



Oregon Sentinel



OF THE OREGON NATIONAL GUARD

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Guarding our Honor

Story by Julie Sullivan, *The Oregonian*
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The roadside bomb blew up four feet from Spc. Kenneth Kaiser, filling his Humvee with choking smoke and showering the Oregon Soldiers inside with flaming fiberglass. The pressure blasted the driver's armored door off its hinges. Kaiser stomped on the gas, steering out of the kill zone as Sgt. Jeromy Turner, covered in another Soldier's blood, regained consciousness, jumped out and returned fire.

That was one day in about 1,000 together.

The last Friday in September was another. The two men stood stone still at Willamette National Cemetery for their 11th funeral that day. The autumn sun beat on dress blues. Wasps buzzed around ears. Sweat trickled under perfectly placed hats. Cpl. Kaiser didn't move. The eight other members of the military funeral honor guard didn't move. To move is to risk the wrath of Staff Sgt. Turner, who once gave the governor's car the "stink eye" for holding up a service.

See Spit, Polish and Precision on page 8

Right: Sgt. Joshua R. Van Valkenburg, 31, of Forest Grove, Ore., stands at the ready with the U.S. flag, prior to the funeral ceremony for Staff Sgt. Nathaniel Brad Lindsey, on Sept. 22 at Willamette National Cemetery.



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

41st Personnel Services Company returns from a year in Kuwait

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

SALEM, Ore. — Cheers echoed through the terminal as Flight 605 pulled up to the gate at Portland International Airport on Oct. 21. Family and friends cried out with excitement, and airport travelers at the terminal began clapping as 37 Soldiers from the 41st Personnel Services Company stepped off the plane. They embraced friends and loved ones after a 14-month absence.

"You don't even know how good it feels to be home," said Pvt. Brittany Wuori, of Lebanon, after de-boarding the plane.

Shannon Smith, whose husband Stephen is a Chief Warrant Officer in the unit, said their reunion was surreal.

"He came home once before, but it was only for two weeks and we knew that we had to send him back, so it's kind of weird knowing that he's here to stay now," she said.

"It was a good experience. I'm glad I was a part of the efforts going on over there, but I'm glad it's over," said Stephen, a Salem resident.

The 41st PSC deployed to Kuwait in support of Operations Iraqi and Enduring Freedom. Their mission was to provide

personnel support to the Theater Personnel Command and Coalition Forces Land Component Command (CFLC).

"We did a lot of administrative stuff," said Spc. Shayla Gookin. "We supported Iraq, Afghanistan, and Kuwait with reports, promotions and awards — all the behind the scenes stuff that they can't do without, but you don't ever really get to see."

The 41st PSC supported the CFLC with information management by maintaining numerous secure and un-secure networks. The company helped thousands of Soldiers with their awards, promotions, bonuses, leaves and passes, while tracking more than 10,000 casualty actions and next-of-kin notifications that occurred in 25 countries comprising the U.S. Central Command. The unit also helped maintain the Army Post Office, which successfully processed over 1.5 million pounds of mail and helped people pay their taxes at the Camp Arifjan Tax Center.

Gookin, who lives in Salem, was happy to trade Kuwait's sand and dust for Oregon's green trees and rainy weather.

"I'm just really excited to be back," she said. "It's green, and it isn't 120 degrees here."

She said the deployment tested her

See 4st PSC on page 5



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

Capt. Ramona Treat, Commander of the 41st PSC (right), gives an Oregon State flag, which was flown over Camp Anifjan in Kuwait, to Danny Santos, Senior Policy Advisor for Governor Theodore Kulongoski, (center), as Maj. Gen. Raymond Rees looks on.

Afghanistan visit yields first-hand look at Guard's positive impact

Let's all welcome home the 41st Personnel Services Company. These soldiers returned from a one year tour at Camp Arifjan, Kuwait in October, and they proved their worth to the war fighter on a daily basis. This group of outstanding Soldiers was recognized as the runner up for the small unit deployment excellence award for the entire Army.

How did they earn that? By focusing on the soldier: overseeing a \$500 million R&R program; processing thousands of personnel actions ranging from awards to promotions, to bonuses, pay and passes; processing more than 1.5 million pounds of mail; and most importantly processing more than 10,000 casualty actions ensuring loved ones and units at home were kept apprised of the status of wounded Soldiers.

It's wonderful to have them home.

But just as their return warms our hearts, our thoughts turn to the dozens of our citizen-armorers deployed around the world and to the 900 citizen-Soldiers of the 41st Infantry Brigade Combat Team that commands Joint Task Force Phoenix in Afghanistan. We eagerly await the successful completion of their missions and their return home.

I had the privilege recently to visit our troops in Afghanistan during the Thanksgiving holiday. The morale of our Soldiers remains high: they find their work a worthy challenge, and they see that they are making a clear and effective difference in the country.

I was able to observe the success of our team at the Kabul Military Training Center where new Afghani recruits go through basic and Advanced Individual Training. They then formed into cohorts that begin collective training and finally leave as full-fledged battalions.

Visits to Corps headquarters and embedded training teams were eye-opening and confirmed the positive effect our troops are having on the progress of operations against the Taliban. A stop in Kandahar included not only members of JTF Phoenix but Airmen from the 116th Air Control Squadron, ORANG. They are doing fantastic work in supporting the air war against our enemies in Afghanistan.

One of the more humorous moments was the Chaplain who commented at the holiday lighting ceremony that this was so successful it would become an annual event. Needless to say, there were humorous hoots and comments from the audience that indicated they had no intention of being in Afghanistan for Thanksgiving 2007.

We can all be proud of them. Whether they are conducting combat missions, training the Afghan National Army, establishing post offices, building schools and providing school supplies, digging wells, supplying combat outposts, or providing medical clinics to the Afghan people, our Soldiers and Airmen are getting the job done.

In about six or seven months we'll have the 41st IBCT and the 116th ACS back in the great state of Oregon. Until that time, we need to make sure we do everything we can to support their efforts overseas, continue our duty here at home, and take care of the families of our deployed Soldiers and Airmen.

As you settle into this holiday season, remember our fellow warriors. We remain a nation at war, and our support to those in the thick of the fight is essential to their mission accomplishment.

Happy holidays.

Raymond J. Rees

Clearing up the difference between sexual harassment and sexual assault

Story by Lt. Col. Marilyn K. Woodward, ORANG Safety Manager

There seems to be some confusion among members about some personnel programs. SAPR, POSH and EO/EEO programs all support maintaining and enforcing an environment of respect and dignity in the military. However, sexual assault and sexual harassment are not the same. Sexual Assault Prevention and Response (SAPR) and Prevention of Sexual Harassment (POSH) are separate programs. The Equal Opportunity (EO - military) and Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO - civilian) program(s) relate to working opportunities.

Sexual Assault (SA) involves physical contact. Sexual Assault is a crime. Sexual assault is defined as intentional sexual contact, characterized by use of force, physical threat or abuse of authority, or when the victim does not or cannot consent. Consent should not be deemed or construed to mean the failure by the victim to offer physical resistance. Additionally, consent is not given when a person uses force, threat of force, coercion or when the victim is asleep, incapacitated, or unconscious.

Sexual Harassment (SH) is a form of gender discrimination that involves unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature in the work environment.

(EO): A military legal requirement based upon equality of opportunity and a work environment free of discrimination from race, color, national origin, gender, and religion.

(EEO): A civilian legal requirement based upon equality of opportunity and a work environment free of discrimination from race, color, national origin, gender, religion, age and disability.

There are different points of contact (POC) for these programs in the Oregon National Guard. The full-time POC for EEO is Capt. Lori Paltridge, State Equal Employment Manager, in the Human Resource Office. The Traditional Army POC for EO and POSH is Maj. Sungshik "Mik" Kim, G-1 section JFHQ, and the MEO office for the Oregon Air National Guard. Sexual Assault Response Coordinators for the SA Prevention & Response Program are Capt. Misti Mazzia (142 FW), and Capt. Lucas Ritter (173 FW), Maj. Ricardo Gloria (82 Bde), and Lt Col. Marilyn Woodward, (JFHQ and Program Manager).



Oregon's Adjutant General, Maj. Gen. Raymond F. Rees, in Afghanistan with 41st Brigade Combat Team and Camp Phoenix Commander, Brig. Gen. Douglas Pritt.

Out with the old stuff, in with the new — done the right way

Gotta have the *new* stuff, but can't find the *old* stuff?

As we are getting new uniforms and updating our equipment many soldiers want to be first to get that new "stuff". Some want to get new uniforms, but their old "stuff" has been misplaced.

Back in July, I was talking to Keri Mroz, the Central Issue Facility manager for Oregon, about problems associated with equipment and uniforms. Some Soldiers have sourced equipment and uniforms from local surplus stores or off the Internet, and while it may look like the real deal — either green, brown or ACU, it probably isn't approved equipment. Commercial stores don't get their equipment through the army supply system, and surplus stores receives theirs as second hand items, which are usually worn out or obsolete. This is especially true with clothing and TA-50 gear, which has an 'X' code stamped on it somewhere.

So the story usually goes like this: It's time to turn in the green gear for ACU gear. Joe misplaced his green canteen cover, so Joe stops by the army surplus store and finds a green canteen cover — problem solved, right? Not quite. Joe will not be able to turn it in because either it is not "US" or it was taken out of service by the military, in other words, 'code X'. It probably will not get by the unit supply sergeant and Joe will do a statement of charges and pay the bill again a couple of paychecks down the road. If Joe somehow gets it by the supply sergeant, then it goes to the CIF warehouse where all turn-ins are inspected for serviceability, where it is checked to see if it is the right item, and if it will work for the next Soldier. If it is not a real piece of Army equipment we certainly do not want to give it to another Soldier. If it makes it that far, CIF pulls the fake stuff out and the unit gets charged for having missing equipment, causing the unit to either have to come up with a piece of TA-50 to clear the Soldier or initiate a statement of charges against the Soldier.

This scenario doesn't just apply to TA-50. The same scene plays out if Joe goes out and buys the newest ACUs and accessories from non-Army sources. When the item wears out or it is time to turn it in, Joe will be out the money and the gear, which affects all the Soldiers in the unit. Oregon doesn't even get to keep the money; the Federal side gets the money for equipment paid for under a statement of charges.

It happens more than we think it does. Ms. Mroz says they fill up a couple of warehouse boxes a year with fake equipment. We can't do anything with that equipment except to dispose of it, as no credit is given for non-Army equipment. Ms. Mroz and her crew are charged with doing their best to equip every Soldier with serviceable, approved gear so Soldiers can complete their mission safely and effectively.

The bottom line is the equipment *you* were issued is what *we* expect to get back. There is a lot of high tech, nice to have equipment on the market but if it doesn't say U.S. on it, it isn't a United States Army issued item, and will not be accepted by the CIF for turn-in.

Keri Mroz, CIF Manager/PBO, contributed to this article.



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

Mentoring important to future of the National Guard



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

In this month's article, I would like to talk about the National Guard Bureau's Mentoring Program that our HRA's are implementing throughout the state. Mentoring today is synonymous with the process by which we guard and guide others. Mentors grab hold and "adopt" those individuals placed in their care. Mentors can be — and indeed are; flight leaders, section NCO's, Squadron leadership, first sergeants, officers and even civilians.

Mentoring is a critical skill for NCO's because they are charged with the training and development of our junior leaders. In some way or another every Airman is both a practicing mentor and a recipient of mentorship. This circle of mentoring only occurs when a unit has created an atmosphere where the leadership recognizes that this is a learning and growing process, and mistakes

are tolerated as part of that process. NCOs, senior NCOs and officers have a responsibility to develop their Airmen to their fullest potential. We make this happen by sharing our knowledge and wisdom. The best way to accomplish this is through mentoring.

There are times you would like to be mentored on a subject that is outside your supervisor's realm of expertise. This is where the NGB Mentoring Program comes in. Contact your HRA for more information on getting mentored on your particular subject matter. Your HRAs can get you set up with someone that will work with you on just about any subject you need help with.

The states' Mentoring Program is looking for individuals to become mentors for those that are seeking help. Becoming a mentor should not be a hasty endeavor. This is not part-time work. It is an intense relationship between teacher and student. This process requires time and caring from both mentor and those being mentored. Effective mentors are totally committed to spending the necessary time and attention it takes to share values, attitude and beliefs. This includes helping Airmen make career decisions and providing support and encouragement that allows leaders to grow. Mentoring is a proven approach and a valuable tool for developing our future leaders. If you are interested in participation as a mentor in the states Mentoring Program, contact the HRA at your respective unit and they can set you up. This is very rewarding and just think how much you will be helping others help themselves.

Our ultimate goal in the Guard is to ensure the right Airmen are ready and selected at the right time in their career to assume our top enlisted leadership positions and we can do this with your help.

Letters From The Front



Orient Shield an opportunity to exchange cultures, experiences



Photo courtesy of Staff Sgt. Shane Ward

Staff Sgt. Shane Ward (center, blue shirt) relaxes with some friends during some down time between training on the Orient Shield deployment in Niigata, Japan.

Hello everyone.

Well I got back to wonderful Oregon just in time to watch the Beavers dismantle the number three ranked USC this Saturday....YES, that was awesome!!! Anyways, I've finally found the time to send off a quick hello and let you know how great the Japan trip was.

I'm currently the sniper section leader for my battalion. Our section was tasked with giving the Japanese Ground Self Defense Force (JGSDF) their first formal sniper training since WWII. We were honored to be given that opportunity. It was a bit of an overwhelming task, but I am incredibly proud of how well it went and the work that my boys put into the endeavor. They received a lot of credit and respect from both nations' Soldiers while we were there. The Soldiers that we were training came from the JGSDF's airborne regiment, and most of them had been through Japan's version of Ranger school. They were all exceptional Soldiers and NCOs. Ultimately training was successful, despite the language barrier and the fact that we were given a new translator to work with nearly every day.

Outside of training, we were given a few opportunities to get to know our Japanese counterparts and their culture. On a few occasions, after our work day was over, we went to the "Friendship Tent" to relax and hang out with the guys we had been training. This was simply a large tent with several tables set up in it where we were allowed to drink a little sake and soju with our newfound friends. We laughed about the day's events, and just relaxed for a bit. Only a few of them spoke bits of English, but the language barrier was actually kind of fun to deal with.

There was also a day when some of us were taken on a tour to an old castle ruin site with a temple, as well as a rice and sake factory. Later that night, some of us went on a home visit where we linked up with a Japanese Officer/NCO and were taken to their home for dinner. Myself and two of my buddies linked up with a JGSDF sergeant major and another sergeant who spoke some English. We went to the sergeant major's home where his wife had a HUGE feast waiting for us (where did they get the idea that Americans eat a lot?).

Two of his three sons were home while the oldest was off to college, and they had a couple of friends over as well. It was a great time. We managed to communicate what the sergeant was unable to translate either through gestures and pointing, or with a small translation computer and dictionaries. After dinner, we exchanged gifts and then played this little game that involved wearing funny little hats and masks when you lost. It was very informative and a whole lot of fun. They invited us back in a card they later sent to us that even included some pictures they had taken while we were there. I would love to go back some day, visit with them again, and be able to vacation a little more.

Take care - Shane

Staff Sgt. Shane Ward deployed to Niigata Japan with Bravo Co., 2-162 Inf. Bn. in October 2006 as part of Orient Shield Training Exercise. For the full story, see pages 10-11.

41st BCT Soldiers help rebuild Afghan schools despite limited funds

Hello all.

The photos you see here are from a recent civil affairs / humanitarian relief mission a little ways outside of Kabul. One photo is of an Afghanistan National Army Soldier who was providing extra security for our mission, which included visiting a rural clinic that purportedly serves 40,000 Afghans in about 5 village areas.



