



1-186 Infantry settles in to new mission in Afghanistan: Page 4



234 Army Band inspires teen musicians: Page 9

# Oregon Sentinel



THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE OREGON NATIONAL GUARD

## LAUNCHING INDUSTRY POSSIBILITIES



Photos by Christopher L. Ingersoll, Oregon Military Department Public Affairs

Oregon Governor Kate Brown (above, center) and Maj. General Daniel Hokanson (above, right), Adjutant General, Oregon, traveled to the Pendleton Airport and visited Oregon Army National Guard Soldiers with Detachment 1, Bravo Company, 41st Special Troops Battalion, to view a launch demonstration of the RQ-7B Shadow 200 Unmanned Aerial System (UAS), March 20. The governor and Business Oregon, along with the City of Pendleton and Blue Mountain Community College, announced a state investment to construct UAS testing ranges. Oregon is one of just 13 states, and the only state on the West Coast, to receive the mandated Federal Aviation Administration approval for UAS testing ranges. Pendleton is one of three Oregon test ranges. The state is investing in these UAS ranges to attract more entrepreneurs and companies in the growing unmanned aerial vehicle industry to set up operations in Oregon, which will in turn create jobs and help boost the local economy. "Unmanned aerial systems are the future of the aviation industry," said Sean Robbins, director of Business Oregon.

## Airman awarded Bronze Star for combat support

Story by Oregon Sentinel Staff

**PORTLAND, Oregon** – The Oregon Air National Guard recognized one of their Citizen-Airmen with a Bronze Star medal for his service in support of Operation Enduring Freedom during a ceremony at the Portland Air National Guard Base, Feb. 7.

Staff Sgt. Owen Unbehaun, of the 125th Special Tactics Squadron (STS), received the Bronze Star medal during a packed morning ceremony held at the unit's auditorium. In attendance were Unbehaun's parents, brother, and girlfriend. The 234th Army Band provided music for the ceremony.

Maj. Gen. Daniel R. Hokanson, Adjutant General, Oregon, presided over the ceremony, and presented Unbehaun with the medal. Oregon Air National Guard Brig. Gen. Michael E. Stencel, Air Component Commander for Oregon, as well as other Oregon National Guard leadership were in attendance.

Unbehaun, a Combat Control Craftsman with the 125th STS, served in Afghanistan with the 21st Expeditionary Special Tactics Squadron, Combined Joint Operations Air Component, Special Operations Command Central.

As the sole Airman serving as a Joint Terminal Attack Controller assigned to an Army Special Forces Team and later a Navy SEAL Team that was partnered with an Afghan Commando Special Operations



Photo by 1st Lt. Heather Bashor, Joint Force Headquarters Public Affairs

Staff Sgt. Owen Unbehaun (right), of the 125th Special Tactics Squadron (STS), poses for a photo with Maj. Gen. Daniel R. Hokanson (left), Adjutant General, Oregon, after receiving the Bronze Star medal in a ceremony at the Portland Air National Guard Base, Feb. 7. Unbehaun provided combat airpower during 43 complex operations as a Joint Terminal Attack Controller assigned to Special Forces teams in Afghanistan. Two more Oregon Airmen, with the 142nd Civil Engineer Squadron, also received Bronze Stars for their support of airfield operations in Bagram, Afghanistan. See **Airmen** on Page 11 for the full story.

See **Unbehaun** on Page 11

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Salem, OR

OFFICE OF THE STATE ADJUTANT GENERAL  
DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY AND AIR FORCE  
NATIONAL GUARD OF OREGON  
P.O. BOX 14350  
SALEM, OREGON 97309-5047  
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The Oregon Sentinel is distributed to members of the Oregon Army and Air National Guard, and other interested persons by request, free of charge. Circulation: 13,500. The Oregon Sentinel is published by Eagle Web Press, a private firm in no way connected with the DoD, Departments of the Army or Air Force, or the State of Oregon, and is under exclusive written contract with the Oregon Military Department. The Oregon Sentinel is also distributed electronically, and can be found online at [www.oregon.gov/OMD/AGPA/publications.shtml](http://www.oregon.gov/OMD/AGPA/publications.shtml).

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**COMMAND**

**Troops returning and deploying need our full support**

This spring and summer we are welcoming home more than one thousand service members from deployments with the 1-82 Cavalry Squadron, 234 Engineer Company, 2-162 Infantry Battalion, 1-186 Infantry Battalion, 125th Special Tactics Squadron, and other units in the Oregon National Guard.



Photo by Christopher L. Ingersoll, OMD Public Affairs

Maj. Gen. Daniel R. Hokanson, Adjutant General, Oregon, and State Command Sgt. Maj. Shane Lake greet Soldiers of 1-82 Cavalry Squadron as they take their first steps onto Oregon soil in Redmond, April 15, following their year-long deployment.

In addition, we are also mobilizing members of the 116th Air Control Squadron, 142nd Fighter Wing, 142nd Security Forces Squadron, and B/1-168 Aviation in the months ahead. As our Soldiers, Airmen, and their Families have done over the past thirteen years, Oregonians continue to answer their nation's call.

As our service members and their families go through the mobilization, deployment and demobilization process, we must make every effort to provide them the best possible support. Our Service Member and Family Support (SMFS) team is there to help at every level, to connect our service members and their families with available resources.

Although our SMFS team has access to numerous resources for our Soldiers, Airmen and their Families – they are no substitute for a battle buddy, wingman, or unit leaders. The efforts of leaders at every level, in conjunction with our SMFS team, Family Support Groups, Psychological Health Professionals and numerous other support groups and agencies have made



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

significant contributions to the overall health of our organization.

I ask for everyone's continued support across our entire organization as we mobilize, deploy and reintegrate our Soldiers, Airmen and their Families – today, tomorrow, and into the future. Support those mobilizing and deployed, and welcome home and support the reintegration of those returning, not just back into their unit, but back into their families and communities.

We must never forget the importance and value of every member of our team.

**Being a 'Soldier first' makes warrant officers better experts**



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

A few years ago, I was transitioning from the enlisted ranks to the warrant officer ranks. I was in the early stages of Warrant Officer Candidate School (WOCS) at Fort Rucker, Alabama, the center of Army aviation. On one particular morning, one of the TAC (Training, Advising and Counseling) officers queried the company-sized group of candidates asking who amongst us were there to be aviators.

I was reluctant to raise my hand at first, but others around me were eagerly doing so. I soon followed suit with some of my peers and put my hand in the air. The TAC officer separated those of us with our hands raised from the other candidates and we soon found ourselves jumping in and out of the ditch. We began several iterations of pushing the earth away from us, followed by several minutes of the dreaded flutter kicks.

After what seemed like an eternity (in reality it was only 15 to 20 minutes), the TAC officer brought us back to formation

and began lecturing us that we were at WOCS for one purpose and one purpose only; to be future warrant officers above all else.

One definition of warrant officer begins with, "The Army warrant officer is a self-aware and adaptive technical expert, combat leader, trainer and advisor." For many, this is the basis of describing the role of the warrant officer in today's military.

Warrant officers strive to be that individual who others seek out for guidance or knowledge of specific issues, the 'technical expert.' In the course of progressing through assignments and education, all warrant officers should remind themselves that we are also Soldiers first and foremost.

Being a 'Soldier first' allows us the opportunity to self-evaluate all factors of our career progression and development. This 'Whole Soldier' concept consists of all factors; OER's, DA Form 1059, APFT, height/weight, DA photo, security clearances, medical readiness, and includes both professional military education and civilian education. It's the self-assessment of these factors, along with our commander's guidance, that shapes our career path of becoming that 'technical expert.'

It is expected of all warrants to strive to surpass minimal requirements in all factors of the 'Whole Soldier.' Only then can a warrant progress through levels of expertise in assignments, training

and education. As this progression continues throughout the warrant's career, they are able to refine their technical expertise and develop their leadership and management skills through tiered progressive assignment and education.

A promotion ceremony was recently held where the recipient was promoted to chief warrant officer 5. Promotion to CW5 is the pinnacle achievement in the Warrant Officer Corps. During the ceremony, remarks of praise were given by several of the individual's past supervisors, peers and subordinates. Using the 'Whole Soldier' concept we can substantiate these remarks of high praise and this promotional achievement. It is a privilege and honor as the Command Chief to announce our newest CW5; Chief Warrant Officer 5 Kevin Hanks.



Photo by Staff Sgt. Paul Rushing, JFHQ Public Affairs

Chief Warrant Officer 5 Kevin Hanks (center) is pinned by family members with his new rank during a promotion ceremony, Feb. 8, in Salem, Oregon. Brig. Gen. Todd Plimpton (second from right), Land Component Commander, presided over the ceremony.

**Enyeart retires following 37 years of service**

Story by Oregon Sentinel Staff



Photo by Christopher L. Ingersoll, OMD Public Affairs

Maj. Gen. Daniel Hokanson, Adjutant General, Oregon, presents Oregon Army National Guard Maj. Gen. David Enyeart with a letter from the governor on the occasion of his retirement in a ceremony at the Anderson Readiness Center in Salem, Oregon, Feb. 8. Enyeart served more than 30 years in the military, most recently as the Chief of Staff of U.S. Forces Korea.

**SALEM, Oregon** – Oregon Army National Guard Maj. Gen. David Enyeart retired after more than 30 years of military service, in a ceremony in front of family and friends held at the Anderson Readiness Center on Feb. 8.

In his most recent position, Enyeart served as the Chief of Staff of U.S. Forces Korea, where he was responsible for directing, planning, coordinating and integrating actions of the Joint Staff while directly supporting national objectives to maintain stability on the Korean Peninsula in order to deflect potential attackers.

Enyeart began his career in the U.S. Army in 1978. He received his commission as a second lieutenant through Officer Candidate School in June 1985 and joined the Oregon Army National Guard as a mortar platoon leader. Over the course of more than three decades, Enyeart served on three overseas deployments; two in Afghanistan and one in Sarajevo, Bosnia. His military career includes commands

ranging from unit level to brigade level before becoming the Assistant Adjutant General – Army for the Oregon National Guard, and then the Commander/Senior Military Representative, North Atlantic Treaty Organization, Headquarters, Sarajevo.

In Sarajevo, Enyeart served with military and governmental agencies assisting in their entry into NATO.

At the ceremony, he was presented with numerous awards and gifts, including the Defense Superior Service Medal, the Armed Forces Reserve Medal and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization medal.

Enyeart gave some words of advice to fellow service members at the ceremony. He encouraged maintaining a good attitude and a sense of humor.

"Remember where you come from — that's one thing I learned," he said. "It's been a wonderful career. I couldn't ask for more."

Enyeart will continue to serve as police chief for the Toledo Police Department in Toledo, Oregon.

COMMAND

# New commander brings wealth of experience to 173rd Fighter Wing

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

**KINGSLEY FIELD, Oregon** – “Sir, I assume command,” said Col. Kirk “Tick” Pierce, thereby accepting command of the 173rd Fighter Wing during an assumption of command ceremony in Klamath Falls, Jan. 10. The official passing of the guidon took place at Kingsley Field’s base theater.

