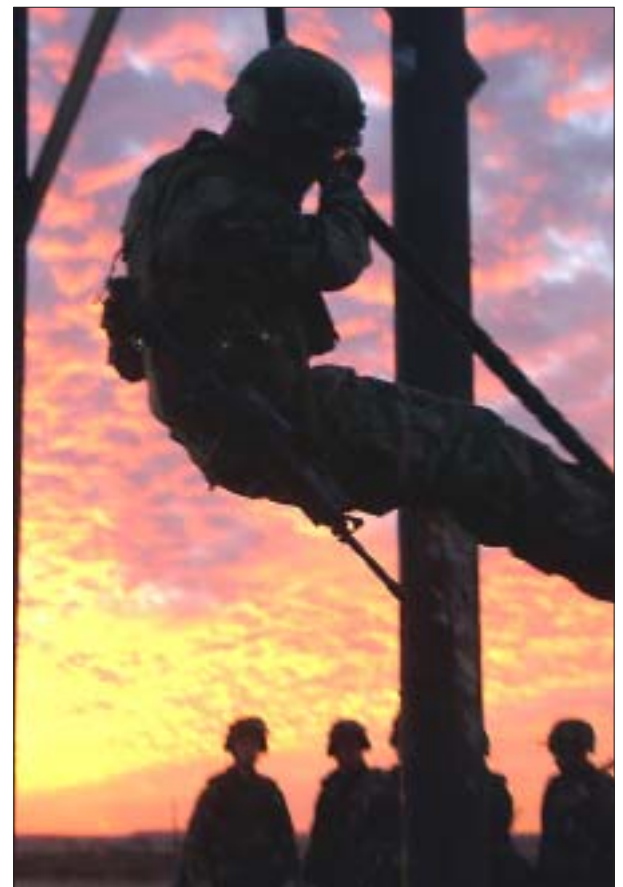
Fast roping is undoubtedly dangerous. If they move by night, there is no illumination.

"There's nothing between you and the ground except air and opportunity," said Salerno. "You come down quickly and unexpectedly."

1st Lt. Christopher Kent, a platoon

leader originally from Tucson, Ariz. who joined the Oregon Guard for this deployment describes the excitement of fast roping. "We're not sitting at the checkpoints waiting for a car bomb to go off," he said. "We're bringing the fight to them - we dictate the terms of combat."

The soldiers, having completed their initial phase of training - which consists first of jumping from a tower and later from a Black Hawk helicopter during both day and night hours - joke about their success in only having one injury as opposed to the normal 4-5 injuries by elite groups who take the course. Fast rope is like sliding down a tree and maybe Oregonian's are so good at it because we're loggers, hypothesized one soldier.



"Fast-roping" from a stationary tower, soldiers from Oregon National Guard's Company B, of the 2-162 IN, train for an eventual deployment to Iraq.

News You Need to Know

Tax changes affect military members

The Internal Revenue Service has revised the tax laws related to capital gains related to the sale of military members' homes.

Taxpayers may exclude gain on a home sale, provided they have owned and used the home as a principal residence for two of the five years before the sale. A reduced maximum exclusion may apply to those who satisfy part of the two-year rule. Military personnel often retain ownership of a home while away on duty but eventually sell it without returning to live in it, perhaps failing the use test completely.

The new law allows persons on qualified extended duty in the U.S. Armed Services or the Foreign Service to suspend this five-year test period for up to 10 years of such duty time. A taxpayer is on qualified extended duty when at a duty station that is at least 50 miles from the residence sold, or when residing under orders in government housing, for more than 90 days or for an indefinite period.

This change applies to home sales after May 6, 1997. A taxpayer may use this provision for only one property at a time and may exclude gain on only one home sale in any two-year period. Although an amended return must usually be filed within three years of the original return's due date, the law gives qualifying taxpayers who sold a home before 2001 until Nov. 10, 2004, to file an amended return claiming the exclusion.

A taxpayer may use Form 4506, "Request for Copy or Transcript of Return," to get an earlier year's tax return. This form and Form 1040X are available on the IRS Web site or by calling 1-800-TAX-FORM (1-800-829-3676). Here are four examples illustrating how the new home sale exclusion rule works:

Example #1 - Lt. Green owned a house in Georgia and lived there from December 1988 until deployed overseas in January 1991. When he returned to the United States in July 1999, he was stationed 90 miles from the house. Preferring not to commute this distance, he sold the house four months later, realizing a gain of \$150,000. Because he had not used the house as his principal residence during the 5 years preceding the sale, he reported this capital gain on his 1999 return. Under the new law, he can disregard both the 8 1/2 years he was overseas and the 4 months after his return to the States, since he was stationed more than 50 miles from old residence. His five-year test period for ownership and use now consists of the 5 years before January 1991, when he went overseas. Since he owned and lived in the house for more than two years during this test period, he may exclude the gain on the sale. He must file an amended return by Nov. 10, 2004, to recover the capital gain tax paid on the 1999 return.

