

In this issue...

VOL. 12, ISSUE NO. 3



2-218th Field Artillery trains at Yakima: Page 8-9



Soldiers, Airmen square off at Iron Chef competition: Page 13

FALL 2014

Oregon Sentinel

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE OREGON NATIONAL GUARD

FIELD ARTILLERY OVERTURE



Oregon Army National Guard Soldiers with the 2-218th Field Artillery Battalion, fire a volley using 105mm Howitzer cannons, during the playing of Tchaikovsky's 1812 Overture, during the Oregon Symphony's Waterfront Concert, held Aug. 28 at Tom McCall Waterfront Park in downtown Portland, Ore. The annual event also featured the Oregon National Guard's 234th Army Band, and several other local classical performers. Photo by Spc. Matthew Burnett, 115th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment. See the full story on page 13.

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1-186th Infantry Battalion mobilizes, trains at Fort Hood for deployment

Story by Oregon Sentinel Staff

ASHLAND, Ore. — Family, friends and well-wishers of the Oregon Army National Guard's 1st Battalion, 186th Infantry Regiment, 41st Infantry Brigade Combat Team, gathered to honor the Citizen-Soldiers during a mobilization ceremony, July 18, at the Southern Oregon University's McNeal Pavilion in Ashland, Oregon.

The deployment is part of the regular rotational cycle of forces to provide security missions in support of Operation Enduring Freedom.

The battalion is headquartered in Ashland, with companies also based in Coos Bay, Grants Pass, Medford, Roseburg, and St. Helens.

The unit is under the command of Lt. Col. Noel Hoback and Command Sgt. Maj. Brad Huppenen. The unit recently completed deployment processing and training at Fort Hood, Texas, prior to departing for Afghanistan.

The units will provide security and support for military facilities in Afghanistan.

The history of the 41st Brigade can be traced back to 1917 when the 41st Infantry Division was created for service in World War I primarily from National Guard units from Oregon, Washington, Idaho and Montana.

The 41st Infantry Division was the longest deployed division



Photo by Master Sgt. Nick Choy, Oregon Military Department Public Affairs

Oregon Army National Guard Soldiers with the 1st Battalion, 186th Infantry, of the 41st Infantry Brigade Combat Team, stand in formation for a unit photo, prior to their mobilization ceremony, held July 18, at the McNeal Pavilion, Southern Oregon University, in Ashland, Ore. See related story on page 14.

during WWII, serving in the Pacific. Elements of the 41st Infantry Brigade Combat Team have served in Saudi Arabia, The Sinai, Kuwait, Bosnia, Iraq and Afghanistan. The brigade deployed a large contingent known as Task Force

Phoenix to Afghanistan in 2006 and again deployed the entire brigade to Iraq in 2009. "The Oregon National Guard today is the best equipped, best trained, best led

See City of Ashland on Page 14

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Oregon National Guard members and their families are encouraged to submit articles and story ideas. Stories and letters to the editor from any source, military or civilian, are accepted. All submissions must include the author's name, mailing address and daytime phone number. Names may be withheld in print upon request. All submissions are subject to editing prior to publication, and the Public Affairs staff reserves the right to print or reprint submissions at any time. The Oregon Military Department Public Affairs Office and Oregon Sentinel staff are not accountable for factual errors presented by contributing authors or photographers.

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COMMAND

Oregon National Guard keeps getting better every year

It was just over a year ago when I assumed duties as The Adjutant General. I vividly remember receiving the call from Governor Kitzhaber notifying me that I was selected to follow Maj. Gen. Raymond Rees, and the excitement of that moment continues every day.

Over the past year, I saw first-hand Oregon Military Department members live our vision: *A ready, professional organization of Soldiers, Airmen and Civilians dedicated to the highest quality service to our communities, State and Nation.*

I also witnessed our entire team come together to ensure we were always ready to perform our mission: *To provide the state of Oregon and the United States with a ready force of Citizen-Soldiers, Airmen and Civilians, trained and equipped to respond to any contingency, natural or man-made.*

From individual acts of heroism both

overseas and at home, to unit-level actions for our State and Nation, to supporting our local, county, and state emergency responders, you always accomplish the mission and exceed expectations.

I have been fortunate to be part of this organization for almost 20 years, and every year we get better. In the past year alone we deployed more than 1,000 Soldiers and Airmen in support of overseas contingency operations; fought forest fires; participated in Red Flag; completed an XCTC rotation; a CERF-P Evaluation; published the first Cascadia Playbook; and provided support to our communities. And that is just scratching the surface! No matter how challenging, you met every mission.

We have a lot to be proud of, and if you look to your left and right, you will see why. Our vision would not be possible, nor would our mission succeed, if it weren't for



Maj. Gen. Daniel R. Hokanson, The Adjutant General, Oregon

the truly outstanding Military Department employees each of us work with every day. From our full-time force to our traditional Guardsmen and women, your selfless service makes our organization stand out. You do your jobs extremely well, always answer our State and Nation's call, and remain Always Ready, Always There!

CW5 Zenchenko assumes State Command Chief position

Maj. Gen. Dan Hokanson, The Adjutant General, Oregon, appointed me as the Command Chief Warrant Officer for the Oregon National Guard on May 1, 2014. Maj. Gen. Hokanson's confidence and trust in my abilities to serve as his State Chief Warrant Officer advisor provides me with motivation and inspiration to complete the CCWO duties and responsibilities.

I serve as the warrant officer advisor to The Adjutant General and participate as a member of the Adjutant General's primary staff. I am responsible for keeping the Adjutant General informed and making recommendations in matters of warrant officers' morale, welfare, schooling, promotion, reduction, retention and general recommendations concerning improving the Oregon Army National Guard operations and efficiencies.

I'm the youngest of a family of eight who grew up in Riddle, a small lumber town in Southern Oregon. After graduating from high school in 1982, I began my military career by enlisting in the U.S. Army as a UH-1H "Huey" helicopter mechanic.

Following my three-year commitment, I joined the Oregon Army National Guard, where I continued my military career, subsequently joining the warrant officer ranks in 1989. For 20 years, I served as a Citizen Soldier, advancing in Army aviation as a pilot in several aircraft. My

aviation career path has led me to several qualifications such as a Pilot-In-Command, Instructor Pilot, and Instrument Flight Examiner. This path also includes additional duties such as Aviation Safety Officer, Tactical Operations Officer and Contract Officer Representative.

During these 20 years, I continued with my civilian education, receiving an associate degree from Umpqua Community College and a Bachelor of Science from Western Oregon State College. I taught in both the McMinnville School District (three years) and Coos Bay School District (eleven years) where I was a varsity assistant coach for both football and wrestling.

I deployed with the C-23 "Sherpa" to Iraq in December 2004 to January 2006. In July 2006, I resigned my teaching position in Coos Bay, Ore., and applied, and was accepted to an Active Guard & Reserve (AGR) position as a Fixed Wing Instructor Pilot and Aviation Safety Officer. From October 2010 to September 2011, I returned to Iraq on another deployment. During those two deployments, I accumulated 1,240 combat flight hours and during my flying career have more than 5,750 of accident free flight hours.

It is with these many years of experience



Chief Warrant Officer 5 Paul E. Zenchenko, Command Chief Warrant Officer, Oregon National Guard

of working with others, mentoring, teaching, collaborating, and advising that I take with me in performing my duties as the CCWO. My top priority is to enhance and strengthen the Warrant Officer Corps.

The office of the CCWO is to be a transparent hub of informing and communicating not only within the ranks of the warrant officers but also with the command of both officer and enlisted grades. I'm honored to be the CCWO for the state of Oregon and I look forward to serving The Adjutant General, and the Warrant Officer Corps.

In the next issue of the Oregon Sentinel, I will share my vision of the Warrant Officer Corps and how we will achieve this vision of leading the Warrant Officer Corps into the Oregon National Guard transformation.

Gauntz reiterates ANG Command Chief's AIM points

Congratulations to Tech. Sgt. Doug Matthews, of the 125th Special Tactics Squadron, Combat Operations Group, Oregon Air National Guard, who was selected as the Air National Guardsman of the Year and one of the United States Air Force Twelve Outstanding Airman for 2014.

Tech. Sgt. Matthews is a Silver Star recipient and is the cream of the crop — an outstanding representative of Oregon National Guard.

Since becoming the Oregon Air National Guard State Command Chief, I see a wider view of what a great organization we have. Why is this organization so great? It's because of the people that serve. The focus for me is simple: people. The Air National Guard Command Chief James Hotaling has identified a few targets that focus on people and are called AIM points.

The first AIM point is a **Renewed Commitment to the Professional Arms**. Core values are more than minimum standards. They give us guidance through our professional and personal lives. You never have to apologize for displaying our core values. Brig. Gen. Michael Stencel, our Oregon Air National Guard commander, coined the phrase "Every Airman a Leader and be a Leader for every Airman." That should be your commitment to our great organization.

Health of the Force is the second AIM point. Fill your tool box with tools to become resilient. Embrace the four pillars of resiliency (Mental, Physical, Social, and Spiritual). Our Army brothers and sisters break out family as a separate category so you could say we have five pillars depending on the training, but no matter which, it comes back to health.

Leadership feels so strongly about a healthy work force they develop and support programs such as the Yellow Ribbon Program. YRP is all about health of the force and this program will set you up for success for pending deployments, during the deployment, and re-deployment. YRP provides you information on resources and how to use your benefits. The program is not just for members, YRP is all

encompassing; a FAMILY program, whoever that is in your circle of trust.

Sexual Assault Prevention and Response, or SAPR, is, in the words of the Air National Guard Command Chief Master Sergeant, "We take care of Airmen (Soldiers), we are one team, and we protect each other from harm."

Recognize and Embrace is the last AIM point. One of the best ways to recognize your people is to informally tell them what they did, how it was significant, and the impact they had on our organization. Do it in a personal manner and then give them a "shout out" in front of the unit. That reinforces what you told them during your face to face. Don't forget about the formal awards, identify who you are responsible for and take care of them, they are doing great service.

Tell the Guard story. This is the embracing side of our AIM points - the National Guard is the **First Choice**. We are first responders in manmade or natural disasters, as seen with this year's fire season. We are the **Endearing Choice** because we belong to the communities in which we serve and the relationships we have with them. We are the **Proven Choice** because of the way that we continue to serve with excellence....So go tell your Guard story!

ONE TEAM, ONE OREGON NATIONAL GUARD!



State Command Chief Master Sgt. Patrick "Andy" Gauntz, State Command Chief Master Sergeant, Oregon National Guard

COMMAND

Oregon Air Guard BG Prunk retires



Photo by Tech. Sgt. John Hughel, 142nd Fighter Wing Public Affairs

Maj. Gen. Daniel Hokanson (left), Adjutant General, Oregon, presents Brig. Gen. Bruce Prunk (right) with a Certificate of Retirement from the U.S. Air Force during his retirement ceremony at the Anderson Readiness Center in Salem, Ore., July 9.

Story by Sgt. Tianna Waite, 41st IBCT Public Affairs

SALEM, Oregon - Oregon Air National Guard Brig. Gen. Bruce W. Prunk, Special Assistant to the Director of the Air National Guard, retired after more than 30 years of service with a ceremony held at the Anderson Readiness Center in Salem, July 9.

Prunk was commissioned in 1983 through the Air National Guard's Academy of Military Science. Prior to receiving his commission, he was an enlisted member of the 142nd Combat Support Squadron of the Oregon Air National Guard.

He has served in various positions throughout his career, including Assistant Adjutant General-Air for the Oregon National Guard, the Director of Staff of the Oregon Air National Guard for Oregon Joint Force Headquarters, and Deputy Commander of the 732nd Air Expeditionary Group, 332nd Air Expeditionary Wing while deployed to Iraq in 2007.

In his most recent position, Prunk was responsible for strategy development, state and federal liaisons, inter-agency coordination, and special duties supporting the 105,000 Air National Guard members nation-wide.

During the retirement ceremony, Prunk received both the Oregon Distinguished Service Medal and the Oregon Thirty-Year Faithful Service Medal, which was presented by Maj. Gen. Daniel Hokanson, Adjutant General, Oregon. Prunk was also presented with a lithograph of an F-15 Eagle by Col. Rick Wedan, 142nd Fighter Wing commander.

Prunk's wife, Janice, attended the ceremony and was presented a Certificate of Appreciation from the Secretary of the Air Force.

National association honors Wickenhagen

Story by Master Sgt. Nick Choy,
Oregon Military Department Public Affairs

SALEM, Oregon — Oregon Army National Guard Capt. Sarah Wickenhagen, an aeromedical nurse practitioner with the Oregon National Guard's Medical Command, based in Salem, has recently been named by the American Association of Nurse Practitioners (AANP) as one of the recipients of their prestigious State Award for Excellence for 2014.

Wickenhagen, FNP, DNP, is also a policy analyst for the Oregon State Board of Nursing. She and other nurse practitioners and advocates were honored at an awards ceremony and reception held during the AANP 2014 National Conference, June 17-22, in Nashville, Tenn.

The State Award for Nurse Practitioner Excellence, founded in 1991, recognizes a nurse practitioner (NP) in a state who demonstrates excellence in practice. In 1993, the State Award for Nurse Practitioner Advocate was added to recognize the efforts of individuals who have made a significant contribution toward increasing the awareness and acceptance of the NP.

"I am truly honored to receive this award. I am very passionate about my profession and feel very blessed to be recognized by my peers," Wickenhagen said.

Prior to joining the Board of Nursing in March, Wickenhagen worked in the Oregon Health Science University (OHSU) School of Nursing teaching in the graduate nursing programs and working clinically in pre-operative medicine. She has a varied background that includes serving as an Army nurse and caring for patients across the lifespan in both primary and acute care settings.

She obtained her Bachelor of Science in Nursing in 1996 from the University of Mobile, located in Mobile, Ala., and her Masters of Science and Doctorate of Nursing Practice (DNP) from OHSU in 2005 and 2013, respectively. Wickenhagen is attached to the Oregon Army National Guard's 2-641st Aviation Battalion, where she provides medical care to unit service members. She is also training to serve as a crew member for the battalion's MEDEVAC unit.

In her spare time, Wickenhagen enjoys spending time with her family, including her husband, Chief Warrant Officer 3 Devin Wickenhagen, who is an Oregon Army National Guard helicopter pilot, and their two children.

"I'm very proud to have Sarah recognized for all her work as a nurse practitioner educator and advocate. She inspires me with her dedication and professionalism and it's very rewarding to see her honored at the state and national level," Devin Wickenhagen said.

Sarah Wickenhagen said she was very thankful for the support of her family — something National Guard families know all too well, having to deal with military schools, annual training, deployments and work-related responsibilities.

"I am incredibly thankful for my family support and in particular my husband who has been with me on every step of this journey," she said.

