



Oregon veterans face post-traumatic stress disorder, pgs. 6-7

Oregon Sentinel



OF THE OREGON NATIONAL GUARD

Afghanistan — ‘Get ready, here we come’

900 Soldiers from the 41st Brigade to spend one year training the Afghan National Army

Story by Kimberly Lippert,
Oregon National Guard Public Affairs

SALEM, Ore. — It was a familiar scene, Mom’s, Dad’s, husbands, wives and kids proudly looking on as their loved ones are mobilized for duty overseas.

“I’m so proud, but very sad, but he wouldn’t want it any other way, he’s ready to go,” said Elaine Clarke. Her son Ryan is one of 900 Soldiers with the 41st Brigade Combat Team going to Afghanistan in the largest single overseas deployment of Oregon Guard troops since World War II.

Thousands gathered in the new Pavilion at the Oregon State Fairgrounds for the Mobilization Ceremony and transfer of authority on February 4. Governor Theodore Kulongoski, Congressman Peter DeFazio, Congresswoman Darlene Hooley, and Major General Raymond F. Rees offered words of encouragement as the unit prepared to leave for their mission abroad.

“None of us will deny you are undertaking a very dangerous mission. I salute your courage and your willingness to serve your state and your country,” said Gov. Ted Kulongoski. “Your service embodies the best of Oregon.”

The Soldiers are charged with the important task of training the Afghan National Army. They will be sent to Camp Shelby, Mississippi for three to four months of training. See **Pritt** on page 4



Photo by Spc. April L. Dustin, Oregon National Guard Public Affairs

Soldiers from each battalion within the 41st Brigade Combat Team stood in formation at the Oregon State Fairgrounds Pavilion Feb. 4, during their official Mobilization Ceremony for deployment to Afghanistan. Soldiers will depart in March to Camp Shelby, Mississippi where they will train for several months before deploying to Afghanistan this summer.

F-Troop 82nd Cavalry demobilizes and deactivates in a bitter-sweet ceremony

Story by Tech. Sgt. Nick Choy,
Oregon National Guard Public Affairs

End of an Era

Above: A Soldier from F Troop, 82nd Cavalry stands in formation holding a pair of golden spurs that were awarded to the cavalry troopers for their combat service in Iraq.

The Order of the Spur is a tradition which dates back to knighthood, where the awarding of gilt spurs symbolized entry into the ranks — and fraternity — of mounted warriors. Soldiers in the United States military awarded spurs are known as “troopers”.

Right: Aleah (l.) and Johnathan (r.) Vanrenterghem wave flags to welcome home soldiers from F Troop, 82nd Cavalry during the demobilization ceremony at the Kliever Armory in North Portland on Jan. 20. The children are the niece and nephew of the unit’s commander, Capt. Eric Walstrom.

PORTLAND, Ore. — The members of F Troop 82nd Cavalry were greeted by thunderous applause from hundreds of family and friends packed into the Kliever Armory during the unit’s official demobilization ceremony on Jan. 20, 2006.

But the joy felt by many in the room was tempered with the knowledge that during the same ceremony, F Troop would be inactivated as part of the Army’s Transformation program.

Moreover, the unit’s soldiers were aware that one of their brothers, Sgt. Kevin D. Davis, originally deployed with F-Troop, lost his life during the unit’s year-long deployment in Iraq. Taken together, the day would be filled with mixed emotions.

“The soldiers made their contributions to their nation and to the people of Iraq,” said F Troop Commander, Capt. Eric Walstrom. “They should be proud of their service, and will always be remembered for what they accomplished.”

According to 1st Sgt. Terry Miller, F Troop First Sergeant, of the 94 members of the unit, 74 Soldiers attended the ceremony held in north Portland. Five Soldiers remained in Iraq as part of the unit’s advance team, and one was on medical hold at Fort Bliss, Texas. The remainder of the unit’s members were sent home because of various medical issues.

Several speakers met with the soldiers before the ceremony began, each providing information on employment, legal issues, and life skills. Ron Kincaid, a Veterans’ Benefits Counselor with the Oregon Department of Veteran’s Affairs’ Veteran’s Service Office was on hand to answer questions soldiers had about financial or health & welfare services provided by the ODVA.

“The ODVA is here to help these veterans,” Kincaid said. “We want them to know what kinds of services are available to them.”

Oregon Governor Theodore Kulongoski, Maj. Gen. Raymond F. Rees, the Adjutant General of the Oregon Na-

Photo by Tech. Sgt. Nick Choy, Oregon National Guard Public Affairs



Photo by Spc. April L. Dustin, Oregon National Guard Public Affairs

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The Oregon Sentinel

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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, and are subject to editing prior to publication. For publication schedules, or for any other questions, please see your unit Public Affairs Representative, or contact the State Public Affairs Office or any of the Oregon Sentinel staff members listed below.

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DoD plan to purchase new weapons threatens National Guard



Maj. Gen. Raymond F. Rees
Adjutant General, State of Oregon

Support for the National Guard continues across the country. We see enormous gratitude from citizens, employers, elected officials, and in-state legislatures and Congress. We owe our thanks to the people who stand behind us.

Unfortunately, the Department of Defense has devised a plan to cut the Guard at a time when it should consider making the Guard more robust and returning resources that the Global War on Terror has drained from our organization. We've proven ourselves a ready, relevant, and reliable force, and the American people know they can turn to us for any crisis in the homeland or overseas. Yet, the DoD seems to be trying to balance its budget on the back of the Guard.

The DoD wants to pay for weapons and new combat systems, and in order to do this they want to reduce funding for authorized personnel and force structure in the Guard. These budget reductions could reduce the overall Army and Air Guard force by nearly 17,000 soldiers and 14,500 airmen.

The tradeoff of reserve component personnel for weapons represents a false economy. The Guard can sustain combat and homeland defense readiness of six brigade combat teams for the cost of one active duty BCT.

At the same time that DoD wants to cut funding for our personnel, we're seeing a surge in our recruiting efforts here in Oregon and across the nation. The nationwide recruiting efforts for the National Guard exceed those of the active duty.

On the Army side, the Army and DoD are on an all out campaign to convince the Americans they are not cutting the Guard, but are building the Guard.

The facts are the Army has proposed a reduction of Brigade Combat Teams from the current structure of 34 to 28. At the same time they are touting that they will give back to the Guard six multi-functional brigades that will be better suited for state missions. There supposedly will be 7,000 spaces in combat support and combat service support units replacing 25,000 in Brigade Combat Teams. In reality, they are saying that we will take away six Clydesdale horses and replace them with six Shetland ponies. We will still have the same number of horses at the end of the day, we all know we will lose substantial capability in the transition.

The Air Force has stated it realizes it would have to cut airmen to balance its books. The Air Force Transformation Flight Plan includes accelerating planned aircraft requirements, such as B-52 and F-117 along with deep cuts in personnel. The move is intended to free resources to repair and replace aging airframes. While the specific details for each state have not been identified, the Air Force plans to cut 14,500 Air Guardsmen between FY 2011 with over 9,000 of these cuts occurring in FY 2008 alone. These issues are going to collide in Congress and create friction between the states and the federal government -- we're seeing evidence of that already. The governors of fifty states

as well as two territories have declared their opposition to the planned cuts. Seventy-five U.S. senators signed a letter urging the DoD to reverse its plan to cut the Guard.

Those who support the National Guard need to know we remain a ready, relevant, and reliable force. Now, more than ever, is the time to recognize the Guard as the right choice for crisis response, homeland defense, and when necessary for federal missions.

The key to showing our continuing relevance is demonstrating our personnel readiness, and the way we do that is to fully man the Guard. We must fill every authorization we're given -- 100 percent manning is the price of admission into the game. If we don't have the personnel, we do not get to play. It is that simple. To keep us in the game, we've initiated some exciting programs: 2-STAR, G-RAP (Guard Recruiter Assistant Program), and ESAR (Every Soldier a Recruiter). These programs offer recognition and incentives to both Army and Air National Guard members and eligible employees. There are cash incentives of up to \$2,000 per recruit. Even family members are eligible for recognition.

This is a win-win situation for us: you can earn money or recognition, and the Guard gains quality people. I encourage you to make this a personal issue. We need to sustain the Guard with quality people. If you help bring those quality people into your unit, you benefit. The Guard becomes a better organization for your efforts.

The strongest statement we can make is to bring in the people we want to serve at our side. We know we're fully capable -- our deployments serving in the Global War on Terror have proven that. Now it's time to show our ability to sustain our readiness. The Guard is uniquely situated to support our communities, our state and our nation. Let's make sure we keep the ability to do so by ensuring we meet our recruiting and retention goals.

G-RAP: Hometown heroes provide strength from within

Story by Guy Britnell

Oregon National Guard Marketing Manager

As a member of the Army National Guard you have answered your nation's Call to Duty. As a Recruiting Assistant you can be rewarded for helping to achieve STRENGTH FROM WITHIN. The current recruiting environment is the most challenging the Guard has faced in the history of the all-volunteer force. The Army National Guard is only as strong as it should be when we remain a fully-manned, flexible and vibrant force. To achieve this, the Army National Guard has announced the formation of the Guard-Recruiting Assistance Program (G-RAP).

The Guard Recruiting Assistance Program's goal is to establish a position of strength from which the guard can achieve its accessions mission of 70,000 enlistments, and meet the guard end-strength goal of 350,000. To achieve this goal, the G-RAP will pay \$2,000 per referred enlistment that successfully ships to Basic Training.

G-RAP is a contracted program designed for individuals who voluntarily apply to become eligible to serve as a part-time Recruiting Assistant (RA). The RA applicant will be verified and hired by a contractor, not the Army National Guard. Each RA will cultivate quality potential Soldiers from within their individual spheres of influence. Once a potential Soldier is identified and pre-

qualified, the RA will facilitate a meeting engagement with their local Recruiter. The Recruiter, RA, and potential Soldier will then work closely to process the potential Soldier and move them towards accession. Upon enlistment, the RA will receive an initial payment of \$1,000, with a second \$1,000 payment upon successful shipment to Basic Training.

Who Can and Can't Be a Recruiting Assistant?

Currently, only traditional Guard members are eligible for this program. AGR, ADSW, and MIL TECH are not eligible. Also, immediate family members of the Full Time Recruiting and Retention Force are not authorized to participate. Educators, coaches, guidance counselors, college professors or other Centers of Influence are not eligible due to conflict of interest.

How Do I Get Paid?

You receive \$50.00 for completion of your G-RAP on-line training program, and payment of \$1,000 upon the verified enlistment of a new Non-Prior Service (NPS) or Prior Service (PS) Soldier. A subsequent \$1,000 payment is made upon shipping to Basic Training for NPS Soldiers and 120 days after enlistment for PS Soldiers. You can elect to be paid via direct deposit to your personal bank account, or you can receive a contractor-issued debit card which will be credited upon each enlistment.

What Support Will I Receive?

You'll have access to promotional mate-

rials that are second to none. Handsome, up-to-date informational pieces, including brochures, guides and DVDs will reinforce your message to candidates. And high-quality Guard branded items, including an assortment of attractive shirts and bumper stickers, will make it easier for you to wear the Guard colors and spread the word!

For more information, or to complete an application, please visit: www.guardrecruitingassistant.com.

ESAR at a glance

The ESAR program is a referral bonus program administered by the Department of the Army. ESAR is similar to G-RAP with the following important differences:

- Payment is \$1,000, paid upon completion of BCT and AIT.
- Only Non-Prior Service referrals will be accepted.
- ALL Army National Guard soldiers are eligible, including ADSW, AGR and MIL TECH (only exception is members of the Recruiting and Retention Force).

You cannot combine ESAR with the G-RAP program. For more information and to register and provide a referral, visit www.1800goguard.com/esar.

1042nd Soldiers take first place during international competition



We did it. I didn't think we would do this good. We competed in a German Shooting competition using their weapons, that no one in our unit had fired before.

There were four events consisting of the P8 pistol, G36 Rifle, the Uzi machine pistol, and a relay race involving pushups, situps and a 70-yard sandbag run for the fourth and final event.

There were 20 other three-man teams competing in the event, coming from the Army, Navy, Air Force and Army Reserves. Contestants from the United States, Poland, Romania, and Scandinavia vied for top honors.

On the right is Spc. Christopher Tovar (right) who won first place in the pistol event. Me on the left (Sgt. 1st Class David Darrow). I took third in the rifle event. Sgt. Stephen Killough (center) took second in the machine pistol event. We placed 10th in the relay race, so we took first place overall.

Not bad for a National Guard team that has been categorized as non-combatants. And we made sure we reminded them of this fact.