Example #2 - Assume the same facts as Example #1, except that when Lt. Green returned to the U.S., his duty station was 40 miles from the house. Only the time overseas may be

disregarded, because his duty station after returning to the U.S. was within 50 miles of the old residence. His five-year test period for ownership and use now consists of 4 months in 1999 and the 56 months before January 1991, when he went overseas. Since he lived in the house for more than two years during this test period, he may exclude the gain on the sale. He must file an amended return by Nov. 10, 2004, to recover the capital gain tax paid on the 1999 return.

Example #3 - Col. White owned and lived in her Ohio house for three years before being stationed overseas in January 1988. She was still overseas when she sold the house in January 2003. She may disregard only 10 of her 15 years overseas, so her 5-year test period consists entirely of years in which she did not live in the house, leaving her not eligible for the home sale exclusion.

Example #4 - Sgt. Brown owned and lived in a Virginia townhouse for 10 months before being deployed overseas in February 1991. She returned in 1995 and lived in the townhouse for 16 months before she was assigned to a Texas duty station in late August 1996. She married and when the couple returned to Virginia in July 1999, they bought a nearby house. In July 2001, they sold the townhouse. Having lived in the townhouse only one month in the five years preceding its sale, they reported the capital gain on their 2001 return. Under the new law, they may disregard the time spent overseas and in Texas when determining the 5-year test period, which would then consist of the two years from July 1999 to July 2001, when they lived nearby, the 16 months she lived in the townhouse in 1995-96, and the 20 months before the February 1991 overseas deployment. During this test period, Sgt. Brown owned and lived in the townhouse for 26 months, so she may exclude up to \$250,000 of gain on its sale. Because her husband never lived in the townhouse, he does not qualify for any exclusion. The Browns have until Apr. 15, 2005, to file an amended return claiming a refund of the capital gain tax paid on the excludable amount.

For more information, or to download instructions and forms, visit the IRS Website: www.irs.gov/index.html

ESGR is looking for chairperson nominees

The Oregon Committee for the Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve (ESGR) Program is now accepting nominations for their committee chair position.

The State Chair position carries an honorary protocol rank of Major General. Though prior military service is not required, the nominee should demonstrate leadership, organizational, and communication skills, and the ability to successfully work with community, civic, business, and military leaders.

Nominees should possess a well-rounded understanding of the importance of the Reserve and National Guard missions, and the ability to motivate and lead the efforts of ESGR committee volunteers.

The new chairperson will assume leadership of the committee on October 1st, after being approved by the Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense Reserve Affairs.

For more information on the nomination process, or if you know of someone who meets the qualifications, contact Bob Elliott at the ESGR office at 503-584-2837, or via e-mail at bob.elliott2@or.ngb.army.mil.

American Airlines opens airport clubs

American Airlines is now inviting all U.S. military men and women under the Iraqi Freedom Rest and Relaxation (R&R) Program to spend time between flights at American's elegant Admirals Club facilities worldwide. At airports where there is no USO, returning servicemen and women in uniform or with military ID can enter the clubs free of charge to wait for their flights, enjoy complimentary snacks and soft drinks, watch TV, use the Internet or just stretch out and relax.

The program starts today and runs for the duration of the R&R program. For more information, visit: www.amrcorp.com/news/december03/12_military.htm.

TAG Honor Guard is recruiting new members

The Adjutant General's Select Honor Guard (SHG) is currently accepting applications to join their elite team. This group is made up of soldiers & airmen from the Oregon National Guard who participate in local community service events and conduct military funeral honors for the state of Oregon, as directed by the State Command Sergeant Major.

Members have an opportunity to train with the 3rd Infantry Division in Virginia, also known as "The Old Guard". They will also visit the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier at Arlington National Cemetery.

One member will be selected annually as the Adjutant General's SHG member of the Year. Members also earn retirement points and are paid for monthly training, including specialized training for performing military funeral honors.

