



41st BCT members train for year-long deployment, pgs. 8-9

Oregon Sentinel



OF THE OREGON NATIONAL GUARD

Three Oregon Army National Guard units return home



Flying CH-47 Chinook helicopters through hostile airspace in support of Operation Enduring Freedom during their year-long deployment to Kandahar, Afghanistan, members of the Oregon Army National Guard's Det. 1, Delta Co., 113th Aviation assumed heavy lifting operations supporting forward operating bases throughout Southern and Western Afghanistan.

But at their demobilization ceremony on March 19, all their hardships became a distant memory — because now they are home.

See complete story on page 11.

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

A CH-47 Chinook helicopter alights on a mountain ridge in Afghanistan to pick up a platoon of Soldiers. While deployed to Afghanistan, members of the Oregon Army National Guard Det. 1, Delta Co., 113th Aviation unit "Mustangs" flew thousands of support and humanitarian missions. Photo courtesy Det. 1, D Co. 113th Aviation

1042nd: Home safe and sound



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

Monica Voehmer (left), greets her fiance, Sgt. Robert Armstrong, of the 1042nd Medical Company (Air Ambulance) during their homecoming at the Portland Air Base Feb. 26.

Story compiled by Sentinel Staff

SALEM, Ore. — About a hundred family members and friends stood inside the Air Mobility Command (AMC) hangar at the west end of Portland International Airport on February 26, waiting for 33 Soldiers of 1042nd Medical Company (Air Ambulance) to arrive.

Among the gathering, Sgt. Deannie Darrow watched the huge C-5 transport plane descend through the gray sky carrying her husband, Sgt. 1st Class David Darrow, home to her.

"He's coming home, and that's all that matters," Darrow said. "I won't have to worry about him anymore."

Darrow's statement echoed the anticipation that all the family members waiting in the hangar must have felt after the 1042nd experienced a number of delays in Europe, which postponed the unit's arrival date in Oregon by almost a week. Family, friends and military leaders let out a collective cheer as the C-5 finally touched down on the runway.

See Rees on page 6

3670th comes back from Iraq

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

CLACKAMAS, Ore. — More than 70 Soldiers of the 3670th Maintenance Company were welcomed home from Iraq by family, friends, community, and dignitaries during their demobilization ceremony at Camp Withycombe on March 25.

"It feels great to be home, I can't seem to articulate the feeling I have to be back here in Oregon," said Cpt. Chris Lennox, commander of 3670th Maint. Co.

The unit spent 12 months supporting Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF) by helping to keep the battle moving with their technical and mechanical talents.

"There may be some folks out there driving tanks and flying helicopters that are

grabbing headlines, but in case you didn't know it, you are heroes everyday," Maj. Gen. Raymond F. Rees, told the returning Soldiers during the ceremony. "Nothing in the Army works without maintenance, it wouldn't run without maintenance, we'd be totally crippled without maintenance, and we thank you for everything that you do for us."

Two platoons of the 3670th Maint. Co., an automotive repair platoon and a construction/ engineer equipment repair platoon, deployed to Iraq in April 2005 with the 1071st Maintenance Company, Michigan Army National Guard. During the deployment, members of the unit traveled to six different Forward Operating Bases (FOBs), performing maintenance

See 3670th on page 2



Fathers re-unite with their children at the 3670th Maint. Co. demobilization ceremony March 25. Left: Spc. Winston Bradshaw. Right: Pvt. 1st Class Roert McClamma.

Tell us what you think!

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The Oregon Sentinel

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

Guard members and their families are encouraged to submit any articles meant to inform, educate or entertain readers of the Oregon Sentinel, including stories about interesting Guard personalities and unique unit training. Letters to the editor are also welcome. All letters must include the author's name, address and daytime phone number. Names may be withheld in print upon request, but all letters must be signed, 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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Personnel readiness a top priority for ORNG

Soldiers, Airmen rewarded for recruiting efforts through G-RAP & 2-STAR



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

There's always something going on in the Oregon National Guard.

With grateful hearts we've seen hundreds of our Soldiers return from overseas: Det. 1, Delta Company, 113th Aviation and the 1042nd Medical Company (Air Ambulance) are back from Afghanistan. The 3670th Maintenance Company is home from Iraq. Yet, even as we welcome home our Soldiers, we're preparing a farewell for 900 more with the 41st Brigade Combat Team, at Camp Shelby, Miss., as they prepare for a year-long tour of duty in Afghanistan. We also have the 41st Personnel Services Company on duty in Kuwait, and dozens of our Airmen are on duty in Afghanistan, Iraq, Diego Garcia and the far reaches of the globe.

Despite our fast-paced deployment schedule, we continue to successfully address a

top priority for the ORNG: personnel readiness. A total of 1,176 people have signed up for the Army National Guard Recruiter Assistance Program, of those people 1005 are actively engaged in the program. Airmen are also eligible to enroll in G-RAP, but only the 173rd Fighter Wing is currently an active wing in the program; the 142nd Fighter Wing will soon be an active wing as well.

G-RAP pays \$1,000 when a potential recruit enlists and another \$1,000 when that person goes to basic training. Members of the ORNG have earned \$43,000 through the program, and Army recruiters are working another 241 potential enlistees. If each of them ships, G-RAP will pay another \$482,000. If you haven't signed up for G-RAP, but you'd like to, visit www.guarecruitingassitant.com.

Another program showing your success is the 2-STAR program. So far members of the ORNG family have earned 81 badges. Seventy-six have earned the basic badge for referring a person who enlists, three have earned the senior badge for referring two people, and two have earned the master badge for referring three people who've enlisted. The command will distribute the badges to unit commanders on 30 April for presentation to the recipients at their next drill.

If you haven't signed up for G-RAP or participated in the 2-STAR program, you're missing out on more than extra cash or recognition. You're missing out on the opportunity to shape the future of the ORNG. If you want high-caliber Soldiers and Airmen working at your side, you have to take responsibility for bringing them into the service. G-RAP and 2-STAR are simple ways for rewarding actions that will help maintain a high-degree of professionalism in the ORNG.

When it comes to retention, we've got the best tools we've ever had. The primary ingredient is communication. Talk to your Soldiers or Airmen. Talk to your friends. Financial rewards, transformation opportunities, such as new MOSs or AFSCs, deployment adventures, and promotion opportunities abound. There should not be a single Soldier or Airman leave whose concerns cannot be addressed.

Another way to contribute to personnel readiness is through membership in professional organizations. The benefits that these organizations advocate for our Soldiers and Airmen greatly enhance our readiness by attracting and retaining high quality individuals. The Oregon National Guard Association meets at the end of this month. This organization was instrumental in educating elected officials and citizens about the impact of BRAC proposals in Oregon. In addition to the ORNGA, you'll find outfits like the Air Force Association, The Association of the U.S. Army, and several others advocating issues affecting Soldiers and Airmen. I encourage you to look into membership with a professional organization. Participation in a group like this gives us a collective voice on issues of our greatest concern.

As we head into summer and gear up for deployments and annual training, keep your focus on personnel readiness. The dividends we gain from your efforts are a stronger, ready, steady force.

Raymond J. Rees

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

3670th works to get equipment back into the fight

Continued from FRONT PAGE

and repair for many units within the theater of operations.

Their work included repairing and rebuilding vehicles, up-arming vehicles, and even working on generators to keep electricity going in the "tent cities" in which they lived.

Maintenance teams from the unit completed 180 inspections and repairs at FOB Cobra, inspected and repaired more than 250 vehicles at FOB Bernstein, completed more than 900 job orders while at FOB Caldwell, and processed more than 750 work orders at Camp Ar Ramadi.

1st Sgt. Allen Holland, said the 3670th was able to complete these job orders through working together as a team, working long hours, and not getting much time off. He said the unit was willing and ready to take on all assignments at any given time, and from any unit that needed assistance.

Holland, said the unit's mission was important, because it helped to save Soldiers' lives.

"(It's important) so that Soldiers using the vehicles and equipment could be safe," Holland said. "If equipment breaks down during an attack you'd be stuck defending your self until another vehicle comes to recover your equipment out of the danger zone, which also puts other Soldiers at risk."

Cpt. Lennox said by providing maintenance 24 hours a day, 7 days a week for units that relied on them, the 3670th was able to get damaged equipment back into the fight, which in turn kept pressure on the insurgency.

The Soldiers were also required to perform force protection duties within the various FOBs they occupied, such as manning perimeter towers and manning entry control points – searching vehicles and personnel at FOB gates. About four Soldiers from the 3670th volunteered to serve on Convoy Security Teams (CST), escorting supply convoys that moved food, parts and equipment throughout Iraq.

Lennox said the FOBs would receive

weekly mortar and missile attacks.

"Usually the FOB would get two or three rounds per attack," said Lennox.

At Camp Ar Ramadi one mortar landed inside the work area of the construction/ engineer equipment repair platoon work site. Fortunately no soldiers were injured.

"Living in tents and not knowing where the mortars are going to land makes you wonder," said Holland.

On January 20, an attack on Camp Ar Ramadi hit too close to home, when small arms fire whipped through the maintenance position of the FOB, injuring Spc. Jaynie Cole.

"I was sitting outside the tent when we saw a mortar go over head, so I went over to my platoon's tent to check in," said Cole. "I had just yelled inside the tent 'Cole's here, I'm good' and had gotten a 'gotcha' back. I turned to leave and started talking to a fellow Soldier when we realized there was incoming rounds going off around us. We got behind the Hescos and I kind of peeked out to see if I could see anything. That's when I felt a hit to my chest."

Cole said she saw the round still sticking out of her chest. Because the bullet had'nt penetrated very deeply, Cole was treated and returned to duty. She was awarded the Purple Heart for her injury.

"I think I value life more each day that I'm alive," said Cole. "The Purple Heart means to me that I'm lucky to be here today. Every time I look at it, I'm reminded of all the soldiers who have died for our country and I say a prayer that no more will die."

Now her family is relieved to have her back home safe and sound.

"It was very difficult to tell the kids that she got shot and make sure that they were dealing with it okay," said Cole's husband, Travis.

Travis said while Cole was away, it was very challenging being a single dad to their three children, Michael, Ashley, and Jourdan.

"You never realize how much you depend on someone until they are gone," said Travis.

Likewise, Cole said it was difficult for her to set aside her duties as a wife and mother, to assume her duties as a Soldier.

"The hardest thing was letting go and knowing that they would be fine without me, because I'm usually such an active part in their everyday life," said Cole.

"While being so proud of all of you, back here in Oregon your families and communities faced the daily challenges of working and living without you. That wasn't easy," said Governor Theodore R. Kulongoski at the demobilization ceremony. "To carry on without you for such a long period of time was a great sacrifice for you, and for us, and for all Oregonians. No one should ever doubt the sacrifice that you have made. So, just as I thank you for your service and for never failing to prove me right when I say our National Guard Soldiers are the best Oregon has to offer, I also thank your families and employers for standing behind you in sharing the terrible burdens of war."



Cpt. Chris Lennox and 1st Sgt. Allen Holland uncasing the 3670th guidon at the demobilization ceremony in Clackamas on March 25.

Transformation creates job opportunities



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

Transformation: All the Soldiers in the Oregon Army National Guard have heard of it, and almost all the Soldiers in Oregon are living it. Soldiers who drill at almost every armory in the state are seeing changes, whether they are new missions, new alignments, different or new equipment, or personnel changes.

What does transformation mean to Soldiers in the Oregon Army National Guard?

First of all, the why of transformation: Army transformation is more than quick-fix improvements in systems, hardware, and weaponry. The entire Army is going through transformation. The undertaking is ambitious, it is moving rapidly, and we are doing it while we are at war. The big purpose is to maintain the Army's near-term strategic superiority around the world and develop long-range solutions for structure, lethality, and information dominance on the future battlefield.

As part of the transformation, the basic structures of the Army are changing. Brigade Combat Teams are the basic building blocks of the Army Transformation. Combat service and combat service support units are being realigned to support the concept of these units, being part of the basic teams either at brigade or division levels.

For Oregon, this transformation means that we have deactivated some units, and activated new units. While it is always sad to fold the flag of any of our units, who all have a long and honorable service to the state and

nation, it happened to support the need to change how we will fight in the future. Out of that, Oregon has gained a much greater diversity of units and jobs.

We gained a new structure for 1st Squadron 82nd Cavalry, now a Reconnaissance, Surveillance, Target Acquisition (RSTA) Battalion. It now consists of two motorized companies and a ground surveillance company with a lot of new high tech equipment, plus a Forward Support Company (FSC).

The 3rd Battalion 116th Cavalry has bulked up to almost twice the size it used to be, and changed its mission. They are now a heavy armor battalion, consisting of two tank companies, two mechanized rifle companies, an FSC, and an engineer company.

The 2nd Battalion 218th Field Artillery changed to two larger firing batteries, and added an FSC.

Together, Oregon has added six FSC units, a signal company, the RSTA battalion, increased the size of military intelligence unit, and changed the structure of the 641st Aviation Battalion.

By how we have placed or re-aligned Army units across the state, it means that for present and future Soldiers of the Oregon Army National Guard we have more opportunities for more people to serve. All of our battalions now have real TOE (table of organization and equipment) positions for Soldiers, no matter what gender they are, and more opportunity for promotion and leadership positions. It also means that if Soldiers want to do something different and continue to serve, we now have force structure to support that. In our state you can be infantry, tanker, scout, aviator, ground equipment maintainer, mobile equipment maintainer, transporter, medic, military police, artillery, high-tech signal operator or maintainer, or be in the military intelligence field. All of these fields have numerous sub-fields that, give everyone who wants to serve an opportunity.

Bottom line: While the process of transformation is stressful and creates some uncertainties, transformation will be good for Oregon and the Soldiers, both in the present and future. The diversification, relocation, and addition of units will enable us to offer more opportunities for our present and future Soldiers. There is no excuse now for Soldiers who want to continue serving or people who are considering serving, not to be able to find a job they want to do in the Army National Guard.

Recruiting, Retention key to ORNG's mission



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

A big issue facing us in the Guard and especially here in Oregon is Recruiting and Retention. On the Air side of the house, we are failing to meet the national goals for recruitment, which places the state of Oregon in the yellow for meeting our goals. On the national level, everyone is having problems with their numbers, and Oregon's seem to take a down turn every month. I believe we are structured in a manner that is designed to support the active component in an exceptional manner. Our current weakness lies purely in the number of Airmen that we have currently serving. If there was ever a time to focus all our collective energies on recruiting and retention activities, it is now.

After reading over exit questionnaires for retention purposes, I am convinced that we must do a better job of listening to what our people have to say. We should not be losing people because of promotions, schools, awards, recognition or training practices. We have an outstanding workforce, and as supervisors, trainers, and those being trained, we must be better at our communication skills. Listening can help avoid troubled communications that lead to such unwanted outcomes as low morale, lost respect, reduction of fresh ideas, and poor service. Everyone that works for the Guard full time knows that we cannot complete the mission without our Drill Status Guardsman. Our DSG's are a valuable asset and we need to ensure that we train and treat

them right so they will want to stay around for an extended career.

In a time when retaining and recruiting top-notch talent is tough, alienating your employees can be very costly. Studies show that employees often chose to leave an organization because of their supervisors' or coworkers' poor interpersonal skills. A key trait of influential people is listening and understanding another's perspective. Interpersonal skills are high on the list of the abilities that make an individual successful in the workplace. If people don't think their ideas are heard or accepted, they will stop presenting them, reducing the organization's cache of knowledge and innovative ideas. If individuals feel that they cannot contribute and are not useful to the organization we will lose them. We need to ensure that all of our folks have a say and are involved in our unit's mission.

We have some great full-time recruiters in the field and they are committed to improving our numbers, but there is no way they can do this alone. As always, I want to encourage you to turn in names of potential recruits to the recruiter assigned to your unit. We need Airmen in most career fields and right now there are a lot of benefits available to new recruits.

Right now, our manning is low, and we need to recruit to keep our strength up. While on the lookout for potential recruits, do not forget to take care of the soldiers in your command. Retention is just as important as recruiting to keep morale high. Please help keep the Oregon Air National Guard strong. We must manage our force to ensure the Guard is properly sized, shaped and organized to meet the challenges of today and tomorrow.

Finally, I want to congratulate Staff Sgt. Daniel Dierickx from the 270ATC for being selected for one of the Air National Guards top twelve Airmen of the Year. For the second year in a row an Airman from Oregon has been recognized for outstanding duty to his Unit, State and Nation.

I was very proud and pleased when I received a phone call from Command Chief Master Sgt. Richard Smith (NGB/ANG-CCM) about the selection of Staff Sgt. Dierickx. We have always known that we have outstanding Airmen here in Oregon. Once again we have shown the country that we do have the best.

Again a big congratulations to Staff Sgt. Dierickx for your selection, you truly are the best of the best.