The AANP is the largest professional membership organization for NPs of all specialties. It represents the interests of the nation's 189,000 NPs, including more than 50,000 members, providing a unified networking platform, and advocating for their role as providers of high-quality, cost-effective, comprehensive, patient-centered, and personalized health care.



Courtesy photo

Oregon Army National Guard Capt. Sarah Wickenhagen, an aeromedical nurse practitioner, was recently honored by the American Association of Nurse Practitioners with the State Award for Excellence for 2014.

Lengyel visits Soldiers fighting Oregon fires



Photo by Spc. Alisha Grezlik, Oregon Military Department Public Affairs

Lt. Gen. Joseph L. Lengyel (second from left), Vice Chief, National Guard Bureau, visits the Gander helibase, near John Day, Ore., Aug. 14. The Oregon Army National Guard assisted with firefighting efforts at locations throughout the state, using CH-47 Chinook, HH-60M Blackhawk, and UH-72 Lakota helicopters.

With Lengyel are CW3 Devin Wickenhagen (far left), HH-60M command pilot; Maj. Gen. Daniel Hokanson (center), Adjutant General, Oregon; and Lt. Col. Mark Ulvin (right), State Army Aviation Officer.

The Oregon National Guard assisted with the Beaver Complex fires, which were comprised of the Salt Creek Fire, located 20 miles northwest of Medford, and the Oregon Gulch Fire, located 15 miles east of Ashland. Authorities determined that lightning started the fires sometime around July 30-31.

As part of its fire-fighting efforts, the Oregon Army National Guard used the CH-47 Chinook helicopter, carrying a "Bambi" bucket which can carry 2,000 gallons of water on a cable length of 120 feet.

Officials determined that the 2014 summer season fires which burned through Oregon, Eastern Washington, and California, comprised the worst fire season on record. See related story on page 6.

State Chaplain promoted to colonel



Photo by Sgt. Edward Gomez-Bravo, Joint Force Headquarters Public Affairs

Col. Scott Delbridge, the Oregon National Guard's newly appointed State Chaplain, addresses family and friends during his promotion ceremony at Heritage Park in Salem, Ore., July 12.

Story by Oregon Sentinel Staff

SALEM, Oregon - Oregon National Guard Lt. Colonel Scott Delbridge, recently appointed as State Chaplain, was promoted to colonel in a ceremony held at Heritage Park in Salem, July 12.

The ceremony was attended by family, friends and members of the military, both currently serving and retired.

Maj. Gen. Dan Hokanson, Adjutant General, Oregon, presided over the ceremony. Delbridge has served with the Oregon Army National Guard since 1994 when he transferred from the Air National Guard.

STATE PARTNERSHIP

Oregon National Guard's first Bilateral Affairs Officer trades Pendleton for Dhaka

Story by Master Sgt. Nick Choy,

Oregon Military Department Public Affairs

DHAKA, Bangladesh — How does an Oregon Guardsman go from flying helicopters out of Pendleton, Ore., to working hand-in-hand with high-level U.S. State Department personnel and Bangladeshi military leaders on Bangladeshi-U.S. relations as part of the State Partnership Program?

Ask Oregon Army National Guard Capt. Craig Talarico, he'll tell you.

As the bilateral affairs officer (BAO) stationed in Bangladesh, Talarico functions as a security co-operation action officer and forward Oregon National Guard liaison officer, representing the interests of the respective National Guard, U.S. Pacific Command commander, and U.S. ambassador.

The BAO works for the combatant command (COCOM) and for the Embassy Office of Defense Cooperation. Having BAOs in U.S. Pacific Command's area of responsibility acknowledges the strategic shift to the Pacific.

Oregon entered into the National Guard's State Partnership Program with Bangladesh in 2008.

Talarico, who took on the new position in March 2014, previously served as a CH-47D Chinook helicopter pilot and detachment commander for six detachments, 'Dust Devils', falling under Bravo Company, 1-168th General Support Aviation Battalion, Oregon Army National Guard, in Pendleton, Oregon. In his full-time job in Oregon, Talarico taught as an elementary school teacher in Hermiston, Oregon.

Talarico has the distinction of being the first BAO ever assigned to the Pacific Command (PACOM) region. Another Oregonian, Maj. Kyle Akers was recently assigned to the BAO position for Vietnam, another State Partner with Oregon since 2012. Maj. Adam Frank Negri, recently assigned as the BAO for Mongolia, who is originally from the Alaska National Guard, rounds out the three National Guard BAOs in the PACOM region. By the end of the 2014 fiscal year, PACOM aims to have five BAOs in position.

"We all went through the same initial training together at Wright Patterson Air Force Base at the Defense Institute of Security Assistance Management, so we are all in the same boat," Talarico said. "There have been other BAOs assigned to countries in other COCOMS (mostly SOCOM and EUCOM) before us."

To find the most qualified individuals for the job, BAO candidates are stringently screened and boarded. In some cases, candidates are personally interviewed by their states' adjutant general. All candidates must be 'promotable' captains and majors, possess operations and logistics staff experience (or equivalent), have overseas duty training experience, have varied and extensive staff and operational experience at the battalion or squadron, and brigade or group levels.

Talarico said the BAO serves as the relationship builders who bring both 'boots on the ground' and diplomatic functionality to the position that gets results for the host nation partner, their home state, and the federal government.

"We must understand what is happening all around us, both in our host nation country, in our home state, and in the United States as a whole," Talarico said. "We are tasked with advancing the objectives of the U.S. ambassador, PACOM commander, adjutant general of our home state, and the Office of Defense Cooperation chief, in addition to working closely with the Defense Attaché."

One important aspect of Talarico's job is to build lasting relationships with Bangladesh's counterparts and fellow Americans in the U.S. Embassy from a wide range of participants including the Department of Defense, the State Department, USAID, and other



Oregon Army National Guard Capt. Craig Talarico (left), meets with CW3 Devin Wickenhagen (center) and CW3 David Long (right), following a recent Subject Matter Expert Exchange held in Dhaka, Bangladesh.

organizations.

"It really is a unique experience," Talarico added. "Not only do I work with amazing people from all over the United States, but I get to work hand in hand with Bangladeshi military officers on a wide range of cooperation activities. It is really humbling and rewarding to work with a foreign military and know that your work contributes peace, security, internal capacity building, and cooperation, and preventing future wars and conflicts."

As part of his job function, Talarico coordinates with Oregon's State Partnership Program director, Oregon Air National Guard Col. Mark Crosby, and the deputy director Maj. Manuel Robledo, for State Partnership Program events and Oregon National Guard forces to participate in military-to-military events. As a result, the three officers' worlds are tightly linked together.

BAOs, by default, acquire an intimate knowledge of the State Partnership Program in their state.

"Over the next decade, you are going to see the State Partnership Program continue to grow in importance and make profoundly important security cooperation contributions to Bangladesh," Talarico said.

"Col. Crosby made over 11 trips to Bangladesh before I arrived, and seeing the relationships he formed, and the foundation he created here has made a huge impact on the program and indeed our Bangladeshi partners. He is a strategic thinker and leader and has given deputy director Major Manuel Robledo and I a lot of tools to work with."

Talarico said that Oregon's partnership with Bangladesh has unlimited potential to do amazing things that will make a difference in the regional security objectives of the Indo-Asia-Pacific. With the addition of BAOs in U.S. embassies throughout the region, there now exists a full-time continuity expert to identify new and expand existing areas of cooperation between the U.S. government, the Oregon National Guard, and host countries' military and government organizations, Talarico said.

"The SPP benefits Bangladesh in many ways, with a primary reason being that this program gives Bangladesh access to knowledge and experience within the Oregon National Guard, which will help build Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief (HADR) capabilities, among others within Bangladesh," Talarico said.

Likewise, Talarico added, the partnership benefits Oregon Guard members in many ways, with opportunities to contribute to objectives on a regional scale.

"Oregon Guardsmen are making lasting and vital contributions to building Bangladesh's capacity to respond to and prepare for disasters, especially earthquakes — something we in the Pacific Northwest really need to watch out for,"

Talarico said.

He added that the two partners have very positive and equal amounts of admiration and respect for one another. In 2014 alone, there have been three different Subject Matter Expert Exchanges (SMEE) of Oregon National Guard personnel travelling to Bangladesh to work with their counterparts.

"These SMEE's focus on partnering Oregon Guard experts with Bangladesh experts in their respective fields, with a focus on building the capacity of the Bangladesh forces," Talarico said.

Other duties of the BAO include planning, coordination of schedules, execution of traveling contact teams, familiarization visits and special State Partnership Program events, including two very recent SMEE events.

One involved the Bangladesh Air Force for Aerial Urban Firefighting and Rescue, and the other was with the Bangladesh Army and Fire Service Civil Defense Force for Urban Search and Rescue.

"As a BAO, these are great experiences for me because this is what security cooperation is all about," Talarico said. "These events place Oregon Guardsman together with Bangladeshi troops and officers, where they train and work hand in hand. This results in finding more, new, and better ways to assist the Bangladesh military in building their own capacity."

He added that the partnership's exercises build foundations of mutual trust, understanding, and respect between the Oregon National Guard and the Bangladesh military.

"It is this trust, understanding, and respect that is a major factor in enhancing the security of Bangladesh from things such as natural disasters and terrorism, and preventing future armed conflicts," Talarico added.

Talarico and his family have faced several logistical challenges moving from Oregon to Dhaka, Bangladesh's capital city. In addition they have had to shift their cultural perspectives.

"Living in Bangladesh requires you to do things differently than what you are used to, because it is such a profoundly different place than the U.S.," Talarico said.

His family went from living in Pendleton with around 15,000 people to Dhaka, a megacity of more than 15 million people. The Talaricos relocated their personal effects via a PCS move, which Capt. Talarico calls a "big logistical task," to say nothing of moving to the complete opposite side of the globe.

"The first thing that every newcomer to Bangladesh experiences is the traffic and nature of driving here," he says. "There is little to no traffic rules enforcement or organization. It is pretty much everyone for themselves out here."

Talarico muses about passengers riding on top of already-overcrowded buses that would be condemned in the U.S., and

a chaotic mixture of rickshaws, three-wheeled caged motorized carriages known as "CNGs", normal passenger vehicles, and throngs of people walking along narrow, rutted streets.

"Then there's all sorts of animals sharing the road," Talarico says. "It's quite an experience in itself."

Living in Bangladesh is an experience of constant movement and activity, Talarico says. The day-to-day experiences and norms are entirely different, but after about six weeks things start to take on a normality, he adds.

"There are many huge challenges you face in Bangladesh, but the sense of community among the Americans living here is very strong, and we made lots of new friends very quickly," he said.

Talarico said the expatriates helped his family figure out how to get around the city safely, where to buy food especially produce and meats that come from reputable and safe sources (there is no FDA equivalent agency in the country), and how to find and hire local national employees, such as cooks, cleaners, child care providers, and drivers.

"We actually hired a local lady to manage many daily household tasks and provide part-time daycare to our daughter," Talarico said. "I am still getting used to the fact that we have hired help in our house during the day, but with how busy everything is here combined with the dust and dirt that finds its way everywhere, it's a necessity, not an indulgence."

Talarico graduated from the University of Montana and was commissioned a second lieutenant in 2006. He graduated from Flight School XXI in Fort Rucker, Alabama in August, 2007. He then assumed the role of platoon leader with the 'Dust Devils' based in Pendleton, Oregon. He deployed with the unit as a pilot, platoon leader, and company executive officer to RC-East, Afghanistan from 2010-2011, and operated out of Forward Operating Base Shank, in Logar Province.

The sub-tropical lowlands of South Asia serve as a stark difference to the deserts of Afghanistan, or the forests, lakes, rivers and mountains of western Montana, where Talarico grew up exploring, hunting and fishing with family and childhood friends.

"We have adjusted to the cultural differences by just taking everything in stride, managing our expectations, and trying new things, because the culture here is rich with amazing history," Talarico said. "I am not exaggerating when I say that most everything that we find normal back home is different here. As Americans, we tend to quickly judge what we see and experience. In Bangladesh, you have to take things as they are and withhold judgment, or you risk only seeing the bad and missing opportunities to experience some really great things here."

Talarico adds that the Bangladeshi people are very welcoming, extremely hard working and love children.

"Bangladesh has numerous internal and external challenges facing it, and these challenges are deep and complex," he adds.

The fact that Bangladesh's population is 90 percent Muslim, which is religiously and politically moderate, a democratic country in South Asia, and values the role of the United States in the region, matters at a strategic level, Talarico said.

"The strategic importance of the United States having a dynamic and positive relationship with the People's Republic of Bangladesh is true in every sense of the word, and the Oregon National Guard is going to play a leading role in growing and molding this relationship in the 21st Century," he said.

Talarico holds a Bachelor of Arts in Geography from the University of Montana (2006), and a Master of Arts in Teaching from Eastern Oregon University (2013). He is a graduate of the Aviation Captains Career Course (2013) and the Defense Institute of Security Assistance Management - Overseas Course (2014).

FEATURES

162nd Engineer Company culminates year of training at AT

Story and photos by Master Sgt. Nick Choy,
Oregon Military Department Public Affairs

YAKIMA, Washington — When the Oregon National Guard needs something blown up, the 162nd Engineers hope they get the call.

During their two weeks of annual training at the Yakima Firing Range this summer, Soldiers from the unit did just that.

Besides practicing setting shape charges, designing creative ways to breach metal or concrete, or polishing their Soldier skills, the engineering unit also has a more important calling — route clearance.

"One of the more important things we do as engineers is route clearance," said Oregon Army National Guard Capt. Raymond Jones, commander, 162nd Engineer Company.

Command Sgt. Maj. Michael R. Polley, 1249th Engineer Battalion command sergeant major, of West Linn, Ore., paid the engineers a surprise visit above the demolition "pit."

He said their annual training is just one of the fun aspects of being an engineer, and a driving force behind Soldier retention.

"There's nothing more exciting than doing demolitions," Polley said. "And for these engineers, it's a retention tool that keeps them coming back year after year, and they get paid to do it. There's nothing more exciting than that."

The Soldiers spend all year training and working on their craft, and are able



to exercise those skills during their annual training cycle, Polley added.

"What our Soldiers are doing here at AT is the culmination of a year's worth of work," Polley said.

Sgt. Eric Gustafson, a medic with the 162nd Engineer Co., said the annual training kept everyone busy with Soldier tasks, engineer-specific training, and weapons qualifications. For Gustafson, he had the added training as a medic.

"All combat engineers have training in demolition," he said. "However, I worked with Soldiers on medical training."

The Corvallis, Ore., native said engineers have a knack for improvisation.

"What's really cool is having the ability to use what's available rather than requesting specific things that you don't have," Gustafson said.

If the unit deploys, their training as engineers and their improvisation skills give them a number of options to complete the mission, he added. However, he warned, dealing with dangerous explosives comes with the demand for great attention to detail.