Another photo is one of our civil affairs officers at the next stop, a local school, where we were discussing their needs, and the condition of their school. The school had buildings for both boys and girls. The Japanese have taken responsibility to construct and equip the girls' school, but the boys' school is some 35 years old — merely a shell of a building, without desks or chairs. It serves three rotations of over 500 students per day, and they take a few months off in the winter since it would be too cold to occupy the buildings - no heat.



The third picture is an end shot of the boy's school and some of the boys who were just getting out of class when we arrived.

This was merely a learning expedition, and from here the civil affairs team will revisit the area to further develop an overall assistance plan using CERP (commander's emergency response program) funds. Unfortunately,

higher command has given us \$3 million of the \$160 million available in theatre, and so has not trusted CJTF Phoenix, which has operations throughout the Afghanistan Theatre with enough funds to make any truly significant impact. That is still being worked and maybe we'll see greater funding over the next few months with some dollar shifting.

Fortunately, my time draws closer to ending here, so I may not see that dollar infusion during my tour. If you are wondering JAG is involved in the overall planning process for CERP operations, and provides legal advice upon request, and operational law (very broad) advice in the field generally in more complicated situations. This happened to be a junket so I was mostly an observer providing additional security.



If you would like to e-mail Hill, he may be reached at either of the addresses listed below.

Lt. Col. Daniel J. Hill, Staff Judge Advocate,
41 BCT and CJTF Phoenix V
E-mail: daniel.hill2@us.army.mil or daniel.j.hill@afghan.swa.army.mil

Oregonians help keep Soldiers' toes warm



Photo courtesy of Maj. Rob Fraser, CJTF Phoenix V

Members of the Task Force Phoenix Effects Cell showing their booties! Back Row: L-R; Spc. Christopher Childers, Maj. Scott Pons, 2nd Lt. Stephanie Noell, Spc. Rex Mitchell, Lt. Albin Brune, Spc. Shane Bohnenkamp, Sgt. 1st Class Mahmood Khan. Front Row: L-R; Spc. Patrick Dean, Maj. Rob Fraser.

We have two groups that are sending booties here for the Soldiers to keep their feet warm when it gets cold here, and it is a bit chilly here!

The first is Loretta Grossman, who started "Operation Toasty Toes" which is a group of ladies who are knitting these booties for the Soldiers. She can be reached via mail at: 326 W Pine St., Apt. 217, Lake Mills, WI 53551-1100.

The second group is in Oklahoma City, called the Hugs Project. Group member, Tommie Howard can be reached via mail at: 401 S. Dobbs Rd., Harrah, OK 73045, or via e-mail at: thehugsproject@cox.net.

We do the best we can to recognize folks who donated items to us! Oftentimes we get mail from folks we do not know, but they quickly become our friends through mail and email. These folks keep us motivated to drive on, and their efforts are truly appreciated.

Maj. Rob Fraser,
Combined Joint Task Force Phoenix V,
Kabul, Afghanistan

THE SENTINEL WANTS YOU!

We want your stories!
We want your pictures!

Submit them to:
The Oregon Sentinel
c/o: Tech. Sgt. Nick Choy,
nick.r.choy@mil.state.or.us

Stories must be submitted in Microsoft Word files, with all formatting turned off. Photos must be high-resolution color JPG files, and must have an accompanying caption (also in MS Word) explaining what is happening in the picture, as well as the rank, full name, and unit of the person(s) depicted. Submissions for Letters to the Editor and Letters From The Front are preferred.

New Afghan-Iraq war memorial a 'gift of courage and honor'

Mother of an Oregonian killed in Iraq turns pain into action, remembrance

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

SALEM, Ore. – The clouds parted and the rain stopped just in time for the dedication of the Afghan-Iraq Freedom Memorial on Veterans Day, November 11, 2006.

The memorial, located on the grounds of the Oregon Department of Veterans' Affairs on Summer Street in Salem, was the brainchild of M.J. Kesterson, who lost her son, Chief Warrant Officer Erik Kesterson, 29, in Iraq on Nov. 15, 2003. Kesterson was a member of the Army's 9th Battalion, 101st Airborne Division.

She watched through misty eyes as her husband, Clay Kesterson unveiled the statue of the kneeling soldier, which is meant to signify all Oregon service members who gave their lives in Afghanistan and Iraq. Three years in the making, the memorial's



Photo by Tech. Sgt. Nick Choy

The Afghan-Iraq Freedom Memorial's central sculpture in Salem, Ore.

dedication marked the end of a long road for a mother who wanted to recognize not only her son's sacrifice, but all those who join the nation's military ranks.

"Thank you so much for the gift of courage you left your family, for the gift of honor you left our country and nation," she said to the gathered crowd.

According to M.J., after hearing of Erik's death in a helicopter crash, she channeled her devastation and loss into action. With her husband's help, she spent nearly every day since learning of her son's death raising funds and garnering support for the Afghan-Iraq Freedom Memorial.

"It was because of his example that my husband and I were able to get up and go forward and do something, not just for our family, but for all of the Gold Star families in this state," M.J. said.

For many of the more than seventy Oregon families who have lost loved ones in the War on Terror, the dedication of the memorial provides a sense of peace.

"It's always going to be there for people to see," said Rachel Isenberg, 28, who lost her husband, Oregon Army National Guard Sergeant Benjamin Isenberg, a member of Bravo Co., 2nd Battalion, 162nd Infantry, who was killed in Iraq Sept. 13, 2004.

The new memorial is unlike many others throughout the nation, in that it honors fallen service members who were killed during the campaign to which the memorial is dedicated. By contrast, many other memorials, such as the Vietnam, Korea and other WWII memorials were not erected until years after the wars were over.

"We've learned our lesson from previous conflicts that waiting isn't an option while our country is at war. My husband and I have full intentions of continuing to work for this memorial," said Kesterson.

Oregon Governor Theodore Kulongoski, spoke about the importance of remembering all fallen service members.

"This is what this special Veterans Day



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

Taylor (left) and Hunter (center) Baum look on the Afghan-Iraq Freedom Memorial wall for the name of their uncle, Oregon National Guardsman, Staff Sgt. Tane Baum of Pendleton. Baum was killed in Afghanistan on Sept. 25, 2005.

is about; creating a memorial and common ground in remembrance of lost heroes that we will never forget and can never honor enough," Kulongoski said.

It was a sentiment echoed by Maj. Gen. Raymond F. Rees, Adjutant General of the Oregon National Guard.

"Today we remember them," Rees said. "And we understand that to honor them we must carry on in their stead and this memorial is a fitting tribute to their sacrifice."

At the conclusion of the ceremony many family members turned their attention to the new memorial wall as they searched for the name of their loved one, now permanently engraved in stone. According to one Soldier, the new memorial is a place of remembrance for not only the families, but the Soldiers who continue to serve in ongoing conflicts

throughout the world.

"When I come down here it's a place to gather and then go back out and attack life," said Sgt. 1st Class Vincent Jacques. "(Their lives) got cut short, so we have to go out and make the best of this – go out and do it for them."

Jacques lost several close friends who were killed while his unit, Bravo Co., 2nd Battalion, 162nd Infantry, was deployed to Iraq for most of 2004.

M.J. said she and Clay are committed to ensuring that the memorial is maintained and if by chance any future Oregon service members lose their lives, their names be added.

"We lost our son Erik but we gained a community of family that will always be together," concluded M.J. Kesterson.

Ash, a 'true warrior', fought cancer with strength and courage

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

This article was written in early September. Staff Sgt. Lance Ash passed away due to complications from a brain tumor on Sunday, Oct. 29, 2006.

SALEM, Ore. – Staff Sgt. Lance Ash didn't realize he was attending his own promotion party when his wife, Freedom, wheeled him into the sixth-floor visiting area of the Salem Hospital.

"That was quite a surprise," Ash said, as family and co-workers surrounded him. "Sometimes it's hard to keep those things a secret."

"Why do you think I made you shave

and clean up?" Freedom asked him.

Ash, 36, was promoted to staff sergeant on Sept. 10, while recovering from the removal of his third brain tumor in less than two years. It was the first promotion party to be held at a hospital in anyone's memory.

Working as an administration NCO in the orderly room at Joint Forces Headquarters, Ash has been fighting a personal battle against his ailment since the removal of his first tumor in June 2005.

Ash was mobilizing at Fort Bliss, Texas, last year to deploy with HHC 3rd Battalion 116th Cavalry when he was sent home because of back problems. Once home, Ash began experiencing headaches and doctors then discovered the first brain tumor. Since

that time, Ash has undergone four surgeries. Three operations removed tumors and one was needed to stop an infection. Doctors have diagnosed Ash's condition as terminal.

However, those who know him say that Ash has shown tremendous courage and optimism in the face of recurring health issues.

"I don't think he feels sick when he's there at work," Freedom said. "As soon as they discharge him from the hospital, he'll be showing up at work the next day."

Over the last year, Ash impressed his family and co-workers by returning to work soon after each surgery, even scheduling his chemotherapy treatments around his work hours.

"He would take off half a day to receive chemo treatment and then go back to work," Freedom said.

"His focus was always coming to work and doing a good job, not thinking about what ails him physically. He's beyond courageous," said Sgt. 1st Class Ron Triller, who worked with Ash in the JFHQ orderly room. (Less than a month after visiting Ash during the promotion ceremony at the hospital, Triller suffered a heart attack and passed away on Oct. 4.)

Although Ash was still recovering from his most recent operation, he couldn't suppress a smile Sept. 10 as Sgt. Maj. James Martichuski and Maj. Sharon Banks pinned his new rank on a BDU blouse draped over his wheelchair.

"This is something he's been wanting for a long time," said Ash's brother, Ted Ash.

"He grew up wanting to be in the Army," said Ash's mother, Kay Ash. "These guys are his best friends. They're a close unit. Their support has been tremendous."

Ash has 16 years of military service between the active duty Army and Na-



Staff Sgt. Lance Ash, (center), receives his E-6 rank insignia from Sgt. Maj. James Martichuski (left) and Maj. Sharon Banks (right) on Sunday, Sept. 10, at the Salem Hospital.

tional Guard, Freedom said. The couple recently moved to Salem from Newberg with Freedom's 4-year-old son, Nicholas. Ash also has two children living in Texas; Chad, 8, and Alisha, 13.

Ted, who also brought his family to the promotion party, said that he and Ash maintain a close friendship. "He's my only brother," Ted said. "We'd go hiking and biking and kayaking together all the time. And I want him to get healthy so we can get back out there together."

"We just keep praying for him. He's the type of person that won't complain until it's really hurting him," Ted continued. "He's been our hero."

Ash was released from Salem Hospital in mid-September. His friends are certain he'll be fighting to return to work as soon as he's able.

"Staff Sgt. Lance Ash is a living example of a true warrior. In spite of health issues, he has proudly served the State of Oregon as a member of the Oregon Army National Guard," said Major Sharon Banks, JFHQ dilemma. "I greatly admire his strength, his attitude and his courage and I pray for a miracle of healing. Lance is the true embodiment of the soldier's creed and warrior ethos.

Veterans of Foreign Wars establishes fund for Ogburn memorial

It's been more than a year since Sgt. John Ogburn III, of Fruitland, Idaho died while serving in Iraq with the 3rd Battalion, 116th Cavalry Regiment of the Oregon National Guard.

Recently, veterans near his hometown of Fruitland, Idaho decided to establish a Veterans of Foreign Wars Post in his honor. The John Ogburn III Post of the VFW will include veterans committed to promoting patriotism and performing community service.

District 4 Commander, Tim McBride is presently preparing the Charter which will be submitted to the Department of Idaho and National Veterans of Foreign Wars for approval and establishment. The John Ogburn III Post will also charter a Ladies Auxiliary and Men's Auxiliary.

Membership in these organizations requires a blood relationship to a veteran eligible for membership or a member of the Veterans of Foreign Wars. Charter membership in these organizations will cost \$20.00 with the annual membership dues to be determined after the Auxiliaries are formed.

Sgt. John Ogburn III died May 22, 2005, in northern Iraq when his Humvee rolled twice after hitting a median. He was 45 years old. Ogburn was a corrections officer at the Snake River Correctional Institution in Ontario, just across the border from Fruitland. Before becoming a corrections officer, he attended Treasure Valley Community College and the University of Oregon, did geology field work in an Idaho silver mine and worked in the family retail business in Ontario.

Any eligible veterans interested in joining the John Ogburn III post may contact Tim McBride at webcity@fmtc.com or via mail at: 5433 Hwy 95, Fruitland, ID 83619. You can also contact the group via phone at 208-452-4653. The website is located at www.vfw2738.org/PostJOIII.html.

Mother-daughter duo find Kuwait deployment good for career, relationship

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

When the 41st Personnel Services Company deployed more than a year ago, Soldiers had to leave their lives and their children behind – a difficult prospect for anyone heading on a deployment thousands of miles away. So when Sgt. Karissa Smith and her mother Sgt. 1st Class Brenda Berrios learned they'd be deploying together they considered themselves lucky.

"I think it makes going much easier, it's nice to know my Mom will be there," said Sgt. Karissa Smith.

"I'm excited to go together. I'm lucky to have my daughter with me," added Sgt. 1st Class Brenda Berrios.

Those were the words of the mother-daughter pair when we first introduced you to them in an article that appeared in the August 2005 issue of the Oregon Sentinel. We caught up with them at the demobilization ceremony of the 41st PSC to see if the deployment lived up to their expectations.

"I think it was more than what we were expecting," said Smith. "We had a good time together. We learned a lot that I think will benefit us in our military careers, but it was a lot harder than what I thought it was going to be," added Smith.

The Soldiers in the 41st PSC had to adjust to living and working in an active duty lifestyle.

"We were stuck with an active duty unit and they were a little more hard-core than we were used to, so it does take a lot of adjusting to their ways," said Smith.

It's a sentiment shared by Smith's mother.

"It was tough getting adjusted the first few months," said Berrios.

Though the pair was in the same unit, they were physically far apart much of the time. They worked opposite shifts, so they didn't see each other that often. Still, Berrios checked in on her daughter every day.

"She'd come and peek in on me every single night when she got done working," said Smith.

Berrios said she and her daughter were already pretty close before the deployment, but the experience "undoubtedly" made them even closer.

"At times most of us went through our own personal issues and problems we had to overcome at one time or another, not just the two of us, but other Soldiers in the unit



Right: Sgt. 1st Class Brenda Berrios (left), and Sgt. Karissa Smith (right), at Camp Arifjan in Kuwait. Their unit, the Oregon Army National Guard 41st Personnel Services Co., was deployed to Kuwait for one year.

as well," said Berrios. "I think it was a little easier to have her there when I was going through tough times and to be there for her when she was going through her tough times," added Berrios.

Before leaving, Smith said she anticipated that her mother would push her to do her best – and she did.

"I think she was a lot tougher on me, she had higher expectations of me, making sure that I was trying to exceed higher above everybody else," said Smith.

While, neither Smith nor Berrios would trade having each other on their deployment

to Kuwait, they both admitted it was tough on their family back home, especially since Berrios' brother Master Sgt. Barry Beddor is currently deployed in Afghanistan with the 41st Brigade Combat Team, Headquarters and Headquarters Company.

"It was a lot harder on our family because there were three of us deployed at the same time," said Berrios.

For now, mother and daughter are looking forward to enjoying some rest and relaxation.

"It will be nice to get some normalcy back in our lives," said Berrios.

41st PSC the 'mortar between the bricks', according to Adjutant General



Photo courtesy of 41st PSC

Members of the 41st Personnel Services Company who redeployed after a one-year deployment in Kuwait.

Continued from **FRONT PAGE**

personal capabilities. According to Gookin, other than Basic and Advanced Training, this was her first time being away from home.

"I mostly learned personal lessons about myself. I did something I thought I couldn't do," she said. "It wasn't scary, but it was really lonely — I missed my mother."

Other members of the unit also said being away from their family was the hardest part about the deployment.

"Watching my girls [Ashley and Ally] grow-up through pictures and talking to them on the phone — it makes you not take anything for granted," said Smith.