Enjoy,
Dave

National Defense Appropriations Act revises benefits for Guard and Reserves



Command Sgt. Major Thomas R. Moe,
State Command Sergeant Major

Recently I have been talking to Soldiers about how we need to be more aware about what is happening in our organizations. We must be able to tell our story, whether it is transformation at the unit level, or what is going on in the Reserve Forces.

As many of you are aware the FY-2006 National Defense Appropriations Act (NDAA) was recently passed and there a lot of positive things that directly effect soldiers in the Guard and Reserve contained in it.

Below are the major Guard and Reserve provisions of the FY-2006 NDAA.

SCSM Moe

Compensation

Basic Allowance for Housing (§610): Requires paying BAH (rather than BAH II) when reservists are ordered to active duty for more than 30 days (previously required the reservist to be ordered to active duty for 140 days or more to receive BAH).

Critical Skills Retention Bonus (§640): Expands the active duty critical skills retention bonus to include RC members; Allows payment for agreeing to serve in an active status for one year; Maximum life-time amount that can be paid to an RC member is \$100,000.

Non-prior Service Enlistment and Affiliation Bonus (§631): Consolidates the Selected Reserve enlistment and affiliation bonuses under one authority; Increased the amount to \$20,000 (was \$10,000 for the enlistment bonus and \$15,000 for the affiliation bonus).

Reenlistment Bonus (§630): Allows the bonus to be paid to a member who has up to 20 years of service and agrees to serve in the Selected Reserve (was 16 years).

Prior Service Enlistment Bonus (§633): Allows the bonus to be paid to a member who has up to 16 years of service and agrees to serve in the Selected Reserve (was 14 years); Eliminated prohibition on paying this bonus to a member who previously received an enlistment or reenlistment bonus.

Selected Reserve Officer Accession/Affiliation Bonus (§634): Increased the maximum bonus amount to \$10,000 (was \$6,000); Eliminated prohibition on paying this bonus to a member who previously served in the Selected Reserve.

Special Pay for Selected Reserve Members Assigned to High Priority Units (§632): Increases amount to \$50 per drill (was \$10 per drill); Expands authority to include officers (previously only enlisted were eligible).

Loan Repayment Program for Chaplains in the Selected Reserve (§684): Allows repayment of education loans of up to \$20,000 for each three years of obligated service as a chaplain in the Selected Reserve.

Foreign Language Proficiency Pay (§639): Increases amount that can be paid an RC member to \$12,000 per year (was \$6,000); Changes incentive to a bonus for all members

(bonus was just for RC members).

Rate of Pay While Attending Service Academy Prep School (§603): Now allows RC members attending military service academy preparatory schools to be paid at the rate for their pay grade and years of service, rather than the cadet/midshipman rate, unless the cadet/midshipman pay rate is greater.

Incentive Pay for Transferring Between Armed Forces (§641): \$2,500 bonus for agreeing to transfer from a regular or reserve component of one armed force to a regular or reserve component of another armed force.

Army Referral Bonus (§645): Allows Sec Army to conduct a pilot program to pay a bonus of up to \$1,000 to a member who refers an individual to a recruiter and the individual subsequently enlists in the Regular Army, Army National Guard or Army Reserve.

Additional Recruiting Incentives (§681): Authorizes Sec Army to develop up to four recruiting incentive programs that are not specifically authorized in law.

Income Replacement for RC Members (§614): Require the Service to pay the difference between: a reservist's regular military compensation (basic pay, allowances, and tax advantage of allowances) plus any monthly special or incentive pays, and other allowances paid on a monthly basis, and; the reservist's average monthly earned income for the 12 months preceding the reservist's mobilization.

Payments not to exceed \$3,000 per month with no payments if the monthly income difference is \$50 or less. The member must have been involuntarily ordered to active duty; and completes 18 consecutive months of active duty, or; completes 24 months of active duty during the previous 60 months, or; is involuntarily mobilized for 180 days or more within six months of separation from a previous involuntary period of active duty of more than 180 days. Payments to begin August 2006.

Medical Benefits

TRICARE Reserve Select (§701): Allow TRS benefit to be suspended during periods of active duty and then resume with any additional period of TRS coverage to be added to the original coverage; Permits mobilized IRR members one year to find a position in the Selected Reserve; Allows 90 days after the member's release from active duty to elect to participate in TRS; Continues TRS coverage for family members for six months after the death of a member enrolled in TRS; Clarifies that TRS includes space available card at military treatment facilities.

TRICARE Standard for All Selected Reserve Members (§702): Allows Selected Reserve members who are self employed, eligible unemployment recipients, or not eligible for an employer sponsored health plan to enroll in TRICARE Standard for self or self and family coverage, with the member paying 50% of the premium (estimated to be \$145/month for self and \$452/month for self and family).

TRICARE also allows all other Selected Reserve members who are not on active duty, not enrolled in TRS or not unemployed/self employed/eligible for an employer health benefit program to enroll in TRICARE Standard for self or self and family coverage, with the member paying 85% of the premium (estimated to be \$246/month for self and \$768/month for self and family).

Medical and Dental Assessment (§732): Requires annual medical and dental assessment and periodic physical exam (as prescribed by SecDef) and that medical and dental readiness be documented annually.

Benefits/Quality of Life

Improved Administration of the President's Mobilization Education Benefit (§540): Allows for retention of the benefit if there is a brief break in Selected Reserve service (not to exceed 90 days) provided the member remains in the IRR.

The difference between a manager and a leader: Individual's state of mind



Chief Master Sgt. Rodney R. Smith,
State Command Chief Master Sergeant

I was reading a magazine the other day and found an interesting article written by James Colvard on the subject of management and leadership. Colvard had some good points for current managers and leaders and for personnel whose goal it is to become a leader in the future. I would like to take this opportunity to share some of his insights and views. Although we may not agree with all he has to say on the subject, he does convey some good points.

We frequently assume management and leadership are the same concept. They are not. The two are associated, but there are fundamental differences. Management involves looking at facts and assessing status. Leadership involves looking at inadequate or at times nonexistent information and

making a decision. Leaders must have the courage to act and take the time to listen. They must be open to new data, but at some point they must take action based on the available data.

In his article James Colvard reveals his views on the differences between management and leadership concepts. A manager takes care of where you are; a leader takes you to a new place. A manager deals with complexity; a leader deals with uncertainty. A manager is concerned with finding the facts; a leader makes decisions. A manager is concerned with doing things right; a leader is concerned with doing the right things. A manager's critical concern is efficiency; a leader focuses on effectiveness. A manager creates policies; a leader establishes principles. A manager sees and hears what is going on; a leader hears when there is no sound and sees when there is no light. A manager finds answers and solutions; a leader formulates the questions and identifies the problems. A manager looks for similarities between current and previous problems; a leader looks for differences. A manager thinks that successful solutions to a management problem can be used again; a leader wonders whether the problem is a new environment might require a different solution.

Multiple functions, limited resources and conflicting demands for time and resources, require management. It involves setting priorities, establishing processes, overseeing the execution of tasks and measuring progress against expectations. Management is focused on the short term, ensuring that resources are expended and progress is made within time frames of days, weeks

and months. Leadership, which deals with uncertainty, is focused on the long term. The effects of a policy decision to invest in staff development, for example, might never be objectively determined or, at best, might only be seen after many years.

Management's concern with efficiency means doing things right to conserve resources. Leadership is focused on effectiveness – doing the right thing. For example, we must manage our resources well to maximize efficiency. In waging war, however, the military's critical responsibility is to be effective and win the war regardless of the resources required. Getting a bargain does not reflect effective leadership if it means losing the war. Good management is important, but good leadership is essential.

Developing managers and leaders involves stages of understanding, not prescriptively, but conceptually. Becoming a leader requires understanding oneself, recognizing ones strengths and weaknesses, and adopting an appropriate leadership style.

James Colvard presented some significant thoughts on leadership. There is a difference between management and leadership. The following are my own views on enlisted force leadership and what you can expect from our senior leadership. Our leaders will always insist on the highest standards. They should promote enthusiasm and pride in their units. Issues and problems should be addressed and resolved and leaders should always strive to move their units forward. Leaders are only as good as the people they lead. A key point to leadership is having people willing to follow. People will only follow if trust and integrity are established and they believe in what you say. We must

understand that each of us has a stake in the success of our units. You must give your best effort to help your unit succeed. When a single unit fails, we have all failed. When a unit succeeds, then we all bask in the glory of success. Regardless of what stage you are at in your career as an Airman or Soldier, you are a part of the leadership and management process. You have an obligation to support leadership and to contribute to the success of your units. Your actions have a profound impact on those around you. The actions you display today will set the standard for the leaders of tomorrow. As you grow as a leader you will rely on leadership qualities learned from the leaders who influenced you and establish your own unique leadership style. We function as a team, and we need leaders who are willing to step forward, accept risks, and become solid role models for our future leaders.

Being a leader has always been tough and always will be. One has to willingly subject oneself to public scrutiny and also the scrutiny of your troops. You must face critics who are often big on words, but seldom have the courage to place themselves in your place. But don't get discouraged; always take comfort in the fact that you are doing your best. Accept constructive criticism from credible sources. Also remember that being a leader today is different then it was ten years ago. We are no longer a large force; we are a much smaller force taking the fight to wherever it happens to be. We are a force on the move and we have many challenges to face in the future. You are an integral part of the management team and leadership process; take that step forward and become a leader in your organization.

1042nd's first female crew chief takes the challenge

At the age of 30, married with two children, you would think joining the military would be the last thing on Tracy Robison's radar screen.

Then again, Sgt. Robison isn't your average woman.



Story by Kimberly L. Lippert, Oregon National Guard Public Affairs

Photos courtesy of Sgt. Tracy Robison, 1042nd Medical Company

Robison wanted a challenge and a chance to serve, so shortly before the 9/11 terrorist attacks she enlisted in the Oregon Army National Guard. It would turn out to be a life-changing decision, and she's been breaking through barriers ever since.

"I joined the Oregon National Guard because I was at a point in my life where I wanted to challenge myself," Robison said. "And my children were older so they could better deal with the initial separation."

"I didn't realize I would be deployed every other year, but I'm still glad I can serve my country in any capacity."

Robison was assigned to the 1042nd Medical Company (Air Ambulance), which was sent to Afghanistan in July 2005. It would become her second deployment since joining the Oregon National Guard, and her first overseas. Her primary duty was as a mechanic on the UH-60 "Blackhawk" helicopters, with additional duty as a supply sergeant. But Robison had her sights set even higher, she wanted to become a crew chief.

"Being a crew chief has been my goal since the last deployment. I never wanted to be stuck in the rear again," said Robison.

A crew chief's duties include maintain-

ing the aircraft, load and passenger security, fuel consumption calculation, airspace surveillance, clearing the aircraft of obstacles and operating the hoist for missions in which a medic needs to be lowered to help a patient.

While in theatre, Robison has been able to complete her flight hours to become a crew chief. With the help of her primary trainer, Staff Sgt. Mark Carter, and almost three weeks of training in Jalalabad, Robison now flies as the first female crew chief for the 1042nd Medical Company.

"I feel damn proud to be the first female crew chief — but let me say that I have broken no barrier, because none really existed," said Robison.

"I just happen to be the first female that was a mechanic, showed promise and progressed. I have done nothing that the males haven't done. My training is the same," she added.

Robison says she was drawn to the excitement of the job.

"I love being in the aircraft and even more so I love being a part of the crew," she said. "I have had the privilege of working with a lot of talented people over here and I'm proud to be a part of it all," Robison added.

One accomplishment Robison is most proud of includes helping the people of Afghanistan.

"Knowing that they are happy we are here, makes all the difference," said Robison. "We save lives — that's what MEDEVAC is all about."

Back home, Robison's husband, Sgt. John Robison, who is a member Joint Force Headquarters of the Oregon National Guard, has been taking care of their two children; Ben age 15, and Haley age 12. No matter how successful and challenging her missions have been in Afghanistan, thoughts of her loved ones are never far from her mind.

"I've missed a lot of important events in my children's lives and I will never get them back. I don't regret joining though. I am doing something that makes me proud, and I hope that when my children grow up, they will look back and be proud of me too," Robison said.



Top: Sgt. Tracy Robison stands next to an Oregon National Guard UH-60 "Blackhawk" helicopter in Bagram Air Base in Afghanistan.

Above: Robison readies the "bird" for runup prior to take-off.

Pritt: "We are the right unit, at the right time, performing the right mission"

Continued from FRONT PAGE

"I believe we are the right unit at the right time, performing the right mission," said Brig. Gen. Douglas Pritt, who will command Task Force Phoenix in Afghanistan.

For the hundreds of Soldiers preparing to leave friends and family behind, the ceremony was bittersweet — though it is tough to say goodbye they are looking ahead to the challenge before them.