"The devil is in the details," he said.

To underscore the importance of learning these highly-specialized tools of the trade, seasoned engineers mentor younger Soldiers by having them prepare 'bricks' of C-4 explosive and cutting detonation cord in appropriate lengths. All the while, platoon sergeants hover over them, providing guidance and feedback.

"No, no, wrap it this way," says Spc. Corey Clawson, unit combat engineer, to another young specialist. "You see, you're getting it all over your gloves," he advises the young Soldier.

"Just take off your gloves and wrap them up with the brick," Clawson finally says, after watching the specialist get more and more C-4 on his gloved hands. Sgt. 1st Class Edward Lewis, one of the seasoned platoon sergeants in the unit watches the interaction, and flashes a smile at 1st Lt. Christopher Campbell, the unit platoon leader.

Campbell comments that he won the lottery with Lewis and Clawson.

"Lewis and Clawson are definitely the 'art' behind the science," Campbell says



Oregon Army National Guard Spc. Corey Clawson (standing), and Sgt. 1st Class Edward Lewis, of the 162nd Engineer Company, 1249th Engineer Battalion, inspect explosives as they prepare C-4 charges during their annual training at Yakima Training Site, Wash., June 20.



Engineers from the 162nd Engineer Company, 1249th Engineer Battalion, pose for a group photo during their annual training at Yakima Training Site, Wash., June 20. Above left: The company guidon flutters in the hot breeze at the 162nd Engineer Company FOB, at the Yakima Training Site.

beaming.

Rank has no real bearing on skills in this unit, according to Campbell. Clawson, whose rank is a specialist, has enough skills and demolition knowledge to teach and mentor many of the young Soldiers in his unit. Lewis, on the other hand, has an entire military career as a demolitions expert, and has attended a number of both civilian and military schools specializing in demolitions and explosives.

His skills as an experienced demolition expert come into play when the unit sets demolition charges. These "cratering" charges, comprised of a combination of ammonium nitrate and C-4 explosive, resemble two-foot long round canisters, and are meant to move large amounts of earth. Depending on how they are set, they can displace a huge amount of dirt, rocks, and sometimes boulders.

Lewis oversees the work, as his Soldiers set six of the charges, with the C-4 'bricks' prepared earlier, stuck to the sides of the canisters, into a five-foot deep hole dug at the bottom of the demolition pit. Some of the holes aren't large enough for the charges, so the Soldiers take time enlarging them, joking all the while.

Satisfied with the depth of the holes, and the cratering charges in place, the unit retreats to two armored vehicles parked at the perimeter of the demolition pit, stringing detonation cord behind them. The rest of the group heads back up the hill to another armored vehicle overlooking the pit, presumably to get a better vantage point. Cell phones come out to record the impending explosion.

Lewis does the honors. Over the radio, his voice can be heard.

"Fire in the hole! Fire in the hole! Fire in

the hole!" Lewis yells.

The explosion sends a large black and gray cloud of smoke, dust and debris about 200 feet in air. In a split-second, a shockwave moves out over the two closest vehicles and up the hill over the third vehicle. The detonation, according to Lewis, has an equivalent of 220 pounds of TNT.

A hush falls over the Soldiers as they stare in awe at the blob of debris spreading out before them. Overhead, chunks of rock and gravel pepper the vehicle's roof. Over the radio, a few Soldiers can be heard cheering.

In the stifling silence of the enclosed armored vehicle, one of the young Soldiers in the unit shifts in his seat. He whispers to no one in particular, "This is why I love being in the Army."



Video still capture by Master Sgt. Tom Hovis, Oregon Military Department Public Affairs

Oregon Army National Guard Soldiers with the 162nd Engineer Company, 1249th Engineer Battalion, set off a charge of 128 pounds of ammonium nitrate and C-4 explosive as a "cratering charge" during their annual training at Yakima Training Site, Wash., June 20. The explosion had an equivalent of 220 pounds of TNT.

Oregon Soldier comes out on top as Army's 'Best Warrior'

Story by Staff Sgt. Darron Salzer,
National Guard Bureau Public Affairs



Photo Courtesy of National Guard Bureau Public Affairs

Sgt. 1st Class Scott Stimpson, with the Oregon Army National Guard Recruiting and Retention Battalion, earned the title of top NCO in the National Guard, July 17, at the National Guard's Professional Education Center, at Camp Robinson, Ark.

CAMP ROBINSON, Arkansas — Oregon Army National Guard Sgt. 1st Class Scott Stimpson, with the Recruiting and Retention Battalion, was recently recognized as the Army National Guard's top noncommissioned officer of the year.

The names of the Army National Guard finalists came during an awards ceremony on July 17 at the National Guard's Professional Education Center located at Camp Robinson, Arkansas, the host of this year's national competition.

Organizers cited hard work and preparation as key factors in this year's competition.

For three stressful days that started on Monday, July 14, under exhausting conditions, 14 Soldiers — seven noncommissioned officers and seven junior enlisted Soldiers — came together for the Army National Guard's Best Warrior Competition to see who among

them would stand out above the rest.

Soldiers and noncommissioned officers took the Army Physical Fitness Test, consisting of push-ups, sit-ups and a timed run. They also completed a timed twelve-mile road march; fired rifles, pistols, grenade launchers and shotguns, and negotiated an urban assault course.

"They are five-time winners already [at their] company, battalion, brigade, state and region," said Command Sgt. Maj. Brunk Conley, command sergeant major of the Army National Guard.

"They have been through the ringer ... they demonstrate perseverance; they demonstrate competence, character and commitment ... and it's just amazing to watch."

Stimpson said he focused preparing for this competition in the two months before.

"I have a full time job, so there was a lot of waking up early [to workout] and then studying as soon as I got home," he said.

The competition goes much further than pushing yourself, Conley added.

Oregon Army National Guard State Command Sergeant Major Shane Lake thanked Stimpson's family for their support, as well as fellow Recruiting and Retention Battalion Soldiers; Sgt. 1st Class Jeremy Carver, who sponsored Stimpson, RRB commander, Lt. Col. Christian Reese, and Command Sgt. Maj. Rod Gallo-way for their support.

"It is a great day to be a Citizen Soldier from Oregon and serve alongside amazing warriors like Sgt. 1st Class Stimpson," Lake said. "He has defined the Warrior Ethos ... and his dedication and discipline are second to none."

Stimpson has served for 14 years in a variety of assignments. He is a graduate of the Air Assault Course, the Rappel Master Course, Drill Sergeant School and is a Master Resiliency Trainer.

He resides in Albany, Oregon, and has three children. He is currently pursuing a masters of business administration and his interests include traveling, hiking and coaching most sports.

NEWS

Pacific Northwest sees one of the busiest fire seasons on record

Story and photos by

Staff Sgt. Jason van Mourik,

Oregon Military Department Public Affairs

MADRAS, Oregon — Citizen Soldiers with the Oregon Army National Guard joined other agencies to assist with fire-fighting west of Madras, in July.

Two Oregon Army National Guard HH-60M Blackhawks and two CH-47 Chinook helicopters assisted ground crews throughout the Logging Unit fire.

The fire complex was made up of five separate fires throughout the Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs reservation.

The Chinooks can carry up to 1,500 gallons of water in a "Bambi" bucket, whereas the Blackhawks can carry 500 gallons per bucket.

Pilots endured thick, blinding smoke, intense heat and long days as they worked the skies above, dropping much needed water at the behest of the civilian ground crews.

"It's a year-round training effort, but March is when we really focus on preparing our crews for fire season," said State Command Sgt. Major. Shane Lake.

"This year, the season just started a little



Oregon Army National Guard Lt. Col. Alan Gronewald, a CH-47 Chinook helicopter pilot and commander of the Pendleton-based Bravo Company, 1-168 Aviation, coordinates with ground crew prior to flying out in support of fire suppression missions at the Logging Unit fire west of Madras, Ore., July 19.

earlier than usual," Lake added.

Not only were the aviators called on to support the efforts of the Logging Unit fire, they were also used against another nearby fire to the east, the Shaniko Butte fire. At its largest, the Shaniko Butte fire encompassed nearly 50,000 acres of land east of the Warm Springs Reservation.

"We have two pilots, one flies the helicopter and the other navigates and talks on the radio that goes to both air attack and firefighters on the ground," said Lt. Col. Alan Gronewald, describing the operation of the CH-47 Chinook during fire flights.

"Then we have two crew members, one stands at the door behind me and lines the helicopter up with the fire, so he tells us turn left and right. And the fourth lies on the floor of the helicopter and monitors the bucket through the cargo hold and actually releases the water onto the fire," he added.

Gronewald, along with the pilots and air crew, worked out of the Madras Municipal Airport. The thick, dense smoke hung over the horizon even on windy days, creating a curtain to the west of the airport.



An Oregon Army National Guard CH-47 Chinook helicopter returns to the Madras Airport after successfully dumping water on a target area in the Logging Unit fire west of Madras, Ore., July 20. Two CH-47 Chinook helicopters and two HH-60M Blackhawk helicopters of the Oregon Army National Guard arrived at the Madras Airport, July 19, to assist local authorities in suppressing the wildfire west of Madras, Ore.

Another fire, which started near Ashland, Oregon, became known as the Oregon Gulch Fire, and was part of a larger fire known as the Beaver Complex Fire, which encompassed burns in the Grants Pass area.

At a fire camp near that location, Oregon Governor John Kitzhaber and Oregon Army National Guard Maj. Gen. Daniel Hokanson, Adjutant General, Oregon, visited emergency managers and other fire managers. Kitzhaber briefed fire managers, and thanked participants for their efforts.

"It's important for me to just show the support for the hard working men and women who are actually doing the job here on the ground," Kitzhaber said.

The fire burned more than 36,000 acres near the Green Springs after being started

by a lightning strike in early August.

More than 1,300 firefighters and staff members were assigned to the fire, from agencies across Oregon and northern California. Kitzhaber said the cooperation between the two states has been seamless, and ultimately helped crews get a handle on the fire.

"This has been an incredible bi-state response to a very, very complicated, rapidly growing fire," he said.

Kitzhaber used the opportunity to stress to Oregonians to take steps to avoid human-caused fires, to allow firefighters to focus on the lightning-started fires they are already battling.

The Pacific Northwest and Northern California have experienced a number of large fires already this year.



State Command Sgt. Maj. Shane Lake visits with one of the HH-60M Blackhawk helicopter crews at the Madras Helibase in Madras, Ore., July 23.

Soldiers of Oregon's 2-162 Infantry settle into Afghanistan mission

Story and photos by

Capt. Leslie Reed,

41st IBCT Public Affairs

KABUL, Afghanistan — Oregon Citizen-Soldiers with 2nd Battalion, 162nd Infantry, 41st Infantry Brigade Combat Team, held a ceremony in recognition of the Transfer of Authority (TOA) from the 48th Infantry Brigade Combat Team on August 27, in Kabul, Afghanistan.

The ceremony, which is an Army tradition, officially signifies the start of 2nd Battalion, 162nd Infantry's mission in Afghanistan.

The 2-162nd took responsibility for security missions in the Kabul area from the 48th IBCT, and 2nd Battalion, 508th Brigade, 82nd Airborne, who will head to their respective homes in Macon, Georgia, and Fayetteville, North Carolina, after a year-long deployment.

"We are official and will now get to execute the mission we have been preparing for a year and a half," said Lt. Col. Scot K. Caughran, unit commander.

"There has been a lot of build-up and excitement about being able to do what we have actually trained for."

Caughran said the 48th IBCT did an excellent job, preparing Oregon's Soldiers and keeping them well informed about what the Oregonians would experience once they officially took over the mission.

"This really helped with our preparation through Fort Hood, and we were ready to assume this mission," Caughran added.

The unit spent two months at North Fort Hood, Texas in preparation for the deployment.

Maj. David Bankston, plans officer for the battalion, described the training as a series of individual and collective tasks leading up to the culminating exercise.

"We basically stood up our operations as close as we would experience in Afghanistan," Bankston said.

The Soldiers' training included defeating counter-improvised explosive devices (CIED), gunnery on all weapon systems, both mounted from vehicles and dismounted on foot, driving tactical vehicles in both day and night scenarios, and what to do in the event of vehicle roll-overs.

Looking back, Bankston recalled that the most beneficial training the Oregonians received at Fort Hood was learning the Afghan culture.

"We are an experienced unit and we know how to do a lot of operations, but it was learning how to do the operations specific to Afghanistan," Bankston said.

Other specialized training was given to Soldiers depending on their duty position and assignment.

"At Fort Hood, our training directly applied to everything we are going to do" said Spc. Jason Hargraves, a member of the battalion's quick reaction force (QRF) team, 3rd platoon, Bravo "Brawler" Company.

First Lt. Keenan McIntire, the battalion's QRF platoon leader, described his platoon's training as effective and complete.

"We had our Soldiers do gear drills, giving them five minutes to go from a completely unready state, like sleeping or from a recreational activity, to fully geared up and ready to go," McIntire said.

"All (our) training is effective because even if there are issues, we learn from it. If everything goes well, or it is perfect, then you don't learn anything," he added.

McIntire says morale amongst his Soldiers is high and that they are keeping busy, along with the occasional platoon competition.

Oregon's 41st IBCT were given the label "closers" in Iraq during their deployment in 2009-2010 — indicating they were one of the last units to serve in that theater. According to Caughran, that reputation seems to have followed the battalion to



Oregon Army National Guard Lt. Col. Scot K. Caughran, Commander, 2nd Battalion, 162nd Infantry, speaks with Deputy Commanding General for Support, Maj. Gen. Jeffrey N. Colt, U.S. Forces Afghanistan, after the Transfer of Authority ceremony with the Georgia Army National Guard's 48th Infantry Brigade Combat Team in Kabul, Afghanistan, Aug. 27.

Afghanistan.

"There may be some timing in there," Caughran said. "I would like to think the Volunteer battalion is well-known, and can execute any mission we are assigned. So if that's the most important mission that needs to be done, then they picked the right battalion. If we need to close things out, then we will."

Hargraves who was present during the closure of some of the last bases in Iraq with the 41st IBCT, agreed.

"If we are building a reputation, because that's what we are good at, then just call in the guys that do it best," Hargraves said.

However, he also sees some differences. Hargraves wants to see the Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF) carry on

and continue to do their own training and execution of missions.

"I like the fact that they are building up and taking care of their own country," he said. "The (ANSF) is great. They say to us, 'hey, we've got this,' and they take care of it. That means more to me than anything."

"I see a difference in attitude and pride," Hargraves continues. "They are very prideful here, they are proud of their own neighborhoods and districts. This is something I didn't see on previous deployments in other countries."

"They are fighting together for the same cause and we're here for them. They trust us, and we trust them. It's building great rapport and a great relationship," Hargraves added.