As a single mom, Staff Sgt. Irene Guerra said it was hard to not be there for her two sons Ruben and Daniel.

"The most difficult part was not being able to do the mom part of raising my kids and having to rely on other people to do everything for them," Guerra said.

She said everyone in her family shared the

responsibilities of caring for her kids, but the deployment was still hard on them.

"They are teenagers, so it was very tough on them," she said. "Academically they faced challenges because they missed me."

Daniel described how it felt to greet his mom at the airport, "It was the greatest moment of my life because she's my mom and I just love her with all my heart," he said.

A self-proclaimed soccer mom, Guerra admitted it was hard for her to miss all of Daniel's soccer games, but he made sure to keep his mother in mind at each game.

"Every soccer game I played was for her," he said.

Less than a week after setting foot back in Oregon, the 41st PSC took part in a public demobilization ceremony at the Anderson Readiness Center. The event was attended by Congresswoman Darlene Hooley; Danny Santos, Senior Policy Advisor for Governor Theodore R. Kulongoski; Oregon State Senate President Peter Courtney; and Oregon National Guard Adjutant General, Maj. Gen. Raymond F. Rees.

Rees related to the audience the extent of the unit's accomplishments while overseas.

"You did it all, 41st PSC," Rees said. "Your service exemplifies the commitment and competence of Oregon Guardsmen. Not only did you do your job, you exceeded the standards by being recognized as a runner-up for the Army's small unit deployment award."

"You were the mortar between the bricks," Rees told the unit. "You sustained our Soldiers and allowed the Coalition Forces Land Component Command to accomplish it's objective. Thank you for your service."

Hooley welcomed the Soldiers home from what she referred to as "a difficult, but very successful mission."

"I stand before you today with gratitude and appreciation for the service you performed and I'm so proud of what you've accomplished over the last 14 months," said Hooley. "For your commitment and your service I think the nation owes you and your families a huge debt of gratitude."

Oregonians. I feel better tonight, that you've come back to the Oregon homeland."

After the speeches were over and the formal ceremony was done, Capt. Romona Treat, commander of the 41st PSC, officially dismissed her Soldiers, returning them to their families.

Guerra said now that she is home, she and her boys are getting back into the "swing of things".

"I'm getting involved with their schools and their teachers and becoming a soccer mom again," she said. "I've already been to a soccer game."

Smith spoke of his own family plans now that he is home, "I just want to have some fun with the family now, catch up on things and get used to being home."

His wife said their family will go through a transition period now that the deployment is over.

"I have to share the bed now, and the car and everything again," Shannon said. "So it's going to be a transition, but I'm very excited to finally have him home and have our family back together again."

Army Aviation breaks ground for new 40,000 square-foot building



Map courtesy of JFHQ AGI Department

Above: An aerial view of the Oregon Army National Guard Aviation Support Facility, located off Turner Road at McNary Field in Salem, Ore., showing the proposed building site just south of AASF Hangar #3 (blue roof). The new facility will house the 102nd Civil Support Team and elements of the Army Aviation unit, including maintenance, support and command. Construction is scheduled to begin sometime in 2007.

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

SALEM, Ore. – The Oregon National Guard hosted a ground breaking ceremony for a new 40,000 square-foot facility at the Army Aviation Facility in Salem on Oct. 21.

Senior members of the Oregon National Guard including the Adjutant General, Maj. Gen. Raymond F. Rees, Governor Theodore R. Kulongoski's Senior Policy Advisor, Danny Santos, and Congresswoman Darlene Hooley – who is credited with securing federal funding for the construction project

– attended the ceremony, and took part in the symbolic turning of earth, following the official speeches.

Rees thanked Hooley for her part in securing \$6.5 million in federal funds – 100 percent of the cost for the project – calling her a “significant part” of achieving the goal of the Oregon National Guard's expansion project.

“Boy, this day has been a long time coming,” Hooley said with a sigh of relief. “It truly is wonderful to finally have this happen, and to be able to support the Civil Support Team and MEDEVAC teams.”

Rees pointed out that the property – bounded on the east by Turner Road,

Mission Street to the north, and the Salem Airport to the west – is now one contiguous piece. He credited both Governor Kulongoski, and former Oregon Governor John Kitzhaber with helping the Oregon Guard realize their vision by providing funding to purchase private property which previously broke up the large tract of land.

Once built, the two-story building will be the new home of the 102nd Civil Support Team, which now occupies temporary quarters in the old Army Reserve Center on Airport Road. The CST will occupy 12,000 square feet in the new facility, while the AASF will utilize 27,000 square feet. The design also calls for a second entrance to the property from Turner Road, across from WalMart.

The current location of the Army's Flight Operations, housed in hangar #1, by contrast, measures 3,750 square feet.

Hooley stressed that not only the Oregon National Guard will benefit from the project, but the local community will as well.

“This construction project will also provide jobs during the construction phase, which this area really needs,” she said. “And in the years to come I really think it's a win-win situation.”

The public was able to view and tour some of the equipment on display from both the Oregon Army National Guard's aviation units and the 102nd Civil Support Team. Personnel from both units were on hand to answer questions.

The Army Aviation Support Facility provides facilities and full-time personnel to supervise, coordinate, and support tenant aviation units with aircraft maintenance, flight operations, safety, standardization, and training to ensure Oregon Army Aviation readiness and rapid response to federal, state and local missions.

The Civil Support Team is tasked with the support of civil authority first responders under occurrence of all Weapons of Mass

Destruction (WMD) incidents. The unit provides assessment, project consequences and advice on appropriate response measures and additional support.

The CST was awarded federal certification by the Department of the Army and the Secretary of Defense in July 2006. The certification allows the Governor and the Adjutant General to utilize the 102nd CST as an invaluable asset in the event of weapons of mass destruction incident. In addition, the unit can be called to respond to incidents in other states as part of the National Response Plan.

The Army Aviation Facility is located at 1921 Turner Rd. SE, on the East end of McNary Field just off Airport Rd.



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

Congresswoman Darlene Hooley (D-OR), left, and Oregon National Guard Adjutant General, Maj. Gen. Raymond F. Rees, right, take part in a ground breaking ceremony for the AASF in Salem, Oct. 21.

Oregon Guard signs thirty-year lease with BLM to use Biak

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

REDMOND, Ore. – The Oregon National Guard and the Bureau of Land Management have partnered an agreement which officials say will benefit not only both agencies, but the local community, and indeed all of Oregon as well.

On Oct. 4, the two agencies met at the Biak Training Site near Redmond, Ore., to sign a 30-year lease to use the facility in central Oregon for training purposes. The agreement ends decades of renewed short-term leases, and expands the area utilized by the Oregon Army National Guard for training to 43,000 acres.

Oregon's Adjutant General, Maj. Gen. Raymond F. Rees, joined the Bureau of Land Management's Deschutes Resource Area Field Manager, Molly Brown, in signing the lease agreement.

The plan cleared the way for OMD and BLM to replace the short term land use permit system with a more stable long term lease in which the two agencies will work together as cooperating land management agencies. The lease also expands the area utilized by the Oregon Army National Guard for training from 31,000 acres to nearly 43,000 acres. According to Rees, the agreement paves the way for capital investment for infrastructure improvements, but is also a benefit to Soldiers who use the site for annual training.

“We will now step into a new category with the National Guard Bureau. This will allow us to come in here and do long-range planning and infrastructure improvements,” Rees said.

The agreement is a culmination of nearly 12 years of cooperative work between the Oregon Military Department and the Bureau of Land Management. The Oregon Military Department served as a cooperating agency to the BLM's Upper Deschutes Resource Management Plan and Environmental Impact Statement, a process that took five years to complete, beginning in 2001.

Brown, who had only been on the job for

three days before taking part in the signing ceremony, had worked with the military for many years in California. As the military liaison with the Marine Corps in Senora Pass, Calif., her efforts were instrumental in securing the Mountain Warfare Training Center for use by the Marines. The Oregon lease agreement, according to Brown, was going to be an equally beneficial agreement between the BLM and the Oregon Guard. One obvious benefit was less time preparing short-term lease agreements, and a focus on taking care of the land.

“Instead of continuously preparing short term permits, we're now concentrating our efforts on merging the needs of both agencies,” Brown said.

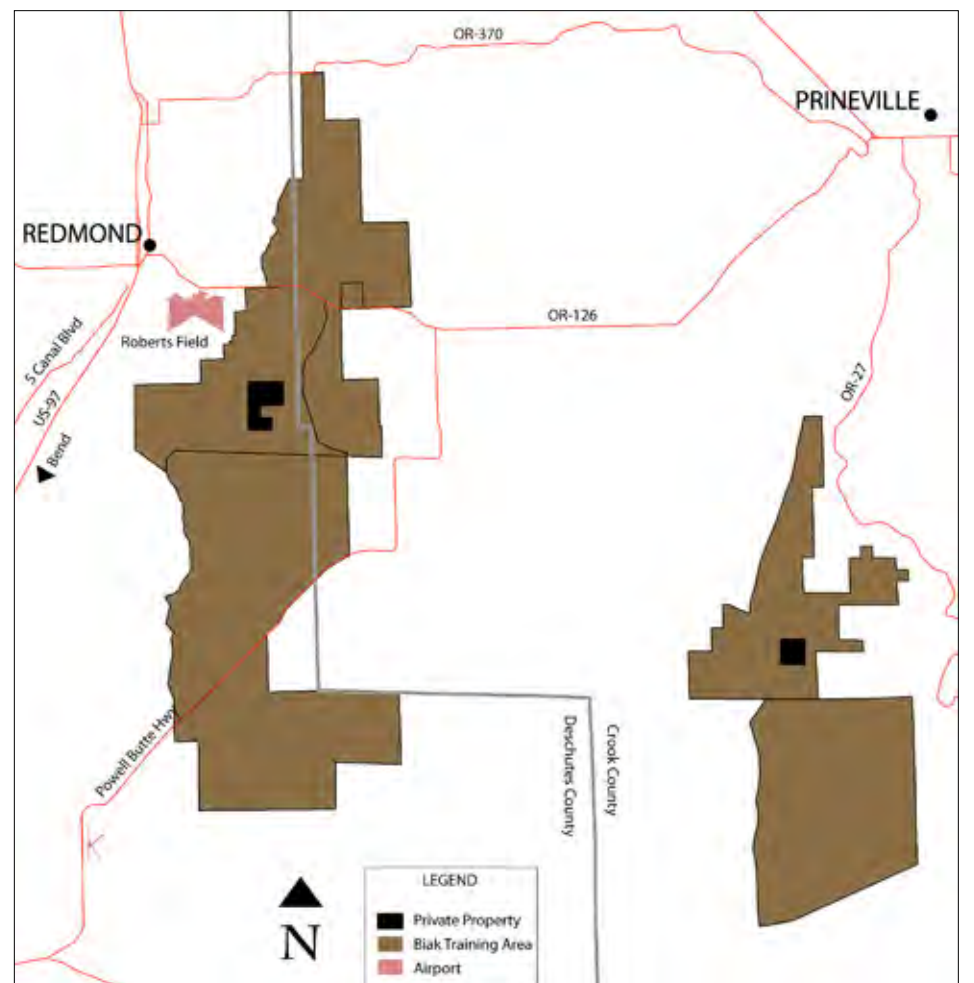
“This offers us a wonderful opportunity to improve on a facility that we've used for decades,” Rees said.

Other benefits of consolidating the training site into a central location, according to Rees, is an annual savings for travel expenses that would normally be incurred by sending Soldiers to other training areas. Finally, there's the physical safety of the Soldiers.

“I think there's a safety factor by getting people off the roads, with less exposure to the hazards of travel,” Rees added.

The history of Biak Training center can be traced back to WWII, when central Oregon served the community as a training hub for the US Army and US Army Air Force. The facility was turned over to the Army Corps of Engineers following the end of the Cold War, until the Oregon National Guard requested use of the site for training purposes. This initiated the use of short term land use permits between the Bureau of Land Management and the Oregon Military Department.

With the combined permitted and withdrawn lands, the Bureau of Land Management and the Oregon Military Department continued the short term three year permit land use process in 1992 and placed the training site under the command and control of 1-82 Cavalry. The Training Site Command was established in 1993 and the training center was informally named



Map courtesy of JFHQ GIS Department

A 30-year lease agreement was signed between the Bureau of Land Management and the Oregon National Guard on Oct. 4, bringing the total area for training to 43,000 acres. The partnership is the fruition of many years of work by both agencies, and according to spokespersons for both the BLM and the Oregon Guard, the agreement will benefit the community as well. The Biak Training Site is located near Redmond, Ore.

“High Desert Training Center.” The Biak Training Center was formally dedicated on July 11, 1999.

Rees drew several parallels between Biak and other training sites throughout Oregon, specifically, Camp Rilea in Warrenton, Ore.

“With our staff out at Camp Rilea and other places throughout the state, the BLM will find that we're an excellent partner because we provide good stewardship,

and they're going to see better habitat for wildlife, and improved management of the natural resources because of our presence,” Rees said.

Maj. (Ret.) Bill McCaffrey, who worked in various capacities between the BLM and the Oregon Military Department since 1997, said although the agreement was at times a challenging prospect, the long-term

See BLM on **NEXT PAGE**

Bulgarian Air Force continues to build relationship with ORANG

Story by Capt. Lucas Ritter,
173rd FW Public Affairs Officer

Photos by Master Sgt. Jerry Bynum,
173rd FW Multimedia

KLAMATH FALLS, Ore. – Five pilots from the Bulgarian Air Force spent a week at Kingsley Field as part of an ongoing nation building relationship between the Oregon Air National Guard and the Bulgarian Air Force.

This current visit comes on the heels of Sentry Lion 2006, an air-to-air combat exercise held between Kingsley Field and the



Capt. Victor Hristov of the Bulgarian Air Force climbs into the cockpit of an F-15 from the 173rd Fighter Wing for his orientation flight. Hristov was one of five pilots from Bulgaria who came to Kingsley Field to learn more about the training culture at an American Air Force base.

Bulgarian Air Force, in Bulgaria.

“We are here to learn as much as we can about how the Oregon Air National Guard and the United States Air Force trains pilots,” said Col. Rumen Radev, Commander of the 3rd Air Base at Grav in Bulgaria. “The experience and knowledge that we have gained on this trip has been a great benefit to the Bulgarian Air Force.”

The Bulgarian officers spent the week getting an idea of how American Air Force bases are structured. They had the chance to sit in on academic briefings, scheduling meetings and to fly with the Kingsley instructor pilots. The objective of their visit is to gain a better understanding of the United States Air Force training culture.

“Bulgaria is a new North American Treaty Organization (NATO) partner and Bulgarian pilots are very eager to learn western tactics and techniques. This is a great opportunity for us to help them improve their flying training program at a world-class flying training unit,” said Col. John Morawiec, 173rd Fighter Wing Operations Group commander. “We hope that they will be able to go back to Bulgaria with a better understanding of how we operate day to day in training the best fighter pilots in the world.”

This visit builds on the relationship Kingsley Field already has with Bulgaria. The exercise Sentry Lion was the product of four Airmen from the base who traveled to Bulgaria to help erect a David R. Kingsley memorial. Kingsley was an Oregon native and a World War II bombardier whose B-17 was shot down over present-day Bulgaria. The base was also a part of the Joint Contact Team Program, a nation building program for new NATO countries sponsored by European Command.

“We are very fortunate to have the opportunity to come to America and train with the Oregon Air National Guard. Sentry Lion was the best exercise that I have seen in the



From left to right; Col. Konstantin Mihaylov, Deputy Chief of Training and Employment; Maj. Orlin Trifonov, MiG-21 Squadron Commander, Col. Rumen Radev, 3rd Air Base Commander; Capt. Victor Hristov, Deputy Commander for Flight Training, 2nd Fighter Squadron; and Maj. Stanislav Peshev, Chief of Staff for the 3rd Air Base, Bulgaria.