Army Transformation: Restructuring Oregon's 41st and 82nd Brigades

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

Due to limited space in the Jan/Feb 2006 issue of the Oregon Sentinel, the 'Transformation article on page 9 is continued in this month's issue. For specific information on how Transformation affects your individual unit, check with your chain of command.

41st Brigade Combat Team

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 Lt. Col. Donll McBride, transformation officer for Joint Forces Headquarters. "The big change was replacing an infantry battalion with a RSTA Squadron."

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.

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 specialty equipment including, UAVs and light counter-mortar radars.

McBride said another big change for the 41st BCT is replacing the 41st Provisional Battalion with the 41st Special Troops Battalion. The new battalion will consist of the 41st BCTs Headquarters and Headquarters Company, A Company (ENG) transformed from the 162nd Engineer Company, and B Company (MI) transformed from the 241st Military Intelligence. The battalion will add a new Signal Company, C Company (SIG) specializing in network and satellite communications, which will increase long-range communications capabilities of the brigade.

Other new units created by these changes include four new Forward Support Companies within the 141st Brigade Support Battalion. These new companies will create more opportunities for Soldiers in support positions, especially benefiting female Soldiers. The support companies will be attached to elements of the infantry, field artillery, and RSTA units across the state to provide direct support to those battalions.

"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.

82nd Troop Command Brigade

The 82nd Troop Command Brigade provides the brigade level command structure for units which do not fall under 41st BCT or Joint Force Headquarters.

McBride said one of the biggest transformation changes in the 82nd Brigade was the loss of two battalions. The 206th Quartermaster Battalion and the 741st Corps Support Battalion were inactivated and their subordinate units have been combined into the 821st Troop Command Battalion.

"The one constant in the military is change," said Lt. Col. Rosemarie McCabe,

former commander of the 206th QM Bn. "The 206th has accomplished a lot in a short amount of time. It has been a grand opportunity and our legacy will live on."

Lt. Col. Don Rolph, former commander of 741st CSB, assumed command of the 821st TCB during the transformation ceremony on Jan. 8.

"Transitions are never easy, but I challenge you to seek out the positive aspects of becoming part of the 821st Troop Command," said Rolph, as he addressed the two combining battalions. "There's a lot of pride and honor in (the 206th and 741st), now we need to bring that pride together into the 821st."

The 82nd Brigade also lost two of its cavalry troops. E Troop and F Troop 82nd Cavalry were transformed into A and B Troops of the 1st Squadron 82nd Cavalry (RSTA), which is now part of the 41st BCT.

"You will have the opportunity to develop a new organization that has been determined to be essential in our future force structure," said former 82nd Brigade Commander Col. George Lanning during the E Troop deactivation ceremony on Jan. 7.

McBride said another big change for the 82nd Brigade is converting 3rd Battalion 116th Cavalry into part of a Heavy Brigade Combat Team.

"The 3-116 Cavalry is transforming from primarily an armor battalion (with three tank companies) to a combined-arms battalion with armor, mechanized infantry and engineers in Bradley Fighting Vehicles," said McBride.

The 3-116 will contain a tank company, two mechanized infantry companies, an engineer company, and a forward support company. This transformation will increase the battalion's authorized strength by approximately 400 Soldiers.

The 1249th Engineer Battalion will also see many changes as it converts from three mechanized companies and one heavy company into a vertical construction company, a mobility company, an engineer support company, and a forward support company. These changes to the engineer battalion will provide more opportunities for female soldiers in the forward support company, and the vertical construction company will train Soldiers for job skills that are more marketable to civilian employers.

Oregon Aviation Transformation

Many Army Aviation transformation changes will take place within the 82nd Troop Command Brigade's 641st Medical Battalion.

The 1042nd Medical Company will be transformed into C Company, 7th Battalion 158th Aviation and will keep all 12 of their UH-60L Blackhawk helicopters.

Detachment 1, D Company, 113th Aviation will be transformed into Detachment 1, B Company, 1st Battalion 168th Aviation and will keep five of their CH-47D Chinook helicopters.

RAID, a counter drug unit, will be transformed into Detachment 1, C Company, 1st Battalion 112th Aviation (Security and Support) and will look to replace their OH-58C Kiowa helicopters with four Light Utility Helicopters (LUH) in 2009.

A Company 249th Aviation will receive four new fixed-wing airplanes to replace the C-23B Sherpas and they will be based at the Portland Air National Guard Base (PANG-B). State Flight Detachment 47 (Operations Support Airlift Command) will turn in their C-12U airplane in fiscal year 2009 or 2010 and join A Co. 249th Aviation in the Future Cargo Airplane unit.

Oregon Guardsman brings a little 'Semper-Fi' to the 1042nd Medical Company

Once a Marine... always a Marine

Story by Sgt. Joe Lindsay, 1st Battalion, 3rd Marine Regiment
Reprinted with permission from Hawaii Marine

NANGALAM, Afghanistan (Feb. 24, 2006) — Recently, the U.S. Army Reserve had an ad campaign geared to former Marines and Marines who were nearing their end of active service date. The recruiting add read simply, "Sometimes the best Soldier for the job... is a Marine."

In smaller print, there was of course the standard talk of continued benefits — money for college, retirement — and so forth.

For one former Marine, the call to service in the Army National Guard had nothing to do with benefits or the influence of an arguably rather clever recruiting campaign. It had, instead, everything to do with what he felt was right.

"I clearly remember the President shortly after 9-11 asking each American to give two years back to their country," said Capt. Jerry Brennan, an aero-medical evacuation officer with the 1042nd Medical Company, Air Ambulance, Oregon National Guard, currently serving as the Task Force Sabre Aviation Detachment officer-in-charge of Jalalabad Airfield in addition to his duties as a UH-60 medevac pilot and air mission commander.

"This is my way of giving something back," he said.

Brennan, who served in the Marine Corps as a CH-53AD/E Pilot with HMH-361 from 1984 to 1992, originally joined the Marines, in part, to pay homage to his father, a highly decorated Vietnam veteran.

"My Dad, Tony Brennan, was my biggest influence in joining the Marine Corps originally," said Brennan, a graduate of the University of Oregon who now calls Lake Oswego, Ore., his home. "He received a Silver Star, two Bronze Stars and sustained multiple combat injuries in Vietnam."

Brennan had been out of the Marines for nine years when the fateful day came that would bring him back into the service of his country.

"When we were attacked on 9-11, I decided to serve my country again," said Brennan. "I was originally born in New York and had recently relocated my wife Sara and our children — Emma, 6, and Charlie, 2 — back to Oregon just prior to the attack. A friend of mine was killed working in the World Trade Center attack on September 11th. Also, my brother was Rudy Giuliani's speechwriter and was there with the mayor when the towers came down. I joined the Oregon National Guard shortly after September 11th 2001."

Nearly four years to the day of the attacks of September 11, Brennan and his fellow soldiers from the 1042nd, based in Salem, Ore., found themselves headed to Afghanistan in support of Operation Enduring Freedom.

The deployment for Brennan came at a difficult time.

"My Dad passed away shortly before we deployed," said Brennan. "He was my hero."

Now however, it seems as if Brennan has taken the role that his father held in the eyes of his son and the men he led in Vietnam — the role of hero.

"I have never met Captain Brennan, or anybody from the 1042nd, but I know who he is, and I know who they are," said Sgt. Michael Chambers, a Bronze Star and Purple Heart recipient who currently serves with 1st Battalion, 3rd Marine Regiment as a platoon sergeant for Charlie Company, 3rd Platoon.

"Captain Brennan has reached a sort of folk hero status out here at Camp Blessing among the Marines, because we've seen him come into hot LZ's (landing zones) under enemy fire and risk his life to save ours."

"We all heard that there's a former Marine pilot out here with the 1042nd, and that makes us feel like we've got a guardian angel in Captain Brennan," continued Chambers, a native of Lexington, S.C.



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

Capt. Jerry Brennan, at the Portland International Airport's MAC facility, on March 2, with his son Charlie, 2.



Photo by Sgt. Joe Lindsay, 1st Battalion, 3rd Marine Regiment

Capt. Jerry Brennan stands beside one of the unit's 1042nd's UH-60 Blackhawk helicopters in Kandahar, Afghanistan.

"When you've got a brother on the ground bleeding and the 1042nd comes to pick him up and give him a chance to survive when otherwise there would be no chance at all, that's just like a guardian angel to us," Chambers said.

Sgt. Brent Wright, a 1/3 platoon guide with Charlie Company, 3rd Platoon, spoke of Brennan in a similar vein.

"We're in the hot spot in Afghanistan at Camp Blessing," said Wright, a Navy Commendation and Purple Heart recipient from Littleton, Colo. "It helps our fighting spirit when we see helicopter pilots like Captain Brennan come in here to the danger zone."

"Obviously this area is dangerous because of rocket attacks, mortar attacks and small arms fire, but even without that, even if this AO (area of operations) was completely peaceful and serene, it is still dangerous to land here because of the mountains, weather, and terrain," continued Wright. "Captain Brennan puts it on the line to help us in tight spots. As far as we're concerned he's a Marine serving in the Army. Nothing wrong with that. Once a Marine, always a Marine."

Those who serve with Brennan in the 1042nd spoke of him in the highest of terms.

"He is a fine officer," said Staff Sgt. Larrie Ericson, a 36-year veteran of the Oregon Army National Guard attached to the 1042nd. "And I've been around long enough to know. He's the best of the best."

According to Brennan, the true best of the best is his family back in Oregon.

"Being away from my family is definitely the most difficult part of being deployed," said Brennan.

Brennan also made it a point to thank his company back in the states for their understanding during his deployment to Afghanistan.

"I am going back to work for Welch Allyn, Incorporated, a diagnostic medical company that makes the patient monitors in our Blackhawk helicopters," said Brennan.

"They have treated me and my family very well and have gone well beyond 'their call of duty' by supporting me on my deployment."

Brennan said it has been a true pleasure supporting the Marines once again.

"I believe I was selected for the position to work with the Marines here in Afghanistan because of my prior Marine Corps service," said Brennan. "I hold a special place in my heart for fellow Marines — I think all Marines do."

Joe Lindsay is a Marine Corps combat correspondent with the Hawaii Marine, the base newspaper for Kaneohe Marine Corps Base, Hawaii. His article on Capt. Brennan first appeared in the Hawaii Marine on Feb. 24, 2006, and has been reprinted in this issue of the Oregon Sentinel with permission.

Eckley's passing leaves behind family legacy of service, selflessness

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

Sgt. James R. Eckley, an Army Guard aviator and 30-year member of the Oregon National Guard died March 9, 2006 of a heart attack.

Eckley joined the military in 1966, and soon completed Officer Candidate School and the Infantry Officer Basic and Infantry Advanced Officer courses. He attained the rank of Major, and after a brief break in service he re-entered the Army National Guard in 1991.

As an aviator for the Oregon Guard, Eckley earned the Senior Aviator Badge and was active in the Civil Air Patrol in Salem. He participated in numerous search and rescue missions for both the Guard and CAP.

"He will always be remembered for his faithful service to the Nation, Oregon, the Army National Guard, and his community," said First Sergeant Rudy Hernandez, 1042nd Medical Company First Sergeant.

Eckley followed in the footsteps of his father, Colonel (Ret.) Benjamin Eckley, who had a long career with Oregon National Guard, and was the original commander of the 82nd Cavalry. Benjamin said that he encouraged his sons to serve their country in some capacity, an interest James Eckley took to heart.

According to James' brother, Lt. Col. (Ret.) Stan Eckley, growing up in the Eckley household wasn't a matter of if you would join the military, it was a matter of when.

"It was just one of those things. Growing up in our family we always saw dad going to drills, so it was just something we knew we would do," he said. Stan retired with 30 years of service in the Oregon National Guard.

At one point in time, all four Eckley brothers and their father were serving in the Oregon National Guard. The distinction put them in the national record books for having the most members of the same family serving in the same branch of service simultaneously.

"One of the brightest moments of my life was to have all four of my boys in the National Guard at the same time," said Benjamin.

Stan Eckley remembers his brother as a dedicated soldier who loved to fly.

"He was most happy when he was around aviation," Stand said. "He really enjoyed working with the younger people in the Civil Air Patrol."

According to Col. (Ret.) Howard Klopfenstein, who served with James and Benjamin, Eckley was a devoted Soldier and aviator.

"When I was Deputy Brigade Commander, Jim was the full time assistant in Ashland for



Photo courtesy of Eckley family

From left to right: father, Benjamin Eckley and sons, James, Stanley, Keith, and Joseph.

the 1-186 Infantry for a period, and he was a great guy," Klopfenstein said. "I enjoyed working with him. They're a very close-knit family."

Family members said Eckley enjoyed spending time with his wife and companion

of 25 years, Annie D. Ford.

Staff Sgt. Eckley is survived by his wife Annie, parents Benjamin and Gloria Eckley, and two sons James R. Eckley Jr. and Douglas E. Eckley. He is preceded in death by daughter, Jacqueline Smith.

Combat Medics receive training ‘essential to deployment’

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

Monmouth, Ore. — The “patient” waits silently on the litter. The four litter-bearers stand ready, while a small black speck appears in the cloudless sky overhead. It grows larger as it nears the field — and what began as the sound of butterfly wings soon becomes a deafening roar as the Oregon National Guard UH-60 Blackhawk helicopter, kicking up dust and clumps of grass, settles 30 yards away.

As the flight medic emerges and makes his way over to the group, the lead litter bearer turns to look at his fellow litter bearers, giving the command to lift their patient. With hunched shoulders and bowed heads, they advance toward the aircraft. Their efforts have greatly increased the chance that this patient — who is now on his way to a hospital to receive urgently-needed medical care — will survive his injuries.

This could easily be a scene cut from an Oregon National Guard deployment in Iraq or Afghanistan. And it could easily be a real world scenario, where quick actions taken by trained Combat Medics just saved a life.

But today, the action is only practice, and instead of the Middle East, the stage for this elaborate play is the Regional Training Institute (RTI) at the Western Oregon University campus in Monmouth, Ore.

“This training is essential to mobilization,” says Col. Richard Daniels, Deputy State Medical Commander.

A collective effort between the 249th Training Regiment, Western Oregon University, and the 1042nd Medical Company

(Air Ambulance), the 91-Whiskey Combat Medic training was held in Monmouth, Ore., Feb. 6-12. But not all of the training happens in the classroom. Of the seven days of instruction, about 80-percent is actual hands-on instruction. And according to Daniels, the training is critical to saving lives in a combat environment.

“We continue to get stories from the field,” Daniels continues, “saying how this training has saved lives. It provides our Soldiers with real-world, hands-on training.”

The Medical Company, based at the RTI in Monmouth, is responsible for training and certifying some 200 military combat medics in Oregon. Known as 91-Whiskey in military parlance, these Soldiers are not only medical personnel, but must also understand all aspects of working around military aircraft — namely the UH-60 Blackhawk helicopter — the designated air ambulance for the Oregon Army National Guard.

All Soldiers holding the 91-Whiskey MOS must go through the refresher course every two years in order to keep their certification. In most cases, the helicopters are not available for actual instruction, and students and instructors alike must rely on simulated aircraft.

“We used a square transformer over by the building as a simulated aircraft one time,” says Capt. Tony Ballenger of the Medical Company. Ballenger, who serves as the officer in charge of the Pre-Hospital Trauma Life Support Course (PHTLS), chuckled as he described how students in previous classes would use anything at hand to simulate the battlefield. But all those at the RTI agree there’s nothing like practicing with genuine equipment — especially a real helicopter.

“This [working around the aircraft] gives me an opportunity to gain confidence so I’ll know what to do in a real situation,” says Spc. Jason Ashworth, 25, of Wimer, Ore.

Ashworth, a member of HHC, 1-186 IN BN in Ashland, served as a volunteer firefighter before joining the Oregon Army National Guard. He did some work with helicopters at Fort Sam Houston, but it wasn’t as extensive.

“This sustainment course is giving me a lot I didn’t get at Fort Sam,” Ashworth says. “I’m truly getting a lot out of it.”

Second Lt. Christopher Markesino, 25, from Portland, agrees.

“This is great training with a lot of real-world experience,” Markesino says. “This is much more valuable than any book we could read.”

Markesino, a Medical Platoon leader for 1st Inf., 186 Bn., attended the course for recertification as an Emergency Medical Technician (EMT) stressed that the individuals teaching the course — regardless of them being classroom instructors, flight medics, or aircrew personnel — bring a wealth of knowledge to the instruction, with many of them working in the private sector.

“Tomorrow we’re going to instruct students on vehicle extraction,” says Capt. Mike Rusher, Shift Commander for Polk County Fire District #1. “But we’re using vehicles these Soldiers may encounter in the field — large trucks, Humvees, and other vehicles they may see when they deploy.”