In addition to sharing some of his background and command philosophy, Pierce lauded the Airmen of the 173rd Fighter Wing.



Col. Kirk Pierce,  
173rd FW Commander

“It’s an honor for me to represent and to lead you,” he said. “You have a phenomenal reputation in both the state and Air Force.”

Pierce comes to the Wing from the National Guard Bureau (NGB) in Washington, D.C., where he served as Chief of Strategy and Analysis Division, the Director of Plans and Programs, and his most

recent position as the Senior Military Advisor to the Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Policy - Strategy and Force Development at the Pentagon.

Maj. Gen. Daniel Hokanson, the Adjutant General, Oregon, presided over the ceremony. He emphasized the wealth of knowledge and experience Pierce brings to this key command position at the 173rd Fighter Wing.

“‘Tick’ is truly an exceptional officer and the right leader for this truly exceptional Wing,” said Hokanson.

Pierce has a wide range of military experience, serving more than 26 years in multiple capacities all over the United States. He served as the commander of the 113th Operations Group at Joint Base Andrews, Maryland. Pierce is a command pilot with more than 4,600 flying hours.

Pierce’s flying background is primarily in the F-16 airframe. However, he will have a first-hand view of the 173rd FW’s schoolhouse as he retrains to fly the F-15 Eagle.

Pierce replaces Col. Jeremy “Weed” Baenen, who commanded the wing from January 2013 to November 2014 and recently retired.

The 173rd FW is the home to the sole F-15C schoolhouse for the United States Air Force and Air National Guard.



Photo by Senior Airman Penny Snoozy, 173rd FW Public Affairs

Oregon Air National Guard Commander Brig. Gen. Michael Stencel (left) presents the 173rd Fighter Wing guidon to Col. Kirk Pierce (right), as he assumes command in a ceremony at Kingsley Field, in Klamath Falls, Oregon, Jan. 10. Pierce has 26 years of military service and has held several strategy, plans and policy-related positions for the National Guard Bureau and the Pentagon.

# 142nd Fighter Wing welcomes new commander, bids farewell to Wedan



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

Col. Richard W. Wedan (left), outgoing commander, and Col. Paul T. Fitzgerald (right), incoming commander, stand at attention during the 142nd Fighter Wing change of command ceremony, Feb. 7, at the Portland Air National Guard Base.

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

**PORTLAND, Oregon** – Oregon Air National Guardsmen assembled for the 142nd Fighter Wing change of command ceremony at the Portland Air National Guard Base, Feb. 7.

Col. Paul T. Fitzgerald took command during a traditional ceremony as the unit colors were passed from Col. Richard W. Wedan, who retired after more than 27 years of service to the Air National Guard.

Fitzgerald most recently served as the 142nd Fighter Wing vice commander for five months and held a prior assignment as the 142nd Fighter Wing Mission Support Group commander. He is a command pilot with more than 2,200 flying hours.

Ceremony attendees included the presiding officer, Maj. Gen. Daniel R. Hokansen, The Adjutant General, Oregon, and Brig. Gen. Michael E. Stencel, Oregon Air National Guard commander, the men and women of the 142nd Fighter Wing, as well as the friends and family of Fitzgerald and Wedan.

“I am humbled, honored and truly blessed to be standing here today as your commander,” said Fitzgerald during his opening remarks. “Call me biased, but I don’t think there is a better place to work or raise a family in the entire world than right here at the 142nd Fighter Wing.”

Fitzgerald began his military career as a cadet at the United States Air Force Academy, Colorado Springs, Colorado, and received his commission after graduating in 1990. Upon completing initial pilot training with the F-15 Eagle at Tyndall Air Force Base, Florida, his first

operational tour began at Kadena Air Force Base, Japan, in 1995. It was in Japan that he met his wife, Vanessa, and the couple has since welcomed three children; Olivia, Ryan and Gavin.

During his remarks to the Airmen and those in attendance, Fitzgerald emphasized his vision for the future. “It starts and ends with providing the state and nation with the most highly qualified forces possible to the commander in the field.”

He also touched on four emphasis areas; leadership, looking for ways to improve the organization, managing resources and executing the Aerospace Control Alert (ACA) mission.

With regards to personal development, Fitzgerald described the challenges of “being the very best that you can be.” He elaborated on this concept of comprehensive Airman fitness encapsulate by Air Combat Command, saying, “I want our leaders to reach their full potential - beginning with physical fitness, mental readiness, understanding the social aspects of working in a large organization like our wing and addressing one’s own spiritual needs.”

During the ceremony, Stencel described Fitzgerald’s attributes and service to the Air Force that have led up to his selection as the next wing commander.

“Having worked in operations, maintenance, and the support group, Fitzgerald brings an enviable appreciation for the pulse of a fighter wing,” he said.

In 2009, Fitzgerald was selected for the Air National Guard internship program where he served as a member of the Plans and Programs Director at the National Guard Bureau (NGB) in Washington,

D.C. After his tour at NGB, he returned to Oregon and was assigned to a variety of state positions before returning to the wing three years ago.

“What do you say about a guy who wears wings and is willing to take them off for a while to better himself and serve on different levels? I know there is no more balanced or better prepared individual to lead this organization,” Stencel said.

Stencel applauded Wedan for his service as the wing commander and his proactive approach with the Weapons System Council. He appreciated Wedan’s ability to see a need and a solution within the same concern.

“Buzz has an incredible work ethic and I don’t think I have ever met anyone who worked harder and took on each new task with more enthusiasm,” Stencel said.

As Wedan approached retirement from the Air National Guard, he reflected on the highlights of his 27 years in uniform, ranging from helping others with issues at home or working on their next primary military education goal.

“Teaching young kids how to fly the jet; when I think about it, I’ve probably helped shape over 450 Airmen as an instructor pilot,” he said.

Wedan had the opportunity to pass and review his Airman one final time during the change of command ceremony, and delivered his gratitude for their service to the Air Force. He was also presented The Legion of Merit medal.

“It was only 26 months ago that I stood here and asked you to join me and embrace a vision of change and excellence,” said Wedan.

Reviewing his four focus areas throughout the course of his command,

Wedan delivered the final grades for his Airmen. The report card included evaluations for the wing’s performance in the ACA mission, improving the air base infrastructure, engaging in the community, as well as retention and recruiting. In each case, Wedan awarded the wing with an “A+.”

In his concluding remarks, Wedan highlighted why Fitzgerald is distinctively ready for taking command of the 142nd Fighter Wing, “I cannot think of a finer officer to lead going forward... Paul, I present to you the finest combat organization in the world.”



Photo by Staff Sgt. Brandon Boyd, 142nd FW Public Affairs

Col. Paul T. Fitzgerald (right), incoming commander of the 142nd Fighter Wing, receives the guidon colors from Brig. Gen. Michael E. Stencel (left), commander of the Oregon Air National Guard, symbolizing the change of command in a ceremony at the Portland Air National Guard Base, Feb. 7.



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

Col. Richard W. Wedan, outgoing 142nd Fighter Wing commander, celebrates after his last flight in an F-15 Eagle at the Portland Air National Guard Base, Feb. 7, prior to his retirement. His son, 2nd Lt. Steven Wedan, joined him on the “fini flight” in the backseat of Wedan’s wingman jet, piloted by incoming commander Col. Paul T. Fitzgerald.

NEWS

# Alpha Company, 1-186th Infantry Battalion settles in for new mission

Story and photos courtesy  
1st Lt. Christopher Gallagher,  
A Company, 1-186th Infantry Battalion

**KANDAHAR, Afghanistan** – With the coming of 2015, the war in Afghanistan transitioned from Operation Enduring Freedom to Operation Freedom Sentinel; marking the end of U.S.-led offensive combat operations and the men of Alpha ‘Apache’ Company, 1st Battalion, 186th Infantry Regiment found themselves with a new mission. They transitioned from their previous deployment site and are now operating out of Kandahar Airfield in southern Afghanistan.

Preparation for site transition required planning that began weeks in advance. Once the marching orders were given, the company’s staff coordinated with outside elements to facilitate movement of equipment and personnel. Once the plans and schedules were coordinated, then came the tedious task of slowly reconsolidating equipment for accountability, maintenance and final movement; all while sustaining 100 percent mission capability.



An Oregon Soldier with Alpha Company, 1-186th Infantry Battalion, fires the M240L machine gun to confirm accuracy before the start of the unit's new force protection mission.

In addition to the company and platoon assets, Soldiers needed to prepare themselves for moving. We all dislike moving houses back home, and those feelings transfer to military life as well. Packing all the equipment that they have been issued (plus the stuff they have acquired during deployment to make their off-duty time more bearable) is a tedious process; often more difficult than anticipated given the amount of room they have available for storage.

Upon arrival, the company hit the ground running. With a zero-dark-thirty arrival, it was a continuous rush to get a multitude of tasks done in order to begin operations. Assigning and receiving billeting, off-loading equipment, moving in, and establishing a new pattern of life is just the start of the resettlement process.

With the new mission came new equipment. Receiving vehicles and weapons systems from another unit is never an easy process and, since they will be held accountable for all that they receive, the Soldiers painstakingly went through all the paperwork and equipment to ensure accuracy. Once the paperwork was finished, the Soldiers needed to familiarize themselves with the equipment they received; which is a mission in itself.

After a short nap, the company moved to the firing range in order to ensure that their weapons and equipment were functioning properly and accurately. ‘Apache’ Company went on a four-mile round-trip, dismounted patrol to the firing range and back. Preparation for the trip constituted planning, like every other combat patrol, rehearsal of battle drills, redundant contingency planning and gear inspections before they stepped-off. Once the patrol reached the firing



Oregon Army National Guard Soldiers with Alpha Company, 1-186th Infantry Battalion pose for a group photo in Kandahar, Afghanistan.

range, they confirmed the accuracy of their machine guns and practiced acquiring and engaging targets with accurate and sustained automatic fire. Upon return of the patrol, the Soldiers assumed their force protection mission and integrated into the complex defense of one of the largest operational bases in Afghanistan.

The New Year not only marked the transition of the majority of operations to the Afghanistan forces, but also the halfway point of the mobilization for ‘Apache’ Company, 1-186th Infantry Battalion. Missing the holiday season is tough for anybody, but for a Soldier half-a-world away from their families, it’s something to be respected and admired.

Despite being away from their friends and loved ones, the Soldiers received a morale boost in the ability to be together in cheering for the Oregon Ducks while watching their championship game. It was a nice reminder of home and why we are here.

## Oregon Army National Guard Soldiers assist U.S. Coast Guard with repair

Story by Maj. Eric Walstrom,  
CSMS, Camp Withycombe

**ASTORIA, Oregon** – Two Oregon Army National Guard Soldiers assisted the U.S. Coast Guard Columbia River Sector using their lockmaster repair skills, November 20, 2014, aboard the USCG Cutter ‘Steadfast.’

First Sgt. Micheal Vickers and Staff Sgt. Eric Kliever, with the Combined Support Maintenance Shop (CSMS) at Camp Withycombe, conduct repair, testing and inspection of General Services Administration (GSA) approved security containers for the Oregon National Guard as well as in support of other federal, agencies throughout the state. This mission was the first time the CSMS has provided lockmaster support to the U.S. Coast Guard.