Bulgarian Air Force,” Radev said.

“We are excited to be a part of this process by helping our friends from the Bulgarian Air Force develop a modern training program,” said Morawiec. “Our wing’s mission is to train air-to-air pilots and we know that we do it better than anyone else and we are eager to show the Bulgarians how to create a better training program. Ultimately this translates into a more effective partner in the War on Terror.”

Kingsley Field has trained air combat pilots since 1983, starting with the F-4 Phantom. The base transitioned to the F-16 Falcon in 1989 and then to the F-15 in 1998. Kingsley Field is one of only two F-15 training units in the nation.

The JCTP was established to allow

American and NATO allied countries to host military-to-military events. The purpose of each event is to strengthen the relationship between the host nation and the United States. Since 1992, over 7,750 EUCOM coordinated and managed military-to-military contacts or events have helped host nations understand the U.S. approach to fundamental issues, such as human rights guarantees for Soldiers, civilian control of the military, military legal codes, and development of professional officer and noncommissioned officer corps.

“We hope that we can continue to train with the Bulgarians and sustain the already well established relationship we have developed with their Air Force,” said Morawiec.

BLM: Agreement good for everyone

Continued from PREVIOUS PAGE

lease agreement is good for the Oregon Guard, the BLM and the surrounding community.

“This agreement is an effective approach to resource management planning and training planning in terms of being proactive with the community. It is a three way partnership,” McCaffrey said.

The added benefit, according to McCaffrey, is Biak’s location. Lying next to Robert’s Field – the only large commercial hub in central Oregon – Biak is primed for the changes slated under the Army’s Transformation doctrine.

“Roberts Field is the fourth largest commercial aviation hub in Oregon, but their intent is to recreate Roberts Field and turn it into the second largest commercial aviation hub in Oregon,” McCaffrey said.

“We’re sitting right on the edge of it,” he continued. “That’s a piece for Oregon that has been missing. No other training center in Oregon has runways, and Biak has them. That’s a tremendous advantage when you think about the future of mobile warfare and where we’re going with air mobility and rapid deployment.”

The Biak Training Site is named after the largest island in New Guinea, where, on May 27, 1944, United States Army units, primarily the 41st Infantry Division, fought Japanese Soldiers for control of the island archipelago. The central Oregon training site, located about 3 miles southeast of Redmond, Ore., was named in honor of the WWII battle and the 41st Brigade’s “Sunset Division”.



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

Oregon National Guard’s Adjutant General, Maj. Gen. Raymond F. Rees (left) and Oregon Bureau of Land Management Field Manager Molly Brown, sign a 30-year lease agreement between the Oregon National Guard and the Oregon Bureau of Land Management for the Biak Training Site near Redmond, Ore. on Oct. 4, 2006.

GIS educates public at Capitol



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

Prepared by Sentinel Staff

Members of the Oregon National Guard took part in Geographic Information System Day at the State Capitol on Nov. 15, 2006. The Oregon Guard’s booth was manned by representatives from Deputy Chief of Staff, Operations (DSCOPS), the 102nd Civil Support Team, and Joint-Forces Headquarters’ Environmental Branch.

The event, which was coordinated by Sue Blohm, GIS Manager for the City of Salem, was also attended by several local and federal agencies, including the Bonneville Power Administration (BPA), Columbia River Inter Tribal Fish Commission, the Oregon Dept. of Fish and Wildlife, Oregon Dept. of Transportation (ODOT), and the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS).

Oregon Governor Theodore R. Kulongoski, issued a proclamation declaring Nov. 15 GIS Day. The goal of the event was to increase awareness and understanding about geography, and to promote cooperation and sharing of GIS data between state, federal, tribal, and local agencies.

Col. Dave Stuckey, Deputy Director, DSCOPS, said GIS supports every mission throughout the Oregon National Guard, but is ‘transparent’ to a lot of people.

“It is a part of everything we do. In training lands management, facilities, operations planning, environmental, and intelligence collection and analysis,” Stuckey said.

The display highlighted how GIS supports Oregon National Guard missions, such as the 102nd CST’s Weapons of Mass Destruction program, 1042nd Medical Co. (Army Aviation’s) Search and Rescue and Fire Suppression initiatives, the Oregon Guard’s Hurricane Katrina rescue and response efforts, and the agency’s involvement in the ongoing Afghanistan mission.

Pictured above from left to right: Staff Sgt. John Rowland, Carl Anderson (standing); Robin Howard, Darin Miner, Terri Noble, Capt. Eric Brenner (seated). The theme for the Oregon Guard’s booth was ‘When we are needed, we are there’.

'Spit, polish and precision': A therapeutic discipline for Oregon Army National Guard's Military Funeral Honors Team

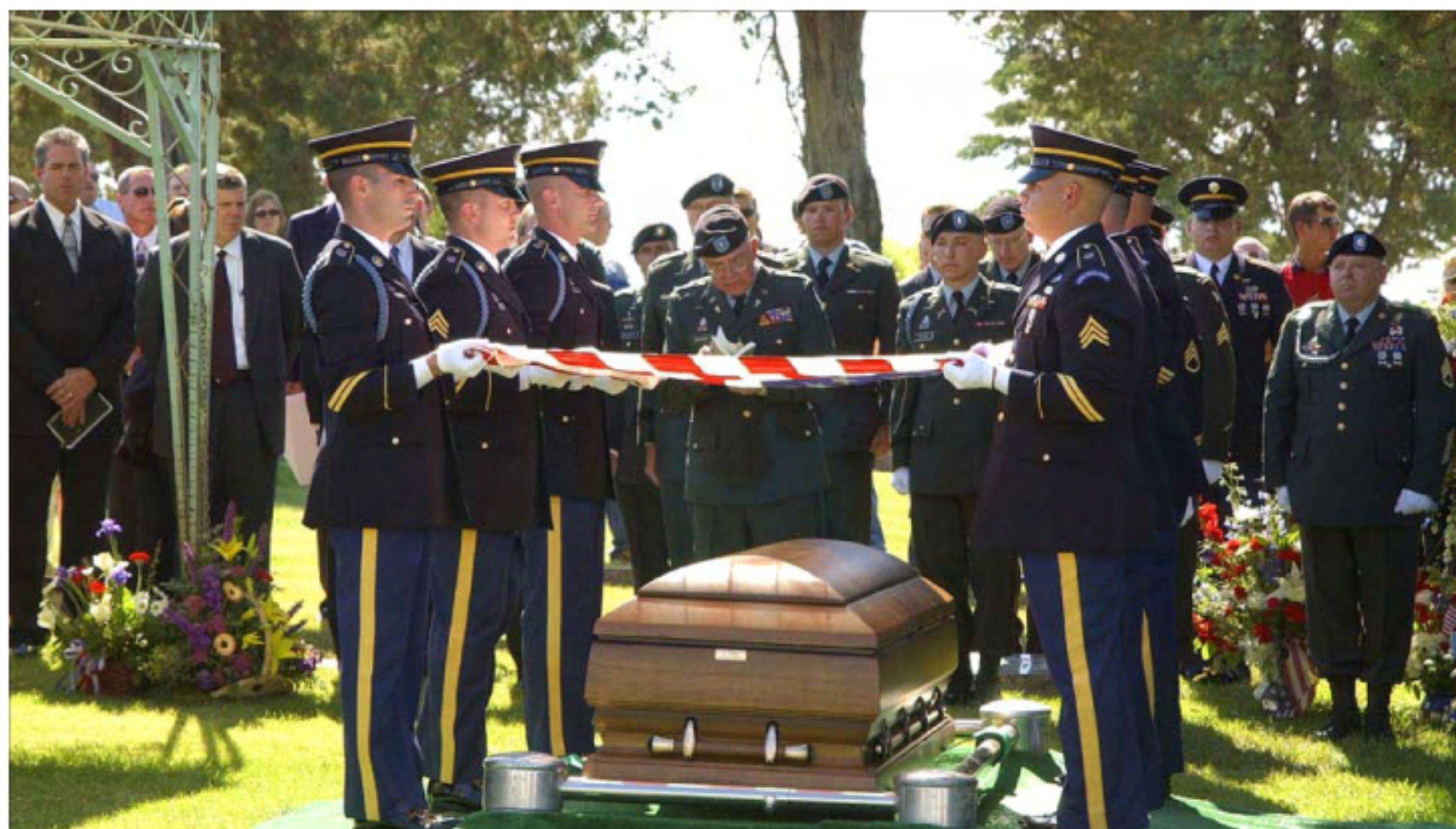


Photo by Cpt. Michael Bratish, Oregon National Guard Public Affairs

When Staff Sgt. Jeromy Turner first arrived in 2005 to lead a new full-time Oregon National Guard Funeral Honors Team at the state's largest national cemetery, his charge was to carry caskets, present the flag and oversee rifle salutes. But driving through the gates each morning at Portland's Mount Scott, above the body shops and strip clubs on Foster Road, the 24-year-old chemical engineer found himself turning down the radio and slowing to cross the hushed emerald hills.

With each veteran he carried, Turner felt something he hadn't felt since leading an infantry squad: humbled. With each family, he wanted the team to be more crisp, more precise, to be — perfect.

The team took over a storage bay near the lawn mowers, borrowed an empty casket and drilled. Turner flew east, becoming the first Oregon trainer certified to the Arlington National Cemetery's Old Guard protocol, the gold standard for military ceremony. He drilled the team along curbsides to relearn marching and studied films of their 170-step



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

The "flag room." According to Turner, when the unit moved into the facility at Willamette National Cemetery, they discovered a closet containing over a thousand flags, many in disrepair. The team refolded every one of them, and discovered several 48-star flags from the late 1950s.

casket sequence. In an age of designer funerals, he looked to Civil War rituals for guidance, then wrote a computer program to track their progress.

His precise nature — as a boy he knew instantly if his brother moved one of his Hot Wheels cars — drove him as it had on the battlefield. Turner carried clothing presses, steamers and irons into the locker room. When Cpl. Thomas Barella first saw Turner burn a Bic barbecue lighter down his uniform to singe stray threads, Barella recalls thinking, "You can't really be doing that!"

"I had," Barella says, "no clue." Soon Barella was carrying his own box of Pledge furniture polish, toothbrushes, safety pins and precision rulers to maintain his uniform and shoes. Mourners never would know that his combat infantryman's badge was one-sixteenth of an inch off. But, Turner says, "We'd know."

The team wrangled for whiter gloves, shinier shell casings and ammunition blanks louder than standard issue. "Who are you guys?" supply clerks demanded.

They are, according to the National Guard Bureau, the No. 1 military funeral honors team outside the Army's showcase unit at Arlington. The Willamette squad is featured in a new national training film, serving as a model for honor guards nationwide.

To understand why an ambitious college graduate and his team of young, fit adrenal junkies work full time in silence among the dead, consider that of the 94,062 veterans buried at Willamette National Cemetery, 31 were killed in Iraq and Afghanistan.

Five served with Turner. Turner, an Oregon State frat rat with something to prove, was — "truth be told" — the last sergeant Kaiser wanted in Iraq. Kaiser recalls Iraqi police recruits laughing as Turner ordered the 6-foot-3 Kaiser to do push-ups while an Iraqi dog panting in his face. "I deserved it," Kaiser recalls, "but I didn't have a very high opinion of him."

That would change. Turner scrapped a chemical-engineering career and a shot at the Army's special operations forces to rejoin his old unit, the 2nd Battalion, 162nd Infantry, which in 2003 was called to Iraq. He was, after all, Jo Turner's son. The nursing services director at Eugene's Good Samaritan Health Center and petite mother of three is also an Oregon Guard staff sergeant now serving as a combat medic with the 41st Brigade Combat Team in Afghanistan. "Integrity, honor and country has been a focal point in raising our children," says Jo Turner, whose three children followed her into the

The Oregon National Guard Military Funeral Honors Team performing the memorial service for Pfc. Thomas L. Tucker at Mount Jefferson Memorial Park Cemetery in Madras, Ore. on July 1, 2006. Tucker was captured and killed by insurgents while serving in Iraq with B. Co., 1-502nd Infantry, 2nd BCT, 101st Airborne Div. (Air Assault). The Willamette National Cemetery Team insisted on traveling to Madras to ensure Tucker's memorial service was done "the right way".



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

Turner "suits up". Staff Sgt. Jeromy Turner, a team leader with the Military Funeral Honors Program, gets ready for a military funeral at Willamette National Cemetery on Nov. 3. The unit would take part in five ceremonies on that particular day.

military. "He knew it was the right thing to do." Jo and her husband, Les, always taught their children to "never leave anyone behind, and everyone comes home."

After four months in Iraq, Turner and Kaiser returned to Oregon on leave. Turner to attend his grandmother's memorial and Kaiser to see his new bride. Turner was watching television, and Kaiser was walking through Portland International Airport en route back to Iraq, when each learned that a roadside bomb had devastated their squad. Spc. Kenny Leisten, the skilled young driver and radio operator from Bravo Co., 2-162 Inf. Bn., who postponed his own leave, was dead. The ambush left their patrol sergeant badly wounded, the team leader's back broken, the medic's legs crushed, and their gunner nearly dead from loss of blood.

Like a bad dream set in slow motion, Turner jumped flights, hitched a ride with a civilian contractor and talked his way onto a general's helicopter to rejoin his unit. "You're so by yourself," he said, "You've lost someone that you promised their family you'd bring back. You're just trying to find someone you

can relate to." Kaiser was racing back, too. When he reached the base, the small trailer he'd shared with Leisten and Spc. John Rosander, was empty. He lay awake alone all night. At the memorial the next day, "The only one I connected with was Sgt. Turner," Kaiser recalls. "We latched onto each other."

During eight more months of combat, Turner and Kaiser rode next to each other on every patrol. They were bombed, hit with as many as 24 rocket-propelled grenades on one patrol, and survived 10 attacks in four days. The 2-162 Inf. Bn. lost eight in Iraq.

At the return ceremony in 2005, Kaiser apologized to his wounded patrol sergeant for not being there when Leisten was killed. He and Turner had left an empty space for Leisten.

Coming home was "a culture shock," Kaiser says. He couldn't relax, couldn't sleep, couldn't stop smoking. He told his wife, Stacy, that he felt like "a 50-year-old in a 20-year-old body." He'd lock his keys in the car and find himself grinding his teeth or wanting to punch a hole in the wall. He had anxiety attacks.

But at Willamette, Kaiser was relieved to be back around Turner and the all-veteran staff at the cemetery.

The locker room, with its \$5 haircuts and 2-cent banter, recalled the camaraderie of Iraq. Everyone jumped when lawn mowers backfired. All hated the Fourth of July fireworks. It is, Turner says, "like group therapy every day."

"It's brought together 12 combat veterans; we're a family," Barella says. "We've cried together, we've had every emotional battle you can think of at Willamette National." And every day, as they had in Iraq, they confronted mortality. The team has conducted military honors for 1,914 veterans.

Turner found a calling. Honors are, he insists, a right due every Soldier and one most powerfully conveyed by combat veterans. "Every Soldier's experience in combat is different. But what is similar, whether in Afghanistan or Iraq, is that every day, you're going out on a mission and you don't know if you are coming back."

Serving full time at Willamette National gave Turner new purpose. The discipline of the daily ritual, the constant contact with his men, the tranquility and beauty of the place itself gave him a connectedness and direction he'd lost. Other members of the team found similar purpose. "I don't know how it happened," Barella says, "but the more I hang out with Turner, the more strongly I feel about the job. Families need this. We need this."

ready, aim and fire three volleys, perfectly in sync. The bugler's haunting Taps floated down and filled the air. Then with a snap, the Soldiers lifted and with a 13-step process refolded the flag, with a dramatic final tuck into a triangle. The casket leader gathered the cloth to his chest and smoothed it, then handed it to Turner.