To further enhance the scenario’s realism, Rusher and his colleagues planned to stage the vehicles in a field, on uneven ground of dirt and sand instead of pavement. Several students would also get the chance to get hands-on experience with equipment such as the ‘jaws of life’ and metal cutting tools.



Sgt. Daniel Bobo, 44, of Salem, Ore., awaits extraction by an Oregon Army National Guard UH-60 Blackhawk helicopter at the RTI’s 91W Combat Medic Training Course at the Western Oregon University Campus in Monmouth, Ore., on Feb. 9, 2006.



Sgt. Daniel Bobo, a Flight Medic with the 1042 Medical Company (Air Ambulance) leads a group of Combat Medic students through a Combat Medic exercise.

“Some of these guys haven’t had a real-life experience working with the equipment or with the vehicles,” Rusher says. “So by using a more realistic situation, it helps prepare them for the real fight.”

Even the university campus gets something out of the training.

Spc. Pedro Velasquez, 24, of Salem, Ore., finds that the training he receives here is a good mix of his civilian life and his Guard experience.

“I’m going to school to be a paramedic, and work full time doing this,” Velasquez says. “The medic training the Army gives us helps my [civilian] career. They supplement each other.”

“I love being a combat medic,” Ashworth adds. “It’s the best job in the Guard.”

For more information about the 91-Whiskey Sustainment Course, or the 249th Training Regiment, contact Col. Richard Daniels at 541-552-6701.

Medevac rescue hoist trainers committed to saving lives

Story by Mary Jane Jacobsen,
115th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

Monmouth, Ore. — Oregon Regional Training Institute (RTI) has the only Army approved maintenance course of its kind for the high performance rescue hoist that is used in most medical evacuation aircraft around the world.

Initially, the Oregon guard was assigned a new medical evacuation mission in 1995. The need for a qualified rescue hoist maintenance program became apparent to the team shortly after this mission was set in place.

The school has instructed hundreds of students from as far off as Korea, Central America and Germany. Air Force, Army, Coast Guard, Marine Corps, and civilian rescue teams all come to the Oregon RTI for this vital and relevant training.

The seven day certification teaches individuals what they need to know about: preventative maintenance schedules, unit level and intermediate level maintenance including complete disassembly and reassembly of a working hoist. It will also give attendees a glimpse into the history of the hoist as well as an opportunity to share their hoist experiences and learn from others.

Retired Master Sgt. Gary Alkire, a rescue hoist course manager and instructor at the RTI, was one of the first to take the original course from the manufacturer for the model

R1 rescue hoist used in military UH-60 Blackhawks. Alkire has seen the course through to its current state and believes the training saves lives.

Having spent decades in the medical and aviation industries, Alkire is a passionate advocate of the course which he believes is the best of its kind.

Master Sgt. Donald R. Rue, a rescue hoist course manager, explained the course’s evolution and approval steps. According to Rue, the Army Aviation and Missile Command and Army Medical Department, the two proponents for the course, have endorsed the hoist curriculum administered at the RTI.

Alkire and Rue took the initiative to go directly to the Goodrich factory where the hoists are made and developed the curriculum over the past decade.

“The extraction and rescue of an individual where an airlift is the only means to maintain life is the basis of the maintenance course,” said Alkire. “A successful extraction is the bottom line of the rescue hoist and each individual working on that hoist knows it.”

“The course exists because of its importance in keeping and maintaining a ready force of emergency responders. By providing high caliber, relevant and quality training for the individuals attending the course, we exceed the standards of training elsewhere,” Alkire said.

“Army aviation has its maintenance standards and that is what we teach,” he continued

As a senior instructor for the course, Staff Sgt. Brent Collee prepares technical forms, quality checklists and training materials to include the training support packets. He explained that the first hoist training at the RTI was conducted in 2000 and with the improvements made over the past few years the program has developed into the highest quality course you can find.

Staff Sgt. Darrin Lane, also a senior instructor, created and maintains the course’s official website and has developed the aircraft quality control forms and records. Lane is a technical inspector and has 20 years of aircraft maintenance experience.

“The hoist is an excellent piece of equipment that needs to be well maintained, and this training fills that need,” Lane said.

The course is designed for crew chiefs, flight medics, maintenance personnel, and their supervisors. They also welcome civilian technical advisors and support teams for medevac units around the world.

Students that graduate from the course receive a certification and an official DA 1059, service/civilian school academic report, signed by a Colonel or above; they also receive a technical manual on compact disc and an open door when ever they have questions or issues.



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

Sgt. Jason Johnson, 32, of Salem, Ore., a flight medic with the 1042nd Medical Co., practices working the hoist from a UH-60 Blackhawk.

For more information regarding the high performance rescue hoist maintenance course, log on to www.hoistcourse.org

New course prepares Soldiers, Airmen for Air Assault School



Staff Sgt. Rowena Simshaw (l.), Sgt. Paul Edgerly (r.) and three others from the 102nd Civil Support Team prepare for their pre-dawn ruck-sack run at Minto-Brown Park in Salem on Feb. 23.

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

It's 6:30 in the morning, and Sgt. Paul Edgerly's heart rate is racing.

Maybe it's because he's carrying a 40-pound rucksack on his back. Or maybe it's because he's trying to finish a 6-mile run (with the fully-loaded rucksack, Kevlar helmet, and full BDUs) in under 90 minutes.

Edgerly huffs and puffs as he rounds a concrete and steel pillar that marks the start/end point of this morning's run at Minto-Brown Park in west Salem.

"I'm doing okay," he manages to say.

"Edgerly's got some drive," says Sgt. Jarrel Rysavy, after shouting some words of encouragement, as Edgerly disappears back down the path.

"Yeah," agrees Sgt. Christopher Campbell. "At the half-way mark they're a little uncomfortable, but they're okay."

Rysavy and Campbell, are both members of the 102nd Civil Support Team — the joint-force division within the Oregon National Guard which specializes in working

with civilian and federal agencies as one of the first responders to terrorist attacks and weapons of mass destruction. (See related story on page 6).

This morning, the two were overseeing four of their fellow unit members during a pre-training course on Feb. 23. On this cold, gray Salem day, Capt. Kristen Maas, Staff Sgt. Rowena Simshaw, Staff Sgt. Bill Gent, and Sgt. Paul Edgerly each donned a fully-loaded rucksack, their Kevlar helmets and canteens filled with water, and prepared for an Air Assault 'pre-course'.

The informal pre-courses were organized for their unit throughout the spring and early summer seasons are meant to prepare not just 102nd CST personnel, but all entrants, for the Air Assault Course scheduled at Camp Rilea in August.

"Anyone who comes to our pre-course will be able to pass the Air Assault Course," says Campbell.

The unusually high failure rate for prior Air Assault courses prompted Campbell and Rysavy to request course organizers to allow them to hold a pre-course, which would train participants on what to expect during

the real course. The pre-course is open to all members of the Oregon National Guard, regardless if they attend the Air Assault course or not. And along with an academic preview, and some knot-tying skills comes an arduous physical regimen.

"The road-march is the main factor for failure out of Air Assault school," Campbell says.

According to Campbell, there are secrets to successfully completing the final phase of the Air Assault course — a challenging 12-mile foot march along the beach fronting Camp Rilea in Warrenton Ore., while loaded down with full combat gear and a 40-pound rucksack. Practice and training is one aspect, but there are other tricks.

Known as a "range-march", participants must keep a predetermined pace, but at the same time refrain from burning themselves out. The gait resembles a race-walk, and must be kept to about an 8-9 minute pace for a four-mile course. Then there's the mental part.

"There's little games you can play in your head," Rysavy says. "Counting your steps, doing math with the numbers — it all helps pass the time and keep your mind occupied."

"The bottom line is if the student has graduation as a goal," Campbell says, "Then they'll already be motivated to finish."

"Our goal is to make sure everyone can pass the course before they go," he adds.

Both Rysavy and Campbell are well-suited for their task. In addition to both being part of the cadre which instructs Air Assault cadets, they were both instructors with the Mobile Training Team (MTT) at Fort Benning, Ga. Moreover, they were both previously stationed at Camp Rilea, and have an intimate knowledge of the post.

"Teaching this course is a lot of fun," Rysavy says.

During the Air Assault Course participants can expect ten days of grueling physical demands, mental stress, and the inclement and unpredictable coastal weather for which Oregon is famous. But participants must first get through 'Zero-Day' — a five-hour ordeal involving nine obstacles, with arduous physical training between each 'station', and a timed two-mile run following the obstacle course — all the while being yelled at by instructors.

"I do yell — and call them names," Rysavy says, "But I think it helps them do better."

"If you're too soft as an instructor," he continues, "you'll make it too easy for [the students]. Air Assault is not easy."

According to Campbell and Rysavy, most of the Air Assault cadets' success in the course is assessed not just during Zero-Day, but also within the first three days of the course. Many who begin the course do not make it to graduation. Cadets can fail any phase along the way. In 2005, 340 students began the course on April 7. On graduation day on April 17, only 76 Soldiers and Airmen were awarded their Air Assault badge. However, those who fail are given the opportunity to reenter the course at the point they failed, but must do so within six months.

Although the course is tough, and the attrition rate high, many who graduate find a new sense of self-confidence. Some even re-invent themselves.

"There was this one cadet," says Campbell, "He arrived with a big chip on his shoulder. He was a Navy Seal, and had done all this stuff, and he made it through the course just fine, and I thought that graduating the course was just going to be another notch on his belt."

"But," continues Campbell, "He came up to me after graduation, and told me that going through Air Assault school really changed his outlook on himself. Hearing him say that meant a lot to me."

If you have any questions about, or are interested in attending, the Air Assault Course, or would simply like to participate in the pre-training, contact Sgt. Christopher Campbell at 503-932-6746.

The Pre-Air Assault Course will consist of three training weekends, May 11-14, June 23-26, and July 13-16, at Rilea Training Site. Soldiers will travel the first day of each class date and report at 1700 hours. These training weekends can be funded either in ADT status (A10/211) or in IDT status. Soldiers must complete all three pre-training weekends in order to attend the accredited Air Assault Course.

For enrollment information contact, Staff Sgt. Debbie O'Donnell, Regional Training Institute (RTI), at 503-838-8577.

Rees: "Every patient you evacuated will forever remember the 1042nd"

Continued from FRONT PAGE

"Even though we've had several delays, the unit is finally on the ground," said Brig. Gen. Raymond C. Byrne, Jr., Assistant Adjutant General, Army. "I bet all the disappointments those delays caused will evaporate the moment they get off the plane. The fact that they're all home and safe is exceptional."

The 1042nd Med. Co. was returning from a six-month rotation in Afghanistan, supporting Operation Enduring Freedom. Their primary mission during the deployment required using their UH-60 Blackhawk helicopters to provide medical evacuation and transport of injured U.S. and other coalition forces.

After a brief reunion with their families in Portland, and enduring a week of in-processing in Fort Lewis, Wa., the Soldiers were brought back to the Army Aviation

Flight Facility in Salem, Ore., where the unit is based.

"The ramping up to come home is when the anxiety kicks in, because everyone wants to get home as soon as they can," said Chief Warrant Officer Rick Chagnon, instructor pilot, upon returning to Salem.

Chagnon said the desert environment and high altitudes in Afghanistan provided a lot of good experience for the younger pilots and crew chiefs in the unit.

"There's a lot more things going on during missions over there, it's a lot different from a simple rescue over the Santiam River," said Chagnon. "They (the flight crews) all did well. They learned a lot, they executed their missions flawlessly, and we never dropped not-one mission. We brought everyone back safe and sound with no scratches, no bumps, no bruises, so it was a success."

While based at Bagram Air Base, near Kabul, and Jalalabad Airfield, bordering Pakistan, the 1042nd Med. Co. logged more

than 1,000 incident-free flight hours in some of the most challenging flying conditions over rugged, mountainous and desert terrain.

Capt. Jerry Brennan, executive officer for the 1042nd, said the skills of the flight crews were tested every day, during every mission.

"It was kind of like baptism by fire for a lot of us that were over there, it represents some

of the most challenging aviation environments that I have ever flown in," said Brennan.

Not only did the pilots and crew members return safely from each mission, but so did many U.S. and other coalition forces that were plucked from the battlefield by the 1042nd's life-saving pilots, crew chiefs, and medics.

Brennan said many times while picking up wounded Soldiers from convoys that had been attacked, the firefights and mortars would still be happening around them.

The unit remained on-call 24 hours a day to perform mass-casualty pick-ups, point-of-injury pickups, improvised explosive device (IED) casualty pickups, and patient transfers.

"Every mission was important to us, whether it was a patient transfer, or going directly to an IED strike to pick up an injured Soldier," said Brennan. "They all were very important to each and every single one of us."

The 1042nd performed more than 290 medical evacuations, to include medevac for local Afghani nationals. Many of their patients were Afghani children who had been wounded by landmines.

"I'd say over half of the people we treated were Afghanistan nationals. Most of them were very friendly and appreciated what we were doing," said Brennan.

For a few of the 1042nd Soldiers, who had previously deployed with the unit to Afghanistan in 2002-03, it was interesting to see how the country is evolving.

"There was a huge difference between when I was there in 2002 and this time," said Chief Warrant Officer Earl Poole, maintenance officer. "Now there are large, thriving villages, some of which had tripled in size since the last time, and it was just amazing to see the people coming back to their homes."

The Soldiers were officially released from active duty service during a Demobiliza-

tion Ceremony at the Army Aviation Flight Facility in Salem on March 6. During the ceremony, a letter from Oregon Governor Theodore R. Kulongoski was read to the returning Soldiers by Danny Santos, Senior Policy Advisor.

"For many of you this not the first time you've been mobilized," Santos read from the letter. "But for all of you my message remains the same; you are absolutely the best that Oregon has to give, we could not be more proud of what you've accomplished or be more grateful to have you back home and safe."

Oregon State Senate President, Peter Courtney told the audience that every one of the 33 Soldiers had volunteered for the deployment.

"This group of men and women not only put themselves in harm's way and they had to leave their loved ones, but they did it to help other people in a far off place that were struggling," Courtney said to a standing ovation.

Oregon Adjutant General, Maj. Gen. Raymond F. Rees also addressed the gathering at the ceremony and thanked the family members for keeping the home fires burning while their Soldiers were away.

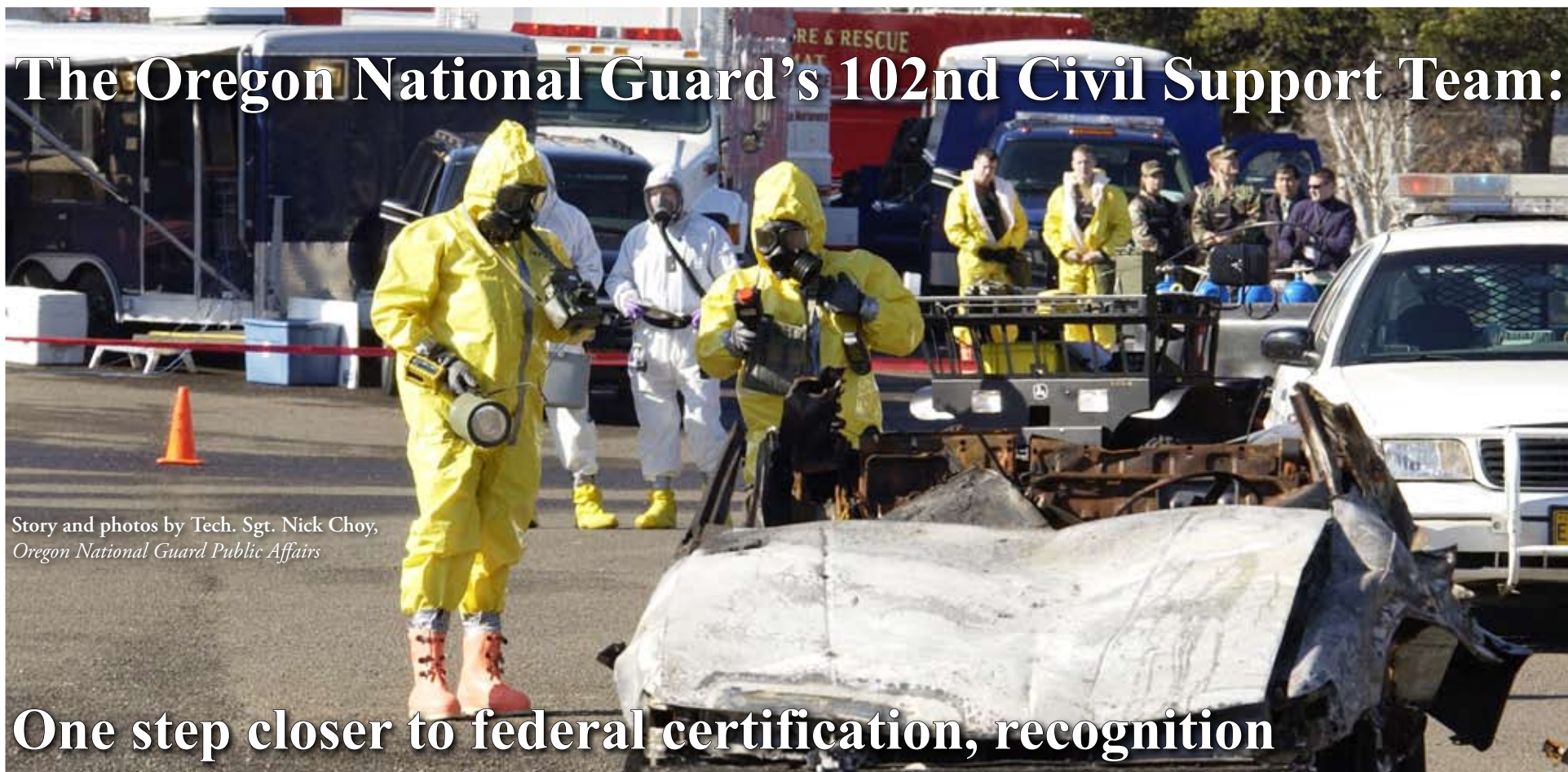
"It's you who laid the foundation of strength for them on the home front and enabled them to conquer the challenges of Afghanistan," said Rees. "Just as we've asked our Soldiers to endure the hardships of the deployment, we've asked you to do the same."