"I'm extremely excited," said Spc. Derek Clevenger, from Medical Command, of Salem. "I've been volunteering for every deployment since joining the Guard and this is the first one they picked me for."

A sentiment shared by Spc. Nova Dragoo, from Headquarters and Headquarters Company 141st Brigade Support Battalion.

"I felt left out because it took me so long to go, now I feel like yes, this is what I've been waiting for," said Dragoo.

They will have support during the deployment not only from their families but also the community. Mo's Restaurants/ Pacific Seafood has decided to adopt the brigade during their deployment, and sent them off with a luncheon prior to the Mobilization Ceremony. Soldiers and their families enjoyed more than 375 gallons of clam chowder served in bread bowls as well as shrimp cocktails. For their efforts, each of the 50 Mo's employees who served chowder at the ceremony was awarded by Gen. Douglas Pritt with his Commander's Coin of Excellence.

"I saw the look in the Mo's family's eyes and the expression on their faces when they

so proudly walked up to accept the coins, and it was one of the most moving things I've ever experienced," said Peggy Preisz, General Manager of Mo's. "We are excited to have this opportunity to show our support of the soldiers and their families and thank them for everything they do to protect our state and nation," said Preisz.

The 900 Oregon Soldiers of the 41st BCT will makeup the largest group assembled under Task Force Phoenix in Afghanistan. They will also be joined by approximately 400 Soldiers from Oklahoma as well as smaller groups from Arkansas, Arizona, California, Iowa, Kansas, Maryland, Minnesota, Missouri, Montana, New York, Ohio, Puerto Rico, South Dakota, Texas, Vermont, Virginia, Washington, West Virginia, and representatives from National



Photo by Spc. April L. Dustin, Oregon National Guard Public Affairs

Mackenzie Fraser (left) sings the National Anthem for a powerful audience of VIPs, as well as hundreds of deploying Soldiers and their families at the 41st BCT's Mobilization Ceremony. Mackenzie is the daughter of Maj. Robert Fraser who deployed to Afghanistan with the 41st Embedded Training Team last year and will return to Afghanistan next summer with the 41st BCT to help train the Afghanistan National Army.

Guard Bureau in Washington D.C.

Waiting at home when they return will be proud family members like Herb Waud, father of Spc. Julie Cavinee, 141st BSB, of Creswell, a Soldier who has been with the

Oregon National Guard for 13 years.

"I was in the military myself and support her 100 percent," said Waud. "I'm proud of her."

I am an American Soldier

Story by Spc. April L. Dustin,
Oregon National Guard Public Affairs

A group of Iraqi citizens approached several American Soldiers who were providing security on the Al-Rasheed Bridge over the Tigris River in Baghdad.

The soldiers remained alert, watching for any suspicious activity, but as the Iraqis passed, they held up their ink-stained fingers, joyfully thanking the Soldiers for their right to vote.

According to Oregon Army National Guardsman, Sgt. Jorge Arias, 26, of Keizer, Ore., that interaction during the recent Iraqi elections was the most memorable moment of his deployment with D Company, 2nd Battalion 162nd Infantry.

"After all the hardships we had gone through, that day was well worth it," he said.

Arias' situation was a perfect example of irony. He was assisting the people of Iraq build a democratic nation, and watching them vote in the first free election since the end of Saddam Hussein's tyrannical rule — yet because he himself was not yet a citizen of the United States, he could not even vote in any US elections. His hope, as he watched jubilant Iraqis walk by his post that day, was that one day he could become a citizen of the country he was now serving and whose uniform he was currently wearing.

"It was ironic that I was helping to protect the Iraqi people's right to vote when, in my own country, I didn't have the right to vote yet," said Arias, who was born in Mexico City, Mexico.

Nine months after that day on the bridge in Baghdad, Arias realized his goal. On Jan. 5, Arias stood in front of the American flag in his Army dress uniform with other naturalized citizens at the Immigration and Naturalization office in North Portland, and took the oath of allegiance. Arias was now a citizen of the United States.

"It felt good, like I was actually transforming," Arias said, describing how it felt to take the oath of citizenship. "It felt like I was stepping through a door that finally opened-up after being closed and locked for a long time," He added.

Arias and his family moved from Mexico City to San Bernadino, Calif. when he was nine years old, and then to Silverton, Ore. when he was a senior in high school.

"My parents wanted a better life for their children," said Arias. "They wanted to pursue the 'American Dream'."

Arias graduated from Silverton High School in 1998, obtained a work visa, and enrolled at Chemeketa Community College.

He met a National Guard recruiter and learned of the Montgomery GI Bill that could help him pay for college tuition. After trying to enlist in the Oregon National Guard, he learned he was ineligible for military service without a 'Green Card', which allows immigrants to become permanent residents in the U.S. During the two years he waited to receive his immigration card, he continued through college, worked as a reserve officer for the Silverton Police Department, and a volunteer firefighter with the Silverton Fire Department. He also worked for the Department of Forestry, helping to fight forest fires during the summer.

"I not only wanted to serve my country, I also wanted to serve my community and my state," said Arias. "Oregon has become my home. I really enjoy life here and the people here."

Arias was finally able to enlist in the Oregon Guard in 2002. As a member of A



Photo courtesy of 2-162 IN BN

Above: Sgt. Jorge Arias in Iraq with D Co., 2-162 IN BN.

Above Right: Arias signs documents at the INS office in Portland on Jan. 5, making him a citizen of the United States.



Photo by Spc. April L. Dustin, Oregon National Guard Public Affairs

Troop (formerly E Troop) 82nd Cavalry, he had only been back from Basic Combat Training and Advanced Individual Training for three weeks when his unit was activated for deployment with the 2-162 Inf. Bn. in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom.

"I was ready for it and excited about it," said Arias. "I really wanted to go because that was what I had been training for."

Arias said although the deployment was very difficult at times, he decided to see it from a positive point of view.

"I'm glad I went to Iraq because of how much I learned about myself and others," said Arias.

Arias said while he and his comrades patrolled the streets of Baghdad, they would interact with the local Iraqis, learn what resources they were lacking, and find ways to help them. He said his favorite mission to perform was delivering school supplies to the local children.

"All the good things we did there to help the people made me feel like I fulfilled something," said Arias. "Seeing the hardships that they live with over there made me really appreciate what we have here."

Immediately upon returning from Iraq, Arias applied for citizenship, and although the naturalization application process typically takes one year or more to complete,

his active duty service made him eligible for an expedited naturalization.

Sgt. 1st Class David Garcia served in Iraq with Arias and had recently been assigned as his platoon leader in A Troop. When Garcia learned how long it was taking for Arias to gain his citizenship, he sought the help of Col. Michael Valdez, special projects officer for Hispanic Advancement, to identify a way to speed along the process. Valdez and Garcia discovered that military service members have special benefits when applying for naturalization.

"Being in the military makes applying for citizenship a smoother process and certain fees are waived for service members," said Valdez.

Many sections within the Immigration and Nationality Act outline specific benefits, eligibility requirements, and application forms for military service members seeking naturalization.

In addition, President George W. Bush signed the Expedited Naturalization Executive Order in July 2002, which allows immigrants serving on active duty in the U.S. military, during certain periods of conflict since 9-11, to become immediately eligible for expedited citizenship.

See Arias on page 12

Rees: "The Iraqi people know the generosity of America's citizen-soldier because of you"

Continued from FRONT PAGE

tional Guard, and Congresswoman Darlene Hooley joined other distinguished guests in congratulating the unit on a job well done.

"You've proven that Oregon National Guardsmen will make the mission successful," Rees told the crowd. "And you've done it with courage and commitment, confidence and competence."

Rees praised the unit for handling the tough assignment with bravery and resolve, acting as the quick reaction force, convoy escorts, or as 'the eyes and ears in the search for improvised explosive devices,' while deployed in Iraq. He emphasized that the troopers of Troop F epitomized the Oregon National Guard's core values of courage, commitment, confidence and competence.

"The American people rely on us to be there for them," Rees said. "Whether we're fighting fires, staunching the flow of floodwaters, bringing relief in the wake of tragedy, defending the homeland, or fighting an enemy in foreign lands."

He also touched upon how the unit was instrumental in distributing thousands of pairs of shoes to Iraqi children.

"The Iraqi people know the generosity of America's citizen-soldier because of you," Rees said. "Thousands of Iraqi children have shoes on their feet because you were inspired to give a simple gift that meant so much to them."

Another important part of the ceremony involved The Order of the Spur, in which Golden Spurs were awarded to members of F Troop. Soldiers earn their titles as Cavalry Troopers by facing combat (which is awarded Golden Spurs) or by overcoming challenging tasks - known as a Spur Ride - which is awarded Silver Spurs.

On the other hand, soldiers may be awarded the spur by seeing combat with their cavalry unit. Such was the case with members of F Troop, most of whom were attached from Oregon's artillery unit, 2nd Battalion 218th Field Artillery.

Lt. Col. Eric Bush, Commander of the 1st Squadron 82nd CAV, handed out the

gold spurs to the troopers assembled in open ranks.

"There's a lot of credit to be given out today," Bush said.

The ceremony climaxed on a somber note when the unit's guidon was cased as part of its inactivation. As part of the Army's Transformation, F Troop 82nd Cavalry would now become B Company 82 Brigade, falling under the command of Oregon's 41st Brigade. As part of the demobilization ceremony, the unit and their family members would also witness the inactivation ceremony for F Troop, bringing almost 100 years of lineage to a close.

Audience members fell into an eerie silence as the F Troop guidon was cased. Col. George Lanning, 82 Brigade Commander, joined Walstrom in front of the formation as their guidon was carefully rolled up and placed inside an olive drab colored holder. The new guidon, emblazoned with a large red "B" was slowly unfurled.

"There is a new banner around which you and your successors will rally," Rees told

the troopers. "But one thing will remain the same: the men and the spirit of Troop F will soldier on. I know you will continue to serve our great state and nation."

Following the ceremony, a video edited and produced by Lt. Rich Paetz, highlighting the unit's accomplishments while in Iraq brought the audience to a standing ovation. Walstrom then called the troopers to attention, and released them to their families. Mothers hugged sons, sisters found their brothers, and wives made bee-lines toward their husbands.

Patti and Bill Munk, of Parkdale, Ore., quickly made their way through the sea of DCUs to find their son, James Munk.

"James volunteered for this," his mother, Patti Munk said. "He wanted to go and make a difference for them [Iraqis]."

"We're delighted to have him home," Munk said.

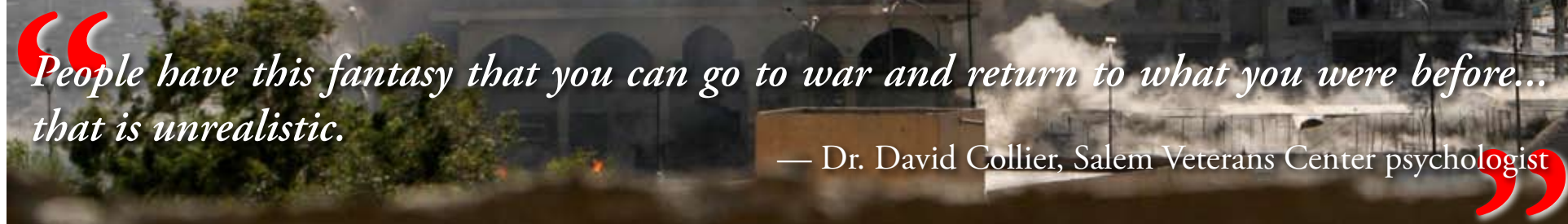
For more information on Veteran's Services, please contact Ron Kinkaid at 503-412-4777, or via e-mail at: ron.kincaid@vba.va.gov.

PTSD

Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder: Finding the calm after the storm

Story by Kimberly L. Lippert,
Oregon National Guard Public Affairs

Photo by Maj. Arnold Strong,
41st Brigade Combat Team,
Public Affairs Officer



“People have this fantasy that you can go to war and return to what you were before... that is unrealistic.”

— Dr. David Collier, Salem Veterans Center psychologist

Combat Fatigue. Shell Shock.

These are just a few terms used to describe the symptoms of what is now known as Post Traumatic Stress Disorder.

While the names have changed the symptoms remain much the same – nightmares, flashbacks, emotional numbing, and isolation. These are the unpleasant side effects of war many Soldiers experience.

“People have this fantasy that you can go to war and return to what you were before, that is unrealistic,” said Dr. David Collier, psychologist at the Salem Veterans Center. “We can’t make you like you were before.”

While statistics vary depending on the source, many believe up to 10 percent of returning veterans from Iraq and Afghanistan have PTSD. According to a recent study out of Walter Reed Army Institute of Research, 19 to 21 percent of troops who have returned from combat deployments meet criteria for post-traumatic stress disorder, depression or anxiety. Of these, 15 to 27 percent of troops surveyed three to 12 months after their deployments had PTSD symptoms.