Looking as if he'd stepped from the Tomb of the Unknowns, Turner, shoulders squared, fingers curled into a square, head rigidly fixed in position, approached the family. "As a representative of the United States Army," he said in a low voice, "it is my high privilege to present to you this flag. Let it be a symbol of the grateful appreciation that our nation feels for the distinguished service rendered to our country and our flag by your loved one."

Spc. Derek Bitte silently crossed the field and handed Donnie Meyer the three shell casings commemorating the rifle salute just fired.

"We've cried together, we've had every emotional battle you can think of at Willamette National."

— Cpl. Thomas Barella, 27

From Mount Scott, Turner can see downtown Portland and Mounts Hood, Rainer, St. Helens and Jefferson. Graves, beneath sycamores, cedar and birch, stretch across enough grass to hold 200 football fields. All things are equal here, each tombstone 1-by-2 feet, each plot, 4-by-8, the grass trimmed to national-shrine standards — 1 inch above the gray granite stones. Generals lie beside privates, Sgt. Benjamin Isenberg lies near Staff Sgt. David Weisenburg — both of Bravo Co., 2-162 Inf. Bn. — and now, Tech. Sgt. 5 Donald Meyer.

When the World War II veteran died in July, his son expected a recording of Taps and retirees presenting a flag. But as the funeral procession crested the hill July 14, Donnie Meyer saw six men in dress blues standing at attention. The leader raised a white gloved hand in a perfect salute.

Step. Step. They pulled the casket from the hearse. Step. Step. They carried the casket to the shelter. Meyer saw three riflemen on a low rise;

The Funeral Detail

Oregon Army National Guard Military Funeral Honors Team, Willamette National Cemetery

- Staff Sgt. Jeromy Turner, 27, Gresham
- Sgt. Charles Rice, 25, Milwaukie
- Cpl. Russell Schaeffer, 25, Portland
- Cpl. Thomas Barella, 27, Clackamas
- Spc. Derek Bitte, 25, Gresham
- Cpl. Kenneth Kaiser Jr., 23, Hillsboro
- Spc. Scott Mahe, 27, Sheridan
- Sgt. Kris Peterson, 22, Beaverton
- Sgt. Timothy Tompkins, 24, Gresham
- Sgt. Nickelaus DePaolo, 25, Vancouver

Buglers

- Sgt. 1st Class (Ret.) Robert Rutherford, 58, Gresham
- Sgt. Robert Tomsen, 67, Vancouver

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503-359-9352



Oregon Army National Guard Military Funeral Honors Team, prepares for a 21-gun salute at Staff Sgt. Nathaniel Brad Lindsey's funeral on Sept. 22, at Willamette National Cemetery. Lindsey was killed in a surprise attack on Sept. 9, while on patrol in Afghanistan.

a brick ledge at the front of the shelter. Turner read the veteran's name.

When Turner first reported for duty at Willamette National, he learned that veterans routinely arrived for burial with no honors requested. Some had no family, others were from out of state, others were homeless or had died alone. Within two days, he began conducting honors for these veterans, attended only by the team and the Veterans Affairs representative who accepted the flag. They grew to love the service, always the last conducted each day.

On his final afternoon as the NCO in

charge of military funeral honors at Willamette National, Turner stood at attention next to the box of ashes Rice had just placed on the ledge. One hundred meters away, the rifle team fired its salute. The bugler's Taps filled the air. In silence, the team unfolded and refolded the flag. Turner presented the flag to the VA representative. And in the dying light, he raised his hand in a perfect salute.

This article was reprinted with permission from the Oregonian. The author, Julie Sullivan, can be reached at: 503-221-8068, or via e-mail at: juliesullivan@oregonian.com.



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

Staff Sgt. Jeromy Turner (right), oversees Sgt. Charles Rice (left), and Cpl. Russell Schaeffer (center), as they practice folding the U.S. flag at Willamette National Cemetery on Nov. 3.



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

Oregon Army National Guard Military Funeral Honors Team leader, Staff Sgt. Jeromy Turner, salutes Oregon National Guard Adjutant General, Maj. Gen. Raymond F. Rees, as he presents the folded U.S. flag during the memorial service on Sept. 22 at Willamette National Cemetery for Staff Sgt. Nathaniel B. Lindsey of 205th RCAG, HHC 41st BCT.

Orient Shield: An opportunity for the Oregon Army National Guard to strengthen bonds with Asian counterparts

Story and photos by Staff Sgt. Russell Bassett,

115th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

SEKIYAMA MANEUVER AREA, Japan — "You go away. No come in town," 1st Sgt. Robert Hanks said to members of his own Oregon National Guard unit. "We no trust you. Go away."

Those words were the only ones the Soldiers of Alpha Company, 2nd Battalion, 162nd Infantry could understand when they came upon a mock village during a patrol in the jungles of Japan's Sekiyama Maneuver Area Oct. 23.

Hanks and members of the battalion's mortar section were role-playing rural villagers and, except for a few choice words, were not speaking in English. The hostile attitude, however, was easily understood by the Oregon Soldiers.

Sometimes winning a fight means making a friend

"We don't want any trouble, but there is suspected enemy activity in this area," Alpha Commander 1st Lt. Cory Jones replied to the villagers, offering them a Gatorade. "We are here to help you."

About 240 Oregon citizen Soldiers from 2nd Bn., 162nd Inf. deployed for two weeks to Japan in October for Orient Shield, an annual, bilateral training exercise with the Japanese Ground Self Defense Force.

The unit, which is headquartered in Eugene, joined Japanese soldiers, U.S. Soldiers stationed in Japan, and other National Guard Soldiers from different states to enhance U.S./Japan combat readiness, improve bilateral operations between the two armies, promote professional relationships and good will, and demonstrate U.S. resolve to support security interests of friends and allies in the region.

"This is by far the best training we have done in the last year. It's very realistic."

— 1st Lt. Cory Jones

The unit is no stranger to working with foreign militaries, as 2-162 deployed to Iraq in 2004 for Operation Iraqi Freedom II and Mongolia in August for Exercise Khaan Quest 2006. The unit also deployed last year to Louisiana to provide relief for Hurricane Katrina and Rita victims. The last time the unit deployed to Japan was in 1996 in support of the annual North Wind exercise.

"From Mongolia to Iraq to Kuwait, we always have to build a rapport with a foreign

brought experience from tours in Iraq. Japan deployed about 600 soldiers to Iraq in early 2004. The deployment marked a significant turning point in Japan's history, as it was the first time since the end of World War II that Japan sent troops abroad except for a few minor UN peacekeeping missions.

Japan pulled its troops out of Iraq this summer.

"The TCP (traffic control point)

responsible for training the Iraqi army. The unit captured more than 100 insurgents and 300 weapons caches while in Iraq.

After the first day of training in Japan, Tanguy was pleased with what he saw.

"It's been great," the commander said. "All the Soldiers are really engaged with their Japanese counterparts, more so than I thought at this point in the exercise."

The focused switched to collective training in the second week, including recon and surveillance and cordon and search operations.

The mortar section, playing not only civilians on the battlefield but also an insurgent enemy force, added a combat-realistic touch to the training. Like the Oregon unit faced when it deployed to Iraq, the enemy didn't always wear a uniform, and the same person shaking their hand one day could be the one placing an improvised explosive device on main supply routes the next.

"The training's been phenomenal, amazing," Jones, a Corvallis resident, said. "This is by far the best training we have done in the last year. It's very realistic."



Oregon National Guard and Japan Ground Self Defense Force troops salute the U.S. and Japanese flags during the Orient Shield opening ceremony.

military force," said Capt. Peter Aguilar, 2-162 project officer. "We know we have to be able to forge those professional relationships."

The first week's training was focused on individual tasks such as weapons training, running a traffic control point, short range marksmanship and close quarters combat. The training was conducted bilaterally with Japan's 2nd Infantry Battalion, 1st Airborne Brigade.

The Oregon citizen Soldiers have much experience conducting traffic checkpoints, as the operations were a regular part of the routine when the unit was in Baghdad.

Several of the Japanese soldiers also

ops we learned in Iraq, we're teaching to the Japanese," Eugene resident and 2-162's operations noncommissioned officer Sgt. 1st Class Jerry Glesmann said. "They have a way of doing it as well, but we are showing them the ways that we did it Iraq."

"You can train and train and train, but there is a perspective you learn in combat that you just can't get if you don't deploy," 2-162 commander Lt. Col. Edward Tanguy added.

In Iraq, 2-162 was responsible for maintaining an area of operations in Baghdad, and was involved in fighting in Fallujah and Najaf. Members of the unit were also

movement techniques, among others. They then went to the range to practice with the M-24 sniper rifle, the weapon used by U.S. Army snipers and the weapon chosen by the Japanese army for their snipers.

"I feel very honored to be over here training the first snipers this Japanese Airborne Brigade has had since World War II," said



Staff Sgt. Shane Ward of Alsea observes targets for Japanese sharpshooters during Orient Shield sniper training Oct. 19. The sniper section of the Oregon National Guard's 2-162 Inf. helped to stand-up the first sniper section in the Japanese regular army since World War II.

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Japan sniper school

The 2nd Bn., 162nd Inf.'s sniper section also deployed to Japan to support Orient Shield. The Oregon snipers helped stand-up the first sniper section in the Japanese regular army since World War II.

Sniper school for infantrymen in the United States is three-to-five weeks, but in Japan, the Oregon Soldiers had little more than a week to get their Japanese counterparts proficient in the sniper mission, which is to provide highly effective fires from a long distance and gather and report intelligence information.

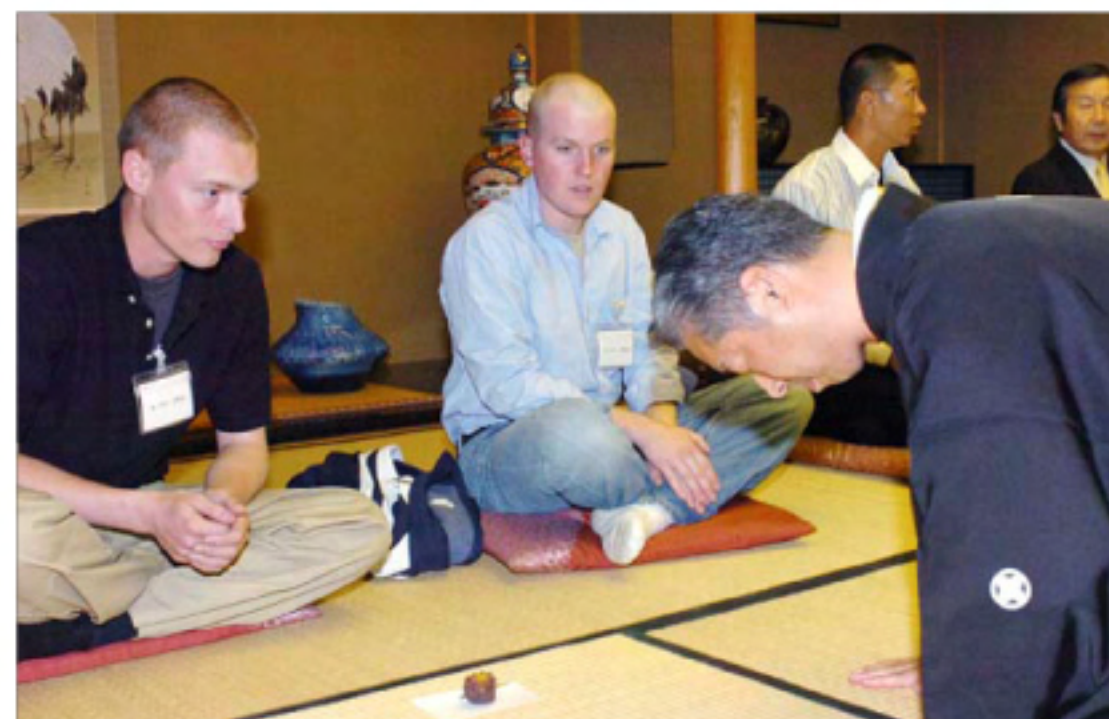
The troops spent the first several days of Orient Shield in the classroom, learning sniper roles and responsibilities, fundamentals of marksmanship, range estimation, sniper tasks, camouflage, observation, rapid-target engagement and

"Sniper school means you are working with the best."

— Staff Sgt. Shane Ward

movement techniques, among others. They then went to the range to practice with the M-24 sniper rifle, the weapon used by U.S. Army snipers and the weapon chosen by the Japanese army for their snipers.

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Vancouver resident Pvt. Dustin Morgan (left) and Eugene resident Spc. Brandon Garner, enjoy a traditional Japanese tea party during a visit to one of the local Japanese host families

Waldport resident Sgt. Nathan Gushwa, the only 2-162 sniper to experience combat as a sniper. "That to me is a real honor."

The Japanese soldiers "have been very attentive," added Spc. Ryan Welch, a 2-162 sniper from Eugene. "They are asking very smart questions, especially with the language barrier. They are eager and disciplined. Really, they've been the ideal students."

While the Japanese have not had snipers in some time, most every infantry unit in the United States Army has them. The Oregon sharpshooters say being a sniper is the pinnacle of infantry soldiering.

"Amongst ranks in the infantry, to be sent to sniper school means you are above the rest, and once you get back to your unit, you know you are working with the best," said Staff Sgt. Shane Ward, a sniper from Alsea.

Sgt. Aaron McNelly, a Newburg resident, said he became a sniper for the freedom.

"You are given a lot more freedom to complete the mission then you do in a regular line unit," he said. "You are told what they want done, but then you are given the autonomy to go out and accomplish that mission."



Members of Charlie Company, 2-162 Inf. Bn., disembark from a helicopter during Orient Shield's first day of training.

Strengthening a bond

As the world watched North Korea, which tested a nuclear weapon Oct. 9, the 2-162 Soldiers were demonstrating the strong partnership between the United States and Japan.

"This exercise will be an opportunity to enhance Japanese Ground Self Defense Force/U.S. Army combat readiness and demonstrate to Asia the alliance between our countries," Tanguy said during Orient Shield's opening ceremony. "By the end of the exercise, we all will achieve enduring bilateral relationships, good will and mutual understanding ... through tough training and cultural exchange."

Tanguy's counterpart for the exercise, Japan's 2nd Inf. Bn, 1st Airborne Bde. Commander Lt. Col. Shizuo Sekine, also focused on strengthening the relationship between the two countries in his speech to approximately 240 Oregon and 350 Japanese Soldiers assembled for the opening ceremony.

"At this time, we establish the occasion for both Japan and the U.S. to make groups and conduct the training with close cooperation," Sekine said.

To promote good will and mutual understanding between the two countries, the Oregon Soldiers were encouraged to not only train with their Japanese counterparts but also bond with them, which they did with vigor and aplomb.

Before the first day of training, the Guardsmen were treated to a party with traditional Japanese food and drink, and during the first week of training, Soldiers from both countries shared stories and laughs at the "friendship tent." The language difference was no a barrier, as the Soldiers from both armies participated in the activities with an enviable amount of enthusiasm and zeal.

"There's a feeling of unity between the two organizations, and that was seen at last night's opening party," Glesmann said. "There is a respect there. They are definitely very disciplined and extremely organized."

During a break in the exercise, many of the Americans were treated to a tour of Kasuyagama Castle, former home of Lord Uesugi Kenshin, The Soldiers also toured a rice and sake factory, where they were able to see both the traditional and modern ways of making sake and buy gifts for relatives back home.

A highlight of the Japanese deployment for many of the Oregon troops was the home visit. Families and organizations from the area invited many of the troops into their homes to experience Japanese culture and hospitality.

The Takata and Takata East Rotary clubs sponsored four Oregon Guardsmen, treating them to a traditional tea party and meal,

complete with geishas. "That was probably the most amazing experience of my life," Gresham resident Pvt. Brain Davis said after the visit. "I love Japan."

Based on the results of a recent poll of Japanese conducted by the U.S. Embassy in Japan, the Japanese return that love.