The lockmaster skill is an additional duty for these CSMS Allied Trades personnel, based on an identified need for

GSA lock repair. Many locks were broken and recycled rather than being repaired for re-use. The typical cost for a GSA Class 6, 4-drawer, single lock container is around \$3,000.

To fulfill the need for this specialized repair skill, Vickers and Kliever were sent to Nicholasville, Kentucky, in late-2013 to receive Lockmasters Security Institute GSA Inspector Certification.

“First Sgt. Micheal Vickers and Staff Sgt. Eric Kliever are a great asset for the Oregon National Guard in repair and certifying of secure locks, vaults and containers,” said Col. Todd Farmer, general foreman for CSMS-Oregon.

In fiscal year 2014, the first fiscal year since their training, the team conducted a total of 15 missions with approximately 25-30 locks repaired. Farmer estimates their work has saved between \$25,000-\$35,000 in operational funds by repairing items rather than having to buy replacements.



Photo courtesy U.S. Coast Guard Sector Columbia River

Oregon Army National Guard 1st Sgt. Micheal Vickers (left) and Staff Sgt. Eric Kliever stand on the U.S. Coast Guard Cutter ‘Steadfast’ after assisting with lock repairs aboard the ship.

## Taking training to the mountain



Photos courtesy Staff Sgt. Julie Trotter, 2-218th Field Artillery Battalion



Medics with the Oregon Army National Guard’s Headquarters and Headquarters Battery, 2-218th Field Artillery Battalion, conducted cold weather training at Mount Hood during their weekend drill training, Jan. 11.

Above: Medics navigate the terrain using snow shoes.

Left: Medics drag a litter through snow to rehearse casualty evacuation.

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## NEWS

# Oregon Soldiers assist West Point Academy with equipment repair

Story by Nick Choy,  
Oregon Military Department Public Affairs,  
and Capt. Maribel Ortega, 3670th CRC

**WEST POINT, New York** – What happens to Army field equipment when it gets dirty, banged up or needs to be repaired? If you're the Logistics Readiness Center (LRC) at West Point Academy in New York, you call the Oregon Army National Guard.

A team of eight Oregon Soldiers, of the 3670th Component Repair Company (CRC), 821st Troop Command Battalion, spent their two-week annual training period at West Point, January 25 – February 7. Their mission was to conduct technical inspection and repair of all optics and night vision devices, and provide training and equipment needs for West

Point's future sustainment capabilities. Cadets who attend the academy use the equipment during their summer training.

During the two-week active duty period, the Soldiers performed service and repair on more than 1,600 individual pieces of equipment, including 808 night vision devices and 800 aiming lasers. All devices were brought up to fully mission capable status.

When not repairing equipment, the Soldiers had an opportunity to use West Point training facilities and familiarize themselves with the M110 sniper rifle, the M240B machine gun, the M1919 Browning .30 caliber machine gun, and various other WWII weapons. The team was led by 1st Lt. Andrew Leckie and Sgt. 1st Class Peter Hachey.

The U.S. Army Sustainment Command manages 72 LRCs worldwide that provide field maintenance expertise, transportation services, and base logistics support. Logistics Readiness Centers have specific mission and workload needs that National Guard units across the nation can assist in providing the manpower through their annual training. Soldiers can work on their unique MOS job skills and accomplish training on their Mission Essential Task List (METL) for the year.

The Oregon National Guard's 3670th CRC is the first National Guard unit in the nation to be approved and funded for this unique reserve component mission to support Army Material Command facilities. This includes support for the Armament Section for weapons repair and the Electronics Section for PVS and radio repair.

Kathleen Silvia, with Logistics Operations for the West Point LRC, said the Oregon National Guardsmen, with their specialized tools and expertise, provided increased repairs throughout and saved Department of the Army civilians at LRC West Point much time and effort.

"They conducted the repairs faster, with more precision and specialized



Photo by Kathleen Silvia, West Point Logistics Readiness Center

Spc. Andrew Cobb, of the Oregon National Guard's 3670th Component Repair Company, conducts repairs on optical devices at the Logistics Readiness Center at West Point in New York, Feb. 5. Eight Oregon Soldiers completed 1,600 repairs at the West Point LRC.

diagnostics," said Silvia. "And a bonus was that these Soldiers achieved their two weeks of annual training doing what they love to do. Amazing talent for a win-win partnership!"

According to the unit's company commander, Capt. Maribel Ortega, the mission was a valuable training opportunity for her Soldiers.

"This is extremely valuable training for all Soldiers, to be able to travel with equipment and perform their actual MOS for a military installation that was badly in need of our assistance," Ortega said. "This high-operational tempo over the course of 11 production days allowed Soldiers to have high morale and enjoy a valuable experience, training at an installation such as West Point."

Silvia thanked Ortega and the Soldiers saying, "She and her staff should be credited with the amazing technical skills

and professionalism they displayed in conducting these repairs for us."

Ortega added that her Soldiers worked at a strong pace, leading them to complete more than the original estimate. As they completed their tasks early, they were able to take a field trip to New York City to experience the sights in one of the U.S.'s largest cities.

"This was a huge boost for morale, and allowed the Soldiers to tour the Statue of Liberty, Ellis Island, Rockefeller Center and the World Trade Center Memorial. It's always important as Soldiers to remember those who came before and what we are fighting to defend for our country," Ortega said.

The 3670th CRC will also perform two more of these annual training rotations in March and April at West Point and two additional rotations at White Sands Missile Range in New Mexico.



Photo by Kathleen Silvia, West Point LRC

Soldiers of the 3670th Component Repair Company conduct final testing of optical devices at the Logistics Readiness Center at West Point in New York, Feb. 3. From front: Pfc. Brian Andrews; Staff Sgt. Dustin Miller; Pfc. George Costa; and Spc. Andrew Cobb. They completed 1,600 total repairs.

## "Institute of Excellence" transforms Umatilla Depot into premier training facility

Story by Maj. Timothy Merritt,  
249th Regional Training Institute

**HERMISTON, Oregon** – As tumbleweeds roll slowly across the desolate landscape of Camp Umatilla Training Center, a team of NCOs move into position to conduct a deliberate ambush against a small force of local Opposing Forces (OPFOR).

The 1st Infantry Training Battalion of the 249th Regional Training Institute (RTI) is conducting training cycles of the Infantry Advanced Leader Course (ALC) with active duty Soldiers for the first time. After achieving the distinction of Institute of Excellence in 2014, the 249th RTI, now located at Camp Umatilla, is the only infantry ALC located west of the Mississippi River in the continental United States. This accreditation enabled National Guard instructors to teach five ALC courses from September 2014 through August 2015. Active duty students are trained side-by-side with National Guard and Reserve Soldiers, helping to relieve a serious backlog of senior non-commissioned officer (NCO) training at such places as



Photo by Maj. Timothy Merritt, 249th RTI

Infantry Advanced Leader Course students receive classroom instruction from the 249th Regional Training Institute at Camp Umatilla Training Center.

Joint Base Lewis-McChord (JBLM) and throughout the total Army.

The Umatilla Chemical Depot is now in the process of being turned over to the Oregon National Guard to develop into a 'proof of concept' military training academy. Through the Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) process, the transition from a federal military ordnance depot to a premier National Guard military training center is slowly evolving.

Earning the coveted title of "Institute of Excellence" enables the 249th RTI Regiment to conduct training operations for mid-level NCOs through its Advance Leader Course in addition to its current offerings of infantry MOS Transition (MOS-T) course and Infantry Transition Course (ITC). Since September 2014, more than 100 NCOs have undergone the rigorous course of training that includes 179 hours of instruction time. For some cycles, students are flown by Chinook helicopter to Yakima, Washington, for live-fire exercises on .50 caliber and M249 machine guns, as well as the MK-19 40 mm automatic

grenade launcher. The cycle culminates with a challenging Field Training Exercise (FTX).

"Camp Umatilla has developed so much in just the time I have been here, but we still have long way to go," said Master Sgt. James Lindseth, chief instructor at the 249th RTI. "We've gone from what was basically a ghost town and transformed it into a nationally-recognized training site. The sky is the limit."

The expanded RTI mission provides the services of a much-needed training facility for both National Guard and active duty units in the region.

"We are the only certified Army Infantry training academy west of the Mississippi in the continental U.S.," said Lt. Col. Geoff Vallee, the operations officer and administrative officer for the 249th RTI. "The addition of the active duty component is a dramatic shift in the operational vision for the post and sets the stage for significant future growth."

The quality of instruction at the Camp Umatilla Training Center is unparalleled. Instructors are required to pass Army Basic Instructor (ABI) training, as well as Small Group Instructor (SGI) training courses prior to training the ALC classes. In fact, the 249th RTI even teaches the ABI/SGI courses at its sister facility in Monmouth, Oregon.

The three to four years spent teaching at the RTI prepare the instructors for future assignments as well. A tour at Camp Umatilla acts as a broadening assignment with some of the most senior instructors going on to first sergeant positions with units

such as D Company, 3rd Battalion, 116th Cavalry Regiment; C Company, 7-158th Aviation; and the 3670th Component Repair Company in fiscal year 2015.

The feeling at Camp Umatilla is definitely one of "getting in on the ground floor." As the transfer date draws ever nearer, plans are in the works for myriad projects. There is talk of a depot-level maintenance facility, force projection platform, container storage area and other sustainment operations projects.

"At this point, what seems most likely is the addition of a Maneuver Senior Leader's Course (MSLC)," said Vallee. "It's a great opportunity to be part of something that future Soldiers will benefit from for years to come. It's challenging, exciting and a little humbling."

The development of Camp Umatilla as one of Oregon's premier training sites is a slowly evolving, complex operation, yet one thing remains clear; National Guard, Army Reserve and active duty Army Soldiers from across the Northwest are going to continue to train to face America's enemies in the harsh and unforgiving terrain of the former chemical depot.



Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Teri Thomas, 249th RTI

Infantry students with the 249th Regional Training Institute maneuver into an ambush position on Camp Umatilla Training Center.



Photo by Maj. Timothy Merritt, 249th RTI

Infantry Advanced Leader Course Class 302 students receive an inspection of their Army Service Uniform (ASU) at Umatilla.

## NEWS

## Oregon Guard showcases critical roles to Guard Bureau's top enlisted leader

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

**PORTLAND, Oregon** – Chief Master Sgt. Mitchell O. Brush, Senior Enlisted Advisor for the National Guard Bureau, visited the Oregon National Guard, Jan. 4-7. He toured both Air and Army National Guard facilities throughout the state to gain a close-up perspective of various mission sets and interface with Oregon Soldiers and Airmen about their work.

Brush is the senior enlisted leader for both the Army and Air National Guard, advising the Chief of the National Guard Bureau, Gen. Frank J. Grass, on all enlisted matters affecting training, health of the force and professional development for National Guard Airmen and Soldiers throughout all states and U.S. territories.