Monthly meetings are held on the third Thursday of every month at 7:30 p.m. at the Oregon Military Department. For more information, or to obtain an application, please contact: Sgt. 1st Class Michael Price at 503-838-8741 or Staff Sgt. Rachel DeRose at 503-584-2400 (ARNG), or Senior Master Sgt. Scott O'Neal (ANG) at 503-335-4181.

Guard members to get long-term insurance

With the passage of the FY-2004 National Defense Authorization Act on November 24, 2003, gray area reservists, including guardsmen, are now eligible to participate, if medically qualified, in the Federal Long Term Care Insurance Program (FLTCIP). Gray area reservists are those who have completed at least 20 qualifying years of service, but have not yet attained age 60 and eligibility for retired pay. LTC Partners, a subsidiary of John Hancock

and New York MetLife, is developing a marketing plan to reach out to every gray area reservist within the next few months. Gray area reservists and guard members do not have to wait for a letter of notification to apply for enrollment. For more information, members may contact LTC Partners through their Web site at www/lcfcfeds.com or by calling (800) 582-3337.

Commissary access means no pink cards

All over America, Guard and Reserve personnel are burning their "little pink cards." The signing of the 2004 National Defense Authorization Act signaled unlimited shopping privilege for Reserve component members and their families. It also signaled the end of issuing, tracking, and checking off those little pink Commissary Privilege Cards. Previously, Reserve component personnel and their families were allowed 24 commissary shopping days per calendar year; and they had to have their privilege cards initialed at the commissary each day they shopped. For more information, see www.afpc.randolph.af.mil/afretire/Reserve_DeCA_benefits.htm.

Emergency Relief Fund gets 'cooking'

The Emergency Relief Fund for Oregon will be publishing a cookbook. All members of the Oregon Air and Army National Guard, civilians, state employees, retirees, friends and families are encouraged to submit a recipe for the cookbook before the submission deadline of February 13, 2004. The book will be ready for delivery and distribution in May. The cost for the book will be \$10.00, payable by either cash or check (Checks can be written in care of the "Emergency Relief Fund Cookbook"). For more information, or to submit a recipe, contact Rosemary Stein, 503-584-3843, Diane Walker, 503-584-3840, or Tracy Gill, 503-584-3991.

VA revises war-related medical coverage

The Veteran's Health Administration has issued a new directive #2003-61 regarding medical care and benefits for veterans who received injuries or sustained an illness directly related to their combat duty after November 11, 1998.

Injuries resulting from accidents that happened after discharge from active duty, and disorders that existed before joining the military are not covered

For more information, contact Debra Mueller, Resource Coordinator for Returning Combat Veterans, at (208) 422-1000, ext. 7564.

Home Depot offers military discounts

Home Depot stores, through the volunteer program "Project Home Front," are providing up to \$1,000 for home repairs to families whose military sponsors are deployed. For more information on the program, or to access and fill out an application, please visit www.projecthomefront.org.

Prosise: Both the Bronze Star and Iraqi assignment “an honor”

Continued from Page 1

Wojdakowski, deputy commanding general.

The pastor of Grace Bible Church in Medford, Prosise was deployed early in May, returning home in August. He and his wife, Donna, have two children, Jonathan, 11, and Anna, 9.

Although he was initially scheduled to serve as a chaplain, Prosise’s orders were changed prior to his arriving in Iraq. He ended up working as the deputy senior adviser for the ministry of public education. However, he also served as a chaplain at the joint operations center in Baghdad while continuing his work in the Education Ministry.

Prosise was recommended for the medal by Col. Douglas Carver, command chaplain for the Combined Joint Task Force in Baghdad. Carver cited Prosise for providing religious planning guidance for the task force, making countless trips into hostile territory to distribute salaries to Iraqi teachers and administrators, providing oversight on the educational staff and uncovering a counterfeit operation in the

Rafidian Bank of Baghdad while working to coordinate salary payments to teachers.

Most of his educational work focused on helping to restore public schools suffering from years of neglect under Saddam Hussein’s administration, he said. There was no office or equipment for his department when he arrived. Office space was found in the palace once used by Saddam along the Tigris River.

“When I got there in May, we didn’t even have an office for the ministry of education,” he said. “We didn’t have a phone, computers. It was a very chaotic situation.”

A former paratrooper in the Army’s 82nd Airborne Division, Prosise also served as a chaplain with the Navy reserves, with temporary duty with the Marine Corps and Air Force before joining the Guard. During his 14 years in the service, he has served in South Korea, Turkey and Europe.