Rees commended the returning Soldiers for their courage and commitment to both their mission and to each other.

"It took all of you who deployed, maintainers, pilots, engineers and medics, a total team effort, to give our troops the best care that they could hope for. Every patient that you evacuated out of harm's way and cared for will forever remember the 1042nd, who with commitment and courage braved the battle to save them," Rees said.



A Soldier walks toward a gathering of family and friends at the Portland Air Base on Feb. 26 after the unit's members arrived at the base in an Air Force C-5 military transport aircraft.



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

One step closer to federal certification, recognition

The exercise started, appropriately enough, with a bang.

Members of the Oregon National Guard's 102nd Civil Support Team joined personnel from a number of public safety and law enforcement agencies on Feb. 15, at the Portland Fire Department's training facility in North Portland.

Participants included the FBI, Oregon State Police, Portland Police, Hazardous Materials Teams (HAZMAT) and Fire Departments throughout the Portland Metro area in a multi-agency practice exercise. According to organizers of the event, bringing together the wealth of knowledge and experience from military, state, federal, and local authorities is instrumental in the post-911 world.

"Working with other teams is extremely important because these are the people we have to work with on a regular basis during real-world crises," said 102nd Civil Support Team commander, Lt. Col. Steven J. Ferrell.

Throughout the morning, the scenario unfolded; during a routine traffic stop, Portland Police officers discover suspicious occupants of a car which turns out to be carrying weapons of mass destruction. A small-weapons firefight resulted in a wounded, and possibly contaminated, Portland Police Officer. Furthermore, the vehicle catches fire, prompting the response of local fire fighters.

Further complicating the situation was the discovery of evidence of a 'dirty bomb' in the vehicle. The 102nd CST was called in to help assess the level of contamination. In order to simulate the travel time from their headquarters in Salem, the team staged their vehicles and equipment in the parking lot across the street from the training facility.

"This training is fabulous because it's as close as possible to what we'd see in the real world," said Tech. Sgt. Larry Andersen,



Sgt. Paul Edgerly checks out the 'crash scene' through one of the 102nd CST's IR telescopes.

102nd CST Survey Team Leader. "Working with the other agencies is vital to what we do. We need to train with all the HAZMAT teams throughout the state."

According to Capt. Zachary Irvine, 102nd CST Medical Operations Officer, the unit was specifically designed to work with civilian first-responders, and periodic multi-agency training is imperative.

"They [civilian authorities] get to know us, and we get to know them," Irvine said. "Also, there's a definite benefit to bringing all our military hardware to the table," he added.

The military hardware Irvine referred to includes cutting-edge communications systems, with one vehicle devoted solely to command and control — offering satellite, secure digital and voice communications in order to communicate with both civil and military authorities. The unit also possesses leading-edge technology in the detection of toxic industrial and organic substances, chemical and biological warfare agents, and radiological materials.

"We have the ability to break down samples to the molecular level to figure out what they are and how best to combat them," Irvine said.

Wearing their protective gear, two members of the CST went out to the scenario's incident site to take samples and monitor the level of any contaminants. They were joined by two HAZMAT team members from the Portland Fire Department, and by the Portland Police's Bomb Squad remote-control robot, known as the Remotec Andros, which gave incident commanders a close-up view of the situation without putting human life in jeopardy.

"If one of the first officers sees that there's a suspicious device, they'll notify the bomb squad, and they'll determine if they need to send in the robot," said Maj. Sean McGann, Deputy Commander for the 102nd CST.

According to McGann, the situation is evaluated by the first responders — usually police and fire personnel — before a determination is made if other agencies who possess more specialized skills are required. In this case, they called in both the HAZMAT and CST teams.

Although the 102nd CST is outfitted with state of the art equipment, monitoring and protective gear, members are constantly attending refresher and instruction courses in order to keep abreast of developing technology, and chemical, biological, radiological agents. In addition to their normal military occupational skill qualification or professional military training requirements, members of the CST are required to complete approximately 600-800 hours of initial training in order to be a team member. Instruction is provided to the unit by several Department of Defense schools, along with other agencies such as the National Fire Academy, Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the Department of Education.

The CST works closely with the De-

Above: 102nd CST members approach the mock 'crash scene' to assess any levels of contaminants released by a suspected dirty bomb. The scenario was part of a joint-agency exercise held on Feb. 15 at the Portland Fire Department's training facility in north Portland.

fense Threat Reduction Agency (DTRA), located in Fort Belvoir, Va. The DTRA is tasked with providing assistance to local civil support teams to help reduce the threat and effects of chemical, biological, or radiological incidents. CST members have a direct communication line to personnel at the DTRA — which includes doctors, epidemiologists, and experts in the fields of chemistry, biology, and radiology — who help them model contamination effects on any given area using weather, temperature, type and quantity of contaminant, or a list of other environmental variables. Based on

them."

Elmore cited the events of 9-11, where authorities in New York City lost very important lines of communication and situational command and control because various agencies were using different radio frequencies. Furthermore, he added, agencies that practice together, will work better together if there happens to be a real-world scenario.

"Bringing all these agencies together is good so we can evaluate any issues with command and control," Elmore said. "Having that clear direction from a unified com-



Sgt. Paul Edgerly (background), and Sgt. Chris Campbell (foreground) of the 102nd Civil Support Team, do a last minute check on equipment before heading out to the 'crash scene'. The unit practiced with a number of other federal and civilian emergency agencies on Feb. 15, 2006 at the Portland Fire Department's Training Facility in North Portland.

feedback from DTRA, CST modelers can then use computers to map the contaminant plume over time to help authorities determine the best course of action, whether it is decontamination, restricted access or full-scale evacuation of the public.

"The training [CST members go through] is extremely important," Ferrell said. "It gives us credibility as a first responder — something that's recognized throughout the world by other first response teams."

The expertise and level of professionalism is not lost on the exercise's other participants. Sgt. Vince Elmore, a member of the Portland Police Rapid Response Team, and 15-year veteran of the police department, felt the members of the 102nd CST brought valuable skills to the exercise.

"Bringing the CST on board [with these exercises] is a great thing," Elmore said. "Now that we know what the CST can do, I don't think we should do anything without

mand is very important."

In order to be effective throughout the state of Oregon, the 102nd CST requires federal certification, which needs to be signed by the Secretary of Defense. The joint-force team, comprised of both Oregon Army and Air National Guard members, is authorized 22 personnel, who are full-time members of the National Guard. Though they are federally resourced, trained and evaluated, they fall under the control of the Governor of Oregon. The CST required 18-24 months for manning, equipment acquisition and training, and according to Ferrell, is nearing the end of their certification cycle.

"By April, the packet will be submitted to Washington D.C.," Ferrell said. "We hope to have full certification by the summer of 2006."

"Until we're signed off on our certification, we cannot respond to any incidents," he added.

Oregon Army National Guard's 41st Brigade Combat Team readies for their year-long deployment in Afghanistan

By mid-June, 2006, almost 1,000 Oregon National Guard Soldiers will be in Afghanistan.

As part of Joint Task Force Phoenix V, their primary mission — to train the Afghan National Army to stand on their own two feet — is a pre-requisite to Afghanistan's sovereignty and self-sufficiency.

But first, the men and women of the Task Force must themselves train. They will spend a year in austere conditions, possibly facing adversity and hardship, not to mention the enemy. It is with this mindset that their training takes on a new importance and priority.

This is the first part of a multi-part series on the training and deployment of the 41st Brigade Combat Team to Afghanistan. It is a ground-level view of what it takes to prepare Soldiers for a year-long deployment into harm's way.

Training the Trainers

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



A lot of what goes on at the Camp Shelby Mobilization Station in southern Mississippi is conducted inside a myriad of classrooms spread throughout the 134,000-acre post located just an hour north of the Gulf Coast.

However, the bulk of the four months' worth of training the Oregon National Guard's 41st Brigade Combat Team is undergoing, is done with a "hands-on" approach, taught by fellow Guard members and reservists from Mississippi and the surrounding region.

Other instructors are contracted by the government, bringing real-world experience to the training regimen.

One such individual is Mike Tucker, Close Quarters Combat (CQC) Lead Instructor for Warrior School.

"Every Soldier needs to know how to fight on any level of combat," says Tucker of the hand-to-hand combat training. "They should be scholars of war — no matter what the situation," he continued. "The biggest thing about this course is to give participants confidence, and to develop the warrior spirit."

Tucker, himself an Army combat veteran, who has seen action in Iraq, is also a 14-year martial arts expert. He explained that close-quarters combat techniques have been employed on the battlefield since ancient times.

CQC training became formalized during the height of the Roman Empire, but as advances in warfare technology moved the warrior farther away from the battlefield, actual hand-to-hand combat began to take a back seat to observational tactics and surgical strikes. However, in Afghanistan, as in many parts of the world, enemy combatants freely mix with the local population, making it harder to discern friend from foe. In order to locate an enemy mixed in amongst the civilian population, Soldiers are inadvertently drawn closer into the "kill-zone". It is in this environment where the curriculum that Tucker and his teammates impart upon his students takes on a new significance.

"Use your gut instincts," Tucker says. "If something doesn't seem right, it probably isn't."

According to Tucker, all humans, regardless of cultural or geographical background, share several distinct levels of awareness. He said most people live their lives in what is known as Condition Yellow — be it waiting in line at the grocery store, driving in our car, or at the local coffee house waiting for the Barista to put the finishing touches on

the froth atop our morning latte. It is only in the lower level, Condition White — when we are asleep or unconscious — where we are at our most vulnerable.

In Condition Orange, we are at a heightened state of awareness. According to researchers, it is at this point where we are scanning for threats, and making split decisions to act or not. We experience a jolt of adrenaline, our pupils begin dilating to increase our field of vision, our heart rate increases, and blood is sent to the major muscle groups to prepare us for "Fight or Flight" as the famous syndrome suggests. If the threat persists, or elevates, we move into Condition Red, where danger is imminent and immediate action is required.

The training calls for familiarizing participants with both the physiological and psychological effects of combat. Terms like adrenal lock, where one's hands literally lock onto something because of the flow of adrenaline throughout the body, are covered. Tucker's demeanor, relaxed and friendly, grows serious as he covers several touchy subjects, including fighters who "eliminate" during battle, saying it is nothing to be ashamed of.

"It isn't because you're scared," he says. "It is your body's natural reaction to a stressful situation. It is the way your body prepares for a fight, or for injury."

According to Tucker, only the last condition, Black, is where the use of deadly force must be employed in order to ensure survival. It is in these last two conditions — red and black — where CQC training becomes vitally important.

"It is possible to stay in yellow all the time," says Tucker. But, as Tucker explained, moving into, and staying in Condition Orange and Red for extended periods of time can lead to long-term health effects and psychological problems. Many Soldiers who have seen combat tend to float in and out of these heightened states of awareness, leading to problems associated with Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder, or PTSD.

Tucker further explained that it is an unnatural act for one human being to kill another. In order to accomplish this task, many Soldiers remove their emotions from the equation, de-humanizing themselves for the duration of the act. Given enough situations, the Soldier ends up separate from the very emotions that make him human.

"It is important to try to quickly re-humanize those who have been involved in a justified killing," Tucker says. "Talk to them about anything — family, friends, tell them jokes — whatever — just don't leave them alone."

The participants were broken up in to two- and three-man teams. The obvious weapons used were simulated knives,

Left: Spc. Lee Brasher, of Portland, Ore., takes aim during a platoon training exercise just outside his barracks. Soldiers routinely conduct self-directed training to increase their patrol skills and situational awareness.

Right: Master Sgt. Billy Benson helps familiarize members of the 203rd Embedded Training Team with the Virtual Combat Convoy Trainer during training exercises at Camp Shelby, Mississippi on March 25, 2006. The ETTs will deploy with a multi-state coalition, which includes the Oregon Army National Guard's 41st Brigade Combat Team, and will spend one year in Afghanistan training the Afghan National Army. Benson is a member of the 1st of the 305th Training Team at Camp Shelby.

pistols and rifles. After several drills involving disarming adversaries of their weapons, or disabling attackers, Tucker moved on to non-traditional weapons, including ropes or parts of your own equipment.

"Everybody should know this," says Sgt. Margaret C. Nelson, an Oregon Guardsman from Bend, Ore., and a member of the 41st Brigade Combat Team's Headquarters Company. A former Military Police member, Nelson finds CQC training particularly important and relevant, given the present state of the world, and the nature of conflict on the modern battlefield.

"Today, we're doing urban warfare, which means you don't know who the attacker is. You're in close contact with your enemy, so your secondary weapon is your own body," Nelson says.

In one drill, participants used their Kevlar helmets and Caribiners to disable their attackers. According to Tucker, anything can be used as a weapon, but he stressed that no matter what, you should never give up fighting.

"No matter how bad the situation is, you have to fight through it," Tucker says.

Lead instructor and CQC Certification Officer, Jeff Skillman agrees. "The core element is to never give up," he says. "The moment you quit is the moment you die."

Across the post, at the Virtual Convoy Combat Trainer, or VCCT, a group of soldiers sit at consoles which resemble more of a high-tech video game than an actual military convoy. Participants peer through stereoscopic lenses mounted on virtual-reality headsets. Flat-panel plasma screens display virtual-reality scenarios distilled from real-world combat situations encountered in Baghdad and Afghanistan. Computers record their movement and reactions to simulated combat situations — including direction of fire and ammunition expended — so that the scenarios can be played back and analyzed by the entire team.

"This is really cool," says Capt. Doug Eggers, of the 203rd Embedded Training Team. Today, course instructor, Master Sgt. Billy Benson and observer/controller, Sgt. 1st Class Mariette Fields, both of the 1st Battalion, 305th Regiment at Camp Shelby, take the group of coalition Soldiers through a myriad of situations involving IEDs, surprise attacks involving rocket-propelled grenades (RPGs), and vehicle-borne explosives. How the Soldiers react in the virtual reality trainer may determine their survival on the real battlefield.

"I'm very pleased with the level of training here at Camp Shelby," says Coalition Commander, Brig. Gen. Douglas Pritt. "I think that the trainers here are extremely professional and experienced. They believe in the mission and they understand the urgency of what they are doing, and that how well they train these Soldiers, Airmen and Sailors is going to be critical to their survival on the battlefield."

"I feel like we have the right chemistry and the right people... all we have to do is to provide them with the right training that they need to do the mission."

— Brig. Gen. Douglas Pritt, Commander, Joint Task Force Phoenix V

Back near the CQ fronting the row of barracks, a group of Soldiers practice foot patrols in the grassy areas between the buildings. Using hand signals, their squad leader, Sgt. Marshall Scheese, from Oregon City, Ore., directs individuals through the drill. They maintain an intense level of concentration, oblivious to distractions — a white GSA vehicle drives by on the road fronting the barracks, a fellow Soldier walks by on her way to the latrine, towel in hand.

"We have some excellent leaders here," said Spc. Lee Brasher, of Portland, Ore., as he and his fellow Soldiers took a break between drills. "A lot of guys here have been deployed before — so there's a tremendous amount of experience."

Platoon Leader, Lt. James McCormick, originally from New Orleans, La., agrees. "These guys are great," McCormick said. "I love every last one of them."