After an introduction and briefing by Chief Master Sgt. Julie Eddings, 142nd Fighter Wing Command Chief, a group of senior enlisted leaders began a concise tour to multiple work areas around the Portland Air National Guard Base that provide 24/7 support to the North American Aerospace Defense Command's principal Aerospace Control Alert (ACA) mission for the greater Pacific Northwest.

Accompanying Brush and Eddings on the tour was the Oregon National Guard senior enlisted advisor, State Command Sgt. Maj. Shane Lake, and Chief Master Sgt. Christopher Roper, senior enlisted advisor for the Oregon Air National Guard's Combat Operations Group.

Brush handed out several of his 'Chief



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

Coins' to commendable Airmen active at the various duty stations he visited during his tour. As he presented one to Master Sgt. Anja O'Neil, assigned to the 123rd Fighter Squadron, and recently named the 142nd Fighter Wing's Wingman Award recipient this past year; he took the opportunity to define his philosophy of the full-time Guardsman.

"The reason we have full-time forces for the National Guard is to support the drill status Guardsmen, period," said Brush. "It is critical that when they [drill status Guardsmen] come in on a drill weekend, they can come in at 'MACH 12' and dive right in."

Brush's tour included stops to the 142nd Fighter Wing Aircraft Maintenance hangar and base operations. He also received a hands-on demonstration from the Airmen of the 125th Special Tactics Squadron — one of only two National Guard units which are a part of the Air Force Special Operation Command. On display was a variety of communication equipment, vehicles that can be delivered airborne, and weapons used by combat controllers in the field.

As they toured the Combat Operations Group, Roper was quick to point out to Brush that, "for three years in a row an Airman from the 125th has been selected as one of the 12 Outstanding Airmen of the Year, including Tech Sgt. Doug Matthews, chosen this year."

The 12 Airmen selected each year by the Air Force embody superior leadership,

exceptional job performance and personal achievements. In addition to Matthews' selection, previous members of the unit designated for this honor were Staff Sgt. Chadwick Boles (2013), Chief Master Sgt. Luke Thompson (2012), and Master Sgt. Scott Geisser (2008).

Brush also spent time with members of the Oregon National Guard's CBRNE Enhanced Response Force Package (CERFP) team. The mission of the joint Army and Air National Guard group is to respond to man-made or natural disaster events with quick-response search and extraction, decontamination capabilities, and medical triage, treatment and fatality recovery.

Senior Airman Corey Shinagawa, a medic assigned to the 142nd Fighter Wing Medical Group and a member of the CERFP, detailed the latest training equipment to Brush and others touring the base.

"What I enjoy the most is coming in on a drill weekend and integrating my skills in nursing with the challenges of being a medic," said Shinagawa; who, after a 12-hour night shift at a local hospital, showed up on base to brief Chief Brush.

"This is the kind of dedication and character that I find continually displayed by members of the National Guard when traveling around the country," said Brush.

After touring the base in Portland, Brush visited Oregon service members in Clackamas, Oregon, at the 41st Infantry

Division Armed Forces Readiness Center, and at several facilities in Salem, Oregon. He toured the Joint Operations Center where the Oregon National Guard works closely with the Office of Emergency Management to respond to emergency situations, such as fires, floods, and search and rescues. He also toured the Army Aviation Support Facility where Oregon Army National Guard helicopters are dispatched for search and rescues and wild land fire suppression missions.

The next stop on Brush's Oregon visit was Kingsley Field in Klamath Falls, Oregon, where the 173rd Fighter Wing offers the only F-15 training schoolhouse in the United States. Brush toured the base and met with Airmen supporting the pilot training program, getting a chance to hear about their mission. His tour culminated with a high-speed familiarization flight in the backseat of an F-15 Eagle.

Throughout his visit, Brush held town hall meetings with Oregon Soldiers and Airmen in each place that he toured. He addressed current issues facing enlisted Guardsmen and shared the National Guard Bureau's vision and way ahead for the future. He tasked the Soldiers and Airmen to be advocates for the military and help tell their story.

"The country needs each of you, and to help the community where we live understand what they get from the Guard, you need to talk about your role and mission," said Brush.

In closing his remarks, Brush emphasized his three P's: pride, professionalism and passion to those in attendance.

"Be excited, be passionate. I need you to be excited for our future," he said. "I need you to train the next generation; don't train them to your standards, train them to be better than you."



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

Chief Master Sgt. Mitchell O. Brush into the backseat of an F-15 Eagle in preparation for his familiarization flight at Kingsley Field in Klamath Falls, Oregon, Jan. 6.



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

Chief Master Sgt. Mitchell O. Brush, Senior Enlisted Advisor for the National Guard Bureau, leads a town hall meeting at the Portland Air National Guard Base, Jan. 5.

## Oregon leads the way as top moving destination in the nation

Story by Christopher L. Ingersoll, Oregon Military Department Public Affairs

**SALEM, Oregon** – It's official, a recent study confirmed what most Oregonians already know; Oregon is the most desirable destination to live in the United States right now.

"Oregon holds onto its title as 'Top Moving Destination' and continues to pull away from the pack," stated a press release for the United Van Lines' National Movers Study, dated Jan. 2.

The annual study tracks customer migration patterns state-to-state during the course of the past year. The study found that Oregon was the top moving destination of 2014, with 66 percent of moves to and from the state being inbound – a nearly 5 percent increase of inbound moves compared to 2013. A separate study conducted by Atlas Van Lines showed similar inbound moving trends.

Of course Oregonians will boast of our glorious mountains and expansive rivers, rugged coastline and beautiful landscapes, craft breweries and world-class wineries, intimate coffee perks and good eats. However, according to a CNN Money article, "More people moving to Oregon," one of the big drivers of the exodus from other states to Oregon is the combination of business incentives in the state and the relatively low cost of living.

"Business incentives, industrial growth and relatively lower costs of living are attracting jobs and people to the Southeastern and Western states," said Michael Stoll, an economist at UCLA.

At the Oregon Military Department, Lt. Col. Christopher Reese, Recruiting and Retention commander, has been making the same case as many Oregon National Guard

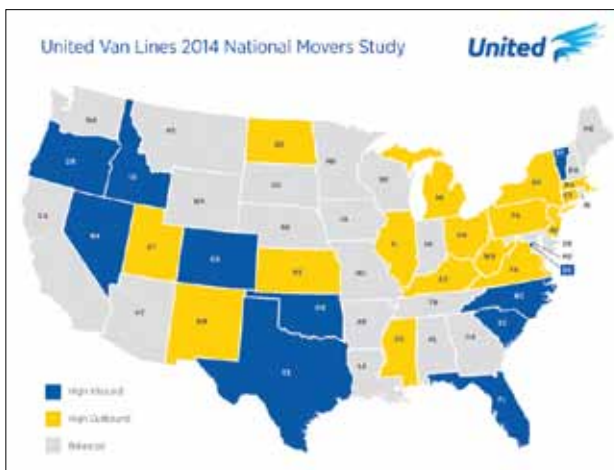


Photo courtesy United Van Lines press release

The annual United Van Lines' National Movers Study found Oregon to be the top interstate moving destination in the U.S. last year. The influx of job seekers could potentially help boost the Oregon National Guard's recruiting efforts.

members return home from deployment and people from other states seek to join the Oregon National Guard.

"Oregon is the place to be right now if you are looking for a career and good lifestyle," Reese said. "We not only have a number of excellent jobs available in the Oregon National Guard, but throughout the state, businesses are expanding and adding new jobs. Add the relatively low cost of living and great lifestyle to the mix and Oregon comes out on top."

Although there are a number of Oregon National Guard

jobs in various fields, engineering, infantry and artillery are the largest units in Oregon and in the highest demand.

While being a Guard member is not traditionally a full time career, local business owners hold Guard members in high regard and prefer to hire them for a variety of reasons.

"We have a lot of employers in Oregon who are very supportive of the military and veterans that want to hire them," said Dawn Taylor, employer support specialist for Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve (ESGR). "Business owners like the qualities that military members bring to the workforce."

With a competitive edge that membership in the Oregon National Guard brings, and the increased job growth in the state, relocating to Oregon is all the more desirable for those looking to move ahead in their career.

However, career is only one of many pieces that make up the bigger picture when deciding where to relocate. Other deciding factors include cost of living and lifestyle.

According to Stoll, even in Oregon's biggest city, Portland, housing costs are much better than other large cities with similar amenities.

"Oregon has many of the same virtues as California – mild winters, an active lifestyle – but home prices are much lower," Stoll said. "The median price for a single-family home in Portland, for example, is \$285,000 according to Zillow. In San Francisco, it's \$881,000 and in Los Angeles, \$481,000."

With lower housing costs and no sales tax, living in Oregon means keeping more of your salary, so there is more to spend on the things that Oregonians like to brag about: the local food, beverage, arts and entertainment scene, as well as the outdoor activities.

STATE PARTNERSHIP

# Oregon National Guard strengthens partnerships in the Pacific

Story by Nick Choy and Staff Sgt. Jason van Mourik, Oregon Military Department Public Affairs

**SALEM, Oregon** – As 2014 came to a close, officials with the Oregon National Guard’s State Partnership Program (SPP) said the training year ended on a high note, marking several key engagements throughout the year that helped to further strengthen U.S. relations with both Vietnam and Bangladesh.

In 2014, the Oregon National Guard (ORNG) placed United States Pacific Command’s (USPACOM) first and third Bilateral Affairs Officers (BAO) in Bangladesh and Vietnam. Officials with USPACOM and staff at each respective embassy say that Oregon’s BAOs were well received and have been a great benefit. The ORNG also actively participated in the USPACOM Capabilities Development Working Group (CDWG) Planning Conference at Asia-Pacific Center for Security Studies in Honolulu, Hawaii.

In the second year of the Oregon National Guard’s partnership with Vietnam, the Oregon SPP conducted what the U.S. Embassy called “the most successful U.S.-Vietnam People’s Army engagement ever” in September 2014.

Ten urban search and rescue experts from the Oregon National Guard’s CBRNE Enhanced Response Force Package (CERFP) traveled to Hanoi and conducted training designed to enhance emergency search and rescue capabilities. The team of Oregon engineers worked alongside more than 50 engineers with the Vietnam People’s Army, employing search and extraction techniques in a variety of scenarios using simulated collapsed building sites.

Oregon Army National Guard Capt. Mark Timmons, action officer for Oregon’s CERFP, emphasized that the experience Oregon’s Soldiers and Airmen gain in these events while training with Vietnamese service members is invaluable.

“It was remarkable to see participants from both countries quickly come together and center around the training used to save our countrymen’s lives in the event of a homeland disaster,” Timmons said. “Our mutual interest in saving lives allowed all of us to understand one another and the techniques we were training on despite the differences in language.”



Photo by Staff Sgt. Jason van Mourik, JFHQ Public Affairs

Oregon Army National Guard Capt. Mark Timmons, with Oregon’s CBRNE Enhanced Response Force Package (CERFP), assists a Vietnamese engineer on a climbing rope to practice ascending a broken structure, Sept. 23, 2014, during a week-long search and rescue technique exchange in Vietnam, as part of the Oregon Guard’s State Partnership Program.