As a member of the Air Force Reserves who deployed to Iraq in 2003 and a Portland Veterans Administration psychologist specializing in the treatment of PTSD and substance abuse, Dr. Jim Sardo is on the front lines treating soldiers with PTSD both abroad and here at home.

“Statistically, the vast majority of people that deploy are going to be just fine. Most of them will have a period of readjustment for 6-12 months that includes irritability, increased vigilance, difficulty dealing with crowds, avoidance, lots of anger responses in traffic, for most folks this tapers with time,” said Dr. Sardo. “There is a smaller segment of veterans that will have symptoms persist over time.”

For those Soldiers, getting help is essential. Experts agree early intervention is an essential component of successful treatment. While psychologists hesitate to talk in terms of a “cure,” with proper treatment it is possible for Soldiers suffering from PTSD to lead productive and fulfilling lives.

Symptoms

The first thing to establish is whether or not a Soldier may have PTSD. While a health professional needs to make the diagnoses, Soldiers and their family members can identify the symptoms. The symptoms fall into three main categories: Intrusion, Avoidance, and Hyper-arousal.

Intrusion, in people with PTSD, involves memories of trauma reoccurring unexpectedly, and “flashbacks” intruding in their thought processes. Vivid memories accompanied by painful emotions, take over the person’s attention. A person may even feel as if they are re-living the traumatic experience or seeing it in a nightmare.

Avoidance is when a person may avoid any situation that may remind them of the traumatic

event. Examples include crowds, driving, or even close relationships with loved ones. They may feel numb and have diminished emotions or feel like life is just a routine.

Hyper-arousal in PTSD can cause individuals to act as if they are constantly threatened by the trauma that caused their illness. They can become suddenly irritable or explosive. The constant feeling that danger is near causes exaggerated startle reactions.

Many people with PTSD attempt to rid themselves of painful memories and anxiety by abusing alcohol or drugs to “self-medicate”. An example may be drinking excessive amounts of alcohol to fall asleep at night.

As Dr. Sardo said, it’s normal to have many symptoms of PTSD immediately upon returning from a deployment, but if those symptoms persist or begin interfering with life it’s time for the Soldier to seek help. The good news for returning Soldiers is that there are more treatment options available than ever before.

Treatment

Some of the current and useful forms of treatment for PTSD include Cognitive Behavior Therapy (CBT), Exposure Therapy, Psychotherapy, and Medication.

Cognitive Behavior Therapy helps veterans reframe their thoughts in a more realistic matter and deal with the very real symptoms of PTSD.

“CBT helps give them the tools to deal with nightmares, hyper-vigilance, and learn how to think and behave in the here-and-now,” Sardo said. “We ask them to be in the presence of what they fear until the anxiety goes down.”

Exposure Therapy is relatively new treatment for PTSD involving careful, repeated, detailed imagining of the trauma (exposure) or progressive exposures to symptom “triggers” in a safe, controlled context to help the Soldier face and gain control over the fear so that he or she can be confronted with the memory or situation without extreme

anxiety.

“With PTSD people retain the same level of intensity [to a trigger or memory] for years, exposure therapy helps them gain distance from those memories and increase tolerability of those memories,” explained Sardo. “We don’t use exposure therapy for everybody but for those who are ready, it can be very effective.”

Psychotherapy, in either a group context or an individual basis, involves a veteran discussing the traumatic event with a professional, and/or with fellow Soldiers. It helps the individual examine personal values and how the traumatic event affected them.

Medications can help alleviate many of the more severe symptoms of PTSD including nightmares and anxiety. Studies show that medications and behavioral treatments are most effective when done together; neither treatment alone is shown to be as effective.

Despite many effective treatments for PTSD, not everyone seeks help. A 2003 study in the New England Journal of Medicine found that up to 60% of U.S. veterans of Iraq and Afghanistan showing symptoms of PTSD were unlikely to seek help for fear of stigmatization or loss of career advancement opportunities. This still occurs even after the military has been working very hard to de-stigmatize mental health.

“The Oregon National Guard leadership from the top down believes in making sure mental health is talked about and normalized,” said Sardo. “The response by the Oregon National Guard has been phenomenal – they have been a model for how to do that.”

“After the return of one of our battalions, we recognized that our system was simply not adequate to address post deployment issues,” said Col. Mike Caldwell, deputy director of state affairs for the Oregon National Guard. “With that in mind, we set out to aggressively understand what resources were available and developed a system that could deliver those services to our returning veterans.”

In January of 2005 the Oregon National Guard established the Reintegration Team, which helps Soldiers adjust to civilian life upon return from deployment. The team has a live-person available 24 hours a day to assist Soldiers and Airmen with a variety of issues, including troubling emotional symptoms.

“I think this effort has provided us a better system to assist our Soldiers once they come home and not just assume that they will figure it out on their own,” said Caldwell.

The Oregon National Guard Reintegration Team will help Soldiers who may be suffering from PTSD connect with treatment providers. More information on the Reintegration Team is available at www.orng-vet.org or by phone at 1-888-688-2264.

Fortunately, there are various options for Sol-

Local & National PTSD Resources

Oregon National Guard Reintegration Team
Helpdesk: 1(888) 688-2264

Available to provide referral assistance, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.
Military POC: Lt. Kevin Ressel
Email: info@orng-vet.org

Portland VA Medical Center
(503) 220-8262

Salem Vets Center
617 Chemeketa Street NE
Salem, OR 97301
(503) 362-9911

National Center for PTSD
www.ncptsd.va.gov

www.ncptsd.va.gov/facts/veterans/fs_help_for_vets.html (Help for Families)

See **Soldiers** on page 9

The first step to healing a “Soldier’s Heart” simply begins with talking

Brotherhood

“The pain is still there, even though you try to shut it away in a little box in the back of your head, you still carry it around with you,” said one Lieutenant who served as a platoon leader for the 2nd Battalion 162nd Infantry in Iraq. In order to speak openly about his experiences, the Lieutenant chose to remain nameless for this story.

Soldiers from the 2-162 Infantry, who fought insurgents in Baghdad, have been back in the U.S. for nearly a year. They possess personal knowledge and experience which may help hundreds of other Oregon National Guard Soldiers who have either recently returned from deployments, or are scheduled to return shortly.

Sgt. 1st Class Vince Jacques of the 2-162 Inf. Bn. was injured in Iraq as a truck commander in a HMMWV that hit an improvised explosive device. He is now a member of the Oregon National Guard’s Reintegration Team, assisting Soldiers and families as they transition back into their post-deployment lives. According to Jacques, it is important for Soldiers and families to realize that we are all in this together.

“It’s good for them to know that they are not alone, there are so many people out there that want to help,” Jacques said.

But in order to understand why some Soldiers have a difficult time adjusting back into their lives at home, it helps to know what their lives were like during deployment.

“Before we went over there, we all had this grand vision of what combat was going to be like, but until you’ve been there, you really won’t understand,” said the Lieutenant. “It’s the ultimate adrenaline rush, but at the same time, it’s one of the worst experiences you could ever go through, especially when you lose someone.”

The Lieutenant said the simplicity of life seemed to slow time, making one year feel like 10 years. He also said he learned to survive on very little sleep, and when he did get to sleep, it was never restful.

“Your internal clock gets so messed up, you begin to wonder if you’re ever going to tick right again,” he said.

Most Soldiers begin to feel that if they can make it through the deployment, they can handle anything back home. At the same time, they realize there were a lot of things they previously took for granted.

“I found that I didn’t realize how much I didn’t appreciate all the little things that I took for granted,” the Lieutenant added.

But most Soldiers agree that going through combat together creates a bond like no other.

“When I see these guys come in for help, there is this brotherhood,” Jacques said of the Reintegration Team. “When these guys come to us for help, they know they can trust us, because we are not just some talking head that hasn’t been anywhere. We were over there going through the same stuff together.”

The Reintegration Team is set up to give returning veterans straight-line communication to counselors and resources. According to Jacques, dealing with the Veteran’s Administration only adds more stress to Soldiers who need assistance right away.

“With the bureaucracy of the Veterans’ Administration, you’d spend hours a day on

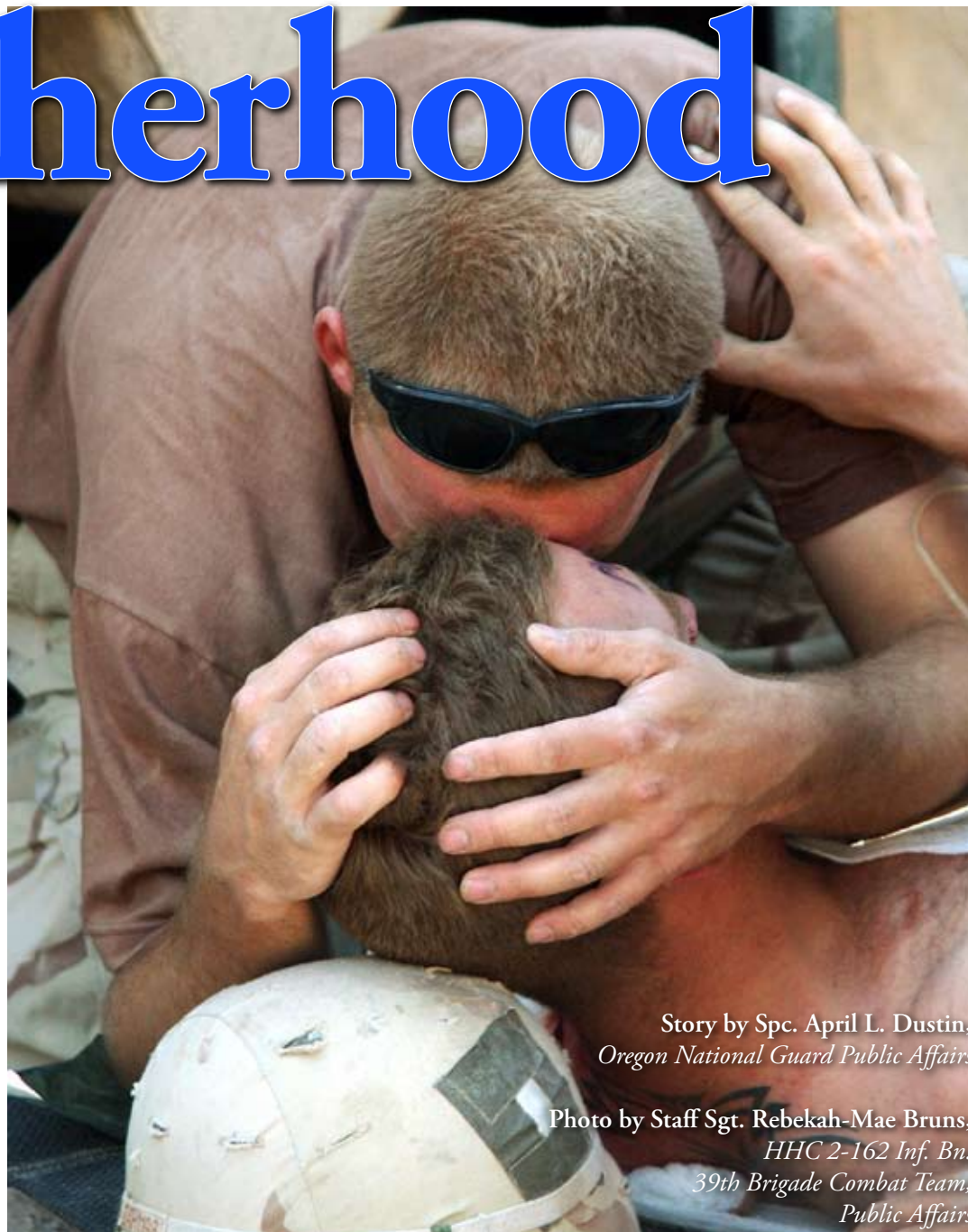
“They were there with me, they’ve seen it, they’ve felt it, they’ve lived it with me, and that makes them my brother”

— Soldier, 2-162 Inf. Bn.

the phone,” Jacques said. “It was extremely frustrating — it almost made a lot of us blow a gasket.”

Jacques said that the concept of brotherhood and the desire to take care of each other is the motivation behind a group of wounded Soldiers, who named themselves the “Blasted Brothers”. They collectively began compiling phone numbers and contacts for veterans’ resources, passing them on so other Soldiers wouldn’t have to wait in long lines or spend hours on the phone.