NEWS

Oregon's CERFP evaluation exercise a success, inspectors say

Story by Master Sgt. Nick Choy,
Oregon Military Department Public Affairs

WARRENTON, Oregon — The Oregon National Guard CBRNE Enhanced Response Force Package (CERFP) completed their biennial training and evaluation exercise at Camp Rilea in Warrenton, Aug. 24-28.

The joint unit, comprised of elements of the Oregon Army National Guard and the Oregon Air National Guard, tasked approximately 200 Oregon Citizen-Soldiers and Airmen from around Oregon for the event.

According to the CERFP commander, Oregon Army National Guard Lt. Col. Michael Moffit, the week was not just an outstanding week of training, but unit members were also able to set some national records in terms of setup time, training accomplishments, and setting benchmarks.

"Many of our evaluators commented that Oregon is in the top-three units in the entire nation, and many of the elements within the CERFP had individual 'firsts' that the evaluators had never previously seen," Moffit said.

The mission of the Oregon National Guard's CERFP is to provide immediate response capability to the governor including: incident site search capability of damaged buildings, rescuing trapped casualties, providing decontamination, performing medical triage and initial treatment to stabilize patients for transport to medical facilities, and remains recovery.

Oregon Air National Guard Senior Airman Charles Weinert, a medic with the CERFP Search and Extraction team, practiced rappelling on the five-story tower of the newly-built rubble pile at Camp Rilea.

Weinert and other members of the Search and Extraction element have undergone numerous civilian and military courses dealing with medical, explosives, rigging, trauma response, and others — something he believes compliments both aspects of his life and career.

"I receive skills in my civilian job that help me in the National Guard, and vice versa. It's like having two careers," Weinert said.

Weinert admitted he joined the Oregon National Guard to 'create opportunities' for his career and future. "A lot of the skills I have are helping me to be very marketable in the outside world," Weinert said.

The Oregon CERFP is one of the

nation's newest validated teams. The team completed required external validation in May 2012, which evaluated members in the technical aspects required for their mission.

In March 2013, the team also underwent a Standardization Evaluation and Assistance Team (SEAT) inspection, which evaluated its fiscal and administrative responsibilities. The team's results allowed for its ultimate validation and mission readiness status.

Oregon Air National Guard Lt. Col. Alex Charney-Cohen, Bio-Medical Officer for Oregon's CERFP, said these exercises are important for members of the unit.

"This is the big game for us. This is what certifies us, and allows us to be a resource for the governor and the state of Oregon," he said.

For residents living in the Pacific Northwest, the skills and training CERFP members undergo are critical, Charney-Cohen said, given the threat of earthquakes and tsunamis.

"This kind of homeland defense mission is extremely important," he said.

Charney-Cohen recently attended a seminar which brought together CERFP unit members from throughout the country. He said talking to Soldiers and Airmen from the Indiana National Guard and its state partner of Israel was eye-opening.

"It's very exciting to learn from each other because unfortunately, places like Israel have real world experience in things like this," he added.

Indiana is partnered with Israel through the National Guard's State Partnership Program. They go about their training in a different, more realistic way with the use of real-world building implosions to enhance their training.

"When they do one of these exercises, they place mannequins in a building, and then blow up the building," Charney-Cohen said.

Oregon's exercise used a combination of mannequins and live 'role players' to simulate victims. Sgt. Ben Clapp, of the Oregon Army National Guard's 224th Engineer Company, who is the Assistant Team Leader for the Oregon CERFP Search and Extraction Team, said going into confined spaces to rescue a victim gives him a different perspective.

"It's exciting, tiring and a lot of hard work, but it is a different change from the engineer field," Clapp said.

Search and Extraction members have to work in full protective gear, making the work tiring, hot, and difficult, especially when rescuing victims, he said.



Photo by Spc. Alisha Grezlik, Oregon Military Department Public Affairs

Oregon Army National Guard Spc. Chris Clugston, a Soldier from the 224th Engineer Co., in Albany, Ore., cuts through steel rebar during a "concrete breach", as part of a week-long evaluation exercise with the Search and Extraction team of Oregon's CBRNE Enhanced Response Force Package (CERFP), at Camp Rilea in Warrenton, Ore., Aug. 27.

"It's amazing what dead-weight feels like. (The victims) are heavy, especially when we're in the suits," Clapp said.

According to Oregon Air National Guard Lt. Naomi Desir, a nurse with the 142nd Fighter Wing, one of the challenges to rescuers and medical personnel is the stress associated with rescue, and dealing with death.

"Seeing casualties can cause PTSD," Desir said. "What we're doing is building a team that can respond to those first responders, and debrief them, and decrease the possibility of PTSD and create resilience (for them) down the road."

Desir said the psychological first aid program will employ a team made up of a chaplain, nurse, and others to help facilitate a debriefing for members of the unit following an incident response mission. In her full-time position, Desir works as a psychiatric nurse at the Oregon State Hospital, dealing with acute mental health issues.

"I think we tend to ignore the mental health aspects," Desir said. "People want to remain tough. People's mental health and physical health are intertwined, and we need to take care of both of them."

Desir had some advice for anyone working as a first responder or in medical care.

"Look out for one another, and don't be afraid to talk," she said.

In March, Oregon's CERFP participated in Vigilant Guard Exercise at Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson in Anchorage, Alaska. Oregon's Citizen-Soldiers and Airmen worked alongside members from the Hawaii National Guard CERFP unit, training to respond to a large-scale earthquake scenario.

The exercise tied into the Alaska Shield and several linked exercises on both the state and national level.

Working in a joint services unit like the CERFP comes with its own challenges. Differences in culture, equipment nomenclature, and simple commands can sometimes trip up members.

Charney-Cohen said the cohesion between unit members, and the reliance on teammates during these exercises strengthens bonds and friendships.

"Crossing cultures can be challenging, but we have worked together to find areas of commonality and understanding, and ultimately it's about the mission," he said.

RECRUITING & RETENTION

Healthcare, education, retirement are benefits of staying in the Guard

Story by Sgt. Philip Steiner,
Oregon Army Guard Recruiting and Retention

It's not just about the numbers, it's about passing on to the next generation of Soldiers the knowledge, experience and skill that has been gained through the career of another Soldier.

This knowledge, with the effort of mentoring and leadership can help guide the future of the organization.

A huge responsibility of senior NCO's is the wellness of their Soldiers. Through many different outlets, these NCO's want to share the benefits and opportunities of staying in the Oregon Army National Guard for a full and healthy career. The primary reason that Soldiers decide to leave the National Guard is lack of information about either the benefits involved or the changes that they can make.

One of the issues not only in the national spotlight but also for Oregon Guard Soldiers is healthcare. As an M-day Soldier you are eligible to receive TriCare Benefits. For the standard Soldier in 2014, \$51.68 a month is all it takes to

be covered, and for families the cost is \$204.29 a month.

When comparing this to what other healthcare options are out there currently, this is a great opportunity to take advantage of. This also is considered minimum essential coverage under the Affordable Care Act. (Please visit <https://www.uhmilitarywest.com/>, as UHC is the provider for the West Coast of the United States).

Right behind healthcare, the talk of somehow paying for the rising education costs comes to mind of anyone looking to further their civilian education.

The first program to help is the (FTA) Federal Tuition Assistance. FTA will pay 100 percent of your tuition up to \$250 per semester hour, or \$167 per quarter hour, limited to \$4,500 per year to include tuition related fees. Current Army Policy limits total TA to 130 semester hours or undergraduate credit or baccalaureate degree, whichever comes first and 39 semester hours of graduate credit or master's degree whichever comes first.

In light of recent financial restrictions within the last year, the following has also

been applied to rules within FTA; Soldiers will be eligible for FTA upon completion of one year service after graduating AIT, OCS, or BOLC and Soldiers are able to take up to 16 semester hours of TA funded courses per year.

In addition to this, if eligible, Soldiers are able to take advantage of the Montgomery G.I. Bill or the Post 9/11 G.I. Bill (if previously deployed). For a full-time student, the Montgomery G.I. Bill is \$367 a month. If previously deployed, the Post 9/11 G.I. Bill will pay tuition according to the time you have in active federal service, starting at one year at 50 percent tuition coverage, a BAH payment every month according to same active duty percentage, and a books and supplies benefit.

If becoming an officer and attending college is the direction you would like to take, ROTC provides many options available for enlisted Soldiers. Two, three, and four year scholarships are available as well as a stipend per month depending which year you are in while in school.

The simultaneous membership program is also available, which allows you to be an officer in training with your current

unit. You will commission as a second lieutenant upon completion of the Advanced Course.

If you would rather stay or get into the civilian workforce, the Guard has you covered there as well. The Oregon Guard has an extensive network of employment resources available to assist job-seekers.

For retirement, the Guard has benefits there as well. In the National Guard, with a 20-year career by age 60, you may be eligible to receive monthly payments for the rest of your life. This is based on serving one weekend a month and two weeks a year for 20 years.

Another benefit can be helping you get into your own home. VA Loans are a way for the lender to feel more secure about lending and allow you to get into a home with possibly little to no down payment.

Retention is the responsibility of all Soldiers to keep the force strong. Share what information you know or have read here to spread the knowledge of what the Oregon Army National Guard can do for Soldiers and their families.

For more information, visit: oregonarmyguard.com.

FEATURES

Oregon Army National Guard's field artillery unit spends annual training at Yakima 'putting rounds on targets'

Story and photos by Master Sgt. Nick Choy, Oregon Military Department Public Affairs

YAKIMA, Washington — The battalion commander for the Oregon Army National Guard's 2nd Battalion, 218th Field Artillery, adopted a "top down planning, and bottom up refinement" philosophy for his unit's recent active duty training in central Washington, and according to many Soldiers in his unit, the new strategy is working out well.

"Typically there's little realism, with no enemy," Lt. Col. Maurice Marshall, 2-218th Field Artillery battalion commander said of previous annual training events.

"I got blank ammunition, instituted a base defense plan, and used simulated IEDs and OPFOR (Opposing Forces), with response to those events. This all helped make the training more realistic," he added.

When Marshall, who is from Milwaukie, Oregon, took command of the 2-218th Field Artillery Battalion, his vision was to increase retention by having the unit's training accurately reflect what goes on in the real world, and to ensure he took care of his Soldiers in the process.

"Food is great, morale is high — couldn't ask for a better AT!" Marshall added.

Send in the Marines

By utilizing members of a completely different branch of service to play the "bad guys," event planners may have benefited the unit in more ways than one.

U.S. Marine Cpl. Nathan Parris, was one of nine Marines from Combat Logistics Battalion-23 based in Fresno, California who was invited to join the Oregon Soldiers during their annual training cycle.

Parris and his fellow Marines planned nightly raids on the 2-218th FA compound. Their tactics included tried and true insurgent missions gleaned from Iraq, as well as some new ideas cooked up by the Marines themselves.

"My fellow Marines and I conducted some recon missions, so we could figure out the best time and location of attack," Parris said. "On a couple of missions we got our butts kicked, but on some of them we got through."

The Marines and Soldiers both admitted to learning quite a bit from each other, said



Above: Oregon Army National Guard Lt. Col. Maurice Marshall, 2-218th Field Artillery battalion commander, pauses for a photo outside his unit's Tactical Operations Center, while dressed in full 'battle-rattle,' during annual training at the Yakima Training Center, Wash., June 23.

Parris — something the unit's leadership had hoped to incorporate into their training all along.

"I definitely learned some things, and helped the Army balance out their tactics. The Oregon Guard can definitely hold their own," Parris added.

Parris and his fellow Marines were joined by two liaison Soldiers from the unit. One of them, Staff Sgt. Matthew Sanderson, who normally works logistics as the assistant S4 in the 2-218th FA, became more than a mentor to the group of Marines.

"It's like they're my sons," Sanderson said, as he looked at the Marine platoon busy cleaning their weapons.

Sanderson said lower-ranking Marines typically don't approach a non-commissioned officer of any service, but they felt more relaxed as the group worked through their missions at Yakima.

"Out here, they had to approach me because I was their only liaison," he said. "So it very much had to happen in order for us to work together efficiently. I think I gained their respect and it definitely boosted our confidence."

Sanderson, who is from Portland, Oregon added that the time together gave Soldiers and Marines time to trade stories, and joke about their inter-service rivalry.

"We learned about the different leadership styles in our services, and small differences such as Army Soldiers saying 'Hooah,' and Marines saying 'Hoo-rah,'" he added that while there are all kinds of jokes about how other branches of the military are "lesser" services, when it comes to training and going to war, U.S. military members have each other's backs.

"When it comes down to it, I would rather have somebody in my foxhole that is part of the U.S. military, because we are the best military in the world," Sanderson said.

On the Firing Line
Yakima is a hot, dusty place. The wind whips up miniature dust storms, coating everything with a tan hue.



Oregon Army National Guard's 1st Platoon, Gun #2, of Bravo Battery, 2-218th Field Artillery Battalion, scores a direct hit on a target using a 105mm Howitzer during a Direct Fire Competition at the end of their unit's annual training at Yakima Training Center, Wash., June 24. The gun crew is comprised of Staff Sgt. Richard Moisa, gun chief; Sgt. Daniel Hyde, gunner; Sgt. Michael Whalan, gunner #2; Spc. Nathan Livingood, ammunition team chief; Spc. Derek Becker, number one man; and Pfc. Blake Smith, number two man.

However, this is where the 2-218th FA gun crews feel right at home.

Staff Sgt. Adam Carroll, a fire direction chief for Alpha Battery, 2-218th FA, joined the active duty Air Force in 1998. He was stationed in Wyoming, Washington State, and had numerous deployments throughout southwest Asia, Afghanistan and Iraq.

In 2007, when he was nearing his separation date, a Soldier friend of his convinced him to join the field artillery unit. He said it was the best thing he's ever done.

"This (unit) is absolutely like a family," he said.



Above: Oregon Army National Guard Capt. Derek Hotchkiss (right), battle captain with the 2-218th Field Artillery Battalion, and Staff Sgt. Nick Valleton, assistant S3 non-commissioned officer, conduct a battle drill in the Tactical Operations Center (TOC), during the unit's annual training at Yakima Training Center, Wash., June 23.

As a fire direction chief, Carroll calculates technical firing data for the Howitzers.

After receiving calls from field observers, Carroll and his fellow Soldiers calculated data using the advanced field artillery tactical data system, using a combination of manual and other computational methods to interpolate data that can be used by the 105mm Howitzer gun crews.

Carroll is convinced his work with the field artillery has improved his skills at his civilian job as the director of sales and marketing for Oregon Aero, based in Scappoose, Oregon.

"It has definitely helped my attention to detail," he said. "Here if you swap two numbers, it's a big deal. Even with the long hours, you still have to maintain the attention to detail, and have the ability to transpose data to ensure everything is correct when putting out information."