As a result of his military service, Prosise has seven rows of ribbons — dubbed fruit salad in military parlance



Photo by Airman 1st Class Trenton Demaris, 173rd Multimedia Lt. Col. Ron Prosise receives the Bronze Star from Col. John Adkisson (l) and 173rd Command Chief Mike Bauer (r).

— hanging from his chest. “To me, as a chaplain, this is all part of God’s grace, that I got to go over there and serve,” he said. “Receiving this is an honor on top of what has already been an honor for me.”

According to Prosise, while working with the ministry of education, he was

— serving the Iraqis. But as chaplain, he was there for the American troops.

Col. John Adkisson, commander of the 173d Fighter Wing at Kingsley Field, pinned the Bronze Star on Chaplain Prosise during the November Commander’s Call.



Photo courtesy of Bravo 52nd Engineer Battalion

Nakis pictured playing with children from the House of Hope orphanage in Mosul, Iraq in October, 2003.

Nakis: mourned by many, missed by all

Continued from Page 1

deployed to Mosul, Iraq, where they are assigned as part of the 101st Airborne Division. The unit has been involved in a variety of civil projects, including housing, athletic fields, road construction, and water systems, as well as improvements to military base housing in Mosul. They were also directly responsible for the construction of the “House of Hope” orphanage in Mosul. Nathan was considered a model soldier by his fellow service members.

“Our heartfelt sympathies go out to the Nakis family during this tragic time,” said Byrne. “He was an extraordinary soldier in an extraordinary unit doing some of the most important work in rebuilding the nation of Iraq,” he continued.

Nakis is survived by his mother and father, Elinor and Art Nakis of Sedro-Woolley, and his brother, Nic, of Seattle.

Feds expands GI Bill with additional funds set aside for on-the-job training

A federal program has allowed for tax-free benefits to be made available for individuals training 24 months in on-the-job training programs.

Individual who participate in OJT programs that allows supervision at least 50-percent of the time that they are working may qualify for up to \$11,820 in additional benefits. The OJT must be documented, and cannot be based on a commission schedule (such as in a commission-based sales position).

Service members who qualify for the G.I. Bill, and who have been recently hired or promoted are eligible for the additional financial benefit. Applicants can either be current members of the National Guard or Reserves, or those who have retired from the military within the past 10 years.

For more information, contact Sandra L. Sterling at (503) 731-4072, ext. 242.

Dooley: “I was just doing my job”

Continued from Page 1

best of valor, and now you are back home with the people who care about you most,” Kulongoski continued.

“It’s a real surprise...I wasn’t expecting this at all...I was just doing my job.” said Dooley when he was asked about the recognition.

Dooley was wounded during an attack on a convoy he was escorting near Mosul, a town located in northern Iraq. A resident of Bend, Ore., Dooley was serving with B-52 Engineer Company, a unit he transferred into for Operation Enduring Freedom from Company A 1249th Engineer Battalion. He had been in Iraq for five months at the time he was wounded.

Dooley’s succession of adventures began last February after he transferred into B-52 then reported to Fort Carson, Colo., along with the rest of the company, prior to deploying to Iraq by way of Kuwait. After arriving in Iraq, Dooley’s unit was stationed at the Mosul Air Base, where conditions steadily improved while he was there.

“When I left the chow hall had been air conditioned. There was a MWR place where we could send e-mail...every day it was still hitting above 110 degrees,” said Dooley.

According to Dooley, the company was immediately tasked with numerous missions as soon as they arrived in Iraq, helping with road improvements and repairs to damaged infrastructure. Dooley described how he worked along side Iraqi fire fighters during July, working four-hour shifts in protective masks, battling a fire which had been started by Saddam loyalists.

“The people over there do need help....just about all of them want us there...” said Dooley.

In spite of the wounds he sustained in Sept., serving in Iraq with B-52 was a worthwhile experience according to Dooley. “Even our poorest [in the US] don’t compare to how most people live over there...” Dooley said of Iraq. He added that he was surprised how badly women are treated in Iraq, and that Saddam’s recent capture could prove beneficial to the overall cause.

Dooley is currently undergoing physical therapy and hopes to make a full recovery. “I’m hoping for 100% recovery...that’s what I want,” Dooley said.

The Purple Heart is the oldest military decoration in the world to remain in use today. It was initial created by General George Washington as the Badge of Military Merit and was first presented in 1783. The award is presented to members of the armed forces of the United States who are wounded by instruments of war wielded by the enemy.



Photo by Tech. Sgt. Nick Choy, State Public Affairs Office

Governor Kulongoski pins the Purple Heart on Dooley at the state capitol.