Photo by Staff Sgt. Jason van Mourik, Joint Force Headquarters Public Affairs

Oregon Air National Guard Tech. Sgt. Andrew Stott (right), 142nd Fighter Wing Medical Group, trains members of the 249th Engineer Brigade, Vietnam People’s Army, in rope work used for search and extraction techniques in collapsed buildings, Sept. 22, 2014, during a week-long information exchange in Vietnam. The exchange was designed to enhance urban search and extraction and medical first response procedures for disaster situations, as part of the Oregon National Guard’s State Partnership Program.

Timmons said the partnership between Oregon and Vietnam serves as a personal career highlight.

“I’ve enjoyed one of the most memorable events in my military career,” he said. “They (our Vietnamese partners) were



Photo courtesy Chief Warrant Officer-3 Devin Wickenhagen

Oregon Army National Guard aviator, Chief Warrant Officer-3 Dave Long (left), of 1-168th General Support Aviation Battalion, works with a member of the Bangladesh Air Force’s 9th Helicopter Squadron, during a Subject Matter Expert Exchange (SMEE), May 7-9, 2014, in Dhaka, Bangladesh.

eager to learn from us and demonstrated their approach to us for urban search and rescue.”

The training followed senior leader visits that took place earlier in the year. Maj. Gen. Daniel Hokanson, Adjutant General, Oregon, traveled to Vietnam. Vietnamese Ambassador to the United States Nguyen Quoc Luong; Vietnam Economics Counselor Le Chi Dung; and a delegation from Vietnam’s National Committee for Search and Rescue (VINASARCOM) also made visits to Oregon.

For the third consecutive year, Oregon’s SPP participated in the Vietnam Bilateral Defense Discussions (BDD), including serving as the Humanitarian Aid and Disaster Relief (HADR) subcommittee co-chair with VINASARCOM. Oregon has worked closely with USPACOM’s Center for Excellence in Disaster Management and Humanitarian Assistance (CFE-DMHA) on ways to enhance collaboration and synchronization of HADR efforts in Vietnam.

The partnership between Oregon SPP and CFE-DMHA will also be beneficial in assisting Vietnam with their request to develop a large-scale training exercise incorporating their new national disaster management coordination center, which is scheduled for completion in September 2015. The first workshop for this working group was held in Hanoi, November 17-20, 2014.

In Bangladesh, the Oregon SPP’s

key focus continues to be supporting Bangladesh’s disaster management initiatives, as well as improving the country’s urban search and rescue division.

Oregon Army National Guard aviators completed a Subject Matter Expert Exchange (SMEE) with the Bangladesh Air Force’s 9th Helicopter Squadron at the U.S. Embassy and Bashar Air Base in Dhaka in May 2014. The group helped the Bangladesh Air Force (BAF) develop techniques and procedures for conducting aerial search and rescue, as well as aerial firefighting in urban areas in response to fires and other natural disasters. One of the recommendations to come out of the SMEE was that helicopters could put out urban fires utilizing water buckets — a concept widely accepted in the Pacific Northwest for fighting forest fires.

“In the U.S., we just take it for granted that emergency and fire services will quickly respond to emergencies anywhere, especially in an urban area, but the neighborhoods are so congested in Dhaka it is literally not possible for emergency vehicles to drive to fires or other emergencies in progress,” said Oregon Army National Guard Chief Warrant Officer-3 Devin Wickenhagen, of Charlie Co., 7-158 Aviation Battalion, based in Salem, Oregon.

Maj. Muqit Khan, squadron leader, and Mi-17 pilot for the BAF, said he also found the SMEE to be beneficial for his countrymen, “[The Oregon aviators] helped us understand some of the things we need to do in order to fly, operate, and maintain water buckets and to rescue people from rooftops in the city. We know it is possible to do this, and we are excited to try what we have learned and to work with Oregon again in the future.”

Also in May 2014, female service members from the Oregon National Guard participated in the Female Officers and Soldiers Subject Matter Expert Exchange, a seminar focusing on the roles of women serving in the military. The conference included round-table discussions, training and education that

will further strengthen military-to-military relationships and support the emerging roles of women in the Bangladesh Armed Forces.

For the fourth year in a row, the Oregon National Guard provided Soldiers and Airmen to the U.S. Army Pacific-sponsored Disaster Relief Exercise and Exchange in Dhaka, August 18-21, 2014. The DREE was followed by a senior leader visit in September in which Oregon National Guard Brig. Gen. Todd A. Plimpton, Assistant Adjutant General-Army, gave a presentation at Bangladesh’s Staff Course and War College. In October 2014, staff from Oregon’s SPP also attended the Bangladesh Bilateral Defense Discussion (BDD).

Hokanson said that as the relationship between the Oregon National Guard and its state partners continues to move forward, there is an emphasis to find ways to enhance collaboration, reduce duplication of efforts, and meet the nation’s longer-term objectives.

“Oregon is leading the way in the Pacific region with our partnership with Vietnam and Bangladesh in terms of urban search and rescue training and preparation for natural disasters,” Hokanson said. “Taking care of the homeland is something that is rooted in the National Guard and we are enthusiastic to share this part of our mission with our state partners.”

According to organizers of these training events, partnerships such as these not only enhance skills of all those involved, but also align with the U.S. strategic pivot toward the Asia-Pacific region.



Photo courtesy Chief Warrant Officer-3 Devin Wickenhagen

Oregon Air National Guard Senior Airman Charles Weinert, with 142nd Fighter Wing Medical Group, trains with members of the Bangladesh Armed Forces on medical first response and casualty evacuation during a Subject Matter Expert Exchange (SMEE), May 6, 2014, in Dhaka, Bangladesh.

FEATURE

# 173rd Fighter Wing Airman fabricates fix to keep F-15 fleet airborne

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

**KLAMATH FALLS, Oregon** - What keeps the oldest fighter aircraft in the U.S. Air Force inventory airborne? The trend is increasing ingenuity and resourcefulness. Oregon National Guard Airmen at the 173rd Fighter Wing have pioneered a critical fix, preserving airworthiness of the F-15 aircraft as the airframe approaches 40-years in service.

**Maximum Performance**

Picture a muscle car, vintage 1978, and what it would mean to take that car to the quarter-mile track and ask for every last ounce of power and torque possible from its engine; running the RPMs to the red, transferring all of that force through the drivetrain and turning it into forward motion – every day.

The F-15 airframe dates back to 1978 and they do get ‘max performed’ every time they take to the sky. Take gravitational forces (better known as G’s) into consideration. These aircraft usually pull up to nine G’s on a given mission. Translated into everyday terms, that means nine times the actual weight of the aircraft. According to the Boeing technical specifications, a given F-15 weighs 45,000 pounds, so at nine G’s it is exerting 405,000 pounds on the wings and the airframe.

Over the years, those forces sap the strength of even the most stalwart of metals; titanium reigns supreme in this environment for its strength-to-weight ratio – half the weight of steel and four times as strong. The modern F-15 aircraft uses this metal extensively, but those G-forces worry away at the metal and eventually it will crack.

**Extended Warranty**

Necessity has prolonged the service life of this aircraft from 6,000 flight hours to 10,000 flight hours and more in some cases. There are precious few F-22s to augment the air superiority mission, and the F-35 has yet to reach active service. Even when they do, plans call for the F-15 to remain in service through the year 2040. With that extended service metal fatigue, issues can arise.

To identify problems that will arise from this extended lifespan, Boeing conducted stress testing of the F-15 airframe to absolute failure, well beyond the 20,000-flight-hours mark.

Sure enough, this testing revealed a critical vulnerability; wing spars absorb tremendous stress and as a result will break. The engineers identified the problem and knew that units using these airframes should inspect the wing spars regularly, and with that, uncovered a larger problem.

The wing spar’s location is such that it prevents inspection by means of X-ray or other normal techniques. Short of pulling the skin off the entire wing, which is not feasible at normal flying units in the field, a method of ensuring the integrity of wing spars didn’t exist.

“There was a catastrophic failure on the stress test aircraft on the intermediate spar,” said Master Sgt. John McAllister, supervisor of the 173rd Sheet Metals shop. “[The engineers] said they need to find out if we can remove some skin in an area and check these, and we said, ‘yes, we will take a look at this.’”

**Grassroots Ingenuity**

The solution is an example of ingenuity and resourcefulness at the grassroots level.

McAllister asked one of his Airman, Tech. Sgt. Jeff



Tech. Sgt. Jeff Childs, with the 173rd Fighter Wing sheet metals shop, requires a small mirror to help ensure his cutting tool does not cut the wing spar while taking fine cuts, measuring only a thousandth of an inch, on the skin of an F-15 aircraft wing. While removing the quarter-inch of titanium skin covering the wing, the delicate part is ensuring he does not damage the underlying spar.

Childs, a sheet metal specialist at Kingsley Field, if it were possible to engineer an inspection point for wing spars.

Childs has an extensive background in machining and fabrication. He even designed and fabricated his own 1932 Ford T-Bucket from scratch.

“It took three years,” he said of building the car. “The hardest part was modifying the lathe gearbox to get clearance for the wheels we machined from stock aluminum.”

So when McAllister asked him if he saw a potential solution to inspecting wing spars, he said “sure.”

Childs and other members of the shop spent several weeks of trial and error until they created a fixture machined from a block of aluminum that holds a carbide cutting tool, which allows them to precisely cut away the titanium skin without damaging the wing spar. This small opening in the titanium skin allows for inspection of the wing spar with an Eddy Current Tester.

**Treading on Thin Skin**

It’s a difficult proposition because the wing skin and the wing spar are literally touching each other. The way Childs designed the process; successive cuts are made, taking a small thickness of titanium on each pass.



Above: Tech. Sgt. Jeff Childs holds the most recent example of his labor, a paper-thin piece of titanium skin removed with extreme care from the wing of an F-15C, Feb. 24.

“I created a fixture that attaches directly to the spar and allows us to machine-off a couple thousandths of an inch at a time,” said Childs, who physically performs all the cutting operations.

Although the fixture is fairly simple once designed, the procedure is not stress free. Anomalies in the spar itself cause the titanium skin to lie differently on each wing. When the remaining piece separating the spar is only the approximate thickness of a human

hair, he takes his fixture off and uses a hand-etching tool to remove the final paper-like bit.

“We take off thin layers in successive cuts until we get close, then we hold our breath for the last cut,” he said.

On two occasions the cutting tool has cut through to the spar itself, scratching it slightly.

“When it happened I was almost sick to my stomach,” said Childs. “We stopped everything and took pictures to send to Boeing engineers to see if a spar replacement would be required.”

A replacement would require the jet be sent to the maintenance depot in Georgia with a price tag of more than one million dollars. Fortunately, that wasn’t necessary.

**Manufacturer’s Recommendations**

“When I came up with this idea, I thought I would put it in a box and send it to depot,” he said.