According to the poll, 80 percent of

Japanese favor the alliance with the United States, and 73 percent said a U.S. military presence is needed in the area to maintain peace and stability.

"The relationships that are being built down at the junior Soldier level are a significant part of this exercise," Tanguy said. "Obviously what we do at the higher levels with the bilateral coordination is important,

but what is really important is when you see the young Japanese soldiers and the young American Soldiers -- even though they can't speak each other's language -- sitting down sharing a lunch, laughing together, sharing their experiences, trading (uniform) patches and things like that. That's where we are really making our money and that's the real benefit."

Orient Shield concluded Oct. 25, and all who deployed were home by Oct. 28.

Three of the 2-162's companies -- Eugene-based Alpha Company, Gresham-based Headquarters Co. and Cottage Grove-based Charlie, along with a few Soldiers from Hillsboro-based Delta and Eugene-based Echo Company -- deployed to Japan for Orient Shield.



Sgt. Steven Tessitore (right), 2-162 mortar sergeant and resident of Corvallis shows members of Japan's 2nd Infantry Battalion, 1st Airborne Brigade how the United States Army sights in their mortars Oct. 19 in Japan. Along with showing the Japanese how the U.S. Army infantry operates, the Oregon National Guard Soldiers also learned Japanese tactics during Orient Shield.



Oregon National Guard Soldier Spc. Alvaro Castaneda (left) of Springfield shares a Tootsie Roll with a member of the Japanese Ground Self Defense Force (right), as Spc. Orlo Flock of Eugene (second from left) and Sgt. James Cutshall of Elmira watch. Many Oregon National Guard Soldiers established lasting friendships with their Japanese counterparts during the bilateral training and cultural exchanges of Orient Shield.



Lt. Col. Edward Tanguy (right), commander of the Oregon National Guard's 2nd Battalion, 162nd Infantry, shakes hands with Lt. Col. Shizuo Sekine, commander of Japan's 2nd Infantry Battalion, 1st Airborne Brigade during the Orient Shield opening ceremony at Sekiyama Maneuver Area, Japan.

Oregon officials breathe a sigh of relief as '06 fire season closes

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

To say the Oregon Army National Guard's aviation units were busy this summer would be to understate the obvious.

In addition to MEDEVAC and the Military Air Rescue Team (MART) missions, and supporting the Air Assault and Rappel Master courses, Oregon's aviation units set new records during Oregon's 2006 fire fighting season.

According to Col. Dave Greenwood, State Army Aviation Officer for the Oregon Army National Guard, crews from both the 1042 Medical Company (Army Aviation) and Det. 1, Delta Co., 113th Aviation, went above and beyond their normal mission, helping with Oregon's fire season for 48 consecutive days – the longest timeframe ever for this particular mission.

"These guys just got back from a war (in March 2006), and they were out there for 48 days, which is a record," Greenwood said.

Oregon's Governor, Theodore R. Kulongoski, declared a State of Emergency on July 21st – an action which allows the use of National Guard resources by State agencies. This declaration normally results in the activation of Oregon National Guard aviation crews, but Greenwood decided to allow his unit to volunteer for the firefighting missions.

"To take them away from their families (for Afghanistan), then shortly thereafter send them out to fight fires is asking a lot."

According to Greenwood, his Soldiers did it with their typical pride and professionalism.

"It was a tremendous effort of the 113 Soldiers on eight separate incidents," Greenwood added. "It was a tremendous sacrifice and commitment on their part."

Greenwood said Kulongoski's statement on July 21 was largely a preventative measure, with environmental and weather conditions heralding the start of a big fire season. His actions were perfectly timed. As it turned out, a few days later in Eastern Oregon is when all hell broke loose.

On July 24, a lightning strike in the Black Crater area of the Deschutes National Forest in Sisters Ore., started what would become one of Oregon's largest conflagrations – growing to more than 9,200 acres, and threatening the evacuation of the entire town of Sisters, Ore.

Federal Emergency Management Agency Director R. David Paulison said the state's request for federal fire management assistance was approved after it was confirmed that the fire was threatening more than 204 homes, and from 350 to 400 businesses. The fire triggered mandatory evacuations of 496 residents, with 1,033 more under standby evacuation at the time of the grant request on July 27.

"It's critical that the men and women who selflessly battle wildfires know they will continue to have the support of the federal government," said Paulison. "This declaration is one demonstration of that support."



A wildfire rages in the Black Crater area of Sisters, Ore. The National Guard is an integral part of Oregon's yearly battle with wildfires.

At the outset of what USA Today called one of the biggest fire seasons since 2000, the Oregon National Guard coordinated with the Oregon Department of Forestry to manage their aviation assets and personnel in a wide variety of wildfire suppression and firefighting roles.

The Department of Forestry classifies the UH-60 Blackhawks and CH-47 Chinooks flown by the Oregon National Guard as Type-1 aircraft, a classification given only to airframes which can carry more than 700 gallons of water – an invaluable commodity during the height of the wildfire season.

"We devised a plan for the mobilization of the Oregon National Guard, utilizing both aircraft from Pendleton and from Salem," said John Boro, Fire Operations Manager for the Oregon Department of Forestry.

Boro, a Nebraska native who moved to Oregon in 1976 after graduating from college and serving in the Navy assisting helicopters land aboard an amphibious transport ship, has spent 30 years with ODF fighting fire. He stressed the important relationship between the Oregon National Guard and the Oregon Department of Forestry.

"There is a really good working relationship between the ODF and the Oregon Guard," Boro said. "The Oregon Guard is aggressive by nature by what they do, and we are an aggressive firefighting organization, so it's a good fit."

One area of responsibility – typically assigned to the state's commercial aviation companies, such as Evergreen Aviation, Erickson Skycrane, and others – is initial attack fire suppression action. According to Greenwood, because civilian contractors were assigned to firefighting projects in Oregon and other areas of the Pacific Northwest, an added responsibility of initial attack fell to Oregon's two helicopter units.

Greenwood said initial attack involves being the first responder to a specific lightning strike. The role is important because it is not only the first line of defense during wildfire season, but the action prevents a much larger fire from developing.

"In John Day, there were 600 of these lightning strikes, which caused 60 fires in one day," Greenwood said.

Maj. Tom Lingle, Army Aviation Support Facility #1 Commander, and 641st Medical Battalion Commander, recognized the effort the unit's Soldiers put forth. "Our Soldiers are incredibly amazing and they prove it again and again," he said.

While Greenwood manages the inter-agency relationship and the overall global view of the aviation units, Lingle oversees logistical support for the air crews, and ensures that all flight crews adhere to the rest policy. According to Lingle, the job of fighting fires isn't an easy one.

"We have units coming off deployments, and we moved into all the other missions during the summer, so it was a challenge to make sure all the crews were trained and ready to go before the fire season kicked off," Lingle added.

"But one of the things that Greenwood and I monitored was the 'burn out factor,'" Lingle said.

The air crews flew almost 88 hours in the CH-47 "Chinook", while UH-60 "Blackhawk" crews flew 330 flight hours, both dropping over one million gallons of water each. Blackhawk crews also provided 24-7 MEDEVAC coverage in support of emergency incidents throughout the state. Moreover, crews shuttled between Black Crater, Tollgate, Edgington, and the Crossroads communities in the Sisters Wildlife area in order to battle fires throughout the region. The high operations tempo was accomplished on top of already scheduled aircraft support for training missions for the Regional Training Institute and the Air Assault course held at Camp Rilea in Warrenton, Ore. in Aug. 2006.

"It was my first year doing fires as a pilot," said Chief Warrant Officer 2 Shaun Lazier, pilot for the 1042nd Medical Company.

"But it was bittersweet because I got all this experience flying the Firehawk, and you're doing such a cool job flying such a high risk job, but you're also watching the forest burn and buildings getting damaged," Lazier said.



Photos courtesy of Col. Dave Greenwood, State Army Aviation Officer

An Oregon Army National Guard UH-60 Blackhawk assists with firefighting season by dipping a water bucket into one of the many ponds located in eastern Oregon.

The Firehawk is a modified UH-60 Blackhawk which utilizes an automated filling system consisting of an under-belly tank and remote snorkel system. The pilot releases the payload of water from the Firehawk in much the same way an air-tanker would, by opening a set of "bomb-bay" doors over the drop zone.

According to Lazier, 24, who lives in Beaverton, Ore., the fires can be unpredictable. Winds, temperatures, and humidity all play a part in who will have the upper hand. But in the battle between man and nature, there are small rewards.

"It's definitely exciting going out there seeing a big fire, working six hours a day and by the end of the week you can see the fire dying down," Lazier said. "Once in a while, the ground crew will say over the radio, 'nice shot.'"

"It's amazing when you're fighting those fires, and you bank the aircraft and you feel that heat," Greenwood said. "In 1988 when I was working the Yellowstone fires, I saw a 200 year-old tree disappear in seconds. It was just like lighting a match. It disappeared that quickly."

"The clouds looked like nuclear bursts. The fire can self-generate 80 mph winds that can spread the fire's growth at an unbelievable pace," Greenwood continued.

According to Greenwood and Lingle, people don't just show up on the doorstep of the 1042nd or the 113th expecting to fight fires. When unit personnel return from Advanced Individual Training (AIT), it typically takes them about a year to be signed off on procedures before they can even begin to take part in either of Oregon's aviation units' standard missions. Only at this point can Soldiers get involved in specialized missions like firefighting and flying the Firehawk or the water buckets.

"It is challenging because we're operating at the absolute maximum performance capability of the aircraft," Greenwood said. "There's times when we have to bleed off water because we may exceed the performance envelope of the aircraft. You definitely have to be on your A-Game."

But fighting fires does not only involve flying helicopters. According to Lingle, in addition to the flight crew and aircraft, a typical 'package' involves a maintenance crew, a refueling tanker, and replacement and maintenance equipment. Then there's the support back at home base.

"The Joint Operations Center (JOC) plays a very important role in all of this," Greenwood said. "They greatly assist us by processing the daily reports we send back to them, as well as making sure everyone gets paid," he said.

The JOC, headed by Sgt. Maj. Raymond Berryman, is also in charge of tracking equipment and personnel – information that has been prepared long before the fire season even started. Wildfire season requirements

are matched to crew qualifications, and personnel logistics and information based on a document known as OPLAN Smokey. The document provides a guide to how many crews, support equipment and personnel will be required, as well as the ground support they'll need once they arrive in the staging area. The key, say both Lingle and Greenwood, is to have 99 percent of the solution done by June 1. But in light of new equipment requirements and the assignment of initial attack to Oregon's aviation units, OPLAN Smokey may need some revision.

"We're going to revise OPLAN Smokey and upgrade some of our equipment to give our Soldiers the tools to do their job better," Greenwood said.

On the books is a plan to purchase equipment which will allow for direct communication between the air crews, the JOC and command and control personnel at the helibase and in the air. Greenwood is also looking into implementation of the long-line sling procedures for supplying ground crews during the fire fighting season, and the purchase of water buckets, which aren't cheap at \$30,000 each.

"It's not standard issue for us to have water buckets," Greenwood said. "They're expensive, and we have to also maintain them."

Boro says the cost of actually fighting the fires is a complicated process, but regardless of how the bills are paid, according to both Greenwood and Boro, the relationship between the Oregon Guard and the ODF is effective at protecting property and lives throughout Oregon.

"The Smoke Jumpers and ODF are exceptionally professional," Greenwood said. "It's a great example of interagency effectiveness."

"I know this sounds like a cliché," Boro said, "but we depend on the guard to be there when we need them. And they definitely were there for the state of Oregon during the 2006 fire season. I just hope that the Governor's office and the people of Oregon recognize what the Guard did (for the state) this year," he added.

As the 2006 firefighting season drew to a close and air crews returned to their home base, residents of several central and eastern Oregon communities breathed a collective sigh of relief. Loss was inevitable however, as Oregon lost more than 497,000 acres of pristine forest. The Federal government estimated almost \$1.5 billion was spent to combat wildfires throughout the northwestern states of Idaho, Oregon, Washington and Northern California, making it the costliest fire season in 50 years.

But according to Greenwood, the statistics pale in comparison to the respect he has for Mother Nature.

"We make a difference," Greenwood said. "But ultimately it's Mother Nature who decides when this thing is over."

102 Civil Support Team: Fully certified, and ready to work

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

BROOKS, Ore. – The Oregon National Guard's 102nd Civil Support Team held a demonstration event at the Marion County Regional Fire Training Facility in Brooks, Ore., on Oct. 27. The event showcased the unit's capabilities in supporting local, state, and federal authorities with weapons of mass destruction incidents.

Pat Egan, Chief of Staff to Governor Theodore R. Kulongoski, Maj. Gen. Raymond F. Rees, The Adjutant General of the Oregon National Guard, and Assistant Chief Bob Jung, of Marion County Fire District 1, attended the demonstration, along with many police, firefighters and military representatives.

"It's reassuring to know we have this level of cooperation and equipment employed to respond this quickly," said Egan. "I'm very impressed with the ability to move information this quickly and work with multiple agencies at the same time."

"I think this is a demonstration of the Guard's commitment to national defense and the defense of the people of Oregon," said Rees. "I'm delighted to have the opportunity to show this (unit) off, and look forward to a better relationship between all the first responder communities throughout Oregon."

In the demonstration scenario, a sarin gas leak caused a vehicle accident in front of a



102nd CST Survey Team members, Sgt. Richard Hosmer (left) and Sgt. Paul Edgerly prepare to enter a structure to check for Sarin gas contamination. Play actors from Clackamas County Fire lay in the foreground. Hosmer and Edgerly were part of a 102 CST demonstration event at the Marion County Regional Fire Training Facility in Brooks, Ore., on Oct. 27.

building, which was also on fire. Firefighters who responded to the vehicle accident and structure fire were overcome by the simulated gas cloud. Civil authorities then contacted the 102nd CST for assistance in identifying and eliminating the dangerous substance.

After arriving on the scene, Sgt. Richard Hosmer and Sgt. Paul Edgerly, Survey Team Members for the 102nd CST, both dressed in HAZMAT suits, had to pick their way around the bodies of simulated casualties overcome by the sarin gas.

"I think it was great that we had a number of first responders come out to our event today," said Lt. Col. Steve Ferrell, 102nd CST commander. "We're always interested to show the capabilities of the team so the first responder community knows they have another tool to use in the event of a WMD incident in Oregon or the rest of the country."

The 102nd CST took part in a similar training exercise in February 2006, working with the Oregon State Police, Portland Police, the FBI, area Fire Departments and HAZMAT teams.

The Salem-based unit consists of 22

full-time Army and Air National Guard members who can rapidly mobilize to any incident throughout Oregon. They assist civil authorities with early detection and analysis of materials which may be chemical, biological or nuclear in nature. The unit's goal is to minimize the impact on civilian populations and facilitate requests for follow-on emergency and military support by civil authorities.

"We bring capabilities most of the first responders don't have," said Ferrell. "We assist them with identifying what type of nuclear, biological or chemical agent may have been used, we advise them on whether it's best to evacuate or shelter in place, and we provide communication through secure and non-secure satellite networks."

The 102nd CST was authorized to become a full-time team on March 9, 2004. After a thorough screening and selection process, the first members of the full-time team started duty on June 1, 2004. Since then, members of the unit spent nearly 800 hours each training and equipping in order to receive federal certification from the Department of Defense. The unit is one of 55 full-time teams throughout the country

authorized by Congress to assist first responders during a WMD incident.

The team also had to become proficient in every aspect of their equipment, which includes a mobile laboratory, communication vehicles and decontamination equipment.