When the Oregon National Guard decided to develop a Reintegration Team, members of the “Blasted Brothers” — who had already started laying the groundwork to prepare for the return of their comrades — seemed like a



Story by Spc. April L. Dustin,
Oregon National Guard Public Affairs

Photo by Staff Sgt. Rebekah-Mae Bruns,
HHC 2-162 Inf. Bn.
39th Brigade Combat Team,
Public Affairs

natural choice to employ as full-time members of the team.

“Before deployment, I had always heard about the brotherhood between combat veterans from previous wars,” the Lieutenant said.

According to the Lieutenant, the combat veteran brotherhood is not unit, service, or even conflict-oriented. It is also not specific to those who served side by side in battle. Most veterans who have experienced any kind of combat situation feel a camaraderie with others who shed blood, sweat and tears together in an austere environment, and their bond crosses boundaries of time and generations.

“I finally got to experience this when I met a Vietnam veteran, who at the time was a stranger to me,” the Lieutenant said. “But because I was a combat vet, and he was a combat vet, we ended up talking for hours.”

“The whole time I’ve been back, I’ve been wondering if I’m just (messed-up) because there are things that I can’t get rid of, things I can’t let go — so I asked him about that. I asked him if it will ever go away, will the pain ever go away (pause, tears) and he said ‘No’.

“After all these years, this Vietnam veteran is still dealing with the pain,” the Lieutenant continued. “By the end of our conversation I found myself hugging this man, because he is my brother.”

According to the Lieutenant, despite a great outpouring of support from both National

Guard-sponsored assistance programs and community sponsored assistance, the majority of the help veterans receive when they return from deployment is from their comrades in arms.

“(It’s) the guys to your left and your right who went through it with you,” he said. “It goes back to that brotherhood. With these guys, I’ll rip off my arm and give it to them if they need it, because they were there with me, they’ve seen it, they’ve felt it, they’ve lived it with me, and that makes them my brother.”

“Dealing with family when you come home is a big adjustment compared to what we were doing over there,” Jacques said.

“Over there, everyone had a tremendous amount of responsibility and when you get

home you don’t have that anymore,” he added.

Jacques cited an example of a private who may return home from Iraq and goes back to working at Fred Meyer or goes to school. The kind of responsibility he used to have in combat is hard to find in the civilian world. Likewise, a squad leader in charge of thousands of dollars of equipment and responsible for others’ lives in combat must now transition back to normal life.

“It’s a tough transition,” Jacques said. The Lieutenant returned home to a grateful community, and of course, his loving family. But a lot of Soldiers carry an unrealistic expectation of what home holds for them.

“There’s an expectation that we’re coming home to Nirvana,” the Lieutenant said. “You get home and you’ve got money in your pocket, you don’t have to do anything at all for a few months. It’s like you’ve won the lottery.”

“You just came through a year of hell, and you feel like taking the next three months to do whatever the hell you want to do, because you’ve earned it,” he added.

“Two months after I got back, I couldn’t take not having anything to do,” the Lieutenant continued. “It drives you nuts. Sitting around talking to everyone about what it’s like over there, you get sick of talking about it. Then money starts running out and you start thinking about the bills. You’ve got to get back into the work force, back into the routine you had before deployment ... but now everything’s totally different. The normality of everyday life that we lived without for a year, while we were in Iraq, now becomes the monkey on your back.”

“So you try twice as hard to make up for the fact that you’ve been gone,” said the Lieutenant. “So now you’re trying harder to do what you think is expected of you back home, and you’re running yourself into the ground. The whole time you’re dealing with this transition, you’re still trying to deal with the stress and emotions of the loss of your friends and the (stuff) you’ve seen over there.”

“You don’t realize how much you’ve changed until you come home,” the Lieutenant said. “The biggest social challenge is crowds. Before I left, I could walk into a crowd and shake hands, make people laugh, I could talk to anyone. Now, even though it’s gotten a little better, when I’m in a crowd, I feel like ‘get these people away from me, I’ve got to leave, I can’t do this,’” he said.

“You talk to the other guys and how you all

The term “Soldier’s Heart” was used in the 19th Century as one of the first models to explain physical and mental changes experienced by veterans returning from the Civil War.

Today, experts use terms such as Anxiety, Depression, and Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) to describe the effects of combat on Soldiers. But, regardless of the terminology, combat has always had long-lasting affects that can take months - even years - to heal a “Soldier’s Heart”.

miss the simple combat life,” the Lieutenant said. “We came back looking for the peace and simplicity of what life used to be before we left, and you begin to realize there is nothing simple about your life back home.”

“I’m fortunate with my fiancé because she is so incredibly supportive,” he continued. “She’ll just listen and won’t offer advice or try to diagnose what I’m saying or feeling. She’s just there to listen and share the pain with me.”

Dealing with losing one of your buddies is very difficult, according to Jacques. But he said the best thing to do for his lost ‘brothers’ is to live his life to its fullest.

“We have an obligation to continue with our lives, get back on our feet, stay busy, be productive and don’t quit,” Jacques said. “If you quit, (because they died) they’d be furious. They’d want you to be better after they died. Any of us that were close to getting killed, it’s like you got a second chance. It would be a sin to not go out and do something with your second chance.”

“No matter how you rationalize it, no matter how you deal with it, the pain is still there and it will always be there,” the Lieutenant said, as tears rolled down his cheeks.

Jacques warns about drowning the pain and stress behind alcohol.

“It (drinking) enhances (emotions), and makes it worse,” Jacques said. “If you’re doing it every night to get to sleep, it only gets worse from there.”

“You start to wonder why you can’t sleep,” the Lieutenant said. “You don’t know if you are not sleeping because during the deployment you’ve just gotten used to it, or if you’re not sleeping because your head is messed up. So you drink two to three bottles of wine, or a case of beer each night just to fall asleep.”

The Lieutenant had a rude awakening one day. As he was taking out the weekly recycling, he counted 18 empty wine bottles and a garbage bag full of empty beer bottles. His fiancé mentioned to him that she found herself drinking a bit more too, but she remained very supportive of him.

“That’s when I knew I had a problem,” said the Lieutenant. “It was starting to affect the people around me that I love.”

Jacques and the experts agree. The best thing in dealing with stress is for veterans to find something that makes them feel useful.

“Go out and be a part of something productive,” Jacques said. “Have things you like to

See **Brotherhood** on page 9



Above: After casing the battalion colors, Lt. Col. David Stuckey, commander of 1-162 Inf. Bn., relinquishes the colors to Col. Cameron Crawford, commander of the 41st Brigade Combat Team.

Right: Lt. Col. David Stuckey, battalion commander, and Command Sgt. Major James Jungling prepare the 1-162 Inf. Bn. colors for casing, during the battalion's inactivation ceremony.

Photos by Spc. April L. Dustin, Oregon National Guard Public Affairs.



Story by Spc. April L. Dustin,
Oregon National Guard Public Affairs

Wildcat Battalion — 'First to Assemble' — for the last time

SALEM, Ore. — Hundreds of Soldiers from the 1st Battalion 162nd Infantry assembled at the Salem Armory Auditorium on Jan. 7 to stand united behind their colors for one last time.

The infantrymen stood together in formation as they watched the casing of their colors, a symbolic ceremony in which the battalion colors are rolled up and cased, signifying the official inactivation of the battalion.

"It's painful watching the colors go away," said Staff Sgt. Karl Gatke, of B Company.

The 1-162 Inf. Bn. was inactivated as part of the National Guard Bureau's implementation of the Army Transformation plan, which includes reorganizing combined-arms units into modular, self-contained brigades. For the Oregon Army National Guard, transitioning the 41st Brigade from a separate infantry brigade to a combined-arms brigade combat team required many changes, including inactivating one of the infantry battalions.

"Today represents an important day for our battalion, the 41st Brigade Combat Team, and the Oregon Army National Guard," said Battalion Commander Lt. Col. David Stuckey, during the ceremony. "Our deactivation and the casing of the colors marks the end of our official history. However, it is also a step forward for the history of our National Guard."

The 1-162 Inf. Bn. has more than 100 years of history, tracing its lineage back to 1887. The unit served during the Spanish

American War, WWI, and WWII. More recently, the battalion was activated in February 2003, deploying more than 400 Soldiers to Kuwait and Southern Iraq in support of Operation Enduring Freedom. The battalion was activated again in September 2005 to assist the 41st BCT with disaster relief efforts in Louisiana.

"Our history has been distinguished, our battalion over time has been a leader within the 41st Brigade," said Stuckey, as he addressed the battalion.

Stuckey recognized individual Soldiers in each company for tasks they had accomplished and reminisced of the battalion's most memorable moments. He reminded the Soldiers they will continue to be a critical component to the Oregon National Guard no matter what guidon they serve under.

"It is you, Wildcats, that have made this battalion special and I ask you to continue on in doing your job, continue our successful tradition, behind a different guidon," Stuckey said. "Our guidon will be cased, but the success we've had has been accomplished by Soldiers and leaders doing their jobs. You as Soldiers are not being cased and, in my mind, adapting has been one of our battalion's greatest attributes."

Several new guidons will stand in front of the battalion's six armory locations throughout the state. Three companies will remain infantry units. A Company, in Hillsboro, and C Company, in Gresham, will become part of 2nd Battalion 162nd Infantry. D Company, in St. Helens, will become

part of 1st Battalion 186th Infantry.

Two of the companies will transition into field artillery units. Headquarters and Headquarters Company, in Forest Grove, and B Company, in McMinnville, will become part of 2nd Battalion 218th Field Artillery. E Company, in Salem, will be totally inactivated and those Soldiers will be transferred to other units.

Although the McMinnville armory will be handed over to 2-218th FA Bn., B Company Soldiers say they will carry their guidon and the lineage of 1-162 Inf. Bn. with them to Afghanistan as they deploy with the 41st BCT this summer.

"This is probably more painful for those of us that are deploying to Afghanistan, because we are watching the unit crumble

and exploring a new MOS," said Jungling. "They may find different jobs they like better or have more opportunity to move up in the ranks."

Stuckey said some Soldiers are pursuing opportunities in field artillery. "I never thought that you could convince an infantryman [to become] an artilleryman," he said, "but we've shown them that artillery makes a difference and is an important part of the mission for the 41st BCT."

Spc. Bradley Beverly, of HHC, plans to transfer to the 2-218th FA Bn. He made special arrangements to take a break from his security duties at the Oregon Military Department to stand in the final formation with his comrades at the inactivation ceremony.

"It's painful watching the colors go away."

— Staff Sgt. Karl Gatke, Bravo Co., 1-162 Inf. Bn.

around us while we carry on its lineage for another year in a combat zone," said Gatke. "The lineage of the battalion will stop there with us."

The battalion's inactivation has affected nearly 650 Soldiers who are now looking for new units to call home. According to Command Sgt. Major James Jungling, the Soldiers are adapting well. He said morale dipped low when the Soldiers first find out about the inactivation, but they decided to show everyone how to go out strong.

"They did a fabulous job at [annual training] and everyone responded and was motivated during Katrina," said Jungling. "They are doing their best to carry on and I'm very proud of them."

Jungling said most Soldiers in the battalion are transferring into 2-162 Inf. Bn. and 1-186 Inf. Bn. to continue their service as infantrymen. He said the other infantry battalions in the state have welcomed them.

Sgt. R.J. Lawrence, of B Company, plans to transfer to 2-162 Inf. Bn. He said, "It's been hard because 1st Battalion has been my family. For my guys, we are all following each other. We're sticking together, so even though we will be in another unit we will still be one big family."

According to Stuckey, many Soldiers in the battalion plan to stay together. "Through this process I have learned that Soldiers facing changes will follow three things; their MOS (military occupational specialty), their friends, or their leadership."

Both Stuckey and Jungling noted the battalion's non-commissioned officers have worked hard to guide their Soldiers through the transition by showing them all the options that are available to them.

"Some of them are taking on new chal-

"I've been doing this [infantry] for six years, so it's time for me to try something new," said Beverly. He somberly added, "But, I'm going to miss my blue cord." (The light blue cord worn on the right shoulder of the Class A dress uniform which can only be worn by qualified infantry Soldiers.)

Lt. Jonathan Vanhorn, of HHC, said as a medic his duties will differ very little when he transfers to the artillery battalion. "Soldiers now have a chance to look at the big picture and see what opportunities are available to them overall," he said.

Although Soldiers and leaders in the 1-162 Inf. Bn. seemed to have mixed emotions about the inactivation of their battalion, they agreed that the Transformation changes provide more opportunities for Soldiers and units within the 41st BCT.

"This is a sad day and a happy day at the same time," said Jungling. "This is heartbreaking for us, but it's better for the state and National Guard to strengthen other units within the brigade. We have strong NCOs and great leaders that can take their experience and spread their knowledge to new Soldiers."

Stuckey explained that although the inactivation of the battalion is frustrating and disheartening, he said the Transformation moves make sense and will accommodate the needs of the state.