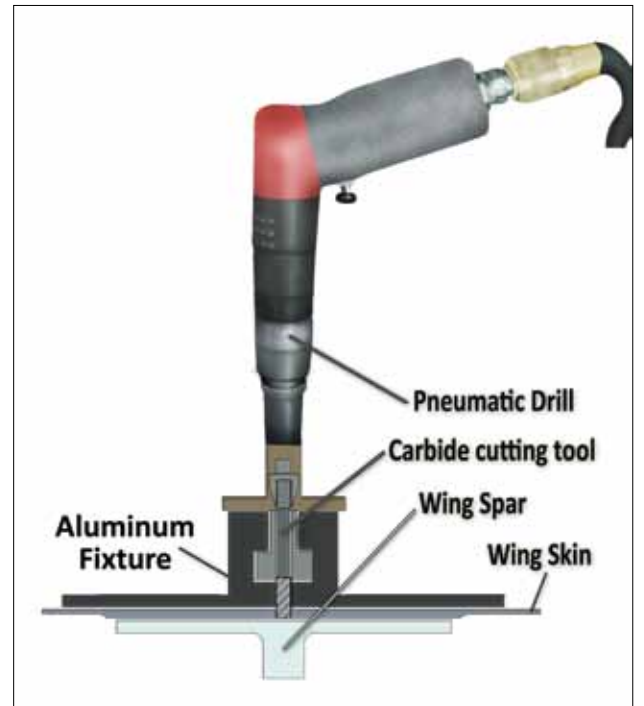
But necessity intervened; depot maintenance and Boeing engineers said “go.”

While discussing the risk of the procedure, Childs does wear the worry on his face, but he says he’s game and can get the 173rd Fighter Wing’s F-15 fleet all taken care of.

The operation has worked well-enough that Childs was sent to Portland, Oregon, to share this technique with fellow Oregon Air National Guard sister-unit, the 142nd Fighter Wing. Their alert mission requires jets be ready to take flight on a moment’s notice. Engineers at depot have stressed the importance of inspecting these spars as quickly as possible.

“They needed to get three of their wings cut and we suggested to have Jeff [Childs] go up, help them build their fixture and show them the process,” said McAllister.

The 173rd was happy to send members on temporary duty to ensure the 142nd FW’s aircraft are mission-ready.



The core of this setup is the aluminum fixture Tech. Sgt. Jeff Childs designed. The fixture precisely mounts a carbide cutting tool which cuts the titanium skin away from the spar beneath, one pass at a time. When the process is complete it leaves a small 5-inch opening in the wing skin which does not affect it in any way, but allows an inspection confirming the wing spar’s soundness. (Photo Illustration by Senior Airman Penny Snoozy, 173rd Fighter Wing)

Childs showed them how to make the fixture and helped them cut five wings.

McAllister says the engineers at depot maintenance think the design is excellent. They are currently supplying every F-15 unit with plans and instructions for manufacturing the fixture that Childs developed to accomplish wing spar inspections.

“A rough drawing of the fixture and a new TCTO has gone out to all the F-15 units to begin working the fix,” said McAllister.

In the future it is projected that other units will adopt this technique, which Childs and the sheet metals shop continue to refine. They are looking at using an ultrasound scan to help measure the thickness between cuts to provide a wider margin of error.



Seen from below, the cutting opens a 5-inch by 1/2-inch wide section of titanium skin, which allows for the non-destructive inspection shop to examine the underlying wing spar. It will remain open and has no effect on any other part.

Soon, the F-15 fleet will fly with some field-grade ingenuity on many airframes courtesy of Tech. Sgt. Jeff Childs, of the 173rd Fighter Wing.



Childs’ fixture, seen at the top of the photo, keeps the bit steady while he makes the most crucial final pass where it’s possible to unintentionally cut into the wing spar itself. He holds the drill lightly with both hands where he can sense even the slightest change in vibration to avoid the spar.



Tech. Sgt. Peter McNally, of the non-destructive inspection shop, uses an Eddy Current Tester inside the skin opening to scan the wing spar for cracks.



FEATURE

# 234th Army Band hosts high school honor band, inspires teens



Photo by Spc. Michael Germundson, 115th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

Spc. Jordan VanLaarhoven (center), with the 234th Army Band, plays the French horn with Austin Hua (left) and Caleb Douglas (right), both of Clackamas High School, during the 2015 High School Honor Band concert at Clackamas High School, in Clackamas, Oregon, Feb. 15. The 234th hosted band students from ten local high schools for a weekend of instruction culminating in a concert.

Story by Spc. Michael Germundson, 115th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

**CLACKAMAS, Oregon** - What do you get when you combine 69 band students from ten different high schools, professional musicians from the 234th Army Band, and a guest conductor from DePaul University? You get inspiration.

The Oregon Army National Guard's 234th Army Band organized and hosted their second annual High School Honor Band event in Clackamas, Oregon, Feb. 14-15. Band students from Clackamas County area high schools in Oregon Music Education Association (OMEA) District 13 converged at Camp Withycombe for a weekend of musical instruction and rehearsals that culminated in a concert performance at Clackamas High School.

"I think it's great that a group of young people, especially students, could come together as a collective and produce such fine arts in such a short span of time," said Armand Jayne, a percussionist and senior at Gladstone High School, in Gladstone, Oregon.

The students were handed their sheet music when they arrived. They only had two days to learn music they would perform in concert with a group of musicians they had never worked with before.

"It's really great to be able to play music, and learn it quickly, with musicians who want to be here," said Samantha Owings, flute player and sophomore at Canby High School, in Canby, Oregon. "It exposes you to more people and you get to know some of the other band kids in the area."

Members of the 234th Army Band led

sectional classes with the students, sharing tips and techniques to help them improve their instrumental skills. According to Chief Warrant Officer 3 Ashley Alexander, commander of the 234th Army Band, working with the students gave his Soldiers an opportunity to teach and mentor.

"It's phenomenal, all of the support we get. We have all of the equipment we need, all of the advice that we need, people are looking over us and making sure that we are able to succeed," said Jayne.

The Soldiers not only mentored the young musicians, they also played alongside them during the concert performance.

"It's a pretty big privilege to be able to hang out with the National Guard professional players and learn from what they have to teach," said Jeremiah Hill, percussionist and junior at Molalla High School, in Molalla, Oregon.

Guest conductor, Dr. Erica Neidlinger, an associate professor and wind ensemble conductor at DePaul University in Chicago, directed the Honor Band. The 234th Army Band has worked with Neidlinger in the past and invited her to give students a similar experience to what they can expect in college.

"Bringing in someone like Dr. Neidlinger, with her expertise and reputation of being a world-renowned conductor, it's just inspiring for the students," said Alexander.

Neidlinger said her goal was to provide the students with a unique experience, challenging them at a higher artistic level above and beyond what they may experience in their individual high schools.

"As far as being musicians and being a part of music as an artistic discipline to begin with, it's all about the human spirit," Neidlinger said. "The arts as a whole, and certainly music, is a means by which a composer of any nationality can express a human experience where language is no

longer a barrier."

She said her expectations were for the students to come together with an ensemble of their peers, despite having never met, play the music to the best of their abilities and turn it into an emotional expression of human communication.

"My overall feeling and impression of the arts as a discipline is that it's a basic human need, and what we're doing is sharing experience and developing a greater understanding of each other through the arts," said Neidlinger.

Neidlinger said it was an honor to work with the 234th Army Band on this project. She noted how fitting it was that the Soldiers continue the tradition of passing down musical knowledge to America's youth. She said throughout history, military musicians coming out of service from war in search of employment became middle school and high school band directors, creating the rise in instrumental music education.

"The military ensembles are the roots of the American wind band to begin with, and its out of the military bands that school music education, band education specifically, took off," she said. "This is how we began."

The idea to sponsor and host a high school honor band originated with Sgt. 1st Class Matthew Farris, a percussion section leader and platoon sergeant with the 234th Army Band during drill weekends. In his full time job, he is a band director at Molalla High School. He is also chairman of OMEA District 13, representing music teachers for the schools in his district.

"I'm always looking to try to do something for my students that will help them grow, especially the students that need that little extra push, something a little more challenging," said Farris.



Photo by Sgt. 1st Class April Davis, 115th MPAD

Dr. Erica Neidlinger, associate professor and conductor at DePaul University, encourages the audience to applaud the performance of band students during the 2015 High School Honor Band concert at Clackamas High School, in Clackamas, Oregon, Feb. 15. The concert was organized and sponsored by the 234th Army Band to inspire local band students.



Photo by Spc. Michael Germundson, 115th MPAD

Sgt. 1st Class Mathew Farris (right), a percussionist with the 234th Army Band, works with Eddie Shoop (center right), of Colton High School; Dakota De La Rosa (center left), of Milwaukie High School; and Sammie Locke (left), of Molalla High School, during band practice at Camp Withycombe, Feb. 14.

As a member of the 234th, Farris realized the professional players in the band would inspire young musicians. He also knew Camp Withycombe was centrally located in the district and had the necessary resources to facilitate a large honor band. He discussed it with the commander and other band members. Alexander, who is also a band director for Aloha High School in Beaverton, Oregon, was immediately supportive of the idea.

"This puts us out there and makes the community aware of what services the Oregon National Guard has to offer them through the 234th Army Band in terms of how we can inspire or entertain them and musically support their communities," said Alexander. "In this case, of partnering with a music education district, it benefits the community by offering the directors opportunities that their students may not have."

Farris said the honor band receives positive feedback from students, parents and music directors each year. He said his students love the music, working with a university director, and working with professional players from the 234th Army Band.

"Parents came up to me and said thank you so much for putting on this event," said Alexander. "They were just thrilled that the Army does this."

Alexander said the 234th plans to continue sponsoring a high school honor band every year and he is hoping to expand the event to other OMEA districts in the future.

"As far as local music education programs, I just encourage everyone to stay involved," said Alexander. "This is part of our culture and our history and it's worth the investment."

## 234th Army Band Soldier awarded outstanding military musician award

Story and photo by Spc. Michael Germundson, 115th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

**CLACKAMAS, Oregon** - It came as a surprise when Oregon Army National Guard Staff Sgt. Ward Baxter, of the 234th Army Band, learned he is a 2014 recipient of the Colonel Finley R. Hamilton Outstanding Military Musician Award.

Baxter, a musical performance team leader for the 234th Army Band's 'Brass Ops' brass band, said he was caught off guard because he didn't realize his leadership had nominated him. He would soon discover what an honor the rare award bestows.

"I went home and did my due diligence and research, and found out that, wow, this is a prestigious honor," said Baxter.

The award recognizes enlisted musicians serving in a military band of the U.S. Army, Marine Corps, Navy, Air Force and Coast Guard who exhibit outstanding musical and leadership excellence. Candidates for the award must be outstanding musicians;

demonstrating excellence in solo and ensemble performance, displaying exceptional leadership qualities and great potential for future outstanding service.

The award is named in honor of Colonel Finley R. Hamilton, U.S. Army (Ret), who succumbed to cancer while serving as president of the National Band Association (NBA). Hamilton served 35 years in the Army Music Program retiring from service as the commander and conductor of the United States Army Field Band. The award is meant to capture Hamilton's dedication to the musicians of the armed forces and his championing of outstanding musician leaders in service bands from all branches.

Chief Warrant Officer 3 Ashley Alexander, commander of the 234th Army Band, said Baxter received the award for good reason.