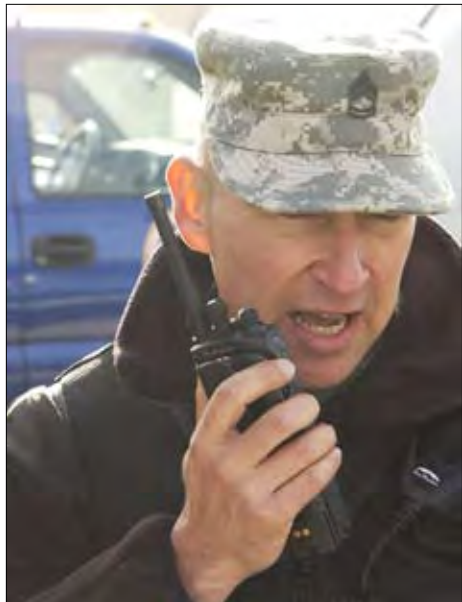
The 102nd CST was externally evaluated by U.S. Army North (then 5th U.S. Army) in October 2005. The unit received federal certification by DoD on July 24, 2006.

"This certification by the Secretary of Defense is an indication to Congress that we have the right equipment, training and personnel to provide assistance to first responders who don't have the capabilities we offer them," Ferrell said.

In addition, DoD certification means the 102nd CST can be integrated into the National Response Plan to provide support to other states if needed.

"There's no doubt about their capabilities," said Rees. "These people have gone through the training, they've been certified by a national certification team, validated by the Secretary of Defense as to their abilities."

"We couldn't ask for a more capable team to help Oregon," Rees added.



Sgt. Bill Gent, Information Systems NCO for the 102nd Civil Support Team, communicates with Survey Team Members during the CST demonstration event in October.

Soldier takes part in joint response exercise with civil authorities

EDITORIAL

Story by Maj. Michael Warrington,
Rear Detachment Commander,
141st Brigade Support Battalion

After returning from the deployment in support of Hurricane Katrina, officers and NCOs of Charlie Medical Co., 141st Brigade Support Battalion asked, "What can we do with our community in order to better prepare for a disaster here at home?"

The answer included getting to know the other agencies that also work in the disaster response business. As a result, Charlie

Med. is laying the ground for Operation Joint Response, a joint interagency training exercise to take place during the 2007 training year.

The Evacuation Platoon Leader for Charlie Med., 2nd Lt. William Coker, works for the Tualatin Valley Fire District when he isn't in uniform. Coker contacted his civilian supervisor regarding the plan, which was received very favorably. As part of the planning process, I was invited to participate in the Community Academy, a community outreach program for business and civic leaders who want to learn more about emergency response.

The academy was held September 8-9, 2006. Among the civic leaders present were the Washington County Administrator, the Facilities Director for Nike, Inc., the Emergency Director for Intel, a clinical physician, and a reporter for the Beaverton Valley Times.

The Community Academy consists of classroom training and practical exercises pertaining to the task organization, operation, and support of routine fire and rescue duties. Classroom instruction included discussion on organizational culture and purpose, business model and quality measures, fire code enforcement and education, emergency medical services, deployment planning, and overview of human resources activities.

Practical exercises included demonstration and hands-on turnout drills, truck operations, hydrant drills, and a burn tower demonstration. The second half of the train-



Maj. Michael Warrington (front row, left) pauses for a photo opportunity on Sept. 9, with members of Tualatin Valley Fire & Rescue.

ing consisted of an overnight ride along with a fire crew. I spent the remainder of the 24-hour shift working with the crew of Tualatin Station 53. During the night the crew responded to five calls ranging from vehicular accidents and injuries to 911 medical emergencies.

The conclusion of the academy included an after action review with district chief Jeff Johnson. He actively sought our feedback and perspective for ideas on how to make the fire service more reliable and community oriented.

As a result of this initial work, the foun-

ation for Operation Joint Response is set. Plans for joint interagency training at all levels of the Oregon National Guard will be complete in early 2007. Opportunities for participation in the Community Academy are ongoing as the academy is scheduled periodically throughout the year.

Highly informative with relevant overlap with National Guard community goals and objectives, I recommend this program for any staff officer or NCO who resides within the TVF&R district. For more information, please contact Maj. Michael Warrington at 503-280-8160.



Maj. Michael Warrington takes part in a joint-response exercise in September with the Tualatin Valley Fire & Rescue.

Oregon Soldiers bust Pakistani smugglers

Story by 1st Lt. Cathrin Fraker, Public Affairs Officer,
Combined Joint Task Force Phoenix V

KABUL, Afghanistan – On Sept. 25, Camp Phoenix Security Forces (SECFOR) raided a nearby compound capturing 18 men suspected of pilfering U.S. connexes in route to Camp Phoenix.

Soldiers from SECFOR received tips that connexes were being opened and contents were stolen prior to their arrival to Camp Phoenix and other Coalition locations. Intel suggested this was happening frequently as Pakistani truck drivers made contact and stopped on the way so smugglers could pilfer the connexes, reseal and send them onto their final destination. The stolen goods are then sold at various locations.

Spc. Richard Newberg, of Roseburg, Ore. and Pfc. Carl Schotthoefer of Grant's Pass, Ore. were working in a guard tower that evening. As soon as they saw the suspected vehicles moving into a compound they alerted the Base Defense and Operations Center (BDOC).

The BDOC redirected a dismounted patrol to assist in the raid. Sgt. Justin Dorn of Medford, Ore. led the members of his patrol to include some members of the Afghan National Police (ANP) to the compound. Mounted forces from the Ready Reaction Force (RRF) and Quick Reaction Force (QRF) were sent out to cordon the area to prevent the escape of any suspects. The command to move in was given and Alpha Company, 1st Platoon, 4th Squad entered the compound and apprehended the thieves.

Due to the tower guard's ability to maintain visibility of the situation and willingness of several local nationals to help, all the suspects were captured and taken to a local ANP Station for further questioning.

"Relationships built in the community were directly responsible for this success mission," 2nd Lt. Scott Marman, SECFOR Intelligence Officer, said.

Soldiers of Task Force Phoenix SECFOR have a feeling of accomplishment after eliminating this recurring security threat.

"They felt it was what they were sent here to do and they get great satisfaction from it," Marmam said. "Professionalism and proficiency were the order of the day."



Photo by Spc. Joshua Phillips, CJTF Phoenix V

Camp Phoenix Security Forces captured 18 men suspected of pilfering U.S. connex boxes in route to Camp Phoenix. Soldiers from A Co., 1-186 Infantry Battalion, 41st BCT detained the suspects for questioning.

News Briefs

Freedom Team Salute offers recognition

The Army's Freedom Team Salute (FTS) program recognizes the sacrifices of all members of the Army family.

Retired Soldiers and Army veterans, as well as the parents, spouses and civilian employers of current active duty Soldiers, are eligible to receive a personalized commendation package. The package includes an Army lapel pin, an Army decal, a Certificate of Appreciation and a letter of thanks.

For more information or to nominate someone for the FTS, visit the Freedom Team Salute Website at www.freedomteam-salute.com.

Military continuing education for Airmen offered online

Qualified NCOs and Airmen can attend the Satellite Non-Commissioned Officer Academy or Airman Leadership School programs from their home unit. Courses are offered two nights per week, and result in full in-residence credit.

Participants in the program will develop themselves for leadership opportunities within their unit, and fulfill important requirements for promotion opportunities. Students also receive one paid PT day for each night of class attended online, as well as 10 hours of Community College of the Air Force (CCAF) credit for NCOA, and nine hours of credit for ALS.

For more information, contact Tech. Sgt. Bonnie McGuffin at 865-985-3829, or Master Sgt. Kevin Thomas at 865-985-3496. They can also be reached via e-mail at bonnie.mcguffin@angtec.af.mil or kevin.thomas@angtec.af.mil.

Rilea given first-place National Environmental award

WARRENTON, Ore. – Camp Rilea was recently awarded the 2006 First Place Environmental Security Award in the "Environmental Quality, Industrial Installation" category by the National Guard Bureau.

The award qualifies the Oregon Army National Guard installation located near Warrenton, Ore., for competition at the Department of the Army level, as well as the Department of Defense level.

Rilea will receive a congratulatory letter, and will be allowed to choose one of the framed "Heritage Paintings" offered by the National Guard Bureau.

A formal award presentation is scheduled to take place at the National Environmental Workshop in April 2007.

"Everyone at Camp Rilea is excited and grateful to be recognized by the Guard Bureau," said Camp Rilea Facility Manager, Lt. Col. (Ret.) Ronald D. Kinsley.

"We work very hard on environmental issues," Kinsley continued. "It's a full team effort, and I want to congratulate everyone on a job well done."

According to Kinsley, Rilea is very well known throughout the nation as a great place to train.

"It's also a very beautiful place too," Kinsley added, noting the picturesque northern Oregon Coast.

Debt keeping troops from duty

Story by Associated Press

SAN DIEGO, Calif. – Thousands of U.S. troops are being barred from overseas duty because they are so deep in debt they are considered security risks, according to an Associated Press review of military records.

The number of troops held back has climbed dramatically in the past few years. And while they appear to represent a very small percentage of all U.S. military personnel, the increase is occurring at a time when the armed forces are stretched thin by the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan.

"We are seeing an alarming trend in degrading financial health," said Navy Capt. Mark D. Patton, commanding officer at San Diego's Naval Base Point Loma.

The Pentagon contends financial problems can distract personnel from their duties or make them vulnerable to bribery and treason. As a result, those who fall heavily into debt can be stripped of the security clearances they need to go overseas.

While the number of revoked clearances has surged since the beginning of the Iraq war, military officials say there is no evidence that service members are deliberately running up debts to stay out of harm's way.

Officials also say the increase has not undermined the military's fighting ability, though some say it has complicated the job of assembling some of the units needed in Iraq or Afghanistan.

The problem is attributed to a lack of financial smarts among recruits; reckless spending among those exhilarated to make it home alive from a tour of duty; and the profusion of "payday lenders" — businesses that allow military personnel to borrow against their next paycheck at extremely high interest rates.

The debt problems persist despite crackdowns on payday lenders and the financial counseling the Pentagon routinely offers to the troops.

Data supplied to the AP by the Navy, Marines and Air Force show that the number of clearances revoked for financial reasons rose every year between 2002 and 2005, climbing ninefold from 284 at the start of the period to 2,654 last year. Partial numbers from this year suggest the trend continues.

More than 6,300 troops in the three branches lost their clearances during that four-year period. Roughly 900,000 people are serving in the three branches, though not all need clearances.

The figures gathered by the AP represent just a piece of the problem, because the Army — which employs an additional 500,000 people and accounts for the vast majority of the 160,000 U.S. troops in Iraq and Afghanistan — rejected repeated requests over the past month to supply its data, saying such information is confidential.

At Point Loma, Patton said clearance revocations in key areas such as military police forces have gotten so common that he often looks for two Sailors to fill a single posting.

Still, Patton said he had never heard of anyone racking up bills to get out of combat. "There are folks who find ways of avoiding being deployed, as there always will be, but I've never seen any do it through finances," he said.

Security clearances are revoked when service members' debt payments amount to 30 percent to 40 percent of their salary. The exact amount depends on the military branch.

There are three levels of clearance — confidential, secret and top secret. Not all troops need clearance. Marine infantrymen don't, but some Marine specialists, such as those in intelligence, do. So do many jobs in the Navy and Air Force.

Financial problems are the overwhelming reason security clearances are revoked. Other reasons include criminal activity, questionable allegiance and ill health.

A key reason the military revokes clearances on financial grounds is the fear that Soldiers in debt might be tempted to sell secrets or equipment to the enemy.

Also, "when they are over there fighting, we like them to have their heads in the game," said Maj. Gen. Michael Lehnert, commander of Marine Corps bases in the western United States. "We like to have them ... not worrying about whether or not they are going to be able to make the mortgage payment or car payment."

Members of the brass also blame runaway interest rates at payday lending businesses, many of which are clustered outside bases around the country. Several states have cracked down on payday lending practices, and recently, President Bush signed legislation limiting how much these businesses can charge military personnel.

Some personnel fall into debt upon returning from combat. "It can be hard to cut that sense of elation and desire to live for the moment," Lehnert said. "Some tend to get themselves overextended financially."

Also, when they go to war, they get combat pay, and none of their income is taxed.

Continued on NEXT PAGE

Bronze Star awarded 62 years later



Photo by Spc. Joshua Phillips, CJTF Phoenix V

World War II veteran, Pvt. (Ret.) Edward Lessick (seated) was awarded the Bronze Star during a ceremony held at Willamette Falls Hospital in Oregon City.

He was awarded the Bronze Star for actions involving reinforcement of an allied airfield on the island New Guinea in the early part of 1943, and although he was officially awarded the medal in February 1944, Lessick never received the medal. The error was discovered in 2005.

Lessick was invited to Washington D.C. for an award ceremony in October, 2006, with a group of other WWII veterans who faced the same situation, but because of health problems, Lessick was unable to attend. The Veterans Commemoration Association arranged for the mailing of the medal to Oregon so officials from the Oregon National Guard could present the award to Lessick.

Pictured above from left to right: Pat Moritz, Oregon Veteran's Group representative, Maj. Michael Warrington, Rear Detachment Commander for the 141st Brigade Support Battalion, Pvt. Lessick, 141st Support Battalion Master Sgt. Mark Moir, and Lessick's wife Judy.

Warrington also presented Lessick with a Battalion coin.

Quotable Quotes

"The only bad thing about a holiday is that it's followed by a non-holiday."

— Henny Youngman, comedian,
(1906 — 1998)

Continued from **PREVIOUS PAGE**

That can lead them to overspend when they come home.

Patton said that like other services, the Navy offers zero-interest emergency loans. Also, military personnel commonly take money-management classes as part of basic training.

"Every time we go in and do an indoctrination brief, there is instruction or training in place to give them some of the pitfalls of debt," said Terry Harris, a personal finance educator at the Pensacola Naval Air Station in Florida. "We do inform them about the pitfalls of security clearances being lost to that."

The increase in finance-related revocations could actually be a good sign — it could reflect greater awareness among the troops, according to Chief Master Sgt. Rodney J. McKinley, the Air Force's highest-ranking noncommissioned officer.

"We have a few more people coming forward and saying, 'Hey, I'm having some financial difficulty and need help,' versus going down the other path where they keep so quiet," McKinley said.

Army changes advertising slogan

WASHINGTON, D.C. - In its battle to win the hearts and minds of recruiting-age Americans, the Army is replacing its main ad slogan — "An Army of One" — with one it hopes will pack more punch: "Army Strong."

The new approach, the fruit of a \$200 million annual contract with a major advertising agency, was announced in October by Army Secretary Francis J. Harvey. He said "Army Strong" will be the centerpiece of a multimedia ad campaign to be launched Nov. 9, timed to coincide with Veterans Day weekend.

Army officials acknowledge that recruiting during wartime is difficult, particularly with the Iraq war grinding on far longer than Bush administration officials expected and U.S. troops dying in battle almost every day.

"There's no question that we want to have a marketing boost right now, it's important to us," said Lt. Gen. Robert L. Van Antwerp, who oversees the recruiting effort as commander of U.S. Army Accessions Command.

The Army missed its recruiting target in 2005 by the widest margin in more than two decades, but bounced back this year to reach its goal of signing up 80,000 new Soldiers, in part by offering bigger financial incentives, increasing its cadre of recruiters and making more use of websites to reach young people. It also has accepted more applicants with lower-tier scores on aptitude tests.

Van Antwerp acknowledged that negative news from Iraq "is a factor" that can inhibit young people from joining the Army, but he said the advertising campaign will not gloss over the risks of war. More than 2,700 members of the U.S. military have died since the Iraq war began in March 2003.

"Every recruiter will tell you, there is a very strong likelihood that you're going to deploy — and pretty early on in your career," he said.

Army officials said the switch did not mean the "Army of One" slogan was a loser, but many have criticized it.

Loren Thompson, a defense analyst at the Lexington Institute research group, said the previous slogan seemed to promote the notion that you could join the Army and preserve your individuality.

"If you want to be an 'Army of One' you probably want to join the Hell's Angels, not the U.S. Army," he said.