"I've had a lot of time to think about this and I am convinced, in my mind, that this change is positive," said Stuckey. "We are making history in casing these colors. It is symbolic that our [battalion's] intermediate objective has ended, but there is a bigger objective out there now and, in the end, this change is a positive experience for the Oregon Guard."



Photo by Sgt. 1st Class John Staub, HHC 1-162 IN BN

Hundreds of Soldiers from 1-162 Inf. Bn. stood in formation behind their respective company guidons to bid farewell to the battalion colors during the inactivation ceremony on Jan. 7.

TRANSFORMATION: A changing Army for changing times

Story by Spc. April L. Dustin, State Public Affairs Office

In accordance with the Army Transformation plan, National Guard Bureau announced on Oct. 5 the new modular-brigade structure for the Army National Guard. NGB announced that the proposed transformation will affect 73-percent of Army Guard units nationwide, which is the largest shift in the Guard force since WWII.

"The Army National Guard has directed its subordinate commands to start the transformation process," said Lt. Col. Donll McBride, transformation officer for Joint Forces Headquarters.

"We are doing this because the Army has decided to transform their units and for us to maintain interoperability we must structure our forces in a like manner."

The Army Transformation plan includes shrinking the divisional force structure down to brigade levels by reorganizing units into modular, combined-arms Brigade Combat Teams. Each transformed BCT will encompass everything it needs to be self-contained, severing much of the command and control ties between division headquarters and subordinate brigades. The objective of this transformation is to increase the mobility, lethality, and self-sufficiency of each individual BCT, therefore increasing the overall effectiveness of the Army in today's battle environment.

"It gives the Army more flexibility to perform a variety of ever-changing missions," said McBride.

McBride said while the Guard has always been a ready, reliable force capable of accomplishing a variety of missions, transforming the state according to the plans set forth by Oregon Adjutant General Maj. Gen. Raymond F. Rees will ensure that the Oregon Guard remains ready to accomplish any federal mission, while providing the Governor with a balanced force across the entire state, capable of accomplishing any state mission.

So what does transformation entail for the Oregon Army National Guard? It involves many changes that will, in one way or another, impact nearly every unit and every Soldier in the Oregon Guard. To meet the reorganization needs of the state, new unit identification codes will be assigned, and personnel and equipment will have to be shuffled.

"All the new unit identification codes are already in the system," said McBride. "Actually, the credit goes to Rick Braun who developed a web-based placement tool to place Soldiers in their new units and it is working very well."

McBride said the affects of these transformation changes depend on each individual unit and each Soldier. He said for some Oregon Guard units transformation will have minor affects such as, changing unit names and moving units to new armory locations.

"For example, (under transformation) the 2-162 Infantry Battalion will still be an infantry battalion," said McBride. "Some of their unit letter designators may change, they will pick up new armory locations and a Forward Support Company, but they are still an infantry battalion."

On the other side of the spectrum, some transformation changes involve more extreme measures, such as inactivating three of the state's battalions. The loss of three battalion headquarters resulted in the loss of some command and control capabilities for the Oregon Guard. These inactivations resulted in hundreds of Soldiers being transferred to other units and, in some cases, having to change their military occupational specialties.

"The 1-162 Infantry Battalion was deactivated and many of those Soldiers have transferred into the 2-218 Field Artillery Battalion," said McBride.

Transformation also encompasses the activation of many new units throughout the state. These new units will provide more MOS opportunities for Soldiers. Soldiers will benefit from these new MOS positions with job skills that are more marketable to civilian employers, and more opportunities in support positions for females (who cannot occupy combat MOS positions).

Another overall impact of transformation will be the affect it has on the state's authorized manning strength. The Oregon Army National Guard is currently authorized a manning strength of 6,806 Soldiers. After transformation, authorized strength will decrease to approximately 6,465 Soldiers.

Logistically, transformation provides many challenges, as nearly all units within the state will see equipment changes. In most cases, equipment will remain at its current armory location however; property book and hand receipt inventories must be completed before change of command moves are made. Also, technical inspections must be conducted to make sure equipment meets standards for transfer or turn-in. Additionally, many units in the state must acquire new equipment, despite significant shortages due to a combination of transformation and transferring equipment to deploying units.

"Each unit will be re-equipping to some degree," said McBride. "When (units will receive new equipment) depends on personnel readiness and the future availability of equipment that is being used in the war currently," said McBride.

McBride said Soldiers should be proactive and stay informed about how transformation will affect their unit. He said Soldiers should not be afraid to ask their chain of command how the affects of transformation changes the role they play as individuals in the Oregon Guard.

"It is a painful process that, at times, due to its complexity, can cause confusion, miscommunication and hard feelings," said McBride. "Loosing force structure is always difficult and that is why personnel readiness is the Adjutant General's number one priority."

The transformed 41st Brigade Combat Team will consist of two infantry battalions (2-162 Inf. and 1-186 Inf.), one fires battalion (2-218 Field Artillery), the 141st Brigade Support Battalion, the new 41st Brigade Special Troops Battalion, and the new 1st Squadron 82nd Cavalry Reconnaissance, Surveillance and Target Acquisition (RSTA).

"The 41st Brigade Combat Team has always been a combined-arms team," said McBride. "The big change was replacing an infantry battalion with a RSTA Squadron."

As a result of these changes, the 1st Battalion 162nd Infantry was completely inactivated and those Soldiers are being transferred to other units.

"The dynamics of restructuring Oregon made 1-162 the odd man out," said Lt. Col. David Stuckey, former commander of the 1-162 Inf. Bn. "This is frustrating and disheartening, but to see how the moves are being made, it all makes sense. This will make units stronger, the 41st Brigade stronger, and the Oregon National Guard stronger."

McBride said the new 1st Squadron 82nd Cavalry (RSTA) will be a very mobile and specially equipped unit, to include the use of tactical Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (UAV). The squadron will consist of a headquarters troop, a forward support company, two motorized reconnaissance troops, and a dismounted reconnaissance troop.

"If you're going to win battles, you have to have good reconnaissance," said Oregon Adjutant General Maj. Gen. Raymond F. Rees, during the activation ceremony for A Troop 1-82 Cav. (RSTA) in Woodburn, Ore. on Jan. 7.

The newly transformed fires battalion, 2-218th Field Artillery, will lose two howitzers as it transitions from having three firing batteries with six howitzers each, to having a two firing batteries with eight howitzers each. However, the battalion will receive other specialty equipment including, UAVs and light counter-mortar radars.

"With this transformation plan we will provide the state with the ability to draw from a regional perspective for combat, combat support or combat service support units," said McBride.

For more transformation changes, see the next issue of the Oregon Sentinel.

Soldiers have access to many PTSD resources



Photo by Maj. Arnold V. Strong, 41st BDE Public Affairs Officer

Research shows that soldiers who have deployed to a combat theater may exhibit symptoms of post-traumatic stress disorder and not even know it.

Continued from PAGE 6

diers seeking help for PTSD. One alternative is the Salem Veterans Center which offers both one-on-one counseling and group therapy. Dr. David Collier, a psychologist with the center has been treating veterans with PTSD for more than 30 years.

"We try to enhance functioning," said Collier. "You hear people talking about a cure, but it's more realistic to focus on managing their condition so it doesn't interfere as much with their life."

In a typical situation, a veteran who comes to Salem Vets Center wondering if they are suffering from PTSD would go through four to five sessions with a counselor to see if their condition meets the criteria for a diagnosis. Treatment is free for Oregon veterans and it is confidential.

"Unless they say, I'm in treatment at Salem Vets Center we would not [reveal that information] to their chain of command," said Collier.

Treatment is also available at the Portland VA Medical Center. Those suffering from severe PTSD symptoms may benefit from an inpatient program in Seattle, Washington through the VA Puget Sound Health Care System.

Experts say it's important to remember that seeking help is not a sign of weakness. Though PTSD can be extremely difficult, with the right help the condition is manageable.

Brotherhood of soldiers an important resource

Continued from PAGE 7

do, like hobbies."

No one wants to be labeled as having a disorder or as being abnormal. What a lot of people don't realize is that, according to experts, experiencing these symptoms makes people normal. The emotions and feelings veterans sometimes experience are normal reactions to abnormal events.

Soldiers don't want to seek help for fear that it will jeopardize their military career. For some Soldiers who don't have a family to come home to, those who shared this traumatic experience with them are the only family they have — and they can't afford to lose that.

According to the Lieutenant, many Soldiers don't want to be perceived as weak by their counterparts. Moreover, Western society frowns upon males who overtly display their emotions. Men are taught to be strong. Crying is a sign of weakness, and if you are a male, admitting that you are scared, worried, stressed out, or tired is a signal to the rest of society that you have failed.

"Soldiers don't seek help and don't want to talk to anyone about it because it's a macho pride thing," he said. "We've got this attitude that we're tough."

But he stresses the most important thing is to bring your feelings out in the open.

"Don't hide it," the Lieutenant said. "If you don't want to take it to your chain of command, take it to one of your brothers. You can't just be tough and sit on it. It doesn't go away, it doesn't get better with time. It gets better with talking to people about it. Find someone you can confide in that has been there, and be honest and up-front with him or her about all of it. If you have a problem let your brothers help you."

"If they're having a really hard time now, it's only going to get worse unless they get help from professionals to carry on with their lives," Jacques said. "Soldiers don't want to be spoon-fed, they're warriors, the epitome of self-reliance. They just want to be given the tools they need so they can pick themselves up and get back on their feet."

But not everyone is open to help.

"There have been times we (The Reintegration Team) has given a guy everything he needs to go get help and he won't do it," Jacques said. "We follow up with the Soldier, but we are not going to push them into it getting help. The VA won't take them unless they are ready, and they have to have a track record that they are trying to help themselves."

According to the Lieutenant, this is the point where the importance of brotherhood is evident.

"Your buddy may look just fine on the outside, but if you sit down and talk to him you'll find out that he's not," he said. "Just find someone you can confide in, — it doesn't even have to be another soldier — just find someone you can trust to talk to."

"Guys don't want their peers or chain of command losing confidence in them, or thinking they can't do their job," Jacques said. "To them, the scariest thing in the world to think is that they can't do their job anymore, but the chain of command doesn't feel that way. Soldiers will not be penalized for seeking help or counseling. We want them to get help now, or it will just get worse down the road."

"Your mind is your weapon," Jacques added. "If your mind is not clear, that is just as bad as having a weapon that is not clear. You need to PMCS (preventative maintenance checks and services) yourself to make sure your mind is functioning in good operational condition."



With the increasing operations tempo, more veterans will need access to assistance.

142nd sees Change of Authority



Photo by Tech. Senior Airman John Hugel, 142nd Multimedia

The 142nd Fighter Wing's first female Command Chief, Chief Master Sgt. Erin Parks (left), along with outgoing FW Command Chief Master Sgt. Daniel Haider (right), present their chief's coins at a change of authority ceremony at the Portland Air Base, Dec. 11.

Story by Maj. Mike Allegre, 142nd Fighter Wing Public Affairs

PORTLAND, Ore. (Jan. 22, 2006) — After 34 years of military service in both the U.S. Air Force and Air National Guard, Command Chief Master Sgt. Dan Haider retired on Jan. 22. Haider officially passed authority as the 142nd Fighter Wing's Command Chief to Chief Master Sgt. Erin Parks on Dec. 11.

A full-time technician with the ORANG since September 1975, and currently employed as a full-time maintenance superintendent assigned to the 142nd Communications Flight, Haider joined the USAF in January 1972. He was initially assigned to Mt. Hebo AFS, Ore., where he went from active duty to the 116th Tactical Air Control Squadron via the Palace Chase program.

Haider said he has seen a tremendous change in the mission and an overall better caliber and quality of Airman joining the ORANG.

"Our NCOs today are better educated and the senior NCOs have more influence and input with their commanders," Haider said.

Parks has been the Oregon Air National Guard's full-time AGR Manager, but has been reassigned as the 142nd FW Command Chief — making her the first full-time Command Chief for the fighter wing.

She began her career in May 1985 and has served in a variety of support roles. Parks is the unit's fourth command chief. Parks wants to work with other units to help improve and streamline their processes.

"Making a good first and lasting impression on these young people is important," Parks said. "I'd like to encourage our members to be more involved in community efforts. It's important especially from the Top-3 to give time back to our communities."

Military Funeral Honor Guard seeks members

Story by Spc. April L. Dustin, Oregon National Guard Public Affairs

The Oregon Army National Guard Military Funeral Honors Program is seeking Soldiers to perform military Honor Guard duties across the state.

The Military Funeral Honors Program is a new program mandated by Congress to reflect funeral honors conducted at Arlington National Cemetery, in Washington, D.C., at every veteran's funeral, in every state across the nation.