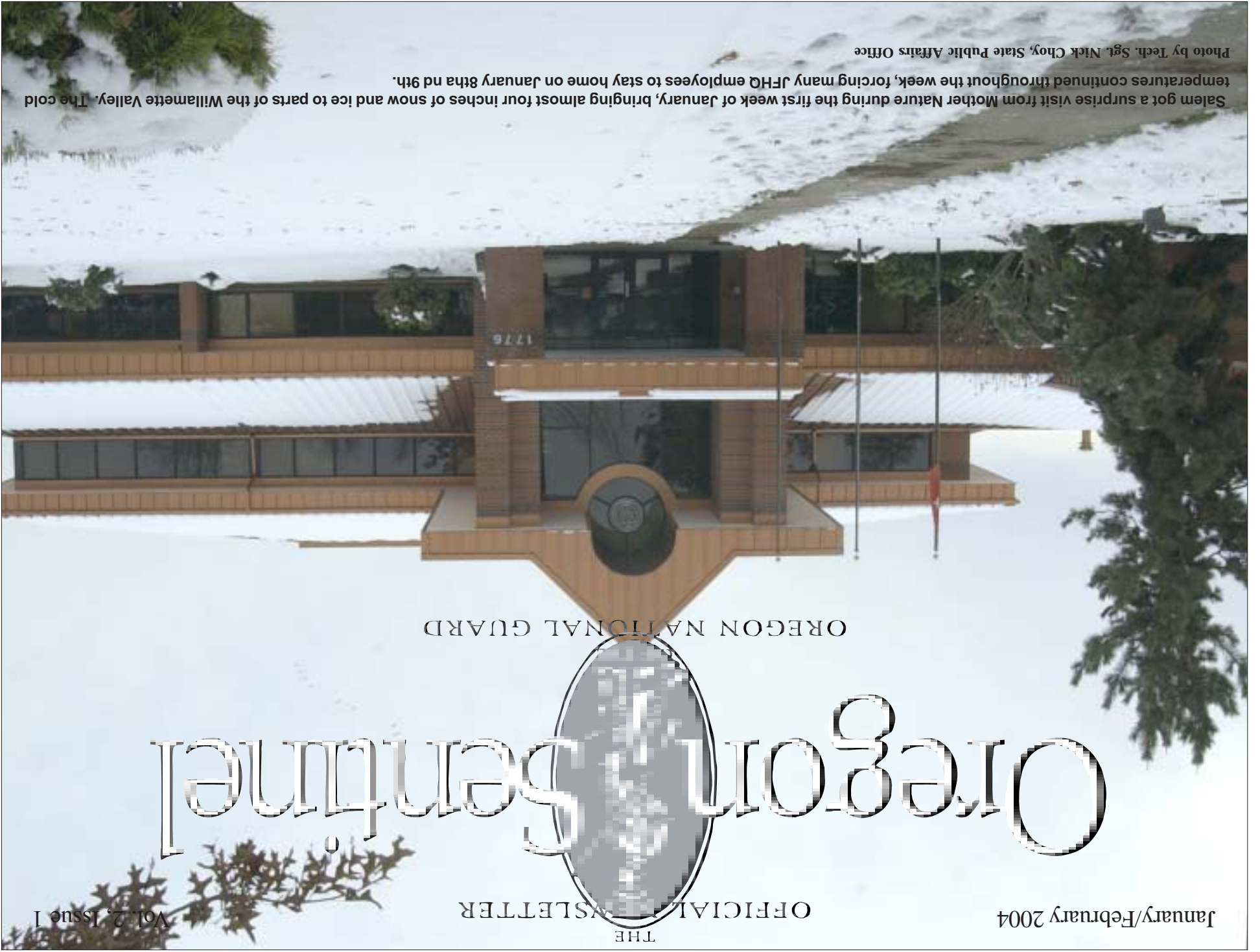


Photo by Tech. Sgt. Nick Choy, State Public Affairs Office

Salem got a surprise visit from Mother Nature during the first week of January, bringing almost four inches of snow and ice to parts of the Willamette Valley. The cold temperatures continued throughout the week, forcing many JFHQ employees to stay home on January 8th and 9th.

January/February 2004

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER

Oregon Sentinel

OREGON NATIONAL GUARD

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Corrections

This is a correction for ESGR article that appeared on page 7 of the Holiday 2003 issue of the Oregon Sentinel. The correct spelling of the program's executive director's name and his correct e-mail address is:

Col. Bob Elliott, (Ret.)
bob.elliott2@or.ngb.army.mil

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