"Only a certain handful of recipients are selected each year and we're very fortunate this year that Staff Sgt. Baxter was selected to receive it," said Alexander.

Alexander said the 234th command team looks closely at who is deserving of receiving the award before nominating someone. He said that it's not every year that someone gets selected.

"They need to be qualified in a leadership way, and artistically as a musician, to help elevate their peers around them," Alexander said.

He added that in order to receive a nomination the band member must enhance the unit as a whole when they do performances.

"It's really an honor to have Staff Sgt. Baxter here as part of this unit because receiving this award kind of reinforces the level of quality we're trying to build here in the 234th," Alexander said.

Baxter is not the only member of the 234th to have received the award.

Staff Sgt. Jesus Cruz, a recipient of the award in 2013, said he still remembers how it felt when he received the award.

"I was really proud," Cruz said. "I was proud my work had been recognized."

Cruz said he is proud to have another member of his unit join the ranks of this rare and prestigious honor.



Staff Sgt. Ward Baxter, an instrumentalist with the 234th Army Band, plays the saxophone while performing with the 234th Army Band's 'Brass Ops' brass band during the 2015 High School Honor Band concert at Clackamas High School in Clackamas, Oregon, Feb. 14.

**OREGON AIR NATIONAL GUARD**

**Kingsley Field's 114th Squadron earns 2014 Top Fighter Squadron title**

Story by Senior Airman Penny Snoozy,  
173rd Fighter Wing Public Affairs

**KINGSLEY FIELD, Oregon** – The 114th Fighter Squadron, part of the 173rd Fighter Wing, took top honors out of all the Air Education and Training Command's (AETC) F-15 and F-16 squadrons from around the United States and was named the 2014 Top Fighter Squadron for the fourth time.

Every year, AETC looks at their fighter squadrons to see who is performing at the best in each of the five top operations squadron categories. The 114th FS won the category for Top Fighter Squadron.

The 114th FS has attained this award three previous years (2006, 2009 and 2010) making this the fourth year of recognition for their award-winning performance.

"The real credit for winning the award this year, and in years past, has been every single person in the entire operations group," says Col. Frederick French, 173rd Operations Group commander.

"This award is labeled as the Top Fighter Squadron, but it really encompasses everybody in the operations group that contributes to the 114th FS's success. Without the whole team, this award would not be at Kingsley Field."

The 114th FS surpassed 65,000 Class-A free flying hours including their 4,800 flying hours and 3,877 sorties during fiscal year 2014. They also increased student production by 80 percent, graduating 59 near mission ready F-15 pilots, all while undertaking the active duty Total Force Initiative, which greatly increased training and manning requirements. The squadron members also accrued more than 2,500 hours of community service.

French says he is very proud of the dedication of Kingsley Airmen and "... consider[s] this award the highest honor we can receive from the Air Force."

The 173rd Fighter Wing, the only F-15 training schoolhouse in the U.S., is a training wing, which limits the awards they can win. Since the squadron is unable to compete for other air-to-air fighter



Photo by James Hasetline, High-G Productions

Oregon Air National Guard instructor pilot Lt. Col. Alaric Michaelis, 114th Fighter Squadron, prepares for a flight at Kingsley Field, Oregon, March 4. The continued success of student pilots and their instructors at the 173rd Fighter Wing's F-15C Formal Training Unit are one of many reasons the 114th FS was named the 2014 Top Fighter Squadron of the Year.

squadron awards, winning this award is one of the few ways to highlight the accomplishments of these Airmen.

French boasts that "... [excellence]

comes out of Kingsley day in and day out." With this work ethic, he says 2015 looks to be another promising year for the 173rd FW and the 114th FS.

**142nd Fighter Wing EOD unit donates robot to Oregon Military Museum**

Story by Nick Choy,  
Oregon Military Department Public Affairs



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

Airmen from the 142nd Explosive Ordnance Disposal unit present a decommissioned Remote Ordnance Neutralization System (RONS) robot to the Oregon Military Museum at Camp Withycombe in Clackamas, Oregon, Feb. 6. From left: Master Sgt. Jeffrey Sadler, Oregon Military Museum Curator Tracy Thoennes, Tech. Sgt. Jason Ganner, and Senior Master Sgt. 'Trey' Mendell Holley.

**CLACKAMAS, Oregon** – The Oregon Air National Guard donated a Remote Ordnance Neutralization System (RONS) robot to the Oregon Military Museum at Camp Withycombe, in Clackamas, Oregon, Feb. 6.

The Oregon Air National Guard's 142nd Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD) unit used the RONS robot between June 2002 and June 2013 to assist with explosive ordnance disposal training and operations. After months of efforts by the Oregon Military Museum, the robot has been declared historical property and is now part of our loans from the National Museum of the U.S. Air Force.

The RONS remote controlled robot, with extended camera mast, switchbox controller, fiber optic control cable, radio control modules and spare parts kit are included in the donation. The robot itself is considered obsolete, according to the U.S. Air Force. While it is operational in terms of being able to move, it is no longer operational from an EOD (bomb squad) perspective.

The Oregon Military Museum is an authorized entity of the Oregon Military Department. The museum's mission and obligations include preserving the Oregon

National Guard's history.

The Oregon Military Museum has partnered in many ways with the 142nd EOD since the museum began in 1975. The museum acts as a repository for some of the military ordnance the unit has recovered in their work with multiple Oregon state and local agencies, in response to EOD calls all over the state.

According to museum curator, Tracy Thoennes, the addition of the 142nd EOD robot to the museum's collection greatly enhances Oregon's ability to tell this facet of the Oregon Air National Guard story. The robot will likely be incorporated into an exhibit of inert ordnance collected by the museum over the years.

"During my tenure here, we have also aided each other with the identification of ordnance and its markings," Thoennes said. "Additionally, over the course of three months, three members of the 142nd EOD team reviewed our entire collection, x-raying 250 objects, and certifying all but two as inert."

Of the approximately 14,000 artifacts in



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

The remotely-operated robot from the 142nd Fighter Wing Explosive Ordnance Disposal unit is moved into position to retrieve a simulated suspicious package during a training exercise, Aug. 1, 2014, at the Portland Air National Guard Base in Portland, Oregon. The robot has been used in real-world exercises and incidents by local first-responders who have partnered with the Oregon Air National Guard unit and its EOD members who provide supplemental assistance.

the museum's collection, there are about 1,000 different examples of explosive ordnance. The museum acts as an ordnance research repository and looks forward to utilizing much of its ordnance collection in future displays, Thoennes said.

**Oregon Air Guardsman recognized for helping other veterans to heal**

Story by Oregon Sentinel Staff

**SALEM, Oregon** – Tech. Sgt. James Batdorff, a personnel support administrator with the 116th Air Control Squadron (ACS), received the Victory on the Homefront Gold Medal and the Victory on the Homefront Community Hero awards from Helping Men Heal, an organization dedicated to helping men from all backgrounds and beliefs heal from trauma and loss.

The first annual Victory on the Homefront awards honored one uniformed service member and one military family from each branch of the military. According to the organization's website, each honoree was selected based on the "courageous emotional strength they demonstrated to those around them despite tremendous personal trauma and loss." The award recipients showed that they did the hard work to heal and are now helping others to heal.

Batdorff joined the U.S. Navy shortly after graduating high school in 1985. After completing boot camp and two years of machinist training, he served four years of active duty aboard the USS Belleau Wood (LHA-3) stationed at Naval Station San Diego, California.



Tech. Sgt. James Batdorff, with the 116th Air Control Squadron (ACS), received the Victory on the Homefront Gold Medal and the Victory on the Homefront Community Hero awards from Helping Men Heal.

In the summer of 1988, while training for an upcoming deployment, he was injured by a steam leak in the 150-pound cross connect valve between the two main machinery rooms. He received first and

second degree burns to his face, hands, arms, upper chest, and thighs. His injuries left him temporarily blind, confining him for about three months to the ship's medical facility.

In March of 1989, off the coast of Korea, during Team Spirit, two helicopters from the USS Belleau Wood crashed, killing 17 Marines. This was the second crash within just a few days. Seventeen Marines were transported to the hospital aboard the ship where Batdorff served as a stretcher-bearer. With no medical background, he was called upon to help with the injured. He assisted with severely burned patients, as well as several amputations. As the patients were stabilized for further treatment and transport, he was asked to hold the hand of a Marine initially believed to be dead. The Marine sustained life-ending injuries, but held onto life for another two hours. Batdorff comforted the dying Marine until his passing.

During this same deployment, Batdorff fell several feet in the engine room during a storm while the ship was off the coast of Australia. His internal injuries went undiagnosed for several months. After suffering extreme weight loss and fatigue he was admitted to Tripler Army Hospital in Hawaii. Upon the ship's return to San

Diego, he underwent surgery due to the internal damage from his fall.

Upon leaving the Navy and the Navy Reserves, Batdorff joined the Oregon Air National Guard. As a part of the 104th ACS he provided emergency services to the citizens of Oregon in the communities of Oakridge and Skelton during the fire season of 1996, and again in Tillamook during the flooding of 1996. In 2005, he deployed to Bay Saint Louise, Mississippi, as part of Oregon's response to help with disaster recovery from Hurricane Katrina.

Following the closure of the 104th ACS, he transitioned to the 142nd Fighter Wing Medical Group as a biomedical equipment technician and Drug Testing Program Manager (DTPAM). He serves as a Substance Abuse Program coordinator for the Oregon National Guard and travels throughout the country evaluating other substance abuse programs.

As a member of Linn-Benton Community College Veterans Club, Batdorff mentors other veterans and assists his fellow classmates outside of normal working hours. He also uses Social Media to reach out to fellow Guardsmen that need help.

For more information about Helping Men Heal, visit [helpingmenheal.org](http://helpingmenheal.org).

**OREGON AIR NATIONAL GUARD**

**Airmen awarded Bronze Stars for service in Afghanistan**

*Story and photo by  
Staff Sgt. Brandon Boyd,  
142nd Fighter Wing Public Affairs*

**PORTLAND, Oregon** – Two Oregon Air Guardsmen were awarded Bronze Star medals in a ceremony at the Portland Air National Guard Base, March 8, for their efforts during a recent deployment to Afghanistan in support of Operations Enduring Freedom and Resolute Support.

Lt. Col. Jason Lay and Chief Master Sgt. Timothy Gilbert served alongside one another, leading engineers in providing critical infrastructure and maintenance support to Bagram Airfield, despite persistent rocket attacks and indirect fire.

In attendance at the ceremony was Maj. Gen. Daniel Hokanson, Adjutant General, Oregon, who praised both Airmen for their dedication to the mission.

“They set a new expectation for others to aspire to,” Hokanson said.

Both service members are assigned to the 142nd Fighter Wing Civil Engineer Squadron and deployed with the 455th Expeditionary Civil Engineer Squadron from April 20, 2014 to October 14, 2014.

“Lt. Col Lay and Chief Master Sgt. Gilbert are good people, hard workers, and they fully-embraced the mission to keep the airway open and to keep the people safe on base,” said Chief Master Sgt. John McIlvain of the 142nd Civil Engineer Squadron, who served with Lay and Gilbert on the deployment.