The two Soldiers, who are part of Bravo Co., 1-180th Infantry, share a common thread — both are Portland State University students, with Brasher studying Political Science, and McCormick pursuing a degree in Middle Eastern Studies. In addition, they both volunteered to go to Afghanistan, exchanging their academic world for a completely different one on the opposite side of the globe.

McCormick, was originally a member of the Active Duty Army's 178th Military Police Detachment, at Fort Hood, Texas. He moved over to the Oregon Army National Guard in



Oct. 2005, and has been attending PSU for a few years. McCormick added that his platoon included a lot of seasoned veterans with years of experience, and a lot of younger Soldiers who were very dedicated to the mission and to their unit. But regardless of their level of experience, they were all, in his words, "adaptive, flexible and creative."

"We have guys who have served a tour, and in some cases two tours, but they have volunteered to deploy again for this mission," McCormick said. "It's humbling."

That sentiment is shared from the privates all the way to the top brass.

"I feel like we have the right chemistry and the right people, and all we have to do now is to provide them with the right training that they need to do the mission at hand," Pritt said.

Once a member of Alpha Co., 9th Engineer Battalion, stationed in Schweinfurt, Germany, Sgt. John Taylor transferred into the Oregon National Guard's 41st Brigade Combat Team after he learned that the unit would be deploying to Afghanistan in June 2006.

"I've always liked the National Guard," Taylor said. "And Bravo Company has a hell of a lot of good leaders. They're doing a good job here."

Another motivation for his move, he would later confess, was that his good friend, Spc. Kellen Powell, 24, from McMinnville, Ore., was already in the unit and would also be going on the deployment.

"I just wanted to hang out with him and get in on this deployment," Taylor said. "I like being deployed."

Taylor, a 23-year old Oregon native, also from McMinnville, had deployed to the Middle East before. He had spent a year in Beji, Iraq as an engineer, hunting IEDs (Improvised Explosive Devices). Taylor also attended pre-Ranger school. According to Taylor, there are a lot of similarities between the Guard and active duty components, but because the 41st Brigade was heading to Afghanistan, it seemed like the perfect time to make the move.

Stenciled on the back of Taylor's Camelback hydration system is a tell-tale sign of a man who wears many hats. It simply reads: INFINEER.

"It's for Infantry-Engineer," he says, smiling. On the other side of the buildings, another team plays out scenarios involving a couple of "bud guys" played by fellow Soldiers who have removed their BDU tops in order to differentiate them from the "good guys".

"Get your team out of there and go around the back of the building!" screams another Soldier to a second team. They move in three- and four-man teams — two facing forward, one aiming low, the other aiming high — and one facing rearward, covering the teams' flank, all the while using body contact to anticipate the movement of their teammates.

This scene could easily have been ripped from the pages of a sleepy neighborhood in Anytown, USA, and the players could easily be adolescent boys playing their version of a mock war. But their weapons and, more importantly, their intentions, are real. And this is not play.

Their self-motivated training is meant to prepare them for the battle that may lay ahead. Though there is a bit of adolescent exuberance thrown in for added fun, their intentions — as are the intentions of all those training at Camp Shelby — are simple: stay alive, and come home.



Above: Chief Warrant Officer Janet Martin (left), takes down a fellow Soldier during Close Quarters Combat Training at Camp Shelby, Mississippi.

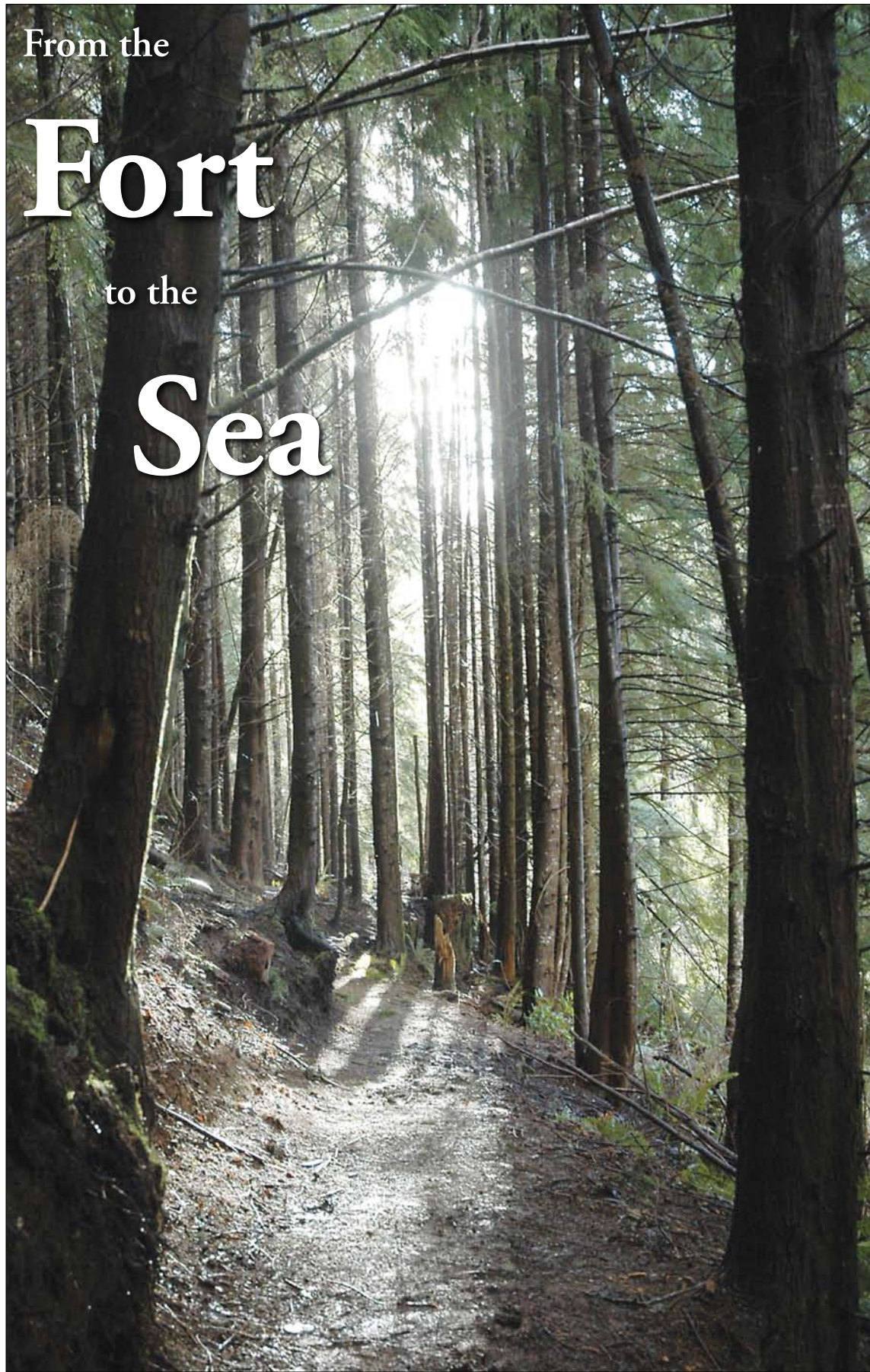
Left: Soldiers are briefed by their platoon sergeant, Sgt. Miah Washburn, just before a self-directed patrol exercise.



Right: Warrior School lead instructor, Mike Tucker, takes students through the paces of hand-to-hand combat training during Close Quarters Combat Training at Camp Shelby, Mississippi on March 19, 2006.

Continued on next page

Part II of this series will look at some of the weapons and tactics which will be employed by members of the Task Force, a look at the Task Force leadership, as well as an exclusive interview with the highest ranking official with the Afghan National Army, Lt. Gen. M. Esaq Noory.



From the
Fort
to the
Sea

Citizen-Soldiers help rebuild a vital part of Oregon's history

Story and photos by Staff Sgt. Russell Bassett,
115th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

SUNSET BEACH – Two hundred years ago, U.S. Army citizen Soldiers – members of the famed Corps of Discovery expedition – were the first non-Native Americans to blaze a trail to the sea over Northwest Oregon's coastal hills and wetlands.

Today, thanks again to the efforts of Citizen Soldiers, the Fort to Sea Trail – a 6.2 mile hike that marks the end of the Lewis and Clark journey – can now be enjoyed by everyone.

More than 100 members of the Oregon National Guard helped to build the trail that begins at Fort Clatsop and ends at Sunset Beach.

Chip Jenkins, Lewis and Clark National Historical Park superintendent, said the trail would not have been possible without the help of Oregon's citizen Soldiers.

"We could not have done it without them," he said. "They were a huge help, and by help I mean everyone from the specialists and NCOs all the way up to the officers and adjutant general. Those out here working every day were creative and ingenious as far as how to solve everyday problems and make progress. The citizens of Oregon ought to be proud of their Citizen Soldiers."

Guard Soldiers of the 1249th Engineers and B Company, 52nd Engineers, as well as Reserve Soldiers from the 671st Bridge Company, worked on the project, which culminated with a dedication ceremony Nov. 14.

Guard Soldiers built the first mile of the trail, which is wheel chair accessible, and constructed the last half mile of trail from Sunset Beach trailhead to the Pacific Ocean overlook. They also worked on two of the trail's biggest bridges, helped to clear other portions of the trail and laid the groundwork for the parking lot at Sunset trailhead.

"It's neat knowing that the initial Lewis and Clark journey was a military expedition, and we are here 200 years later with the military to build a trail to remember that journey," said Maj. Daniel Brewer, Innovative Training Program project manager, who oversaw the trail's construction.

Sgt. 1st Class Stacy Heathcock, project NCOIC, said finishing the trail gave him a real sense of accomplishment.

"We are giving back to the community," he said. "It was a high visibility target for us to put our best foot forward, so to speak, and show what Citizen Soldiers are capable of. It's only fitting that military comes in now, just like the original expedition."

Heathcock, who has hiked the trail several times, compared it to "watching a sunset come up on a good day."

"You end up on the beach and you know you can't possibly go any farther without building a raft," he said. "I enjoy hiking from the dark timber to the open beach."

Jenkins, who has also hiked the trail several times, said he enjoys it because it offers a variety of different terrain: lush coastal forest, wetlands, grasslands, dunes and beach. More than a mile of the trail runs through Camp Rilea, an Oregon National Guard post.

"The trail totally exceeded my expectations," he said. "I fully expected once we got the primitive trail in, that we would have to go back and make improvements, but because of the help from the private sector and help from the Guard, we were able to build it to a higher standard."

Heathcock said the toughest challenge the Guard Soldiers faced was working in the mud.

"We had a lot of tight spaces and cut and fill area where we were working with a backhoe and dozer in soft clay," he said. "The toughest part was staying on schedule working in areas where the ground was like pudding."

The engineer said Oregon Guard Soldiers received excellent training building the trail.

"A couple of our guys pulled civilian employment from what they learned here," he said.

Several private companies and government agencies also worked on the trail or donated money and equipment for the trail's construction.

"It was a great joint venture," Heathcock said. "Everyone pulled together and brought forth their best to come up with what turned out to be a great final project."

The Fort to Sea Trail is now open year round. From June 10 to Sept. 4, a shuttle will run between Fort Clatsop and Sunset Beach. For more information on the trail, visit: www.forttosea.org.



Above: The terrain on the trail includes coastal forest, wetlands, grasslands, dunes and beach. Above right: Oregon Army National Guard Soldiers work on Sunset Bridge, the largest bridge on the Fort to Sea Trail.

Right: Two hikers climb a hill on the Fort to Sea Trail on Jan. 21. The 6.2 mile trail is open year-round.



Below: Canby resident Jayna Nole takes in the ocean view at the Sunset Beach overlook, which marks the end of the 1805 Lewis and Clark expedition, and the new Fort to Sea Trail.



Mustangs serve 'crucial link' between Soldiers on front lines and rear areas

Continued from FRONT PAGE

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

PENDLETON, Ore. — Crowds of people stood along the streets of Pendleton, Ore. amidst flashing lights and sirens of police cars and fire trucks on March 17, to welcome home more than 80 Soldiers of Detachment 1, D Company, 113th Aviation Regiment (the Mustangs).

A trail of flags, banners, and yellow ribbons lined the path to the Army Aviation Flight Facility, where family members, military personnel, and supporters from the Pendleton community patiently waited to wrap their arms around the returning Soldiers.

"Upon our return to Pendleton, we were greeted by the community in a very memorable and very emotional home-coming celebration," said Capt. David Doran, Det. 1, D Co. 113th Avn. commander. "It was something that we will never forget. That was the moment I knew we were home."

The demobilization ceremony at the Army Aviation Flight Facility on March 19 was filled with more banners, family members, community supporters, and patriotic music. Many distinguished speakers welcomed



Photo courtesy of Det. 1, D Co. 113th Aviation

A Chinook flies over Afghanistan at dusk.

the Mustangs home including, Governor Theodore R. Kulongoski, Senator Gordon Smith, Senator Ron Wyden, Congressman Greg Walden and Oregon Adjutant General Maj. Gen. Raymond F. Rees.

But, Doran said he did not really breathe a sigh of relief until at the end of the ceremony, he was able to stand in front of his Soldiers, order "dismissed", and watch the Mustangs throw their hats up in the air with celebration.

"That was the moment I knew that we had completed our mission and we had gotten everyone else home safely to their families and friends," said Doran.

The Mustangs had spent one long, difficult year serving in Kandahar, Afghanistan, flying CH-47 Chinook helicopters through hostile air in support of Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF). The unit arrived in Kandahar in March 2005 as part of D Company, 113th Aviation headquartered in Reno, Nevada. Within the first three weeks of touching down on the desert soil, they had assumed 100 percent of heavy lift operations necessary to sustain the Forward Operating Bases (FOBs) throughout southern and western Afghanistan.

"When we arrived, we took Total Operational Authority ahead of schedule, thanks to the motivation of our soldiers and the training that we had conducted, which decreased the train-up we required in-country," said Doran.

The fast pace in which the Mustangs assumed their mission seemed to set the tone for the rest of the deployment, as they continued to operate at an extremely high tempo. As part of the Quick Reaction Force (QRF), the Mustangs were on-call 24 hours a day performing a wide range of aviation missions including, standard re-supply missions, downed aircraft recovery, forward area re-fueling, and casualty evacuation. The unit logged more than

6,500 flight hours over the challenging, high-mountain desert terrain, moving more than 11 million pounds of supplies and equipment and 45,000 troops.

"Every Oregon Soldier brought his or her "A" game to this mission," said Doran. "Whether it was fixing, fueling and flying aircraft or administering the personnel and logistics of the unit, the Soldiers executed bravely, faithfully and successfully under the most extreme circumstances."

Delta Company's more dangerous duties included serving as the primary Air Assault platform for the 173rd Airborne, and the 3rd and 7th Special Forces Groups. The aircrews performed more than 100 missions in which they inserted combat troops directly into battle with the enemy. In June, the Mustangs supported combat troops during the single largest engagement of OEF, Operation Catania, which resulted in more than 150 Anti-Coalition Militant kills and captures, and produced the most enemy KIAs of any operation in Afghanistan to date.

"Primarily, we served as the crucial and indispensable link between the rear area and those Soldiers (infantry troops and Special Forces) whose main mission is to close with and destroy the enemy," said Doran. "We were the lifeline for their logistics. We used our audacity and versatility to insert them into the most advantageous positions to gain as much tactical advantage as possible, as they engaged the enemy. We maneuvered them rapidly throughout the ever-changing battlefield."

Doran conveyed, that the imminent danger of these missions loomed over the Mustangs, as they counted their luck at each and every "close-call". He said many times the helicopters were shot-up by enemy machine guns (catching one aircraft on fire) and many aircrews had nearly missed being hit by Rocket Propelled Grenades (RPG).

"We were feeling very lucky, we were not sure how long that luck could possibly hold out before someone got hurt or worse," said Doran.

On September 25, their worst fear was realized, when one of the Chinooks was hit by an enemy RPG, killing five crew members on board. Two of these crew members were Oregon National Guard Soldiers, Warrant Officer Adrian Stump and Staff Sgt. Tane Baum, both from Pendleton. Doran said the loss of their comrades affected everyone individually and the unit in its totality.

"We all grieved in one way or another, and we likewise managed in one way or another," said Doran. "It changed the way we looked at our mission, and it changed the way we looked at each other. We went from the fear of losing an aircrew, to the graver fear of losing another aircrew and



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

CW3 Dennis Rogers (front), and fellow members of the Oregon Army National Guard's Det. 1, D Co., 113th Aviation toss their hats after being dismissed by their commander, Cpt. David Doran, at the unit's demobilization ceremony in Pendleton, Ore., March 19.

we still had five months ahead of us. Aircrews had to continue to execute in the same environment, but with a serious shift in paradigm. No mission was considered routine, no return to base was assured. This took amazing fortitude and personal courage on the part of each individual."