"This is a very self-fulfilling position," said Sgt. RJ Lawrence, NCOIC for the Oregon program. "We are there to render the ultimate honor to veterans and their families. It is the last military honor they will ever receive."

The Oregon program, headquartered in Forest Grove, currently has nearly 70 Soldiers across the state performing almost 200 funerals every month. The program also has a full-time Honor Guard stationed at Willamette National Cemetery performing full honors (firing party, flag folding, and bugle) for as many as 12 funerals per day.

Lawrence expects the number of requests for funeral honors to rapidly grow by the end of the fiscal year.

"The Pentagon statistics show that 800 veterans die in Oregon every month," said Lawrence. "We are required to have at least two Soldiers at every funeral, so the program needs to grow."

In addition to funeral performances, the Honors Program also performs Color Guards wherever needed.

"We even had a team perform a Color Guard for the Governor," said Lawrence.

Lawrence said with the 41st Brigade Combat Team's upcoming deployment to Afghanistan, the Honors Program will lose one-third of its members.

"We need people for both full-time and part time positions," said Lawrence. "We need teams all across the state."

The program has full-time Honor Guard teams in Forest Grove, Albany, Bend, and La Grande. Lawrence said there is a need for full-time teams to be created in Southern Oregon and Southeast Oregon.

Soldiers interested in joining the program must meet standard Army height and weight requirements and must be available to train a minimum of two days per week. Soldiers will receive Dress Blue uniforms, Active Duty base pay, and one retirement point for their Honor Guard performances and training.

"They have to be able to commit and have a strong attention to detail," said Lawrence.

For more information contact the program coordinator, Master Sgt. (ret.) Randy Teisl or NCOIC, Sgt. RJ Lawrence at 503-359-9352 or send an email to: ormilitary-funerals@ng.army.mil.



Van Natta temporarily replaces Elliot as Oregon ESGR chair

Retired 1249th Engineer Battalion Command Sergeant Major, Bill Van Natta was named Executive Director for the Oregon Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve (ESGR) Program.

He will hold the position while Col. (Ret.) Bob Elliott is deployed with the 41st Brigade in Afghanistan. The unit is scheduled to return to Oregon sometime in June 2007.

Van Natta has been with the Oregon National Guard for more than 33 years, both as a traditional guardsman and an AGR. He has served with both the 41st BCT and the 82nd BDE, and for more than five years, has served as a volunteer with the Oregon ESGR program in various capacities.

If you need assistance with anything related to ESGR, feel free to contact Bill Van Natta at 503-932-2362, or via e-mail at: william.vannatt@ng.army.mil.

2005 tax exemptions for Guard members

The Department of Revenue website outlines 2005 Income Tax Legislation benefits that Oregon Guard members are eligible for. A few of these benefits include:

- Military members serving in a combat zone are not taxed by either the IRS or the State of Oregon.

- National Guard members who deployed to the Gulf Coast region during Hurricane Katrina for relief efforts may exclude their combat pay and military pay from their taxable income. Oregon National Guardsmen called to active duty but serving in Oregon can exclude all their active duty pay.

- Oregon is now connected to federal tax law which allows Oregon National Guard members to claim up to \$1,500 in travel expenses from overnight trips. Guard members may file an amended return within three years from the due date of the return to claim this deduction if you previously included this expense as an addition on your Oregon return.

- Military members who change in duty status from Title 32 to Title 10 may subtract, from Oregon income, the military pay earned inside Oregon.

- Guardsmen serving on Title 10 can exempt the first \$3,000 income earned while working on duty inside Oregon.

- Military death benefits of up to \$100,000 are now tax-free on state returns, as they are on federal taxes.

For more information visit the Military FAQ at www.oregon.gov/DOR/PERTAX/military-faq.shtml. You can also call the Oregon Department of Revenue at 503-378-4988 (Salem) or 1-800-356-4222.

Some military to soon see BAH changes on their LES statements

WASHINGTON, D.C. (Dec. 16, 2006) — About 30,000 single service members who live off base and pay child support are likely to see a slight change in their military pay.

The rules regarding the basic allowance for housing differential; an allotment for single members who pay child support; will change Dec. 31, Tim Fowlkes, the Pentagon's assistant director of military compensation, told the American Forces Press Service.

The change is one of the last parts of a seven-year phase-in of the basic allowance for housing that began in 1998, he explained. The BAH system replaced the old variable housing allowance system.

Under both the old law and the transition policies that have been in effect to implement BAH, single members who pay child support get a BAH differential. After Dec. 31, however, only members who live in government quarters and pay child support will continue to receive the BAH differential, Fowlkes said.

Members who live off base and pay child support will receive BAH at the "with dependents" rate. Previously, they received BAH at the "without dependents" rate, plus the BAH differential.

This "with dependents" BAH rate varies widely based on pay grade and location, Fowlkes said, so some affected service members will notice a slight increase in their pay and some, a slight decrease.

TAG's Marksmanship Match set for April

The 2006 Adjutant General's Combat Marksmanship Championship will be contested April 29-30 at Camp Rilea. The AG Match is open to all current Oregon Army and Air National Guard personnel. Contestants may enter as an individual or as four-member teams comprised of company, battalion/ flight-squadron shooters.

Additionally, SARTS is conducting monthly marksmanship training sessions at Camp Adair. This training gives soldiers an opportunity to verify the battle sight zero on their assigned weapons. Dates for upcoming training and information regarding the AG Match are posted on the SARTS webpage: www.mil.state.or.us/SARTS.

Monthly small arms training for ORNG

The Small Arms Readiness Training Section will conduct basic rifle and pistol marksmanship training monthly throughout 2006.

These training sessions are open to all members of the Oregon National Guard and will provide opportunities to safely train with highly skilled instructors offering quality, focused marksmanship training.

Guard members who participate will gain an increased level of shooting skill and a thorough understanding of the basic principles of marksmanship.

Check the SARTS webpage for location, dates and additional information: www.mil.state.or.us/SARTS

Although use of unit weapons is preferred, SARTS can provide a rifle or pistol to participating soldiers or airmen. Contact MSG Arnst via email: jeff.arnst@us.army.mil.

Guardsmen invited to participate in Lincoln Marathon in May

The 2006 Lincoln Marathon will be held in Lincoln, Nebraska May 5 – 8. The marathon will be held in conjunction with recruiting and retention workshops.

If you would like to attend the marathon as either a participant or spectator, or are interested in the recruiting workshops, contact the NGB Marathon coordinator, Sgt. 1st Class John G. Murphy at 402-309-7359, or via e-mail at: jack.murphy1@ne.ngb.army.mil.

Women Veteran's Conference in March

All women who served in the military are invited to the upcoming Oregon Women Veterans Conference on March 23 at the Linn county Expo Center in Albany, Ore.

Follow I-5 south to the Knox Butte/Fairgrounds exit (# 234A). Registration begins at 8:00 a.m., with the event kicking off promptly at 9:00 a.m.

There is no cost to attend this seminar. A complimentary lunch will be provided to attendees. Reservations are required. Please call 1-800-828-8801, ext. 2384/2385/2389 to register.

DoD requiring hands-free cell phone use

The U.S. Department of Defense (DoD) now requires drivers to use hands-free devices when using cell phones in moving vehicles at any military installation or base. Violators may be subject to a \$50 fine.

Title 32 CFR §634.25 (3) Driver distractions states that Vehicle operators on a DoD Installation and operators of Government owned vehicles shall not use cell phones unless the vehicle is safely parked or unless they are using a hands-free device.

The wearing of any other portable headphones, earphones, or other listening devices (except for hand-free cellular phones) while operating a motor vehicle is prohibited. Use of those devices impairs driving and masks or prevents recognition of emergency signals, alarms, announcements, the approach of vehicles, and human speech. DoD Component safety guidance should note the potential for driver distractions such as eating and drinking, operating radios, CD players, global positioning equipment,

Continued on NEXT PAGE

etc. Whenever possible this should only be done when the vehicle is safely parked. For more information visit the Electronic Code of Federal Regulations at: <http://ecfr.gpoaccess.gov>.

Relief from unwanted cell phone solicitation

Until today, cell phone numbers have been exempt from solicitation by telemarketers. To exclude your cell phone number from calls by telemarketers, register with the FTC at <https://www.donotcall.gov/register/Reg.aspx> or call them at 1-888-382-1222. Your phone number will remain on the registry for five years from the date you register.

Discounted dental offered to Guard members and families

As a special thank you to military members, Clean Smile, located in Salem, will be giving a 30 percent discount off all dental hygiene services to military personnel and their dependent families.

Guard members and their dependents must show a valid military ID to take advantage of this special offer. The discounted services will begin March 1 and last through Dec. 31, 2006.

The sole focus of Clean Smile is whitening, exams, cleaning, sealants, fluoride, and X-rays.

Clean Smile is located at 370 High Street NE, Salem Ore. For more information call 503-363-8885 or visit www.cleansmile.net.

List of precedence for Oregon State ribbons

To assist those in placing Oregon State Medals and Ribbons, the command staff has requested the Oregon Sentinel publish a list of the awards. They appear below in their order of precedence:

- Distinguished Service Award
- Exceptional Service Medal
- Meritorious Service Medal
- Commendation Medal
- 30 Year Medal
- Emergency Service Ribbon
- Superior Airman Award
- Superior Unit Citation
- Faithful Service Ribbon
- Recruiting Award

DoD encourages military spouses to complete survey

WASHINGTON, D.C. (Dec. 6, 2005) — Defense officials want to make sure that military spouses know it's important for them to take the time to complete the online 30-minute survey they got notices about in the mail late November.

The new Defense Department survey has gone to spouses to get their views as defense planners shape family programs to meet their needs and interests, a top Pentagon family policy official said today.

Nearly 74,000 military spouses have been asked to participate in two new surveys, one directed at active-duty families and one for National Guard and Reserve families, according to John M. Molino, deputy undersecretary for military and family policy.

The survey group, selected at random to provide a cross section of all military families, received the notices asking them to participate in the online survey, Molino said during an interview with the Pentagon Channel. The survey period runs through late January.

The survey responses are confidential, he said, and responses will be instrumental in determining how DoD directs its resources to family programs in the future, Molino said.

"Participation in this survey will directly influence policy," he said. "So it is very important that the people who have been contacted and invited to participate" respond. This, Molino said, will give DoD a full cross section of responses to using in tailoring its family programs.

"There is always competition for limited resources, (so) we want to make sure we spend our money smartly in the future," he said. "And the survey is an opportunity for military spouses ... to be sitting around the table with us, to be giving us their input so

that we can make smart decisions on how to spend these monies and these resources in the future.

"We can't really do it smart without them," Molino said.

The last spouse survey, in 1999, underscored the need for more and better child-care facilities, particularly on bases, and interest in enhanced education benefits, he said. Officials have worked to introduce improvements in both areas, he said.

Molino said he's hoping spouses asked to participate in the 2005 survey will weigh in with their views to help identify gaps and direct programs to fill them, particularly in light of changes in the military since the last survey.

The new survey, for example, will focus more on deployment issues and challenges they present families, he said.

"The world has changed since 1999. A lot has changed within the military and a lot has changed in the nature of the military (and) the makeup of the military family," Molino said.

"So we think it is time, as we look ahead, that we ask today's military families what's important to them (and) what's relevant to (them), so we can better plan and better spend the resources that we will spend in the future" on programs to meet their needs, he said.

Family programs have become increasingly important within the military, Molino said, noting that more than half of today's service members are married.

Ensuring that families have strong programs and services boosts readiness, because it frees service members to focus on the mission rather than wondering if their families are being taken care of, Molino said.

But family programs are a big factor in retention too, because families satisfied with military life are far less likely leave the military, he said.

Freedom Team Salute to honor employees

Freedom Team Salute recognizes and honors those who answered the "Call to Duty." This includes all Army veterans and those who support today's Soldiers: spouses, parents, and, for Guard and Reserve Soldiers, their civilian employers.

Employers of National Guard and Reserve Soldiers make sacrifices to allow their colleagues to answer the Call to Duty. FTS recognizes their support as well. The nomination process is simple, and those nominated receive a letter and certificate signed by the Secretary of the Army and the Chief of Staff of the Army, an official Army lapel pin, and Army decal. FTS has recognized more than 325,000 Army veterans and supporters since the program's launch in May 2005.

The FTS staff is currently processing more than 600,000 additional commendations. FTS Commendations are an especially appropriate way to recognize retiring Soldiers as Army veterans. To incorporate FTS into retirement ceremonies, submit nominations online at least eight (8) weeks in advance. The program has provided nomination opportunities to tens of thousands of Americans at nearly 30 Army installations, at veteran service organizations' events, and public events.