The unit's Soldiers are very dedicated to the unit and what they do, Carroll said. When Oregon Aero relocated him to Utah about three years ago, he continued training with the unit in Oregon.

"I did not want to leave Alpha Battery," he stressed. "I've since moved back to Oregon, but that's the kind of dedication I see in our Soldiers as a whole."

Sgt. David Nelson, a gunner for 1st Platoon, 2-218th FA, has been in the Oregon Army National Guard for five years, but this was his first year firing live rounds. He said he has seen an improvement in this year's annual training.

"On previous ATs, we usually wait around to get fire commands," he said. "So far on this AT, we haven't sat around much. We definitely love to shoot. It was one of our complaints in the past — we want to fire more. This AT we have been doing that and have been pretty busy. It feels good."

Standing next to his crew's M119A2 Howitzer, he described the ammunition used by the unit and the capabilities of the weapon.

"It can shoot illumination, white phosphorus, and charge rounds up to 11.5 kilometers," Nelson said. "With a rocket assist round, we can fire up to 19.5 kilometers."

A typical fire mission begins when Fire Direction Control (FDC) calls out the command, "Fire Mission!" Batteries will respond with the same command, ensuring everyone is on the same page. FDC will then read off what shell, charge and fuse that'll be fired, and how many rounds of each.

Then, deflection — the left and right limits — and quadrant, which is a measurement of elevation, are given. The gunner then sights in on his column meter and waits for the gun chief to verify the information before the fire command is given.

"The best part of this job is blowing stuff



Oregon Army National Guard Staff Sgt. Jonathan Stocker (left), gun crew section chief for Alpha Battery, 2-218th FA, explains fire coordinates and trajectory tables to gun crew member Spc. Cody Shepherd, during the unit's annual training at Yakima Training Center, Wash., June 23. The gun crews fired high-explosive and phosphorus charges as part of their annual training cycle. Stocker, who is from Keizer, Ore., and Shepherd, from Milwaukie, Ore., were joined by Soldiers from several Army National Guard units from Oregon and Washington.



Two Oregon Army National Guard Soldiers with Golf Troop, 141st Brigade Support Battalion, guard an entry control point at the 2-218th Field Artillery Battalion compound at Yakima Training Site, Wash., June 21.

up," Nelson said. "Being able to help line units, and putting rounds down range — there's really nothing quite like it."

And then there's the food

According to Marshall, the unit certified 12 Howitzer sections, fired more than 2,100 rounds, conducted combat lifesaver training, quick-reaction force operations, battle drills at the Tactical Operations Center, and confirmed all their computer and manual systems. But Marshall said, that was just part of the requirement for a successful AT.

"When we feed our Soldiers well, they're even more motivated," Marshall said.

The unit made sure to serve all participants two hot meals a day — breakfast and dinner — and MREs were issued for lunch. Crews from the Oregon Army National Guard's 141st Brigade Support Battalion prepared the meals, and shuttled them out to the various sections and batteries scattered throughout the far-flung expanse of the Yakima facility. For the Marine platoon from CLB-23, the special dinner menu came as a surprise.

"When the Marine platoon got back from their OPFOR mission, we fed them BBQ ribs," Marshall said, beaming. "They were very good. The next night we had chicken cordon bleu. It was exquisite."

Marshall said a small gesture such as meals benefits everyone.

"They can work their butts off all day, come back and relax, get a hot meal, a nice cool drink and everyone is extremely pleased. Motivation and morale is through the roof," Marshall said.

The menu at AT wasn't lost on Parris and his fellow Marines.

"The Army Guard food was exceptional," Parris said. "Marines are always happy to have hot chow rather than an MRE. They took care of us, gave us a big tent and cots. Cots, food, and some blank rounds to pop off — don't need much to make a Marine happy!"

When asked if he and his fellow Marines would train again with the Oregon Soldiers, Parris referred back to the food.

"If they feed us this well, definitely!" he said.

Bravo Battery gives mechanic 'AT of a lifetime'

Story and photo by Master Sgt. Nick Choy, Oregon Military Department Public Affairs

YAKIMA, Wash. — When Oregon Army National Guard Pfc. Kevin Sandoval, of Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 141st Brigade Support Battalion reported for duty for his annual training in June, he never envisioned he'd be invited by the 2-218th Field Artillery to fire one of their 105mm Howitzer cannons.

"This is definitely a bit of jump when you're standing right next to it and you hear it go off," Sandoval said.

Sandoval's typical duties involve repairing vehicles, however, after he and another Soldier from HHC were requested by Bravo Battery, 2-218th FA to assist with some equipment repairs, the artillery Soldiers allowed them to fire one of their Howitzers.

"It was definitely an adrenaline rush," Sandoval said of his experience firing the weapon.

He and another Soldier were allowed to fire eight rounds each, under the watchful eyes of seasoned Bravo Battery Soldiers.

"I told my friends that they definitely want to try this," Sandoval said. "All the stories that I told them, they definitely were jealous of what I was able to do."

Sandoval, who graduated from high school in February, joined the Oregon Army National Guard on May 20, 2012. He said the National Guard taught him skills he never dreamed of before.

"When I went to Advanced Individual Training to learn my trade skill, I learned absolutely everything," he said. "I got to do things I never thought I could do, such as work on Mine Resistant Ambush Protected vehicles, pull whole engines out of Humvees and put it back together all in one day."

Sandoval, who admits he has always had an interest in all things mechanical, said before joining the Oregon Army National Guard, a simple repair to his car would have cost him hundreds of dollars in labor. He recently saved a lot of money by repairing his own car using the skills and knowledge he acquired in the National Guard.

"I had to change something on my POV [privately owned vehicle] and they were going to charge me \$600, but I have the skills to do it myself, and it only cost me \$130 in parts," Sandoval said.

Sandoval said the National Guard is a great way to acquire useful skills. He recommends the Recruit Sustainment Program (RSP) for those who want to simply 'try out' membership in the Oregon Army National Guard.

"There's no commitment," he said. "You can try things out for a weekend, and if you don't like it you don't have to go back. But it's definitely an experience you won't forget," Sandoval said.



Oregon Army National Guard Pfc. Kevin Sandoval, a wheeled-vehicle mechanic with Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 141st Brigade Support Battalion, stands next to a 105mm Howitzer during his annual training at the Yakima Training Center, Wash., June 23. Sandoval and another Oregon Soldier were each allowed to fire eight rounds with Bravo Battery, 2-218th Field Artillery, as a "thank you" for the two Soldiers' support of 2-218th FA personnel during the unit's annual training at the training site.

Being in the National Guard is the best of both worlds, Sandoval added.

"Getting to fire live rounds from weapons that you've never seen before, or never even heard of, or maybe just seen on television, and performing all this stuff is incredible," Sandoval said.

In addition, Sandoval said the mock firefights staged by the opposing forces (OPFOR) team added a lot of realism and excitement to his unit's annual training.

"Just last night we got into a 'firefight' with some of the Marines just up the road from here," Sandoval said. "We were already in bed and heard some explosions, so we grabbed our weapons and responded to the attack."

While it was his first time engaging 'enemy forces', Sandoval said the late-night simulated enemy attack made for a memorable experience.

"I'll never forget that. I've only been here a week and a half and I've had so many experiences I'll never forget," he said.

Anatomy of 'sending a round downrange'

Photos by Master Sgt. Nick Choy, Oregon Military Department Public Affairs

Oregon Army National Guard Soldiers of Alpha Battery, 2-218th Field Artillery Battalion illustrate how a round is fired from an M119A2 105mm Howitzer cannon. Their gun crew is comprised of Staff Sgt. Jonathan Stocker, gun crew section chief; Sgt. David Tully, ammunition team chief; Spc. William McKnight, gunner; Spc. Cody Shepherd, gunner; and Pfc. Jordan Pena, assistant gunner.



The team has just fired a round. Sgt. David Tully, ammunition team chief, hands another 105mm round to Spc. Cody Shepherd, gunner. Shepherd pivots and begins to crouch down to insert the round into the breach. Pfc. Jordan Pena has already opened the breach to accept the round. Shepherd inserts the round as Pena prepares to close the breach. Staff Sgt. Jonathan Stocker, gun crew chief, observes from the left for any safety concerns. Shepherd inserts the round as Pena prepares to close the breach. Stocker Howitzer's barrel as Pena prepares to close the breach. Stocker continues to supervise. Shepherd pivots away from the breach, With his entire gun crew at the ready, The round leaves the muzzle, and the Pena confirms the empty barrel, as Shepherd crouches down to receive the spent shell, which he then tosses aside. Tully appears with another 105mm round.

OREGON AIR NATIONAL GUARD

Matthews recognized as one of twelve Outstanding Airmen throughout Air Force

Story by Senior Airman John E. Hillier,
Air National Guard Readiness Center
Public Affairs

When you talk to Tech. Sgt. Douglas Matthews, a proud member of the Special Operations community, one concept quickly emerges: the Team.

Team members, team mission, team challenges and team accomplishments. Being part of a team is at the core of how Special Operations accomplishes their mission, not only on the battlefield, but in every facet of their jobs. For Matthews, the Air National Guard Outstanding Non-Commissioned Officer of the Year, and one of the twelve Air Force (active component) Outstanding Airmen of the Year, the complete team focus is a way of life.

Matthews is a combat controller with the Oregon Air National Guard's 125th Special Tactics Squadron at Portland Air National Guard Base. He was awarded the Silver Star for gallantry in combat on Nov. 27, 2012 in Afghanistan. Matthews was injured in the battle, when an improvised explosive device was detonated under his vehicle, triggering a large-scale ambush on his patrol. Despite his exposed position, he coordinated close-air support against enemy forces. He refused medical evacuation to remain behind and engage the enemy with multiple air platforms, which allowed his team to break contact and return to base — remarkably with no loss of life.

The Silver Star is the nation's third-highest decoration for gallantry in action against an enemy of the United States while



Tech. Sgt. Doug Matthews, assigned to the 125th STS, trains at the Portland Air National Guard Base, Portland, Ore., Nov. 22, 2013. Matthews was chosen as the Air National Guard NCO of the Year.

engaged in military operations involving conflict with an opposing foreign force.

Matthews refers to his job as being the team's guardian. "Combat controllers all have a sense of guardianship for the team. We take a lot of responsibility for them, doing everything we can. We're managing aircraft, looking around trying to give our teammates the best situational awareness of what's going on, on the battlefield."

Even during his year-long recovery, Matthews made every effort to be a good wingman to his team members who were still deployed.

"It can be pretty hard to leave that, to almost abandon those guys while they're still over there. You feel like it's your responsibility to help them out, to watch their back," he said. But there is no shortage of wingmen in a Guard unit, and the 125th lived up to that creed. "It takes a while to adjust, and it's a very different lifestyle. You rely heavily on the support of close friends and teammates at home who have shared those similar experiences," Matthews said.

After five years of active duty service, Matthews joined the Oregon Air National Guard in 2008 in order to continue his education while still serving the nation. He is currently pursuing a bachelor's degree in integrative physiology at the University of Colorado Boulder.

"The combat control career field is small. There are only two units in the ANG. I wanted to go full-time to a university and the Oregon Air Guard allowed me to live wherever I wanted to and drill quarterly. I grew up in Colorado, so that's where I live. I wanted to still be able to serve in whatever capacity I could manage while still getting my degree."

Matthews has made physical fitness not only a lifestyle, but soon it will be his occupation as well. He is in the process of opening a cross training gym in the Boulder-Denver area.

"I like the variety with the workouts. There's always something different

you're doing; there's always something pushing you," said Matthews. "I like the community with [the sport]. It's a great social outlet." While military life means moves and deployments, Matthews says that he can easily find a wingman through fitness. "No matter where you move to, where you go, there's always some place you can easily meet people."

Even a professional wingman needs some solitude from time to time, and Matthews finds it by being outdoors.

"I have to be outdoors - I lose my mind if I'm cooped up inside somewhere," he said. "I love to go hiking. I grew up rafting a ton. I'm into amateur photography. It's almost therapeutic to grab the camera and go on a hike and take pictures of whatever things you see. I can do it by myself or with other people. It especially goes really well with the things that I like doing - being outdoors."

Whether he's serving in the Air National Guard, attending college courses, working out at the gym or enjoying the outdoors, Matthews shows that Guardsmen are always on mission for their country and their communities.



Tech. Sgt. Doug Matthews

Focused training allows Guardsmen to enhance roles as Sexual Assault Victim Advocates

Story and photos by Tech. Sgt. John Hughel,
142nd Fighter Wing Public Affairs

PORTLAND, Oregon — The training can be both challenging and supportive, as trained professionals and instructors assisted victim advocates with comprehending their roles, and processing cases that involve sexual abuse and assault.

The three days of instruction and class work, held June 24-26, allowed members of the Oregon Army and Air National Guard to bolster their skills and reinforce their responsibilities as Sexual Assault Prevention and Response (SAPR) victim advocates.

In a report released by the Pentagon in May of this year, 5,061 service members reported being sexually assaulted in 2013. The record high number and increase of reported claims can be attributed to new efforts to encourage reporting and is a direct result of the SAPR program.

The overall goal of the training helps victim advocates serve as facilitators and as a confidential source to aid a victim of sexual abuse, and begin the process of getting the assistance they need to recover. "That's what we're here for," said

Army National Guard Maj. Rey Agullana, Sexual Assault Response Coordinator (SARC), for Joint Forces Headquarters, in Salem, Oregon.

"This training is to give knowledge and encourage proficiency so that you can be successful in your roles as victim advocates," he added.

In his role as the SARC, Agullana oversees the SAPR program for the State. The training helps victim advocates remain current in their roles as they are required to attend 32 hours of training within a two-year period.

The informal class structure allows for interaction between victim advocates and instructors, affording a wide range of questions to be asked, and issues to be discussed. This was the first time the training had been held at the Portland Air National Guard Base.

Agullana pointed out that although the rates of sexual assault are highest among women, "the actual numbers are higher among men, because more men serve in the military," he said.

Along with stories and case studies the group watched several videos that explored the nature of sexual violence and how the military is working to educate uniformed members on the lasting impacts of sexual assault. As victim advocates, the challenges can be daunting when having to help and report cases of sexual assault and abuse, Agullana said.

"Just remember to have faith in your leadership and your SARCs; they are there for support and advice," he said.

Dr. DeAnn Smetana, 142nd Fighter Wing director of psychological health, emphasized the concept of self-care, as she worked with the group to recognize the warning signs.

Just as victims of sexual assault may experience emotional symptoms such as depression and anger, physical magnifications can develop too; often times, consequently, a victim advocate can develop some of the same impacting symptoms.