The Mustangs didn't have much chance to pause and grieve, they had to continue their mission. The Afghan National Parliamentary Elections had been taking place throughout the months of August and September and the Mustangs had to provide aircrews to accomplish many missions needed to ensure security of the elections.

"The stark reality was that we were but one cog in the machine, and the machine was not going to stop or even slow," Doran said. "In retrospect, it kept us moving forward as a unit, even though we each paused on our own, in our own time, to reflect and begin the healing process."

In early October, shortly after the deaths of Baum and Stump, a devastating earthquake hit Pakistan and the unit was tasked yet another mission; to provide humanitarian aid. The unit deployed two aircraft to Pakistan and the crews moved more than 750,000 pounds of relief supplies, evacuated more than 750 casualties, and transported 650 aid workers in the aftermath of the earthquake.

"The relief missions in Pakistan was a surreal experience for the aircrews involved," Doran said. "They flew above an otherworldly landscape of flattened dwellings - thousands of rooftops resting

on rubble."

Meanwhile in Afghanistan, Doran said the Mustangs continued to execute dangerous combat missions with enemy contact likely. On December 4, the unit almost lost another aircrew. He said although the CH-47 was completely destroyed, the crew escaped with only minor injuries and were recovered from the fighting soon after.

"Most of us have a new appreciation of combat aviation and better understand the risks involved," said Doran. "It takes facing those dangers with your close friends and comrades to really understand and appreciate life away from the combat zone."

Doran said the deployment gave him a better appreciation for the value of life and the precious time he was missing with his wife and two kids.

"The distance that we could not bridge and the precious time that we can never reclaim makes a long deployment like this such an enormous sacrifice, especially for those with spouses and children," Doran said.

Now that the unit has returned safely to Oregon, Doran said the Soldiers of Det. 1, D Co. 113th Avn. can look back on this deployment with pride in their accomplishments, knowing they made a difference.

"We made the resurgence of significant terrorist sanctuaries within our area of operations highly unlikely; hopefully our successors will continue to apply the pressure," he said. "We enabled the Afghan people to take control of their own destiny by safeguarding the National Parliamentary Elections and allowing them a glimpse of representative democracy. And we restored hope to thousands who had little or no chance for survival following the earthquake in Pakistan, demonstrating the U.S. Soldier is a compassionate provider of basic needs to those in peril."

Before the demobilization ceremony began, officially releasing the Soldiers from their active duty service, Doran gathered the Mustangs around him and told them that this endeavor will define them, for better or worse, for the rest of their lives.

Doran said, "Fifty years from now, we may not recall the address of the house we owned, the name of a coworker, the type of car we drove. But, we will not likely forget the men and women with whom we served and the struggles we faced together as a team. We will not forget those we lost; they will live on, unaffected by time, in our memories. We will be able to say we were a part of something great and noble, and God willing, long enduring."



Photo courtesy of Det. 1, D Co. 113th Aviation, Oregon Army National Guard

A group of Soldiers from Det. 1, Delta Co., 113th Aviation stand next to one of their CH-47 Chinook helicopters. Cpt. David Doran, (center, in front of doorway), is the unit's commander. Warrant Officer Adrian Stump is pictured on the far right.

Oregon's 1-186 Trains in the 'Land of the Rising Sun'



Soldiers from 1st Battalion, 186th Infantry Regiment secure buildings during an urban assault for Operation Orient Shield.

Story by Spc. Jody Metzger,
Det. 1, 1-128th Mobile Public Affairs,
Colorado Army National Guard
Photo by Sgt. Scott Griffin,
Colorado Army National Guard

HOKKAIDO, Japan - Operation Orient Shield 2006 training exercise in Hokkaido, Japan ended with a bang March 14, as Soldiers of 1st Battalion, 186th Infantry Regiment and the 5th Brigade, 27th Infantry Regiment of the Japan Ground Self Defense Force engaged the enemy during cordon-search and assault operations.

Cordon and search is a technique that creates a perimeter to keep any enemy

from escaping, while another group does a systematic search.

"The objective is for the Soldiers to get intelligence of enemy activity in the area and to be able to take them down," said 1st Sgt Michael Campbell, Command Sergeant Major for Task Force 186.

The crunching sound of a hundred snowshoes was the only noise as the Infantryman advanced on the objective.

With C Company as the cordon, B Company advanced on the 'village.' After a brief exchange of gunfire, the Soldiers quickly secured the objective, clearing each building and detaining a half-dozen insurgents.

The second exercise was a full assault on an enemy held village.

After hitting the target with mortar fire, both companies advanced on the village under a hail of rifle and machine gun fire. White, red and purple smoke drifted across the battlefield creating an eerie backdrop as the Soldiers rushed the objective.

"Move, move, move! Cover that door!" could be heard over the crackle of small arms fire as squad leaders pushed their Soldiers to fight and clear the objective.

Using covering and suppressive fire, the Guardsmen quickly overwhelmed the 'insurgents' and secured the village.

Small unit tactics like the cordon and search, and a direct attack are fluid maneuvers, allowing for quick shifts, so Soldiers can adapt to changing battlefield conditions. Teamwork and precise coordination are essential as fire teams and squads move from position to position.

"The guys worked together very well," said Spc. Jason Ashworth, a combat medic for C Company.

The experiences gained from the operation helped the Soldiers build confidence with each other as well as their own ability.

"I have benefited from the training and have a greater sense of confidence in my skills as a Soldier and as a combat medic," said Ashworth.

This type of training is essential in the emerging 21st Century Battlefield.

"Since 9-11 the concept of war in the military has changed. A lot of warfare is being fought in the cities," said Campbell.

As the American forces were seizing

their objective, the 27th Infantry Regiment of the Japan Ground Self Defense Force (JGSDF) was seizing their own. This bilateral operation required both forces to train, communicate and fight together to accomplish a joint mission of cordon and search, as well as a direct assault.

"Most missions these days involve a multinational force," said Ashworth.

By participating in Operation Orient Shield the Oregon National Guard Soldiers had the opportunity to experience working with another nation, as well as learning a few new things.

"Training in Japan is good because it allows our soldiers to interact with different cultures, as well as gain a better understanding of how the JGSDF works," said Campbell.

Operation Orient Shield was not only an opportunity to work with Japanese soldiers, but to meet Japanese families and make new friends. As part of the bilateral exercise, Soldiers from Oregon's 1-186 Inf. Bn. also participated in a program where they were welcomed into the homes of Japanese families.



Soldiers of 1st Battalion, 186th Infantry Regiment joined the 27th Regiment for the closing ceremonies of Operation Orient Shield 2006.

Oregon Youth Challenge Program receives national honors, recognition



Oregon Youth Challenge Program drill team

Story prepared by Sentinel Staff

The Oregon National Guard Youth Challenge Program (OYCP) received honors for having the best post-residential mentorship program of more than thirty similar programs nationwide. In addition, it was recently named one of the top three programs of its kind in the nation for 2005 - an honor it has received for the past four out of five years.

Two cadets, Romiro Villgomez, of Salem, and Alex Soeffker, of Medford, joined

Oregon Congresswoman Darlene Hooley and Maj. Gen. Raymond F. Rees, Adjutant General of the Oregon National Guard, in receiving the honors at the Senate Dirksen Building in Washington D.C. Also in attendance from Oregon were Sen. Gordon Smith, Rep. Greg Walden, Brig. Gen. Mike Caldwell, deputy director for state affairs, and Rick DeMars, the Director of OYCP. Other guests included Senators John McCain, of Arizona, and Max Baucus, of Vermont.

Administered by the Oregon National Guard, the OYCP is Oregon's only public military-focused alternative high school. It is guided by Oregon National Guard values and principles and focuses on redirecting at-risk youth toward a positive future.

The OYCP is the only statewide high school in Oregon, and it serves youth from all 36 counties. It is accredited and an alternative school for Bend and La Pine. The legislative Emergency Board approved more than \$400,000 in funding last month to help keep the successful program whole.

The voluntary 17-month program provides at-risk youth ages 16 to 18 with a second chance to succeed. Cadets work

through a two-phase program, beginning with an intensive residential program during which they develop life-coping skills, perform community service work, and attend academic classes. The structured and highly successful program focuses on many of the Governor's benchmarks for youth, including mandatory mentoring, work placement, and drug and alcohol education.

OYCP students provide thousands of hours of service to the community, government agencies, and nonprofit organizations. Since its inception, OYCP students have provided more than 188,900 hours of service through out Oregon.

Upon graduating from the OYCP, cadets receive a high school diploma, a GED, or have earned enough credits to return to high school. Nearly 1,700 Oregon high school dropouts have earned eight or more certified high school credits at the OYCP, and re-enrolled in school. More than 1,000 students who previously left school have earned a high school diploma or GED while in the OYCP.

The program, which is cost-free to cadets and their families, is followed by one year of mentoring. During this time, the cadets

receive encouragement and support in implementing their life plan as they re-enter their home environments.

In addition, NFL player and former Oregon State football standout, Tim Euhus, of the Buffalo Bills, agreed to be a co-spokesperson for OYCP, along with NBA star and former University of Oregon basketball player, Fred Jones, of the Indiana Pacers. The two professional athletes will be teaming up to raise awareness about OYCP through a variety of grassroots marketing opportunities including, public service announcements, collateral materials (including the Web site) and participating in OYCP activities locally and nationally.

"The Oregon National Guard Youth Challenge Program makes our urban and rural communities stronger, by giving at-risk youth a second chance in education and acquiring life skills that will give them the best chance for becoming responsible adults," said Euhus. "I am pleased to team with Fred Jones to raise awareness about the program so more at-risk youth will understand they can rise to the challenge."

For more information, visit www.oypc.com or call 541-317-9623.

Soldiers have access to free physical training thanks to donated exercise equipment

Story by Spc. Patrick Lair,
115th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

ALBANY, Ore. — Soldiers of the 224th Engineers in Albany won't have any excuses when taking their Army Physical Fitness Test.

Cpt. Jessica Dunn and Staff Sgt. Dan Dunn recently donated approximately \$55,000 worth of exercise equipment to the Albany National Guard Armory. What used to be the armory's indoor rifle-range is now a mirror-lined room full of bench presses, tread mills, dumb bells and other exercise equipment.

"My goal is to get the word out that all the local Guard Soldiers have a place to work out for free," Staff Sgt. Dunn said. "I love what the Guard is doing for me. I'm just trying to give something back."

The Duns have managed a ring-sports and martial arts training center called Victory Gym for 12 years, the last four years in Albany. Staff Sgt. Dunn trains boxers and

teaches boxing at West Albany High School. He also works as a recruiter at the Albany National Guard armory.

Cpt. Dunn is the commanding officer of 821 Troop Detachment in Salem. During the week, she works full time in the Human Resources Office at the Oregon Military Department in Salem. She is also an accomplished kickboxer.

In the fall of 2005, the Duns decided to eliminate the weight training side of their gym and focus solely on ring-sports and martial arts training. They teach classes in boxing, Thai kickboxing, jiu jitsu and capoeira, which they liken to the moves of "Cat Woman or Eddy on Tekken."

They sold four pieces of equipment to the Albany YMCA at a 50 percent discount. In exchange, the YMCA donated their outgoing equipment to the armory. The Duns then donated the remainder of their fitness equipment to the Albany armory and Staff Sgt. Scott Nyquist, administration noncommissioned officer for the 224th Engineers,

turned the old rifle range into a gym.

Nyquist said that while he works out every day at the new gym, it is still a work in progress. He hopes to route another electrical line into the gym to power televisions next to the treadmills. He also hopes to use a side exit in the gym for Soldiers who want to come in and work out on their own time.

"We lucked out," Nyquist said of the Duns' contributions. "It worked out great for us. It's good to have people like them in the Guard."

Victory Gym will soon be turned into a non-profit corporation, staying open just for local boxing and martial arts students.

"We don't make any money on the gym. We do it for the kids. Whether they compete or not, it's good for discipline," Staff Sgt. Dunn said.

The Duns encourage Soldiers to check out the weight room at the Albany armory, 3800 Knox Butte Rd. NE.

For classes at Victory Gym, it is located at 251 Pacific Blvd. SW.



Soldiers can now work out for free, using the donated exercise equipment located at the Albany National Guard Armory.

Oregon Guardsmen help protect home state during First World War

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

Did you know that the Oregon National Guard played a significant role in protecting the home-front during World War I? While many were fighting overseas, officials at home worried about inadequate protection of docks, shipping plants, food warehouses, and other assets from espionage or sabotage by enemy operatives or sympathizers.

The State Council of Defense for Oregon responded by drafting a plan for organizing a state police force. The council modeled the plan after the Texas Rangers. The Oregon Legislative Emergency Board met and approved the proposal, resulting in \$250,000 in funding for the force through the end of 1918.

When looking for recruits officials primarily sought men with prior military experience. The majority of the new guard was between the ages of 18 and 45 years old with many having served in the Spanish American War. With a total of five automobiles and 12 motorcycles the force numbering 11 officers and 180 enlisted men took to the streets. Salaries were reasonable for the time privates earned \$90 a month while Officers were paid according to military salary.

While assignments varied much of the focus for Oregon's new police force centered around protecting shipbuilding. By November, police had guarded the construction of 61 wooden ships and 20 steel ships in Oregon. Another major focus of the force was preventing wildfires in the state, a mission that remains important for the Oregon National Guard today. During the time of the Military Police Force, two officers and 50 enlisted were assigned to prevent serious damage to crops from fire or "other destruction at the hands of lawless men." The force was stationed in Athena, Condon, Helix, Heppner, La Grande, Maupin, Moro, Pendleton, Pilot Rock, and Umatilla – all communities growing grain needed to feed the American soldiers fighting in Europe. Officials estimated that the police visited and safeguarded nearly 11,500 farms during this duty. Along similar lines, large detachments saw duty fighting 38 forest fires.

The military police also nabbed Oregonians who violated the state's prohibition laws related to alcoholic beverages. MP Officers arrested and secured convictions in 87 liquor law cases. Leaders saw the arrests as part of their role to protect the "public morals" of the state. In other actions the Oregon Military Police nabbed violators of espionage laws, and other "seditious and disloyal acts."

The actions by the military police force against bootleggers fueled criticism by opponents of Governor James Withycombe and the Oregon Military Police. The Oregon Journal newspaper said that while the police had been formed by military need, they since had been used for "all sorts of activities." Suspicions even arose in some quarters about whether the military police had "engaged in bootlegging themselves." To make matters worse, a police private's pay of \$90 per month was three times the pay of a Soldier. Supporters countered that, unlike Soldiers, military policemen had to pay for their own "full sustenance."

The end of the war soon brought an end to both the controversy and the Oregon Military Police. Within three weeks all but 15 men were mustered out of service. The governor sought to continue the military police as an ongoing presence. In January 1919 he recommended that the Oregon Legislature establish "a state constabulary of ten or fifteen men as a small mobile force for state police duty." Withycombe envisioned the organization helping with the enforcement of prohibition and game laws as helping to prevent forest fires.

Despite Withycombe's efforts the organization came to an end on March 30, 1919. Law enforcement in Oregon reverted to a fragmented system of groups enforcing prohibition, criminal, arson, forestry and other laws. It wasn't until 1931 that the Oregon State Police Department was created, and many people believe that organization was modeled after the Oregon Military Police.

Personnel ready 41st Brigade for deployment



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

Sgt. Anthony Arm Priest, (left) and Pvt. 2nd Class Taijit Grewal (right), both from Headquarters and Headquarters Co., 141st Brigade Support Battalion, assist with loading items into shipping containers in Salem, Ore., on Feb. 23, 2006. The items are bound for Afghanistan as part of the 41st Brigade deployment in the summer of 2006.

Organized by Harold Wood of Salem, Ore., who also heads up the Oregon Cares Project, items included donated web cameras, food, audio-visual equipment, clothes and shoes for the Afghani people and donated fire-fighting equipment destined for Afghani volunteer firefighters. According to Wood, at the height of the donation, there were 169 fully-loaded pallets in the warehouse.

Some items, originally bound for Louisiana as part of the Hurricane Katrina relief efforts, were diverted to the Oregon National Guard's largest deployment since WWII, because relief workers in the southeast were receiving too many items.

Use of the warehouse space on northeast Amber Street was donated by Steve Macdonald, co-owner of Mac's Radiator in Salem. Unfortunately, Macdonald would never get to see his generosity come to fruition. He passed away on Feb. 18, 2006.

Portland Lumberjax game goes Guard



Spc. Jaynie Cole (center) presents the game ball at the Lumberjax lacrosse game April 2.

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

The Oregon National Guard dominated the Rose Garden April 2 during the Portland Lumberjax lacrosse game. Thousands of lacrosse fans found that around every corner, and everywhere they looked, the National Guard was there.