The Army adopted the "Army of One" slogan in January 2001 after research showed that young people saw life in the military as dehumanizing. It had replaced the "Be All You Can Be" campaign, which lasted nearly 20 years but which Army officials had soured on at a time of recruiting problems.

"Army Strong" was developed by McCann Worldgroup, the communications firm the Army hired last December after struggling through a disappointing recruiting year. The overall five-year contract with McCann Worldgroup is valued at \$1 billion, with the first two years guaranteed at \$200 million annually.

The new slogan, developed in numerous tests with focus groups and interviews with

Soldiers, is meant to convey the idea that if you join the Army you will gain physical and emotional strength, as well as strength of character and purpose.

"What will happen if you come into the Army is what soldiers know happens: you become better," Van Antwerp said in an interview. It also is aimed at selling the merits of Army service to parents, teachers and other "influencers" — adults who directly influence a young person's direction in life, Van Antwerp said.

Harvey said the ad campaign "speaks to the essential truth" of being a Soldier.

Eric Keshin, chief operating officer at McCann Worldgroup, said in an interview that "Army Strong" represents "an evolution that is moving with the times" to enable the Army to meet its recruiting goals.

The other military services also rely on slogans to spearhead their advertising campaigns. Just last month the Air Force switched its from "Cross Into the Blue" to "Do Something Amazing." The Navy has relied on "Accelerate Your Life" since January 2001, and the Marines have long used "The Few. The Proud."

TRICARE offers travel medical tips

While you hope you won't need medical treatment while traveling, you should be prepared in case it is necessary.

Before traveling outside the area where you live, consult with your MTF or TRICARE Service Center and learn how best to access urgent care and avoid out-of-pocket medical expenses. They can advise you whether you need to call your PCM before seeking Urgent Care.

It is important to note that emergency care does not require prior authorization before treatment. However, your PCM and TriWest should be notified within 24 hours or by the next business day of any emergency inpatient admission.

For more information, contact 1-888-TRI-WEST. When in doubt you can dial 1-888-TRIWEST to learn the status of your MTF's Urgent Care Notification Process.

Uniforms now available online

Busy troops can now assemble their uniforms with just a few clicks of the mouse. The virtual exchange's new "Uniform Ready-to-Wear" website makes it easy to complete uniform orders through one easy-to-use webpage. The final product is shipped to the Soldier's or Airman's door, ready to wear right out of the box. ACUs and BDUs can be ordered along with add-on items such as boots, belts, t-shirts and socks. For a small fee a local alterations contractor will even attach all nametapes, rank, insignia, badges and patches on BDUs before they are mailed.

The website can be accessed by logging on to www.aafes.com and clicking on "Military Uniforms Ready-to-Wear."

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 for reimbursement of fees paid for Oregon Hunting and Fishing Licenses.

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 503-584-3982.

JFHQ JAG Officers head to Afghanistan

SALEM, Ore. — Two Oregon Army National Guard JAG officers recently deployed to Afghanistan. They will join more than 900 Oregon Army National Guard Soldiers already there.

Capt. Sean O'Day, of Salem, Ore., and 1st Lt. Nick Paulson of Portland, Ore., both traditional Guardsmen with the Oregon Army National Guard, volunteered for the deployment. In early October, they departed for Camp Shelby, Mississippi for two weeks of training before heading to Afghanistan in mid-November.

The pair will cross-train with JAG officers already in Afghanistan who are directly supporting the Afghan National Army mission. They will join Combined Joint Task Force Phoenix V, a joint-force coalition, led by the Oregon Army National Guard's 41st Brigade Combat Team, comprising military personnel from many other states and U.S. territories.

Paulson, who has a background in bankruptcy law, recently received his commission in the Oregon Army National Guard. O'Day is the Assistant City Attorney for the City of Salem, at one time worked for the Governor's office.

Army Guard releases keepsake holiday ornament



WASHINGTON D.C. — The 2006 Army National Guard Keepsake Ornament is now available for purchase through the Army National Guard Readiness Center. Sales benefit the Army National Guard Morale, Welfare, and Recreation Program.

The Army National Guard is an organization with great pride and is one of this country's most enduring institutions. Born in 1636 out of a need to defend themselves in the New World, today's Guard continues its legacy by protecting local communities and national as well as international interests.

The keepsake ornament commemorates the sacrifices and accomplishments of the Army National Guard Family in its 370th year.

For more information, or to order the 2006 Army National Guard Keepsake Ornament, send your order to: Karen Holly, c/o NGB-ARZ, 111 South George Mason Drive, Arlington, VA 22204-1382. Make checks payable to "MWR". Ornaments are \$10.00 each.

CDC offers flu season tips and information

Flu season is here. According to the Center for Disease Control, the best way to avoid the flu is to be vaccinated each year.

The flu is typically spread through person to person contact, or through sneezing or coughing by infected persons. The CDC also recommends washing hands and practicing good hygiene during the flu season as ways to further avoid getting sick.

For more information on staying healthy, flu vaccination information and the types of vaccinations available, please visit: <http://www.cdc.gov/flu/keyfacts.htm>.

Corrections

The Oregon State Defense Force story, which appeared in the August/September 2006 issue of the Oregon Sentinel, was written by 1st Sgt. Tom Nelson, not David Funk as first indicated.

The Tiger Balm 2006 story, which appeared in the August/September 2006 issue of the Oregon Sentinel was incorrectly attributed to Spc. Nicholas Wood. The correct author of the story is Spc. Patrick Lair, of the 115th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment.

Tell us what you think!

Address your comments, feedback and ideas to:

The Oregon Sentinel

Attn: Editor

c/o State Public Affairs Office

P.O. Box 14350

Salem, OR 97309

sentinel-editor@mil.state.or.us

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Stories and photos from the field are gratefully accepted. We need your input to ensure 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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Oregon Sentinel Publication Staff

Editor in Chief/Contributing Writer
Tech. Sgt. Nick Choy
nick.choy@mil.state.or.us

Associate Editor/Copy Editor
Kay F. Fristad
kay.f.fristad@mil.state.or.us

Contributing Editor/Contributing Writer
Capt. Michael S. Braibish
michael.s.braibish@mil.state.or.us

Co-Editor/Contributing Writer/Photographer
Spc. April L. Dustin
april.dustin@or.ngb.army.mil

Contributing Writer
Kimberly L. Lippert
kimberly.l.lippert@mil.state.or.us

Audio/ Visual/ Contributing Photographer
Sgt. 1st Class Tom Hovie
tom.hovie@or.ngb.army.mil

Contributors
115th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment
142nd Fighter Wing Public Affairs
173rd Fighter Wing Public Affairs
Unit Public Affairs Representatives

Lewis & Clark education program, 'a history of the country and the National Guard'

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

SALEM, Ore. — Almost 90 students from Meyers Elementary School in northwest Salem, took history from the pages of a textbook and brought it into the classroom.

Members of the Oregon National Guard visited the school on Nov. 15, as part of the Guard's ongoing Lewis and Clark education program.

The Oregon National Guard is continuing and expanding its Lewis and Clark Educational Outreach Program, which goes into schools and organizations to teach the public about the history of the Lewis and Clark expedition.

Representing the Oregon National Guard, Lt. Col. Thyra Bishop and Maj. Alisha Hamel met with students in the school's media center. In addition to interactive displays and maps, the students also enjoyed a multimedia presentation.

"When we started this program during the

Lewis and Clark Bicentennial, we did it as a way to educate the community about the National Guard," Hamel said. "But as we went into the schools, we found the program to be mutually-beneficial to both the Guard and the public. The program was helping us to tell the history of the United States, and indeed the National Guard, but it also cast our organization in a positive light because the Guard is so much a part of the local community."

The presentation consists of an interactive lecture period covering the history of the Lewis and Clark expedition. It utilizes items in the "Discovery Box" — a display box containing replicas of historic implements, tools, books and other items used by the exploration's members, in addition to items of interest the explorers may have encountered along their route to the mouth of the Columbia River. Viewers are then treated to a movie which ties the history of the expedition together, followed by a show and tell period where audience members can touch and explore some of the items in the

Discovery Box. These include a grizzly bear paw print, a period uniform coat and hat, a beaver pelt, a sextant and compass.

For more information or to find out about upcoming presentations in your area, contact Cherie Cavallaro at 503-584-2272 or via e-mail at cherie.cavallaro@or.ngb.army.mil. You may also visit the new American history era presentations online at www.mil.state.or.us/LC.



Maj. Alisha Hamel, project officer for the Oregon National Guard's Lewis and Clark Educational Outreach Program, talks to students at Meyers Elementary School in northwest Salem on Nov. 15. The program aims to educate the public about the Lewis and Clark expedition, and how it relates to the Pacific Northwest and the Oregon National Guard.

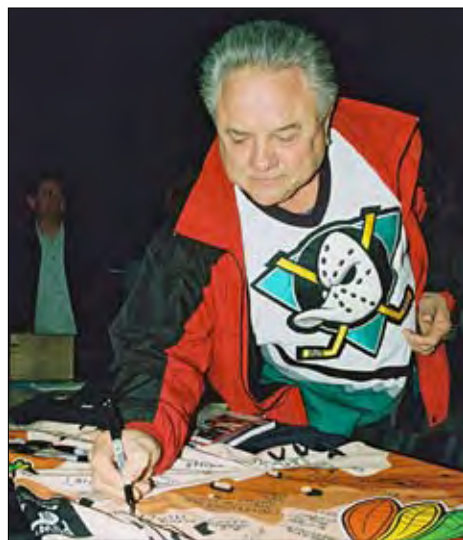
Winterhawks game an opportunity to promote Oregon Army National Guard

Story and photo by
Sgt. Tina Villalobos,
41st IBCT Public Affairs

PORTLAND, Ore. — There are at least two ways to get more than six thousand Portlanders to stand up and cheer in unison — a hard-fought goal by their Winterhawks hockey team; or an opportunity to honor veterans and current service members. There was a great deal of cheering going on at Portland's Memorial Coliseum this Veterans Day, despite the home team's 4-1 loss to Seattle's Thunderbirds.

The presence of uniformed Soldiers from several Oregon Army National Guard units, brought an enhanced sense of pride in local service members, and additional recognition to all veterans. Guard Soldiers hosted two tables — one table to distribute free Winterhawks tickets to veterans; the other to offer veterans an opportunity to sign a commemorative Winterhawks display jersey.

Bernard Schreiner, a veteran Army infantryman who served in Vietnam from 1966-1968, appreciated his military service. "It was a learning experience. I grew up there," he said. Schreiner signed the Winterhawks veteran's display jersey, and touted today's



Bernard Schreiner, a Washington State Vietnam era Army veteran, signs the Winterhawks veteran display jersey.

Soldiers, "The military is a whole different world now, compared to when I was in," he said. "It is truly a professional Army."

Other service members liked what they saw of the Oregon Guard. Sgt. 1st Class David White, of Charlie Co., 41st Special

Troops Battalion, and Sgt. Gene Edwards of Army Recruiting and Retention, chatted with Spc. Joshua Meisenheimer of the Washington National Guard's communication signal support unit, who is considering moving to a special troops battalion.

"There's a special troops battalion that opened up in Washington, but the problem is, it's so far north for me that there's no way I could transfer," said Meisenheimer. "Clackamas isn't that far. So if this unit is like they said it is—if it's really that high-speed, and they've got the communications equipment and they're doing a lot of actual real training; it'd be worth checking out!"

Meisenheimer is proud of being in the Guard. "I've been with the Guard my entire career. I really like the National Guard," he said. "The National Guard will give you all the training. You go to Basic Training. You go to AIT, just like the active Army. When I was over in Iraq, the National Guard was right out there with the active Army, and we were doing the same things."

Local Soldiers volunteered their Saturday night for a variety of reasons.

Private 1st Class Matthew Campbell, of Bravo Co., 82nd Cavalry, braved wind gusts of up to 26 mph and temperatures as low as

48 degrees as he welcomed Winterhawks fans and watched over the Humvee in front of the Coliseum.

"My goal here today is to spread the word about the Guard, honor our veterans, and give them some free tickets to make their night a little better," Campbell said. "I've been in the Guard for 14 months. The best part is the camaraderie and high-speed training. This is my first experience with the military, and I definitely plan to stay in."

Spc. Jonathan Turner, a Cavalry scout with the 41st Brigade Combat Team, was equally enthusiastic to welcome veterans signing the Winterhawks jersey.

"Joining the Guard is the best thing that I ever did," Turner said. "I have lots of pride in myself, and lots of pride in the people around me. The Guard is what made me grow. I love it!"

"One of the things I like about recruiting is meeting people," Turner continued. "There are actually good people out there that want to serve their country—they're not just doing it for the money."

The Soldiers hosting tables and greeting fans each echoed pride in their service, and appreciated the opportunity to recognize those who had served before them.

Staff Sgt. Peter Seaberg of HHC 41st Brigade Combat Team distributed game tickets at the entrance of the Coliseum.

"The Winterhawks is the hardest working team in Portland, and we are partnered with them because we're the hardest working team in Oregon," Seaberg said. "We're giving all the veterans tickets to the game. It is a way for the Winterhawks, and us to say, 'Thanks for serving, and thank you for being part of the community,'" Seaberg added.

Coaches create more qualifiers on the range

Story and photo by
Sgt. Tina Villalobos,
41st IBCT Public Affairs

WARRENTON, Ore.—Thousands of rounds pierced the cool morning air during the annual weapons qualification at Camp Rilea in October. Soldiers that didn't make the cut on Saturday had to brave Sunday's howling wind and driving rain for another attempt.

According to Sgt. Timothy Hoard, HHC 41st Brigade Combat Team, a score of 25 is passing for paper targets. More than 600 Soldiers showed up to give it their best effort.

Zeroing weapons with the aid of a shooting coach proved to be effective. Another Soldier's insight, observation and experience made all the difference for Sgt. Leanna Slightham.

She paired up with Spc. Michael LaFever of HHC 41st BCT. LaFever is new to the Oregon Army National Guard after spending four years on active duty, including a year of service in Afghanistan.

"When I was zeroing my weapon, things weren't going well," said Slightham. "Spc. LaFever was making suggestions about whether I should adjust my sight or my technique. Toward the end, he said to take the handle off the front of my M-16. It was my last chance," said Slightham. "We took it off, and I shot one more time and ended up zeroing my weapon."

But Slightham wasn't the only Soldier to benefit from great advice.

Spc. Scott Ness coached Sgt. Michael Youngblood of Alpha Co., Special Troop Battalion.

"Scott is more familiar with the M-16. He was refreshing me on the way the paper actually works for zeroing the weapon," said Youngblood. "He was telling me how to read it and everything, and how to adjust my sights so I could get it in the right spot."

"I qualified," said Youngblood, "Even though I was shooting in 30 mph wind, and rain."

Proper preparations were watch words for future success on the range.

"It seems like a lot of the reason people have trouble qualifying is that they are not used to the glasses they have to wear; or their Kevlar falls over their face — so their equipment gets in the way," said Slightham. "You should have your equipment ready. If you wear contacts, have your glasses ready and practice with them ahead of time. If you have everything prepared, the only thing you will need to worry about is qualifying."

As an avid rifle hunter, Slightham may have an edge over some. "I hunt, so I shoot rifles. It's always helpful for basic breathing and trigger squeezing techniques. It would be nice if there were more oppor-



Sgt. Leanna Slightham works diligently to zero her M-16 as part of her annual weapons qualification at Camp Rilea in October.

tunities to go out on the range and shoot, because once a year is not really enough if you have to go into combat and shoot. It would be good to have more realistic combat range training throughout the year."

Youngblood offered advice for next year's weapons qualification.

"Get a good coach that knows what they're doing, regardless of their rank," he advised. "Listen to them and ask questions. You'll learn how to read the M-16 charts, and how to breathe."

Even with all the advice and techniques, some Soldiers still get stressed and concerned about the possibility of not qualifying.

"Take your time," said LaFever. "It is not as difficult as you think! Just relax."

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