"It is important that as advocates, you don't reach burn out," Smetana said, as she described the consequences of taking



Dr. DeAnn Smetana, 142nd Fighter Wing director of psychological health, leads a discussion on "personal space" during three days of training for Sexual Assault Prevention and Response (SAPR) training, June 24-26 at the Portland Air National Guard Base, Ore.

on cases where tragic issues of the victims can resonate with victim advocates.

"As caregivers, each of you has unique traits that allow you to give the passion and assistance this role constantly demands," she said.

In one particular exercise, Smetana had individuals pair up, then with one person stationary, the other approached until they hit, "a personal comfort zone," to illustrate how each person has their own degree of "comfort area."

To better assist victims of sexual assault, Kelly Dominici, from the Portland Veterans Administration Medical Center in Vancouver, Wash., further elaborated on the role of victim advocates when helping individuals suffering from sexual abuse.

"With trauma, there is no 'one-way' that someone responds to an MST [Military Sexual Trauma] event," Dominici said.

She described to the class that it is not uncommon for some individuals to wait for years to get help or begin the healing process.

"There is a stigma behind sexual

assault, where self-blame or self-worth comes into question for those suffering," Dominici said.

She pointed out that victims will be left with lingering unanswered questions.

"Often times women will question themselves — why didn't they fight back during an assault, whereas men will often question issues associated with sexual orientation."

Even as the media has recently reported backlogs for VA medical cases, helping members get the support they need has not affected victims of military sexual trauma.

"For MST cases, the VA does a really good job of getting a consultant assigned in the first 48 hours," said Dominici.

Elaborating on the assistance and process, Dominici said, a normal cycle of treatment can take anywhere from six to nine months of self-follow through.

"The assistance and professionals in place can help bring about dramatic and enduring changes for those suffering from a sexual assault," she said.



Army National Guard Sgt. 1st Class Cammy Price, center left, and Air National Guard Master Sgt. Michelle Lowe, center right, as well as other victim advocates from the Oregon National Guard, participate in three days of Sexual Assault Prevention and Response (SAPR) training at the Portland Air National Guard Base, Ore., June 24-26, 2014. The overall goal of the training helps victim advocates serve as facilitators and as a confidential source to aid a victim of sexual abuse.

OREGON AIR NATIONAL GUARD

Chief Master Sergeant of the ANG visits Klamath Falls

Story by Tech. Sgt. Jefferson Thompson,
173rd Fighter Wing Public Affairs

KLAMMATH FALLS, Oregon — The command chief of the Air National Guard visited Kingsley Field in Klamath Falls, July 15.

Chief Master Sgt. James Hotaling hosted numerous sessions with Airmen from the 173rd Fighter Wing and 270th Air Traffic Control Squadron ranging from junior enlisted, company grade officers, to Airmen support personnel, such as the director of psychological health and the chaplain's office.

He frequently touched on the difficult fact that military budgets are slim and explained that this is not going to change. He stressed that the profession of arms is changing and that Airmen must adapt to a new environment.

"Are things changing rapidly in our United States Air Force?" he asked the audience to general agreement. "We need to understand that even if we get frustrated, we chose to be a professional in this profession of arms, and who needs to change if rules change? — we do."

He went on to say that this is the starting point for the rest of the conversation, meeting as professionals and looking toward what the future has in store. Hotaling brought his unique perspective

from the top of the enlisted corps and spoke bluntly about what he sees down the road.

"If we do not change the way we do business, we will face enemies who are peers to us in military strength — and that's scary," he added.

He emphasized that what cost savings are realized through cuts now are providing a safeguard against that point; that the money we are able to invest in future systems and weapons platforms for that contingency are critical.

While the chief discussed some difficult concepts affecting our Air Force and Air National Guard, he left Kingsley Airmen with a positive message.

"Out of the three components active, Reserve and Guard you are positioned the best because of how efficient you are, because you do more with less," he said.

The 173rd Fighter Wing sees this unfolding now as they expand the number of pilots produced without greatly increasing costs, and with the addition of a modest complement of active-duty Airmen scheduled to begin arriving in the fall.

When asked whether the Guard would enjoy equal footing with the active duty on benefits such as base gyms and other nice-to-have infrastructure, he compares the cost of those things balanced against the ANG's efficiency saying "it's a dangerous road to go down."



Photo by Master Sgt. Jennifer Shirar, 173rd Fighter Wing Public Affairs

Master Sgt. Levi Clarey (left foreground), of the 173rd Fighter Wng, asks Chief Master Sgt. Jim Hotaling, the Air National Guard Command Chief, a question during a town hall meeting for the senior enlisted Airmen during Hotaling's visit to Kingsley Field, Klamath Falls, Ore. July 15. Hotaling spent the day meeting and speaking with the Airmen of the 173rd FW and 270th Air Traffic Control Squadron.

He toured the base after the briefings, including stops at the 270th ATCS and 173rd Security Forces Squadron.

Hotaling has occupied the top enlisted spot in the Air National Guard for 18 months and is the 11th Command Chief

Master Sergeant for the ANG. Previously he served in Oregon as a 125th Special Tactics Squadron Combat Controller and then became the 142nd Fighter Wing Command Chief at Portland Air National Guard Base.

Kingsley Airmen test defensive techniques during combatives competition

Story by Tech. Sgt. Jefferson Thompson,
173rd Fighter Wing Public Affairs

KLAMMATH FALLS, Oregon — 173rd Fighter Wing Security Forces Squadron Airmen spent two days grappling with each other during a combatives course held June 18-19.

The security forces combatives course teaches various defensive techniques with names like the guillotine, arm bar, and rear necked chokes.

Tech. Sgt. Clinton Wells and Staff Sgt. Matthew Taylor led this two-day annual training after volunteering to become instructors for this newly expanded program. Taylor and Wells share a passion for teaching self-defense.

"I like that it brings a lot of knowledge to our Airmen; a lot of the situations we have to go into were not always in the best position," said Taylor. "This is going to teach them how to turn a bad situation around," he said.

The combatives program teaches both self-defense and weapons retention. Airmen learn to use their skill sets to

escape compromising situations and regain control.

"This system we are teaching is highly effective," said Wells. "We are teaching them how to fight."

The Airmen begin by practicing the techniques and gradually build up to effectively use the techniques to dominate the situations.

"There are times where you can't control the environment you are in," said Wells. "All of sudden you find yourself in a bad position...you may be knocked on the ground, they may be putting choke holds on you...we are teaching how to fight out of that situation and turn it around to your advantage."

The security forces trainees all agreed that though difficult, the training is beneficial.

"It is useful training," said Senior Airman Ryan Kaber. "It's just logging flight hours to train the brain to not cave-in in the worst possible situation."

Training that emphasizes the hands-on aspect can be physically taxing.

"I don't know if I'd call it fun, but it's better than, uh ... CBTs," Kaber said.



Photo by Master Sgt. Jennifer Shirar, 173rd Fighter Wing Public Affairs

Tech. Sgt. Clinton Wells and Staff Sgt. Matthew Taylor, 173rd Fighter Wing Security Forces Squadron, instruct members of the 173rd SFS on various defensive skills during combative skills training June 18 at Kingsley Field, Klamath Falls, Ore. Members of the 173rd SFS spent two days learning self-defense and weapons retentions skills as part of an annual training exercise.

Science, math and technology the focus of Kingsley's STARBASE Program

Story by Tech. Sgt. Jefferson Thompson,
173rd Fighter Wing Public Affairs

KLAMMATH FALLS, Oregon — Just over a year ago, former STARBASE director Marsha Beardslee closed the door to the Kingsley Field STARBASE program and retired.

She thought at the time that the doors of the Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM) program would remain closed for good.

But after a turbulent year consisting of funding being pulled due to the sequestration budget fight, Kingsley Field's STARBASE program is once again up and running — for this year.

Congress restored funding for the program for one year, but the next remains to be seen.

Currently, the program doesn't have a new director, but Alesha Earnest, the office manager hired in 2014, fills some of that role. She says next year remains cloudy and that she was forced to hire teachers on a temporary contract.

"At this time, we have no idea whether funding will come through or not, but we



Children learn about foreign countries during a STARBASE Kingsley instruction block.

are forward-planning with the hopeful assumption that it will," said Tamara Walker, a STARBASE teacher, on the future of the program for next school year.

But budget woes aside, the program is in one of its busiest years to date and next promises more of the same, adds Walker.

"We already have over two-thirds of next school-year's calendar full ... local schools are eager to secure their place in our program," she said.

The curriculum is not only educational and beneficial for the students, it's fully accredited.

Students spend a week at Kingsley Field, arriving in the morning and leaving at the end of the school day — and it's free to the schools that take advantage of it.

Upon entering the classroom there are models of cars and rockets, a lab area boasting a 3D printer, and contraptions of all shapes and sizes.

A shelf holds a dozen programmable robots in one corner, yet one thing conspicuously missing — stacks of text books. That's by design; the program is entirely hands-on. Science is taught through experiments, bridge building with cardboard, egg drops in protective containers and numerous other lab experiments designed to draw students into the worlds of engineering, science, and math.

It's the type of educational experience that is at a premium for many districts here and around the state says Suzette Nieraeth, a Henley Elementary School teacher.

"I have had 36-37 students all year this year in half of a modular unit, about 640-square-feet; we literally don't have room for a beaker much less all of this great equipment," she said pointing to the full lab made ready for her sixth graders

to perform experiments involving hot and cold reactions.

Laura Lokey, another STARBASE teacher stands at one of the stations using a mortar and pestle to grind Alka-Seltzer for the endothermic reactions.

"We're going to see some fizzy explosions," she said with a smile. "It's about getting them to say 'ooohh', and then you have them, it's the best part of the job."

Lokey goes on to say that every school who visits the facility confirms that teaching STEM subjects is squeezed by the necessity of teaching the three R's — reading, writing and 'rithmetic — and that virtually no school has the time or space to perform experiments like the one she is preparing — and if and when they are able to teach science it is relegated to a textbook.

"STARBASE provides the avenue to leave the textbook behind and not only learn, but get excited about a future in one of these disciplines," said Lokey.

For more information about STARBASE Kingsley please call the office manager, Alesha Earnest at (541) 885-6472 or email aleshaeearnest@gmail.com.

FEATURES

'Charlie Med' brings a M.A.S.H.-style mobile medical unit to Yakima's AT

Story and photos by Master Sgt. Nick Choy,
Oregon Military Department Public Affairs

YAKIMA, Wash. — Most people who grew up watching television in the late 1970s and early 1980s are familiar with the situational comedy show M.A.S.H., which chronicled a U.S. Army mobile medical unit during the Korean War.

According to the Oregon Army National Guard's Charlie Co., "Charlie-Med" 141st Brigade Support Battalion commander, Capt. Gregory Ramirez, his new Troop Medical Clinic (TMC) is very much like the show.

"This bunch is a tight-knit group who cares for each other, and they have a lot of caring and compassion," Ramirez said. "They joke and have a good time, but when it's time to practice medicine, there's nobody more serious than this bunch."

Made up of 44 personnel, including doctors, nurses, administrators, dentists and an x-ray technician, the unit specializes in Echelon-2 care, or patient stabilization.

Comprised of nine tents, some of which are connected via modular hallways — the largest of which being the main hospital section — resembles large igloos connected with passageways.

Second Lt. Alexandria Davidson, Charlie



Oregon Army National Guard Pvt. 1st Class Alexander Cummings, a medic with Charlie Co., 141st Brigade Support Battalion, highlights the capabilities of his unit's ambulances outside the Troop Medical Clinic during the unit's annual training at the Yakima Firing Range, Wash., June 21.

Co., Treatment Platoon Leader and Health Services Officer for the TMC, said while the medical corps is somewhat relaxed, Soldiers still have the same training and qualifications regarding warrior skills, and everyone in the unit takes both their jobs and their Soldier skills seriously.

"Even though we don't do this every day like the active duty, the people in this unit have a lot of experience from their civilian jobs, and you can see how it crosses over when they come to drill," Davidson said.

Davidson, a recent graduate from the University of Oregon, works part time as a relief counselor at a children's treatment center.

Originally from Fort Lewis, Washington, Davidson comes from a military family, but admits she never really looked at the military as a career.

"The military wasn't my first choice. I went to UoFO to run track, and ran into some ROTC guys, and it caught my interest," she said.

"I never thought I'd take my career this far, but I'm very happy with the way things have turned out," she added.

Ramirez is happy Davidson decided on a career path with his unit.

"I've been blessed," he said. "I've got three young lieutenants, which are Medical Service Corps personnel, so their learning curve is extremely steep."

To be able to come here and do not only their administrative and leadership tasks, but to take it upon themselves to learn the medicine side is a big thing. I think Davidson is going to be a very effective leader."

Self-training is not limited to the unit's leadership. All Soldiers within the TMC ensure their Soldier skills are kept up to date, and balance their training by professional education to keep their medical certifications up to date.

Spc. Nathaniel Novotny, of Wilsonville, Ore., a treatment medic for Charlie Co., is hoping to acquire skills as an x-ray technician in order to broaden his civilian



Oregon Army National Guard 2nd Lt. Alexandria Davidson, treatment platoon leader for Charlie Co., 141st Brigade Support Battalion, works on a computer program in the Troop Medical Clinic (TMC) during the unit's annual training at Yakima Training Center, Wash., June 21. The unit's TMC supports medical needs of service members with a full complement of doctor, nurse, dental, x-ray, and administrative services.

career horizons.

"The training is fantastic," Novotny said. "It's been nice to get out on to the ranges with these new facilities and our new capabilities. If we wanted to, we could make trauma separate, so there's a lot of training and classes that need to happen, including a mass casualty exercise. AT is definitely the shortest amount of time to do the most training."

Novotny said the unit members spend all year building up to their annual training cycle, but unit Soldiers have a number of other warrior tasks and administrative functions to complete.

He concedes it's difficult for most to fit in all the medical-related training and patient care during their monthly drills, but he concurred with the commander's assessment that members of his unit are self-starters, and motivated to train themselves on medical tasks.

"Everyone in the unit is knowledgeable. There's a sense of passion for patient care," Novotny said. "It comes down to providing the best patient care you can. There's a great feeling about being able to help someone."

For Soldiers interested in becoming members of Charlie-Med, Ramirez recommends taking Emergency Medical Technician (EMT) courses at local community colleges.

"Having some background in medicine — understanding the concepts, or a hands-on doctrine is what you need," Ramirez said.

"Most of our medics are civilian EMTs. Those classes are short, inexpensive and easy. It will give you the fundamental skills, but also be able to use easy concepts and common terminology," he said.

Charlie-Med is based at the Kliever Armory in Portland, Ore.

Soldiers pause during annual training at Yakima for safety 'stand down'

Story by Capt. Guy Gregory

Photos by Spc. Marissa McLain,
141st Brigade Support Battalion

Safety was a top agenda item for Soldiers of the Oregon Army National Guard's 141st Brigade Support Battalion during the unit's annual training at the Yakima Training Center in June.