"Through the partnership of the Oregon Guard and the Portland Lumberjax, we were able to saturate the Rose Garden with advertising and recruiting tools during this event," said Sgt. 1st Class Gower Talley, Marketing NCO for Recruiting and Retention Command. He said he was pleased with the way the event turned out and appreciated the warm welcome extended by the Portland Lumberjax.

As lacrosse fans arrived at the game, they were surprised to see Greg Biffle's #16 National Guard racecar from last year's NASCAR season. As they approached the car to get a closer look, they were greeted by recruiters, who offered them a chance to have their picture taken with the car.

To begin the game, the Lumberjax introduced one of the Oregon Army National Guard's recently returned Iraq veterans. Spc. Jaynie Cole, a Purple Heart recipient from the 3670th Maintenance Company, was brought out on the turf to be recognized for her service with a thunderous applause from thousands of appreciative fans. Cole was given the honor of presenting the game-ball.

"I was nervous standing out there in front of all those people, but it was a lot of fun, I am honored," said Cole. "They even let me keep the ball."

Fans watched the game underneath the 1-800-Go-Guard banner that randomly flashed throughout the game on the electronic LCD ring surrounding the stadium. During breaks in the game, commercials high-lighting the service of Oregon National Guard Soldiers displayed on the score-board monitor in the center of the arena, as Lumberjax dancers threw National Guard T-shirts to fans in their seats.

Sexual harassment awareness

Stories by Lt. Col. Marilyn K. Woodward, ORARNG Safety Manager

April is National Sexual Assault Awareness Month (SAAM) to raise awareness about and to promote prevention of sexual violence. The Department of Defense (DoD) theme for SAAM 2006 is Sexual Assault Prevention... Begins With You. This slogan serves to remind us that each of us can play a role as a leader, a teacher, a friend or co-worker in sexual assault prevention. New DoD policies addressing sexual assault prevention and response (SAPR) seek to establish a climate of confidence in which:

- Sexual assault and the attitudes that promote it are not tolerated.
- Victims of sexual assault receive the care and support that they need.
- The offenders are held accountable for their actions.

In calendar year 2004, there were 1,700 reported cases of sexual assault within the Military Services. Of these, 104 were assaults on men. Victims usually know their assailant; nearly 70-percent of sexual assaults on women, the assailant was the boyfriend, marital partner, date, friend, family member or neighbor.

Units were provided with an initial training NGB video, "Sexual Assault: Staying on Guard" which was to be viewed by all OR Guard members by 31 March 2006. The Program differs for National Guard Title 32 members versus Title 10 Active Duty.

Information and safety tips may be obtained from the DoD website, <http://www.sapr.mil/>, or a specific Service website. Or, you may contact your local Brigade or Wing Sexual Assault Response Coordinator (SARC). The ORNG SAPR Program Manager/SARC is LTC Marilyn Woodward. She can be reached at 503-584-3931.

ORARNG to receive automated defibrillators

Automated External Defibrillators (AED) are computerized devices that can help prevent death due to sudden cardiac arrest. These devices monitor the heart rhythm and can, if need be, deliver an electric shock to the chest wall to assist personnel whose heart has stopped or went into fibrillation (very rapid uncoordinated fluttering contractions of the heart). They are only part of the Cardio-pulmonary Resuscitation (CPR) which may be required to keep someone alive until paramedics can arrive.

The Oregon Army National Guard has acquired about twenty under the guidance of the State Surgeon; see ORARNG Reg. 385-5 (Dec 04). These have been distributed based on likelihood of accidental electrical shock, age of employees, number of employees and number of visitors. They are being installed in central locations within a facility. Additional AEDs will be distributed when funding becomes available to purchase more.

Each work place/ facility is required to have one or more personnel trained in First Aid (FA) and CPR to include the use of our agency AEDs (American Red Cross or American Heart Association Standards). This is primarily to protect our employees IAW with Federal Office of Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) and state guidelines.

Our training may be used for civilians as necessary. Oregon has a Good Samaritan Law (ORS 30.801) which includes protections for individuals and organizations that promote and provide FA, Cardio-Pulmonary Resuscitation (CPR) and deploy an AED in an emergency.

AEDs are only part of your Emergency Plan for your facility. All employees shall know your plan and know where the First Aid Kits and AEDs (if available) are located. Supervisors shall ensure the appropriate number of employees have current FA/CPR/AED training for your facility.

Your Letters

Cousin shares thoughts on Soldier's death

My cousin Adrian Stump was killed in the mountains of Afghanistan a few months ago. We grew up together. We were going to share our first legal drink when he came home for Christmas.

He didn't show. The helicopter he piloted was shot down by a rocket-propelled grenade launched by one of the "terrorists" we often hear about, the ones who hate freedom. It took the military three weeks to gather his body ripped apart by the impact of a grenade into his helicopter.

Christmas was depressing. My aunt and uncle had lost their first-born baby; I lost a great cousin and even better friend.

I tuned the world out. After my mother called and told me to forget about seeing my cousin again, I didn't come out of my room for three days except to make attempts at eating. I drank more than usual. I smoked more than usual because the numbing effect made Adrian's passing slightly tolerable.

I gave up on the news because every time I turned it on, a slide show of my life with Adrian would reel inside my head and I would cry until my body became limp from exhaustion.

I almost cried during the recent State of the Union when Bush asked us to never forget the families who have lost a loved one in this war of aggression. I thought of what my family has been through these past months. I was told that neighbors could hear my aunt's scream blocks away when the government vehicle arrived and uniformed officers told her that she would never see her boy again.

Human brains are not wired to handle the emotion that floods a mother's body at the moment her son's heart no longer beats. The brain cracks and the body collapses. My aunt's eyes are empty now; I have a hard time looking into them because I don't see her pain, I feel it, and it's at that moment that I realize I'm experiencing only a fraction of what's coursing through her body.

As I watched President Bush, I heard him say that freedom is on the march and wondered, is it? I thought it odd that freedom is the bastard offspring of military intervention and mass murder. I thought it odd that in a world so large, a single man has the power to kill thousands of people without answering legitimate questions from the people he is supposed to be serving.

My friends and family went out for drinks on the day we had planned. Adrian didn't make it because his body was blown into pieces, cremated, then spread in the Blue Mountains in Oregon.

Now my world is back on its axis, attempting to regain its calm rotation. I sit through my classes and wonder if the material truly arouses my passions, or if the discussions we have are even worth the mental energy. Are we talking about the meaning of life? No. Are we talking about how to realistically arrive at a better world? Or is it simply liberal fantasy? Probably the latter.

I don't like being alone because there's too much time to think about how sad and angry I am that a National Guardsman is dead because the soldiers that were in Afghanistan were relocated to Iraq and replaced with National Guard units — who were supposed to stay national and respond to local catastrophes.

Everyone told me that my cousin's death was not in vain. I look into their eyes and know they are lying to me and to themselves. I know they are trying to make me feel better; I nod my head. There are people — good people — who honestly believe that Adrian's death wasn't in vain. And to them, I shake my head, but say nothing.

Our existence on this planet is not very significant. The world keeps spinning when we die. People move on. However, when the world loses someone like Adrian, it should stop, if only for a moment. Rains should pour. Our collective self should pause and reflect: Are we acting as pawns while the powers that be distract us from what truly matters in our life: family, friends, ourselves and all living beings? Are we doing what we truly love in our lives?

If you aren't, you are living a lost life. Religious or not, it is a miracle that

we are here. We don't have much time, though. Time eventually catches up and runs its course on our bodies. My cousin's death called me back to the nucleus of my life: family, friends and myself. So much had distracted me for so long. Don't let anything pull you away from your life's nucleus.

I didn't attempt to explain what a great person my cousin Adrian Bovee Stump was because words do not apply. Emotions do. You listen to him with your eyes and your heart because words lack substance. They cannot describe Adrian or people like Adrian.

After Adrian's death, I envisioned myself on my deathbed, staring blankly out a window and asking, "What was it all about?"

If your life isn't on the path you would like it to be, begin a new one. The clock is running.

Harry Beckwith

Oregon Soldiers invited to submit names to Purple Heart Hall of Honor

Dear General Rees,

I want to take this opportunity to make you aware of the National Purple Heart Hall of Honor, which is currently being built in New York's Hudson Valley.

Located just over ten miles from the United States Military Academy at West Point, the National Purple Heart Hall of Honor pays tribute to those who were killed or injured defending this great nation.

I respectfully request that you make the Hall of Honor known to your returning soldiers and airmen, who have earned the Purple Heart, so that they may record their names and stories in the Hall's database.

The National Purple Heart Hall of Honor is scheduled to open on November 11, 2006 and it would be wonderful to have those citizen soldiers and airmen, who have sacrificed so much, included in this very worthwhile project. Any service member who has earned a Purple Heart shall be afforded a place in the Hall. They simply need to send a copy of their DD 214 to the following address: The National Purple Heart Hall of Honor, PO Box 207, Vails Gate, NY 12584.

Thank you for your time and attention to this issue and for your service to your state and nation.

Senator William J. Larkin, Jr.
New York

Soldiers with PTSD have many resources, options

Dear Editor,

I just completed reading your Jan/Feb 2006 issue. I read all of your issues as the father of a recently released soldier of the O.N.G. I am also a County Veterans Service Officer and the President of the Oregon County Veterans Service Officers Assoc.

Your article on P.T.S.D. provided good information to our returning soldiers, but you once again left out what is likely the most important resource to each and every soldier with P.T.S.D. and any other issues they are having any kind of difficulty with. That resource is their local County Veterans Service Officer.

Local C.V.S.O.s have expert knowledge in all areas of Veterans benefits and are especially equipped for getting soldiers treatment for P.T.S.D. C.V.S.O.s can access help at the few places you mentioned in the article and the many places you did not mention. White City, Walla Walla, Roseburg V. A. hospitals, local mental health facilities, and local counseling centers.

C.V.S.O.s have attended virtually every stand-down and reintegration event that has been held!

I think it would be very beneficial and informative to your staff to become familiar with the most available and knowledgeable resource in this state for our servicemen.

C.V.S.O.s work hand in hand with the Oregon Department of Veterans Affairs to provide the best Veterans Services available anywhere.

Timothy H Jederberg,
President, Oregon County Veterans Services Officers Assoc.

Purple camps benefit children of deployed service members

The National Military Family Association (NMFA) announces their 2006 Operation Purple residential camps for all children from all branches of the Armed Forces. NMFA developed this free residential camp program, which is sponsored this year by the Michael & Susan Dell Foundation and TriWest Healthcare Alliance, in response to the need for increased support for military children, especially those whose parents are or will be deployed.

Operation Purple, offers children the opportunity to experience nature, develop friendships, learn life skills and enhance their self-esteem. The camp setting provides children with many challenging and exciting opportunities to interact positively with like-minded individuals all being from similar backgrounds and situations.

Each camp is "purple", meaning it is open to children of any member of the uniformed services including National Oceanic Atmospheric Administration, United States Public Health Service and the Air National Guard and Reserve. Families are encouraged to apply to the location closest to their home as transportation costs are not covered. This year NMFA's Operation Purple Camps will host more than 2,500 deserving children at 26 locations in 22 states. Programs in the following states have been offered funding to host a camp in 2006; Alaska, California, Florida, Georgia, Hawaii, Iowa, Idaho, Maryland, Michigan, Montana, Nebraska, Nevada, New York, Ohio, Oklahoma, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Texas, Utah, Vermont, Washington, and Wisconsin.

Several of the Operation Purple Camps are located on active air bases including: Eglin AFB and Hurlburt Field, FL (for youth 13-18 yrs); Hill AFB, UT (for youth 13-16 yrs); McChord AFB, WA (for youth in 7-12th grade); Mountain Home AFB, ID (for Teens); Tinker AFB, OK (for youth 9-14 yrs); and Wright-Patterson AFB, OH (for youth 10-15 yrs).

If you want to take advantage of this excellent camping opportunity, visit the National Military Family website at www.nmfa.org. Click on the Purple Camp closest to where you live, download the application form(s) complete and follow the mailing instructions. Applications will also be available at www.operationpurple.org. Registration begins March 15th and ends May 1st. For more information, contact Jo Kinchington, Soldier and Family Assistance Manager, at 1-800-790-0963.

Free Tae Kwon Do offered to Guardsmen

National Guard members and their immediate families (spouses and children) are welcome to receive free Taekwondo lessons every Wednesday from 5 p.m. to 7 p.m. in the auditorium at Camp Withycombe, 10101 SE Clackamas Rd., Clackamas, Ore.

The free lessons are being provided courtesy of Grand Master Hong Sik Kim, owner of Kim's Taekwondo, who is a ninth degree black belt. Kim is also a member of the Oregon State Defense Force.

"Taekwondo teaches self defense, and is good for physical and mental fitness," said Kim.

To pre-register for classes call Hong Sik Kim at 503-653-0200.

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.

Native American Cultural training in May

The Department of Defense will conduct a three-day training course on American Indian Cultural Communication in Seattle, Wash., May 16-18, 2006.

The free training will provide an overview of DoD's American Indian and Alaska Native Policy and cover practical methods to enhance formal consultation and intercultural communication with tribes.

It is highly recommended that interested parties register as soon as possible, as it may be difficult to get room reservations after mid April.

For more information, contact Laura Berg, AICCC Project Coordinator at 503-281-4716, or via e-mail at berg@teleport.com.

MOSQ, OES, NCOES top schooling priority for ORNG

Due to the impact of transformation and the Department of Defense's immediate need to attain the highest level of readiness, all MOSQ training takes precedence over all other military educational opportunities.

OES/NCOES is also a high priority. Recent deployments have caused Soldiers to fall behind in their professional education. OES/NCOES is critical for these Soldiers to remain competitive with their peers. It is important to properly manage the careers of our leaders to ensure the future of the Oregon Army National Guard.

Due to budget constraints, school funding must be focused on schools that will support our readiness levels. Functional training such as Ranger, Airborne (except for certificates earned through successful recruiting efforts), Air Assault (except for the school at CRO), Pathfinder, Infantry Mortar Leaders Course (IMLC), Battle Staff NCO, and Sniper will be by exception only. In addition, all Disney training for the remainder of the year will not be approved and the educational training program offered by HR will be maximized.

There are educational opportunities available outside of MOSQ and OES/NCOES that support our readiness goals. Functional schools such as Officer Strength Manager Course (OSM), and Battalion Career Counselor Course (BCCC) instructed by the Mobile Training Teams (MTT) at RTI will be supported. Centrally funded courses at the Professional Education Center (PEC) that are required for increasing, improving, or sustaining the full time force will also be supported.

In an effort to ensure that our budget will be able to support MOSQ and OES/NCOES, all RC soldiers need to attend RC component schools with Region G. This saves critical travel dollars needed to ensure our readiness levels. All schools outside of Region G will be by exception only.

For more information, contact Lt. Col. Timothy Kelly, deputy chief of staff for operations, or Lt. Col. David Stuckey, deputy director of operations, at 503-584-3612.

Hunting, fishing license fees reimbursed to active duty Soldiers

If you are currently serving in an active duty capacity, National Guard, or reserve component of the United States Armed Forces, or have retired from military service within the last 12 months you are eligible to for reimbursement for your Oregon Hunting and Fishing License.

The reimbursement goes through the recruiting department. You will need to show your military ID, hunting and or fishing license, secondary ID such as a driver's license, DD 214, or NGB Form 22 if you recently retired from the Armed services. Take the items to your nearest recruiting office and after filling out a form your reimbursement request will be submitted.

If you have any further questions please call the Oregon National Guard Recruiting Office at 503-584-3811.

Continued on next page

TRICARE launches prescription program

TRICARE has launched its first-ever campaign to encourage beneficiaries to use the TRICARE Mail Order Program (TMOP) to fill prescriptions.

TRICARE officials hope to use a change in co-payments not only to encourage more beneficiaries to use mail order but also generic drugs.

The plan would end the \$3 co-payment on mail order generics. At the same time, co-pay for the retail network would rise from \$3 up to \$5 for generic and from \$9 up to \$15 for brand name drugs.

The company Express-Scripts runs the TMOP. To reach it, call 866-363-8667, or 866-275-4732 from overseas; e-mail TMOP.customer.relations@express-scripts.com; or write to Express Scripts Inc., P.O. Box 52150, Phoenix, AZ 85072.

TRICARE projects help service members with healthy living

TRICARE has created two demonstration projects and one pilot program to test help service members and their families battle the dangerous effects of obesity, tobacco use and excessive drinking.

TRICARE plans to launch weight management, tobacco cessation and alcohol programs within the coming months. These projects will involve service members and their families who volunteer to participate.

The demonstration projects and pilot program will span three years and the sole pilot program will cover two years from start-up. They will help identify ways to deliver the best possible benefit for TRICARE beneficiaries.

For more information about the demonstration projects' launch dates, visit TRICARE's website at www.tricare.osd.mil/healthychoices.