For more information, visit www.freedomteamsalute.army.mil.

Marines' Memorial Association offering scholarships

The Marines' Memorial Association is proud to present three scholarship programs for members and their families who need assistance in furthering their education. These scholarship programs have been made possible by generous donations from the S. D. Bechtel, Jr. Foundation, Sergeants Henry and Jeanne Rose, and members just like yourself. The scholarships are open to all eligible members of the Association, member dependents, or grandchildren of the members. To learn more about the scholarship programs, you can visit our website at <http://www.Marineclub.com/Scholarship.htm>.

The scholarship program is one of the many programs that the Marines' Memorial Association sponsors to assist our United States Armed Forces Veterans and Currently Serving personnel. These programs are

The stars descend on Oregon



Photo by Tech. Sgt. Nick Choy, Oregon National Guard Public Affairs

Gen. Benjamin S. Griffin, (right) Commanding General for the U.S. Army's Materiel Command, looks over the Oregon National Guard Memorial Quilt created by Master Sgt. Marilyn Bergsma at the Anderson Readiness Center in Salem, Ore. on Jan. 12.

Griffin and members of his staff visited the with key members of the Oregon National Guard and Maj. Gen. Raymond F. Rees's primary staff in order to assess equipment shortages and training sets required by the Oregon National Guard with regard to the ongoing Global war on terrorism, deployment and redeployment.

all made possible through tax-deductible contributions to the Association from our members and friends and families of our members. If you would like to make a donation, or assist with any of these programs, visit www.Marineclub.com/Tribute/ or call Lecelia Harrison, Membership Director, at 415-673-6672 x293. You may also send a donation to the Marines' Memorial Association, Re: Tribute: Your Membership & Contribution At Work, 609 Sutter Street, San Francisco, CA 94102.

If you know of fellow Veterans or individuals currently serving in any United States Armed Forces who might be interested in applying for one of these scholarships, please forward this email to them. They can apply for membership in the Association online at our website <http://www.Marineclub.com/Apply.htm> and, once they are members of the Marines' Memorial Association, they can apply for one of these scholarships.

Theme parks extend discount program

Anheuser-Busch announced the "Here's to the Heroes" program has been extended through 2006. The program provides a single day's free admission to any one of the SeaWorld or Busch Gardens parks, Sesame Place, Adventure Island or Water Country USA for active duty, active reserve, Ready Reserve, National Guardsmen, and up to three of their direct dependents.

Service members can register online at www.herosalute.com or at the entrance plaza of a participating park, and show a Defense Department photo ID. Inactive, standby and retired reserve members, and military retirees are ineligible for the program.

USERRA laws changed to better protect military members

The Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Act (USERRA) laws changed effective January 18, 2006 to better protect our military members.

The Department of Labor's action is the latest in a series of proactive steps taken to ensure job security for the largest group of mobilized National Guard and Reserve service members since World War II. USERRA prohibits discrimination against past and present members of the uniformed services and establishes reemployment rights for service members who want to return to the jobs they held prior to military service.

The new regulations, drafted in an easy-to-read, question-and-answer format, explain how USERRA protects against discrimination and retaliation because of military service; prevents service members from suffering disadvantages due to performance of their military obligations, and affords them ample time to report back to jobs following completion of their service

obligations.

The USERRA regulations as well as a wealth of information for both the employer and the employee, can be found at: www.dol.gov/vets/programs/userra/.

RAID pilots awarded for drug eradication efforts



Oregon National Guard OH-58 Kiowa.

Story by Kimberly L. Lippert,
Oregon National Guard Public Affairs

Two pilots from the Oregon National Guard Reconnaissance and Interdiction Detachment program (RAID) received a National Marijuana Eradication Award. The pair flew countless missions from July to September of 2005 resulting in the seizure of 51,237 plants and 51 pounds of dry marijuana. The majority of the drug busts took place in Baker County, Malheur County, and Harney County.

As part of the RAID program the Oregon National Guard has three full-time pilots, three part-time pilots, and three full-time mechanics. The pilots, always accompanied by law enforcement officers, fly OH-58 Kiowas about 500-800 feet above ground looking for drug plantations. During peak season in the summer they fly 4-5 times a week logging anywhere between 120-150 hours.

The National Marijuana Eradication Award is given to individuals who show outstanding efforts in fighting the drug problem in the United States. Both ORNG pilots were recognized for their help in coordinating flights with various law enforcement and government agencies as well as the total number of flight hours they logged while assisting in drug busts.

Both pilots were given awards at the 2005 Marijuana Eradication Conference in Washington, D.C. on January 19, 2006.

Throughout the year the mission of the RAID Team also includes efforts to fight Methamphetamine, Cocaine, and Heroin busts. The RAID program has been in existence since 1991.

Combat Action Badge: Small package carries heavy weight



Story by Spc. Nicholas Wood,
115th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

LAKE OSWEGO, Ore. — To the Soldiers of the 82nd Rear Operations Center (ROC) the Combat Action Badge (CAB) is much more than a silver badge two inches in width consisting of an oak wreath, bayonet and grenade. It is recognition for the months of combat action seen in Iraq between July 2003 and their return home in April 2004.

On Jan. 7, a ceremony was held to honor the Soldiers of the 82 ROC. Forty-six members of the 82nd ROC received the CAB for their support of Operation Iraqi Freedom.

The Soldiers of the 82nd ROC were the first Oregon Guard members to qualify for the badge, although they were not the first to receive it. Soldiers in other Oregon Guard units who have deployed more recently have already received CABs while still in theater.

The CAB was instated May 2, 2005, one year after the 82nd ROC returned from deployment. The badge is meant to recognize Soldiers for duties served as early as Sept. 18, 2001, who engage the enemy, but do not otherwise qualify for specific combat badges, such as the Combat Infantry Badge.

"It acknowledges that every Soldier is a warrior," said State Command Sgt. Maj. Thomas Moe.

Col. Charles Yriarte, commanding officer of the 82nd ROC during its tour in Iraq, said his Soldiers went through many of the same experiences combat arms Soldiers endure, but were ineligible for any combat recognition.

"I was proud to take a group of professional Soldiers, reform them, and watch them excel in something they were not trained to do," Yriarte said

Normally a rear element and not a forward headquarters, the 82nd ROC began their journey in February 2003, traveling first to Camp Virginia, Kuwait. They continued their duty at Logistical Support Area Anaconda near Balad, Iraq and were charged with tracking all troop movements in and around LSA Anaconda.

One of the first units into Iraq, the 82nd ROC was forced to build their base from scratch, as well as establish relationships with the local population.

LSA Anaconda was frequently shelled with mortars as well as rockets. Enemy combatants were not the only foe. With temperatures reaching 142 degrees, frequent dust storms and lack of infrastructure incumbent with building a base from nothing, challenges were not in short supply.

Sgt. Arthur Arroyo, intelligence section sergeant, recalled once seeing a thermometer register 120 degrees as early as nine in the morning.

After receiving the badge, Spc. Amy Swanson, plans operator, expressed humbly that it is hard to compare herself to the Soldiers on the ground in combat arms, but she is honored.

"It's good to look back and see the accomplishments we made," Swanson said, "Especially the relationships with the Iraqis."

Moe was proud of the Soldiers' accomplishments. "The 82nd ROC was a good unit, is a good unit, and will continue to be a good unit," said the State Sergeant Major. "This award is earned, not given."

Oregon National Guard aviation unit returns home with honors, awards



Photo by Tech. Sgt. Nick Choy, Oregon National Guard Public Affairs Office

Alpha 249th Commander, Maj. Devin R. Wickengagen (right), accepts the unit guidon from Assistant Adjutant General (Army) Brig. Gen. Raymond C. Byrne, while 1st Sgt. Richard W. Fields (left) and the rest of the unit looks on.

Story by Kimberly L. Lippert,
Oregon National Guard Public Affairs

SALEM, Ore. - Eight Soldiers of Alpha 249th Aviation Company arrived home on January 7 after more than year long deployment to Iraq, bringing with them a prestigious honor. A Company 249th Theatre Aviation, made up of four different detachments from four states, was selected as Army Aviation Fixed Wing Unit of the Year for their outstanding efforts in theater.

"It's the perfect end to the deployment," said Maj. Devin Wickenhagen of A Co. 249th Avn. "I was pleased to get recognized for the hard work we've done over the last year."

Friends, family and leaders of the Oregon National Guard welcomed them back at a demobilization ceremony January 10.

Col. George Lanning, commander of 82nd Troop Command Brigade, called the Soldiers "great American heroes that served

our nation during difficult times."

A Co. 249th Avn. Soldiers flew more than 1400 missions, carrying more than 2,000 passengers and hauling more than 4.7 million pounds of cargo in C-23 Sherpas.

"For those of you who have no reference to those numbers, let me say, as an aviator who does have that reference, "Wow," said Maj. Tom Lingle, commander of 641st Medical Battalion. "The duty they performed is nothing short of phenomenal."

Soldiers in the unit identified a number of equipment modifications to increase the survivability of the C-23 aircraft and enhance safety and situational awareness. Two of the key modifications included Ballistic Blankets, made of Kevlar to protect the cockpits from small arms fire, and aircraft survivability equipment.

"It's a very intense period when deployed to Iraq, much more intense than being state-side, we had many more missions and had a direct impact in Iraq," said Wickenhagen.

Arias: "I feel like I've truly earned my right to be a citizen"

Continued from PAGE 5

Nationally, according to U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Service statistics, there are more than 36,700 non-citizens serving in the U.S. military. Locally, Oregon Military Department records show there are currently 33 non-citizens serving in the Oregon National Guard.

USCIS reports more than 24,700 military naturalizations have been granted since 9-11. Of those, nearly 9,000 service members have been granted expedited naturalization.

"I'm a good example that many immigrants are willing to do whatever we can to be a part of this country, we are willing to fight for it," said Arias. "I feel like I've truly earned my right to be a citizen."

Arias said gaining his citizenship has created new opportunities for him to accomplish his goals, and fulfill his 'Ameri-

can Dream'. As a U.S. citizen, Arias will now be able to obtain a security clearance, making him eligible to become a commissioned officer in the National Guard. He also plans to pursue a career in federal law enforcement.

"I would like to be a federal marshal or work for a drug enforcement agency," said Arias.

Arias plans to attend Western Oregon University, where he will major in International Studies, with a focus on economic and cultural relationships between the U.S. and other countries — specifically Latin America.

"I will be a good asset for the government to work in that area because I already know the language and culture," said Arias.

"I'm going to continue the idea of chasing that 'American Dream' and I think I'm doing a pretty good job so far."

The detachment from Oregon included nine soldiers, one of whom was injured in combat. They were joined by three detachments with Soldiers from South Dakota, Oklahoma, and Washington. After training in Fort Bliss, Texas A Company left for Iraq and quickly settled into the mission of providing daily transportation support for the Multi-National Corps – Iraq. Priority missions included transporting Class VII and blood products, aviation repair parts, high priority non-aviation repair parts (i.e. parts for Unmanned Aerial Vehicles or counter mortar radar systems), and providing emergency re-supply of ammunition. A Company also carried a wide variety of other cargo and passengers.

"We were flying vital equipment, which kept it off convoys," said Staff Sgt. John Mueller. "So, indirectly we were keeping soldiers safe."

As a flight engineer, Mueller's job was to load and unload the aircraft, making sure the cargo fit within the weight restrictions. He was also responsible for obstacle clearance and aircraft avoidance while in the air. During one flight, Mueller's plane came under fire from a large caliber machine gun on the ground.

"Thankfully they missed," Mueller said. Despite the dangers Mueller believes their mission was worth it.

"We are over there helping people, and they are accepting our help," Mueller said. "The people in Iraq are excited about democracy."

Chief Warrant Officer Joe Mollahan has been a pilot with the Oregon National Guard for twenty years. He said what set A Company apart was their ability to work together.

"It's cohesiveness, we're able to put the company together in short order and we worked well together," said Mollahan.

Their missions weren't easy – flying unarmored, unarmed, in an un-pressurized aircraft in a combat zone never is, but Col. Timothy Kelly, State Army Aviation Officer for the Oregon National Guard said they did it well. "They have worked really hard and deserve recognition for what they've done," said Col. Kelly, State Army Aviation Officer for the Oregon National Guard.

This is the second Army Aviation Unit of the Year Award for the Oregon National Guard. The 1042nd Medical Company Air Ambulance received this award in 2002.



Sgt. Jorge Arias (right) takes the oath of naturalization to become a United States citizen on Jan. 5, while Special Projects Officer for Hispanic Affairs, Col. Michael Valdez (left) looks on. According to Valdez, being in the military makes becoming a U.S. citizen a much smoother process.

Photo by Spc. April L. Dustin, Oregon National Guard Public Affairs

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