According to the unit safety officer, Capt. Carmen Nicely, the event was not only the first of its kind for a land unit in the Oregon Army National Guard, but will be held as an annual event.

"Our battalion commander wanted to bring something interactive in one location that held the interest of our Soldiers and enhanced our unit readiness," Nicely said.

The event was the culmination of months of planning which incorporated input from the Oregon National Guard Safety Office in Salem.

Nicely coordinated the event after Lt. Col. Michael Burghardt, 141st BSB commander, expressed his vision to get Sol-



An Oregon Army National Guard Soldier practices CPR during the unit's safety stand down held during annual training at the Yakima Training Center in June.

diers more actively involved in learning and practicing the five risk management steps to mitigate hazardous conditions on and off duty.

Lt. Col. Robert Fraser, state safety officer, said he was very impressed with the unit's commitment to safety, and over the course of a year, observed how senior noncommissioned officers mentor junior members on how to manage and mitigate risks.

"Safety is part of the unit culture," Fraser said. "The 141st BSB is the only unit in the 41st IBCB to conduct a Safety Stand Down day, and I know the Soldiers truly enjoyed their time at all the safety stations."

The day-long event focused on the importance of risk management and its role in ensuring Soldiers remain safe on and off duty in their daily lives.

Soldiers participated in six separate events; conducting essential combat life support, how to perform CPR on unresponsive victims, boating and motorcycle safety, safe use of fire extinguishers, and how to plan for conducting missions and recreational activities safely by conducting pre-mission checks and inspections.

Participants were briefed on how to identify and assess hazards as well as find ways to mitigate hazards when planning and executing any activity.

Cadet Carley Flores said the events reminded Soldiers of the importance of standards for safety and how to work as a team to effectively apply those standards in creating a safe home and work environment.

"The event was to train every Soldier to be mentally up to the standards of every station they visited," Flores said.



Oregon Army National Guard Maj. Brian Stramel, executive officer for Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 141st Brigade Support Battalion, uses a fire extinguisher to put out a fire during a brigade Safety Stand Down, held at the Yakima Training Center, in Yakima, Wash., June 24.

Burghardt said his intent for the Safety Stand Down is to ensure his Soldiers take what they have learned and apply those lessons to safely conduct all missions, including convoy operations.

Leaders are required to brief all Soldiers prior to conducting any mission, and this includes a safety brief.

According to Burghardt, Soldiers can also take the lessons learned and apply them in their daily lives.

"Because of the topics covered and the hands-on presentations, service members will remember these skills and teach their family members how to apply them in their

daily activities," Burghardt said.

Sgt. Summer Beagle, who participated in the Stand Down, says she understands the commander's vision for the event.

"It's (the event is) a good idea. Soldiers will feel more prepared, as the event provides an overview of safety procedures that can be applied to mitigate hazards we may encounter in both our military and civilian lives."

The Safety Stand Down concluded with an awards ceremony that recognized Soldiers who consistently demonstrated an uncompromising work ethic of safety at annual training.

FEATURES

Oregon Soldiers, Airmen compete for 'Iron Chef' title at 2014 Bite of Oregon



Story and photos by Master Sgt. Nick Choy,
Oregon Military Department Public Affairs

PORTLAND, Ore. — A cooking team from the Oregon Army National Guard took first place in the dessert portion of the Bite of Oregon event held in Portland, Ore., Aug. 10.

The winning team, comprised of Oregon Army National Guard Sgt. Jeffrey Reed and Sgt. Elizabeth Stewart, both of Golf Co., 141st Brigade Support Battalion, took the title with a mixed berry cobbler using a cornbread style cake. The secret ingredient announced just prior to the start of the competition was whole sweet corn.

In 2013, Reed and Stewart competed in the annual Phillip A. Connelly cooking competition put on by the Department of the Army. The duo garnered both state and regional titles in the competition.

Reed and Stewart competed against the Oregon Air National Guard team, with head chef Master Sgt. Michael "Mick" Gremaud and teammate Chief Master Sgt. Michelle Marshall. The Air Guard team prepared a mixed berry-cream and sweet corn compote medley. Marshall came to the competition with formal culinary training at the Culinary Institute of Portland.



Above left: Oregon Air National Guard Master Sgt. Michael Gremaud (left), and Chief Master Sgt. Michelle Marshall (right), serve berry-cream dessert with sweet corn compote to judges. Above: Oregon Army National Guard Sgt. Jeffrey Reed (right) and Sgt. Elizabeth Stewart (left), prepare their dessert recipe during the Iron Chef portion of the Bite of Oregon event, held in Portland, Ore., Aug. 10. Reed and Stewart won the Bite of Oregon competition with a mixed berry cobbler with sweet corn as the secret ingredient. In 2013, Reed and Stewart participated in the annual Department of Army Phillip A. Connelly Award Competition for cooking, taking both state and regional titles.

"This is a great chance for our Citizen Soldiers and Airmen to show how they are fantastic members of our community, and during a great event such as the Bite of Oregon," said Maj. Gen. Daniel Hokanson, Adjutant General, Oregon.

Oregon Army National Guard Ryan Sablan, food service specialist and first cook for Golf Co., 141st Brigade Support Battalion, said he expected the Soldiers on his team to do well, in part because they had been preparing for this event by default of what they do in their full-time civilian jobs and during drill weekends.

"Every drill is a live mission," Sablan

said. "Preparation (for this event) has been happening with experienced food service folks as long as they've been in the military, and in some cases in the civilian world."

Sablan, who acted as the Army Guard's team advisor and coach, competed in the 2012 Bite of Oregon against chefs from Cisco.

He said every new challenge has to be treated like it's the first time, and just because his Soldiers came to the event with a lot of experience, didn't mean they were assured victory.

"The Air Force is very competitive,

so we need to get into a situation where we meet and exceed the standard. Even though both branches are fraternal, there is a sharp sense of competition today," Sablan said.

Stewart said her team did not expect to win, and lauded the Oregon Air National Guard team for a very professional effort. She added that many of the audience members had no idea the Oregon National Guard had cooks or any level of culinary talent.

"This is awesome, because a lot of people get to experience and see how we train all year," Stewart said. "This event helps people understand that we do more than go to war or learn to shoot a gun. Our Soldiers have many talents."

Proceeds from the annual event went to benefit Special Olympics Oregon. For more information on The Bite, including event schedules, please visit: www.biteoforegon.com.



Oregon Army National Guard Sgt. Jeffrey Reed (left) and Sgt. Elizabeth Stewart, give each other a "high-five" in celebration after their team was announced the winner of the Iron Chef portion of the Bite of Oregon event, held in Portland, Ore., Aug. 10.

Oregon National Guard brings the 'boom' to Waterfront Concert in Portland

Story and photos by Spc. Matthew Burnett,
115th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

PORTLAND, Ore. — The Oregon Army National Guard helped kick-off the 2014-2015 season of the Oregon Symphony during the 18th annual Waterfront Concert at Tom McCall Waterfront Park in Portland, Oregon, Aug. 28.

The concert was opened by the 234th Army Band and closed with a Howitzer salute during the symphony's grand finale. Citizen-Soldiers of Alpha Battery, 2nd Battalion, 218th Field Artillery Regiment, fired volleys from their 105mm Howitzer cannons during the symphony's rendition of Tchaikovsky's 1812 Overture.

"Alpha Battery has a very long history with Portland and it is the oldest continuously serving unit west of the Mississippi," said 1st Lt. Michael Lee, a platoon leader with Alpha Battery, 2-218th FA Bn.

"We have always been happy to provide this support to the Oregon Symphony," Lee added.

The free, public event has been a summer ending capstone for the city of Portland for the last 18 years, and signals the start of the Oregon Symphony's new season. More than a thousand people attended the event, and spent time mingling with Soldiers from the unit, who answered questions about the Howitzers.

"It's a fun event," Lee said. "It's also something we see as a way of getting us out into the community to talk to people who live in Portland and the surrounding areas, to show them that we are normal people — we're Citizen-Soldiers," he added.

A delegation from the Vietnam National Committee for Search and Rescue (VINASARCOM) also had the opportunity to attend the concert with Maj. Gen. Dan Hokanson, Adjutant



Oregon Army National Guard Soldiers with Alpha Battery, 2-218th Field Artillery Battalion, pose with members of the delegation from the Vietnam National Committee for Search and Rescue (VINASARCOM) before the start of the Oregon Symphony's Waterfront Concert in Portland, Ore., Aug. 28.

General, Oregon, during their visit to Oregon as part of the National Guard's State Partnership Program.

Members of the delegation posed for photos with the Howitzers and the Soldiers. Their interpreter said they enjoyed the concert and were impressed with how the Oregon National Guard gets involved with the community.

The Waterfront Concert also featured performances by the Metropolitan Youth Symphony, Hillsboro Mariachi Una Voz, BRAVO Youth Orchestra, Portland Youth Philharmonic, the Portland Taiko Drum troop, and performances by the Portland Opera and Oregon Ballet Theater. The event also featured a live fireworks display.

In 2013, the Oregon Symphony cancelled the event at Waterfront Park due to budget constraints. The annual concert typically costs \$192,000, with partial funding through the City of Portland's Regional Arts & Culture Council. At the time, Portland Mayor Charlie Hales vowed to restore funding for this year's



Alpha Battery, 2-218th Field Artillery Battalion, fires a volley using a 105mm Howitzer cannon, during the playing of Tchaikovsky's 1812 Overture, at the Oregon Symphony's Waterfront Concert, Aug. 28, at Tom McCall Waterfront Park in downtown Portland, Ore. The annual event opened with the Oregon National Guard's 234 Army Band, and several other local classical performers.

event.

Soldiers from Alpha Battery, 2-218th Field Artillery Battalion also participated in annual training at the Yakima Training Center in June, along with Soldiers of

the 141st Brigade Support Battalion and 162nd Engineer Company. Alpha Battery, 2-218th FA Bn., is headquartered at the Jackson Armory in Portland, Ore.

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NEWS

Charlie Co., 1-186th Infantry, Soldiers overcome obstacles



Oregon Soldiers with Charlie Co., 1-186th Infantry train on a Leader's Reaction Course in the heat of Fort Hood, Texas. The Soldiers completed their training at Fort Hood and are headed to Afghanistan, where they will provide security in support of Operation Enduring Freedom.

Story and photo courtesy
Sgt. Daniel Hutchison,
Unit Public Affairs Rep.,
1-186th Infantry Battalion

FORT HOOD, Texas — Soldiers of Charlie Company, 1st Battalion, 186th Infantry, based out of Roseburg, Ore., trained at Fort Hood, Texas, prior to their departure to Afghanistan, where they will spend approximately nine months.

Fort Hood featured training facilities to help the Soldiers prepare for their deployment, including pop-up target firing ranges for all types of weapon systems.

The weather was hot and humid, with temperatures over 100 degrees most days, but the Oregon Soldiers said their morale was high and they were happy to be training.

Some of the training included a Leaders' Reaction Course. The course featured a series of obstacles and practical exercises in problem solving to test the teamwork and leadership capacity of Charlie Company's Soldiers. The Soldiers competed for the fastest and most effective completion of the course, despite the challenging tasks and the hot weather conditions.

Charlie Company also conducted a road march to the bayonet assault course. While bayonets aren't thought of as the most commonly used weapon system in modern warfare, the course provided an opportunity to blow off some steam for the Soldiers. Spc. Karl Henderson made use of skills acquired in his civilian job as a knife sensei to instruct Soldiers on how to disarm an attacker.

Oregon's Citizen-Soldiers said they are training and working hard, and eager for the deployment.

City of Ashland fills auditorium to capacity for local heroes

Continued from Front Page

"we've ever been due to experience gained through supporting overseas contingency operations over the last decade," said Maj. Stephen Bomar, director of Public Affairs for the Oregon Military Department.

"Mobilizations such as this help the Oregon National Guard maintain a ready and reliable operational force, Bomar said"

It is customary for senior leaders and elected representatives to deliver letters to the deploying units.

U.S. Senator Jeff Merkley wrote, "I have no doubt your team will demonstrate skill and professionalism in your upcoming mission. I know you will display courage and strength as you provide security forces at the Bagram Airfield base."

U.S. Senator Ron Wyden also provided a letter to the unit. Many local, state and other elected officials were in attendance alongside representatives from law enforcement and emergency response agencies.



Photo by Master Sgt. Nick Choy, Oregon Military Department Public Affairs

Oregon Army National Guard Maj. Gen. Daniel R. Hokanson (center), Adjutant General, Oregon, is joined by Oregon Secretary of State Kate Brown (right), and Lt. Col. Noel Hoback, commander, 1st Battalion, 186th Infantry, of the 41st Infantry Brigade Combat Team, to say farewell to Soldiers following their unit's mobilization ceremony, held July 18, at the McNeal Pavilion, Southern Oregon University, in Ashland, Ore.

Vehicle training important part of preparing for deployment



Oregon Army National Guard Soldiers with 1st Battalion, 186th Infantry Regiment, 41st Infantry Brigade Combat Team, certified to drive Mine-Resistant Ambush-Protected (MRAP) vehicles at Fort Hood, Texas, in preparation for deployment to Afghanistan in support of Operation Enduring Freedom.

Story and photo courtesy
Sgt. Daniel Hutchison,
1-186th Infantry Battalion

FORT HOOD, Texas — Soldiers from Alpha Company, 1st Battalion, 186th Infantry, based out of Medford, Ore., conducted mobilization training and evaluations at Fort Hood, Texas, prior to their departure for Afghanistan. The major tasks during those few weeks culminated into qualifications for the crews on mounted gunnery.

The different stages for qualifying a unit can be very arduous, resulting in long hours in the heat and humidity of Texas, testing Soldiers' physical fitness, discipline and military bearing.

The qualification process started with getting Soldiers qualified to drive the different vehicles they will be utilizing during their deployment. Those vehicles are the MAXXPRO and MATV, two vehicles belonging to the Mine-Resistant

machine guns. The next stage involved the crews moving through several scenarios, engaging a series of targets while being graded on time, accuracy and correctness of commands.

Once the individual crews were qualified on gunnery, the next task was to conduct a Convoy Live Fire patrol. This exercise was comprised of several vehicle crews, which moved along a route and encountered scenarios to test their ability to react to the different situations in a timely, organized and effective manner. The crews spotted Improvised Explosive Devices (IEDs), and reacted to a simulated explosion and small arms fire. The crews became more proficient and confident in their abilities to coordinate fires safely and effectively with those units beside them.

This sort of task is important for the unit because it familiarizes them with the vehicle and weapons systems that will be essential tools for them during their time in Afghanistan. It also hones their ability to work as a team.

With each individual position having their own certain responsibilities in the crew, the communication between Soldiers must be sharpened for them to be a potent fighting machine. This is just one of the many skill sets Soldiers in the unit acquired in order to enhance their survivability downrange.