Motorcycle club announces third Ride & Rally for the Troops

The third Ride and Rally for the Troops motorcycle event will take place on July 9, to show support of military members currently deployed to the Middle East and their families.

The event is a motorcycle ride coupled with a rally with music, food, and entertainment. There are T-shirts and pins for registered participants or for purchase, and other items that will be sold or raffled.

All proceeds, including registration fees, will be donated to support troops and their families.

The Rally will begin and end at Destination Harley Davidson located at 2302 Pacific Highway, East Fife, Wa.

Registration will begin at 8:00 a.m. with a departure time of 10:15 a.m. U.S. flags will be prominently displayed at the rally site, on motorcycles, and along the ride route.

1st CAV dedicates memorial in Ft. Hood

FORT HOOD, Texas – The 1st Cavalry Division commemorated the sacrifice and service of its members during a dedication ceremony of the Operation Iraqi Freedom Memorial on April 4, outside the division headquarters.

Located on the east end of the division parade field, the memorial honors all troops who have participated in Operation Iraqi Freedom under the First Team.

Of note, 168 names of those who made the ultimate sacrifice (including the names of eight Oregon National Guardsmen from 2nd Battalion 162nd Infantry) are etched into polished, black granite panels. These panels are from the same mountain in India used for the Vietnam Memorial in Washington, D.C.

Featured speakers included the 1st Cavalry Division's commanding general, Maj. Gen. Joseph Fil, Jr., the Multinational Corps-Iraq commanding general (and former First Team commander) Lt. Gen. Peter Chiarelli, and members of the 1st Cavalry Division Association, who coordinated fund-raising efforts for the memorial.

Recruiting launches ESAR Program

The Every Soldier is a Recruiter 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.

NGB Marathon Championships set for May 7

The NGB marathon championships will be held in Lincoln Nebraska May 7th. Runners from all states and U.S. territories compete to earn a spot on the "All-Guard" team. The Oregon team has placed in the top three almost every year since 1994. The top-three finishing times from each team are added up to determine the winning team. Oregon is the defending team champion.

The runners representing Oregon are: Sgt. 1st Class Bill Kaemmer, from the PSU Gold program; Staff Sgt. Ed King, 123rd Weather Flight, Portland Air Base; 2nd Lt. Evan Going, Delta Co., 2-162 IN BN; and Sgt. 1st Class Timothy Vandervlugt, JFHQ.

Corrections

Incorrect rank noted for MG Rees in Jan./Feb. 06 issue

In the Jan./Feb. '06 issue of the Oregon Sentinel, we mistakenly referred to Maj. Gen. Raymond F. Rees as a Brigadier General in the photo caption on page 11. Our deepest apologies for the mistake.

Quotes from 'Brotherhood' article incorrectly attributed

Some quotes were incorrectly attributed in the 'Brotherhood' article on page 7 and 8 of the January/ February 2006 issue of the Oregon Sentinel.

A few statements in the article were incorrectly attributed to Sgt. 1st Vince Jacques. The following statements should have been attributed to the Lieutenant, of 2nd Bn. 162nd Inf., who chose to remain nameless for the article:

"Two months after I got back I couldn't take not having anything to do. 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 makeup for the fact that you've been gone. 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. And 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 talk to the other guys and how you all miss the simple combat life. We came back looking for the peace and simplicity of what life used to be before we left and you begin to realize that there's nothing simple about your life back home."

"I'm fortunate with my fiancé because she is so incredibly supportive. 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."

Act to help families of fallen Soldiers

On April 6, Senator Gordon Smith introduced the Fallen Heroes Family Savings Act. When a servicemen or woman is lost while serving on active duty, their next of kin receives a \$100,000 death gratuity. As recently as a few years ago the death gratuity was a modest payment of \$6,000. Senators Smith and a group of bi-partisan senators advocated for an increase up to \$100,000 and the payments exemption from federal income taxes.

Restrictions exist today that limit a family's ability to contribute the \$100,000 gratuity payment to a tax free account. The Fallen Heroes Family Savings Act will allow the families to roll this gratuity, tax free, into a Roth IRA, Health Savings Accounts or Education Savings Accounts. These families will rollover the death gratuity amounts above the contribution limits currently permitted, therefore allowing families to safely invest such large sums for future financial security.

"Behind our fallen heroes are the families they leave behind," Smith said. "Encouraging their tax free investment will help these families grow the savings they need to pay a lifetime of bills. No amount of money can ever replace the loss of a loved one, but the investment could help pay for a child's college education, pay health care costs or put an individual's golden years on firm footing."

Senator John Kerry (D-MA) agreed to be an original cosponsor of this bill. Congressman Walter Jones (R-NC) introduced this legislation in the House of Representatives on July 27, 2005.

New signal company lifeline for Soldiers

Story by Staff Sgt. John Glover, 115th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

CAMP WITHYCOMBE, Ore. – Oregon Army National Guard's first signal company, Charlie Company of the 41st Special Troops Battalion, was officially activated in a ceremony Feb. 4.

The activation is part of the total Army transformation to a modular, brigade-oriented force. The new company will provide signal assets such as telephone, radio and satellite communications capabilities to the 41st Brigade Combat Team and ORARNG; in the past, these services were provided by the Oregon Air National Guard or Army Guard units from other states.

The new structure will allow the BCT to go to a theater with all necessary assets in one cohesive package. In the past, a brigade would have to pull the necessary attachments from a division-level unit to have the pieces necessary to be effective in a theater of operations.

Though officially activated, the unit is still in the forming stage at just 30-percent strength with roughly 20 Soldiers. Deactivation of other units in the state with organic communications assets allowed Charlie Company to form its initial base of troops, but the remaining positions will have to be filled by Soldiers new to the National Guard or wishing to cross-train from another military occupation specialty.

"If a Soldier is interested in joining the company and willing to go to school, the opportunity is open to them," explained 1st Sergeant David C.K. White, company first sergeant.

The activation of this new company provides a plethora of opportunities which have not been previously available for Soldiers in the ORARNG, according to White. One of these opportunities is promotion for communications Soldiers; White was promoted to first sergeant Jan. 1 to become the top enlisted Soldier in the company.

Another opportunity is working with equipment that units at the brigade level haven't previously been able to own. Pfc. William L. Hansen is taking advantage of this opportunity by volunteering to train on tactical satellite equipment.

Hansen has wanted to work with the equipment since working around the high-tech gear during his active duty time in the Army. "(Working with TACSAT) is something that intrigued me, now I have the opportunity to do that, so this is a great position to be in," Hansen explained.

"With the (new) equipment we will be able to provide the capability to do anything you can do with high-speed Internet," Hansen said. These capabilities include allowing deployed Soldiers to call home or check e-mail in addition to the secure network connections, which are the lifeline of communication for the brigade in theater, explained Hansen.

White feels that the company's newly activated status is its greatest asset. "How many times have you ever been in a unit where they said, 'We can't do that' or 'We've always done it this way?' We don't have those boundaries," White explained. "We don't want to be part of anything but the best unit in the state ... and that's where we're headed."

Mo's Restaurants goes 'above and beyond' in supporting the Oregon National Guard



Photo by Bill Van Natta, ESGR Executive Director

Mo's Restaurants was presented with the "Above and Beyond" award from the Oregon Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve (ESGR) by Col. Cameron Crawford, Commander of the 41st Brigade Combat Team, (center), on March 9 at the Mo's location in Lincoln City, Ore.

Peggy Preisz, general manager; Jolee Becker, assistant general manager, and Gabrielle McEntee-Wilson, vice president of public relations; accepted the award.

Mo's has continued to support the Oregon National Guard, providing free meals to deploying units and their families during the mobilization ceremonies. Mo's has also adopted the 41st BCT, offering to provide assistance to families and send care packages to Soldiers during the brigade's Afghanistan deployment in 2006-2007.

PANG Base 'ready' for Operational Readiness Inspection say inspectors

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

PORTLAND AIR BASE, March 12, 2006 — It was a beehive of activity in the Survival Recovery Center, or SRC.

Squawking radios vied for attention over the din of conversation around the conference table in the center of the room. The flurry of work and number of people rushing to and fro only hinted to the various war-game scenarios unfolding just outside the secured vault door.

The Portland Air Base's March Operational Readiness Exercise (ORE) was in full swing.

Throughout the base, over a three-day period during the March UTA, exercise organizers would throw just about every scenario in the book at the members of the 142nd Fighter Wing, ranging from a disgruntled troop who received a "dear-John" letter from his sweetheart to a full-scale enemy attack involving chemical and biological weapons. The goal — to test the Oregon Air National Guard's response and readiness to anything the inspection team would try out on the unit during the upcoming Operational Readiness Inspection in June, 2006.

Just outside Fighter Operations located in building 265, exercise observer Col. Pierre Jones, instructed three members from the 123rd Fighter Squadron wearing full MOPP gear the correct procedure for decontaminating a vehicle using the M295 Decontamination Kit.

"This is nice," said Airman 1st Class Jeffrey Woods, his gas mask muffling his voice. "It's good to come out here and actually do the decon instead of just reading about it in a manual," he said.

"You can read things a thousand times but you never really get it till you do it in person," adds 142nd Fighter Wing Safety Officer and ORE organizer, Maj. Paul "Snap" Fitzgerald.

In November, several personnel who weren't taking part in the training were shown by ORE observers how to double-wrap vehicles and equipment and how to place an injured person on a litter and strap them down.

"The IG folks are here to educate, motivate, and independently evaluate," Fitzgerald says. "First and foremost, they're here to evaluate us. On the first day, if you show a good attitude and a willingness to learn, the inspectors will help you out. By day two and day three, they'll expect you to have learned from your mistakes and input their suggestions."

But according to Fitzgerald, the IG will be here to evaluate the wing.

"By day three, the IG's expectations of us will be a lot higher than day one," Fitzgerald warns.

Back in the SRC, Senior Master Sgt. Allen Roush, Fire Chief for the Portland Fire, falls to the floor, clutching his chest. For a split-second, no one in the room moves. As several people spring into action, the tempo in the room jumps tenfold. One person mans the phones calling for a self-aid and buddy care team, while another calls the UCC to inform them that Roush is in the throes of a heart attack.

"It hurts," Roush moans, clutching his chest.

Much like the "killing-off" of a character on a television series so the actor can go on to bigger and better things, Roush is carried out of the SRC by the litter team, as Col. Steven Gregg shouts after them.

"Make sure you get him in MOPPI!" he yells, mindful of the simulated chemical attack going on outside the building.

Once outside the SRC, Roush's body-double, Airman Basic Timothy Dickerson takes his place on the litter, and Roush exchanges his mask and NBC ensemble for a non-player badge. He would spend the rest of the day observing the Portland Base Fire Personnel going through various exercises.

"It's exciting to be a part of the exercise, and interesting to be able to play both sides — in the SRC and as an observer — you get to see things you don't see as a participant," says Roush as he gets into the Fire Chief vehicle waiting in the parking lot.

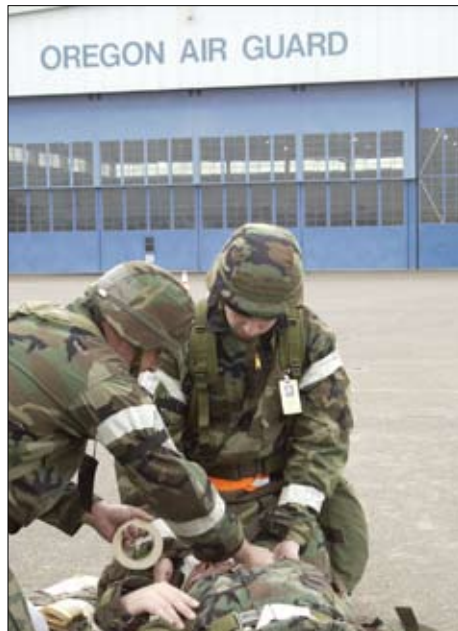
"This is a total learning experience," Dickerson says from the litter as he awaits transportation to the medical tent. "I've learned a lot. I think this [exercise] gives me a one-up on others when I go to tech school," he adds.

Half way across the base, Chief Master Sgt. Patrick Covington is launching his own training exercise.

"There's definitely some learning going on here," said Covington, a member of the 147th Fighter Wing in Houston, Texas, as he carefully picks his way through the mud in the 142nd Civil Engineering compound.

Covington carries a UXO (unexploded ordnance), or simulated bomb, on his shoulder. He drops it just outside the entryway to one of the tents. The prop is destined to test the players' response, once the all-clear signal was given.

Eventually, the 'condition black' signal is given, and CE personnel emerge from their hiding places. They immediately take note of the UXO, call in its location, and cordon off the area surrounding it, and including their tent.



Senior Airman Jason Uriah (right) and Tech. Sgt. Dennis Locke, (left), administer Self-Aid and Buddy Care to a "fallen comrade" during a casualty exercise on the flightline.



Master Sgt. Paul Looney of the 142nd Fire and Rescue, readies his crew for another scenario during the March UTA's Operational Readiness Exercise on March 11.

First and foremost on the minds of all the participants and observers is safety. Master Sgt. Mike Clark, Ground Safety Manager for the 939th Air Refueling Squadron, made note of several areas that could be improved upon for safety.

Clark pointed out the muddy conditions in and around the Civil Engineering compound, located on the west end of the parade field. He suggested exercise organizers do a site survey during their planning stages, and account for Oregon's inclement and unpredictable weather.

"We get a lot of rain here in Oregon," he said, "so it's a good idea to take that into consideration when planning."

He suggested using wooden pallets as walkways between the tents, and elevating electrical cables out of the mud.

"You don't want your people getting hurt," he said, "especially during an exercise."

Nowhere is safety a bigger concern than on the flight-line, where multi-million dollar hardware mixes with ordinance, highly-combustible fuels, amidst the sound of screaming jet engines.

"It comes down to practice practice, practice," Fitzgerald says.

"Some of the safety practices we do immediately as personnel enter the war game. We make sure they have a full canteen of water and that they're constantly hydrating. We instill in them that safety comes first," Fitzgerald says.

He adds that the wing's personnel are the most important resource it has. Little things like making sure the vehicle is turned off before getting out, or that the wheels are chocked before leaving the area are important. Fitzgerald adds that the issue of safety also comes down to teamwork.

"All our NCOs and officers are safety monitors," he says.

Out on the flightline, the process of 'turning aircraft' is made more complicated by the addition of MOPP gear. Add to this the occasional simulated mortar and chemical weapon attacks, which adds a new dynamic to an already-complicated job. According to

Fitzgerald, the IG inspectors need to know that the wing's personnel can turn aircraft around while wearing MOPP gear.

"The reason why we turn jets in MOPP 4 is to prove to the ACC commander that we can do our number one mission, which is to fly, fight and win in a wartime and chemical environment," he says.

Chief Master Sgt. Erin Parks, who recently assumed the position of the Oregon Air National Guard's 142nd Fighter Wing Command Chief spent majority of the day briefing personnel on what to expect once they entered the "play area". Simulating a deployment to the country of Qatar, base personnel were challenged with foreign rules and laws, in addition to various challenging exercises throughout the weekend. Parks and her team in the Personnel Processing Area (PPA) briefed several large groups of personnel who would participate in the exercise, helping prepare for the weekend's events.

"I think this is awesome!" says Parks about the exercise.

An observer during the last ORE, Parks uses visual examples during her briefings. In the corner of the room, a plush toy penguin hangs from the ceiling, yellow safety tape wrapped around its black and white body. The display is another trick Parks likes to use to help personnel remember key passwords and processes — in this case, one of the passwords for challenges being the word "Penguin".

"I'm a visual learner, so I like to teach the way I learn," says Parks. "My hope is that these [briefings] are effective."

"All this hard work is going to pay off, and we're currently on the right track," Fitzgerald says. "We're going to do great in June."

National Guard race car visits Lancaster Mall in Salem

Story by Maj. Kevin Dial,
1249 Executive Officer

One of Greg Biffle's #16 National Guard cars made a pit stop at the Lancaster Mall in March as the 1249th Engineer Battalion, local Recruiting and Retention personnel, and the National Guard Racing Team temporarily opened up shop in the mall.

While on its way to the Rose Garden for the Portland Lumber-Jax lacrosse game on April 2, the car was received by an excited audience in Salem. In the two days at this location, mall patrons posed for a free photograph with the car. The team processed approximately 750 photos that were uploaded to the Go-Guard website, where patrons could retrieve their photos.

"We finally got to hear the engines roar," said die-hard NASCAR fan, Sgt. Robert Browning, FSC 1249th Eng. Bn. According to Browning, this would make an excellent engineer vehicle, as long as he was the driver. As the battalion continues to support the strength mission, we look forward to the next time we can host Guard Car #16 and show the state that we really are "One Step Better."

For more information on National Guard Car #16, visit www.1800goguard.com/guardracing/.



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