Ambush Protected (MRAP) family of military vehicles.

The next step was for the Soldiers to qualify on the weapons systems they are assigned. The Soldiers spent almost a week on different ranges training on their marksmanship abilities, ranging from their individual weapons to crew served

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NEWS BRIEFS

Retiree offers praise for Oregon Sentinel

Greetings. This is just a quick note to offer praise for the latest edition of Oregon Sentinel. This is a top quality publication and I look forward to every edition.

- Gary K. Miller, CMSgt (ret.)

Bonamici speaks at Employer Summit



Photo by Master Sgt. Nick Choy, OMD Public Affairs

U.S. Representative Suzanne Bonamici, (D-OR, 1st District), speaks to audience members during the Northwest Military Employer Summit, held at Camp Withycombe in Clackamas, Ore., June 5.

The annual event, organized by the Oregon National Guard's Reintegration Program and the Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve (ESGR), brings together community leaders, elected officials, and representatives of Oregon's military to recognize select employers who support their military employees. Bonamici presented an ESGR Seven Seals Award to Eid Passport for their dedication and support of military service members employed at the company.

Oregon's Substance Abuse program addresses concerns

The U.S. Military has a long history and culture of alcohol and substance misuse. Years of research confirm that substance misuse is on the rise, and continues to be a concern for the military, especially alcohol and binge drinking.

To address these concerns, reduce the stigma, and get Soldiers the help they need, the National Guard Bureau implemented some changes to the Resiliency program.

These changes are meant to help the

Army meet their mission. The Oregon Substance Abuse Program's mission is to provide prevention training, promote family and peer support through education, and connect Soldiers to treatment resources to increase military discipline, individual performance, as well as combat readiness and resilience.

Oregon National Guard now has one Alcohol and Drug Control Officer (ADCO), Maryalicia Verdecchia, and one Prevention Coordinator (PC), Steve Comella, who support the OSAP program.

The ADCO coordinates all substance abuse and risk reduction activities, assists commanders in identifying and referring Soldiers with known or possible substance abuse issues, and monitors and evaluates referral, separation and completion rates.

The PCs provide units with prevention training and administer the Unit Risk Inventory to all units.

Additionally, the ADCO and PC serve as subject matter experts for the OSAP program and Army Regulation 600-85, and act as a resource for Soldiers and command with any questions and concerns. Finally, the OSAP program is working to reduce stigma against Soldiers with Substance Use Disorders (SUD) and especially those who ask for help.

Please do not hesitate to contact any member of the OSAP program team for more information, to include Sgt. 1st Class James Goleman at 503-536-5313 or 503-584-3681.

Visit the OSAP Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/marylalicia.verdecchia#1/ORNGSAP>.

National Preparedness month raises awareness

**Ready for an
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September was National Preparedness Month and the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) urges the U.S. to "be disaster aware, take action to prepare."

In Oregon, events took place highlighting the importance of emergency preparedness and what individuals and families can do to prepare for emergencies.

One such event called "Race the Wave" took runners and walkers along a tsunami evacuation route in Cannon Beach, Ore., Sept. 28, followed by an emergency preparedness fair near the city's supply

combat techniques. This, and reliving the battle over and over, causes fear to lose its grip over him.

A friend (who is writing a book on the psychology of courage) has told me that when interviewing brave people he found a common response was that the person felt they had no choice in acting bravely.

In other words, they did not use self-discipline to move forward, they simply had to.

"Whatever we learn to do, we learn by actually doing it; men come to be builders, for instance, by building, and harp players by playing the harp. In the same way, by doing just acts we come to be just; by doing self-controlled acts, we come to be self-controlled; and by doing brave acts, we become brave." - Aristotle

In virtue ethics theory, virtues are not traits that people are born with or not, they are practiced, over and over under the watch of a mentor until the behavior becomes second nature.

REFLECTIONS ON WWII



Photo by Sgt. Tianna White, 41st IBCT Public Affairs

A Soldier re-enactor stands near the World War II memorial in Salem, Ore., during the Spirit of '45 Day celebration, Aug. 10. The celebration honored the achievements of all the men and women who participated in WWII.

cache containers established above the tsunami inundation zone.

The event was a collaborative effort among FEMA, the Oregon Office of Emergency Management (OEM), Oregon Department of Geology and Mineral Industries (DOGAMI), Clatsop County, the City of Cannon Beach and its citizens. It focused on the importance of emergency preparedness for a Cascadia earthquake and tsunami, and highlighting the work Cannon Beach has done as a community to prepare.

"It is amazing to be a part of an event where the whole community is coming together to raise awareness about the importance of preparation," Clatsop County Emergency Manager Tiffany Brown said. "Being prepared will save lives and property during a disaster."

Oregon is located near the Cascadia Subduction Zone, a 600 hundred mile earthquake fault stretching from offshore Northern California to Southern British Columbia.

Experts predict a large earthquake and tsunami similar to the one that struck Japan in 2011 could strike Oregon in the near future.

"The Cascadia Subduction Zone has let rip with more than 40 great earthquakes," State Geologist Vicki McConnell explained. "It's geologically active, and Oregon could experience a huge earthquake and tsunami anytime."

The theme for the race is: "Know the Plan, Take the Route, Race the Wave."

"One of the best ways to get prepared for a tsunami is to practice walking or even running the escape routes," said OEM Geologic Hazards Coordinator Althea Rizzo. "Race the Wave is a great way to practice that route and have a lot of fun doing it."

Kim honored by Asia-Pacific Council

In May, Oregon Army National Guard Lt. Col. Sungshik Kim received the 2014 Federal Asian Pacific American Council (FAPAC) Military Meritorious Service Award.

The honor is given annually to a service member for outstanding work in fostering a strong relationship between the military and the Asian American community, promoting equal rights and equal opportunity within the military, and overall public service.

FAPAC is a nonprofit, nonpartisan organization that represents Asian Pacific Americans who are civilian or military employees of the federal government and District of Columbia.

While serving as the state human relations/equal opportunity (EO) officer, Kim made significant changes to the way the Oregon National Guard's EO program operates and enforces standards. The state's EO regulation, ORARNG

600-21, hadn't been updated since Oct. 9, 1987. Kim helped publish a more comprehensive regulation on June 27, 2012. It has the responsibilities and operations of the EO program for each brigade and subordinate units, including complaint procedures. He also certified 251 equal opportunity leaders throughout the nation to support deployments with the new training standards.

In addition, Kim organized the 2013 event for Asian American Pacific Islander (AAPI) Heritage Month, which featured Samoan, Filipino and Vietnamese representatives as guest speakers, and the sharing of Asian dishes at the Oregon Military Department. As a State Diversity Council treasurer, Kim nurtured a new relationship with the Korean Society of Oregon.

Last year's recipient of the FAPAC award was also a Guard Soldier. Dr. (Major) Hyo Jin (Jeana) Cho from the District of Columbia was honored for writing a dissertation on cross-race mentoring in the Army that aimed to find ways to assist future mentors and mentees.

The FAPAC award in May coincided with Asian-Pacific American Heritage Month, which commemorates the immigration of the first Japanese to the U.S.

RESILIENCE

Courage, a virtue that needs mentorship

Story by Staff Sgt. Eddie Black
Readiness and Resiliency Program
Coordinator

*"Courage is being scared to death,
but saddling up anyway."*
- John Wayne.

The discussion of courage has shifted over the years to mirror this quote from John Wayne. However, this is but only one definition of courage and Aristotle, and many warrior societies of the past, would argue against John Wayne.

As warriors we place a high value on courage. Aristotle called it the chief virtue necessary for the rest. Courage, for Aristotle, is not saddling up even though afraid, that is called discipline and self-control.

Look at the movie "The Edge of Tomorrow." In this movie Major Cage is a coward who does all he can to avoid combat. Through a chance occurrence he finds himself repeating the same day over and over again. He meets Sergeant Vrataski, who trains him in

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OREGON NATIONAL GUARD

Oregon WWII veteran receives one of France's highest honors

Story by Mike Allegre,
Oregon Department of Veterans Affairs

Former Soldier is the 'spirit' behind veteran business venture

Story by Mike Allegre,
Oregon Department of Veterans Affairs

CAMP ADAIR, Oregon — When the discussion of successful Oregon veteran owned businesses is broached, one endeavor that has become more visible and known for its quality products is owned and operated by an Iraq war veteran.

After former Oregon Army National Guard Spc. Dawson Officer returned home following his tour in Iraq in 2004-05, he considered whether to work for someone else or himself.

He chose the latter. With a glass of his favorite whisky in hand he considered what it would take to create and distill his own brand of spirits with a quality taste unique to Oregon.

With the determination of a Soldier on a mission, Officer conducted tireless research while studying the art of becoming a craft distiller. With eager assistance from family and friends, he opened the doors to 4 Spirits Distillery at Camp Adair, located just north of Corvallis.

Officer broke into the market place by introducing a new vodka in 2011. It remains a top selling product in part, because of its two unique labels — *WebFoot* for University of Oregon Duck fans and *SlapTail* for the fans of the Oregon State Beavers.

He and his staff have since crafted a new bourbon whisky with a distinct smoother taste, and sales of this new product, like his other spirits, have been exceptional.

"If you make a quality, smooth tasting product and give it a unique taste, then add our company's story and mission to the mix, it will peak peoples interest," he said. "My two employees, who are at various tasting events all around the state, are bringing us plenty of new customers."

Many veterans groups, with facilities that serve alcoholic beverages, have also discovered Officer's products and are becoming some of his best customers. With the company's customer base located in five western states, 4 Spirits will soon expand to California.

As a combat veteran, Officer hasn't forgotten his military roots. The company continues to donate 10 percent of sales of bourbon whiskey generated in each state to fund that state's individual veteran programs. The distillery also has created a first of its kind 4 Spirits Veterans Endowment Scholarship Fund through the Oregon State University Foundation.

Even with his personal business success, Officer never forgets why he named the distillery in honor of four Oregon combat soldiers — his friends who were killed in Iraq in 2004.

"I served side by side with these guys in the Oregon National Guard's 2nd Battalion, 162nd Infantry Regiment in Delta Company. I think about them and their courage nearly every day."

As the year winds down, Officer and his staff are now developing another type of whisky. In August and November they will be releasing three variations of one spirit that has its roots in the Caribbean: Rum.

The award is the highest honor given by the French government and is awarded for distinguished public service, including the service of U.S. military veterans who fought on French territory.

Edward C. Phillips, age 93, was presented the National Order of the Legion of Honour during a formal ceremony, July 2. France's Consulate General serving Portland, Mrs. Françoise Aylmer, placed the distinct medal on Phillips' lapel.

For more than a decade, the government of France has presented the Legion of Honour to U.S. veterans who participated in the liberation of France during World War II.

Phillips was a master sergeant in the U.S. Army's 246th Signal Operations Company, which landed at Omaha Beach in northern France on D-Day, June 6, 1944. Within seven months Phillips and his unit would be involved in several treacherous battles including the Battle of

St. Lo, the Battle of Aachen and the Battle of the Bulge.

More than 75 people were in attendance at the ceremony, including many family members, at Phillips' residence in Wilsonville, Oregon.

The former Soldier said he was a little nervous and wondered why he received so much attention.

"Back then I didn't do as much as thousands of others did there. Maybe they're more deserving," Phillips said humbly.

"The entire event was very nice and I appreciated the award the French government presented to me. I shed a few tears, as did some others, but it was a wonderful memorable time for all of us."

Established by Napoleon Bonaparte in 1802, the French Order can only be presented by someone who has received it and is only given to living recipients.

Phillips is among nearly one million people who have been awarded the medal. Among the notable Americans who have received the honor are aviator Charles



Photo courtesy of the Phillips family

Master Sgt. Ed Phillips circa 1944.

Lindbergh, several military generals including Dwight D. Eisenhower and Curtis LeMay, singer Barbra Streisand, and actor Robert Redford.

3-116 Soldiers host veteran tankers during gunnery training

Story by Mike Allegre,
Oregon Department of Veterans Affairs

To Soldiers who served as crewmembers aboard any U.S. Army tank, the names of these juggernauts are familiar: M1 Abrams, M60 Patton, M4 Sherman, M26 Pershing, and others.

Imagine Army veterans, who once trained for war inside these metal beasts of burden, having an opportunity to jump back into the close confines of a tank years or even decades later.

Thanks to a former Army Armored Cavalry Soldier in Roseburg, Ken Osborne, and the cooperation of the Oregon Army National Guard in La Grande, Ore., several veteran "tankers" were able to relive their time of serving aboard one of the newer tanks in the Army's arsenal — the M1A2 SEP Abrams Main Battle tank.

And they did it while the Soldiers of Oregon's 3rd Battalion, 116th Cavalry Regiment were completing their training at the Orchard Combat Training Center, in Idaho, July 11-12.

A member of the national U.S. Army Brotherhood of Tankers, Osborne made a phone call months ago and spoke with Master Sgt. Dan Ishaug in La Grande. Their conversation and Osborne's request opened the door to this rare opportunity.

"The fact we could even embed with them was phenomenal. We talked with these Soldiers about their tanks, how they train, and answered each other's questions about our service. We spoke the same language," Osborne said. "It's been about 25 years since I was aboard a tank and even longer for Vietnam vets."

In the hot desert sands, the old Soldiers smiled as they rode aboard the modern Abrams tank. Osborne said the Guard



A former Army tank crewman helps an Oregon soldier aboard the National Guard's Abrams Main tank when the older tankers joined the 116th Cavalry Regiment's training in Idaho in July. Photo courtesy of Ken Osborne.

Soldiers did more than just allow the "old tankers" to get back on the tanks. For those veterans suffering from Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), this day was therapeutic.

"Most of the men there are combat veterans. Experiencing this together helps improve their mental health. At one time one of our guys was a 19 year-old tank commander in Vietnam; a Staff Sergeant,"

Osborne said. "Sadly he got promoted because everyone else was dead."

The day wasn't just about kicking up some sand while riding on a 62-ton tank.

In the late afternoon, the young Soldiers fired up the barbeque in the shadow of the tanks they had just spent part of a day showing off.

"Tankers will always be tankers, long after they're discharged," Osborne said.

USO COMES BACK TO PDX



July 2 marked the official dedication of the United Service Organization's (USO) new Welcome Center at Portland International Airport. Oregon Sen. Ron Wyden took part in the ceremony with USO staff members Christine Vu, retired Col. Joe Williams, and several other supporters, including Miss Oregon 2014, Rebecca Anderson.

The center at the airport will help to fulfill the USO's mission of lifting the spirits of America's troops and their families.

A nonprofit, congressionally chartered, private organization, the USO provides an extensive range of programs at more than 160 locations in 27 states and 14 countries, and at hundreds of entertainment events each year.

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