Lay received the Bronze Star for meritorious service as the commander of the 455th Expeditionary Civil Engineer Squadron, at Bagram Airfield. He led a team of 101 total force engineers who managed a 740-acre airfield, executed 970 work orders and oversaw 35 construction projects worth more than \$123 million.



Lt. Col. Jason Lay (left) and Chief Master Sgt. Timothy Gilbert (right) pause for a photo after receiving Bronze Star medals in a ceremony, March 8, at the Portland Air National Guard Base. Both Lay and Gilbert received the award for leading a team of engineers in maintaining Bagram Airfield, the busiest combat logistics center in the Department of Defense, during their recent deployment to Afghanistan.

The actions of these Oregon Airmen ensured the airfield remained capable of supporting ongoing combat operations at the busiest combat logistics center operated by the Department of Defense.

“Without their efforts, cargo would not have moved, personnel would not have been transported, and troops in contact with the enemy would not have received critical air support,” said Hokanson.

Gilbert received the Bronze Star for his distinguished service as chief enlisted manager of the 455th Expeditionary Civil Engineer Squadron. He led 99 Airmen through the completion of 970 work orders, 13 high priority projects and maintenance of the airfield.

“The leadership of Lt. Col. Lay and Chief Master Sgt. Gilbert enabled them to push themselves and their team to very high

levels,” said Col. Donna Prigmore, 142nd Mission Support Group commander.

Prigmore said both awardees possess a tremendous amount of technical expertise and the leadership needed to accomplish the mission under tight deadlines.

“It was a fast-paced, no-fail mission,” said Gilbert about the significance of the deployment. “We helped oversee the transition between Operation Enduring Freedom and Operation Resolute Support, which included a large decrease in the number of boots on the ground.”

The Bronze Star medal was established in 1944 and is the fourth-highest individual military award and the ninth-highest by order of precedence in the U.S. Military. It is awarded to members of the armed forces who distinguish themselves by heroic or meritorious service in a combat zone.

**Oregon Air Guard members gather for annual awards**

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

**PORTLAND, Oregon** – Members of the Oregon Air National Guard gathered to be acknowledged for their achievements during the past year at the 21st Annual Oregon Air National Guard Awards banquet held at the Embassy Suites Hotel, March 14.

Award winners from across the state of Oregon dined during a formal banquet and represented the 173rd Fighter Wing and 270th Air Traffic Control Squadron, based in Klamath Falls, Oregon; the 116th Air Control Squadron from Warrenton, Oregon; Joint Forces Headquarters staff

from Salem, Oregon; the 142nd Fighter Wing, the 125th Special Tactics Squadron, and the 123rd Weather Flight, based at the Portland Air National Guard Base, in Portland, Oregon.

Ceremony attendees included Maj. Gen. Daniel Hokanson, Adjutant General, Oregon, and Air Component Commander Brig. Gen. Michael Stencel with his wife, Sue, as well as senior enlisted leader, Oregon National Guard Command Sergeant Major Shane Lake and his wife, Stacy, along with the men of women of the Oregon Air National Guard.

During a brief introduction, Hokanson thanked those that worked long hours to organize the event, saying, “This is always a first-class event and I look forward to seeing all of the award recipients throughout the night.”

Prior to dinner, the 142nd Fighter Wing Base Honor Guard conducted an all-service Hat Ceremony to honor those service men and women still Missing In Action and held as Prisoners of War. The ceremony represented all five branches of the military; Army, Marine Corps, Navy, Air Force and Coast Guard members still unaccounted for in service to the nation.

The top state award winners for 2014 Airman of the Year went to Senior Airman Sean S. Saling, assigned

to the 123rd Weather Flight, as the top Category I awardee; along with Tech. Sgt. John D. Barr, IV, from the 125th Special Tactics Squadron, as the Category II top Airman; and Master Sgt. Jason W. Witts, assigned to the 173rd Logistical Readiness Squadron, as the Category III overall Airman.

Other special recognition awards went to 142nd Fighter Wing members; Lt. Col. Sean Sullivan, selected as Oregon Air National Guard Field Grade Officer of the Year; Capt. Jonathan Corrigan, the Company Grade Officer of the Year; and Mr. Robin Boren, the Civilian Employee of the Year. From the 173rd Fighter Wing; Master Sgt. Jess Lindsay was selected as the Wingman Award winner; Staff Sgt. Danielle Siluano, selected as the Honor Guard Member of the Year; and Staff Sgt. Christine Kerzel, the Unit Career Advisor of the Year. The Recruiter of the Year was Tech. Sgt. Jonathan Olsen from Joint Force Headquarters.

Two members of the 125th Special Tactics Squadron were also acknowledged, as Senior Master Sgt. Brent Cavanias was selected as the First Sergeant of the Year, and Master Sgt. Nicholas Raya was recognized for the Chester E. McCarty Outstanding Superior Performer.

Two organizations were also recognized during the banquet. The 142nd Fighter Wing Civil Engineering Squadron was selected as Outstanding Unit of the Year, and the Multnomah County Sheriff’s Office was selected as the Employer of the Year for the Oregon Air National Guard.

In closing remarks, as the evening ceremony concluded, Stencel reminded those in attendance that their hard work and dedication has not gone unnoticed.

“It’s been a long, long year from multiple deployments to our training and alert missions here at home, and yet there is more work to be done in the coming year. Thank you again for your constant dedication to our nation and state.”

**Unbehaun protected lives with air support**

Continued from Front Page

Unit, Unbehaun was instrumental in providing combat airpower during 43 complex operations, according to the citation.

During one major clearing operation consisting of 300 personnel and supported by 80 aircraft sorties, Unbehaun’s ability to battle track the widely dispersed ground forces was critical for the team’s force protection. As he and his team moved through the objective area, hostile insurgents positioned on the high ground and ambushed their elements, the citation says.

Unbehaun neutralized the enemy insurgents with the AC-130W gunship, multiple unmanned predator drones, and four F-18s, which killed eight insurgents and destroyed four defensive fighting positions. Throughout the deployment, Unbehaun managed 160 air sorties and controlled 21 aerial resupply missions enabling the delivery of one ton of equipment, fuel, and perishable goods for his teams.

The 125th STS is responsible for training, equipping, and employing combat control (CCT), Special Operations Weather Team (SOWT), and support personnel to successfully execute special tactics operations domestically and worldwide in support of both state and federal missions.

Since establishment of the unit on May 27, 2005, the 125th STS has deployed forces in support of numerous combat operations during Operation Enduring Freedom in Afghanistan, and Operations Iraqi Freedom and New Dawn in Iraq.

The unit has also responded to numerous domestic response operations to include: Hurricane Katrina, Hurricane Rita, Hurricane Ike, and severe flooding in Vernonia, Ore. Currently, the unit is undergoing its first mobilization in which operators are filling a critical need as Joint Terminal Attack Controllers (JTACs) in Village Security Operations in the remote areas of Afghanistan.



Photo by Tech. Sgt. Emily Thompson, 142nd Fighter Wing Public Affairs

Oregon Air National Guard Senior Master Sgt. Jason Witts (center), assigned to the 173rd Logistical Readiness Squadron, is presented with the overall Oregon Air National Guard Outstanding Airman of the Year Award, Category III, from 173rd Fighter Wing Command Chief Master Sgt. Danny Ross (left) and Air Component Commander Brig. Gen. Michael Stencel (right) during the 21st Annual Oregon Air National Guard Awards Banquet, March 14, in Portland, Oregon.

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**SERVICE MEMBER & FAMILY SUPPORT**

**Yellow Ribbon Program assists service members, families with transition**

*Story and photos by  
Tech. Sgt. Aaron Perkins  
142nd Fighter Wing Public Affairs*

**BEND, Oregon** - As many Guardsmen know these days, it is sometimes hard to get readjusted back to the routine of civilian life when they have been away on a military deployment for a period of time. The Yellow Ribbon Reintegration Program (YRRP) is designed to help Guardsmen with this transition.

The organization is setup to help educate service members, and their families, on the resources and benefits available to them. It's not just about getting through deployment - it's about reducing the stress of transitioning into and out of each deployment phase, as well as supporting the member's reintegration. It helps with the unique challenges that National Guard service members and families face by connecting them with their local support community.

Staff Sgt. Seth Clark, of the 142nd Fighter Wing Civil Engineer Squadron, attended a Yellow Ribbon event held in Bend, Oregon, following his recent deployment.

"It's nice to have all the resources available under one roof, to be able to go around and talk to different people and organizations that can help you out," Clark said

The YRRP works with a variety of federal offices such as the Department of Labor, Veterans Affairs, Small Business Administration, as well as local service providers, like veteran service organizations and the American Red Cross. It helps service members and their families navigate through the numerous Department of Defense, Veterans Affairs and state systems.

Greg Ford, a local service provider from the Central Oregon Veterans Center, was one of many local organizations on hand to talk to returning Guardsmen.



Guardsmen and their families participate in group activities during a Yellow Ribbon Reintegration Program event in Bend, Oregon, Jan. 24. The workshops provide information about the resources available to help them navigate all the phases of deployment and reintegration.

"I always love coming to these events," said Ford. "They are always run spot-on, and everyone is really great to work with."

Bobbi Bourne, a local representative from the Serving Armed Forces (SAF) branch of the American Red Cross in Bend, detailed her mission.

"We're here today to help inform families about how to contact service members and

information." A highlight of the event was welcoming a few members of the Oklahoma National Guard who were on site to observe and take notes on how the Oregon YRRP does business.

"This is one of the more well-known Yellow Ribbon programs, so we're here to guinea pig and see what we like to



Tai Chi Master, Jian-Feng Chen, demonstrates various tai chi movements to Guardsmen and their families to help them relax and decompress during the final day of the Yellow Ribbon Reintegration Program event in Bend, Oregon, Jan. 25. The Yellow Ribbon Reintegration Program provides deployment support and reintegration services to all service members, and their families, helping them through the stressors associated with deployment and homecoming.

**It's nice to have all the resources available under one roof.**

- Staff Sgt. Seth Clark,  
142nd Civil Engineer Squadron

their command when they are deployed in case of emergencies that occur here at home," said Bourne. "We are also here to educate families on preparedness for situations like an earthquake, to make sure they have a 72-hour disaster kit prepared, just in case, with all the pertinent

hopefully bring back to our program," said Staff Sgt. Garrett Davis, an Oklahoma Air Guardsmen. "So far it has been really great, high energy and enthusiasm. You can tell people here care about what they do and want to help returning service members and ones who are getting ready to deploy."

**Oregon Guard participates in new teen resiliency pilot program**

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

**ARLINGTON, Virginia** - A pilot program designed to bolster the resiliency of Army National Guard teens and build positive methods of coping with stress is currently underway in 19 states.

Part of the Army's Comprehensive Soldier Family Fitness Program that trains Soldiers and their spouses on skills to cope with stresses, the pilot program has a curriculum tailored to the teen population and teaches teens life skills - skills that adults have because of their many life experiences - such as being self aware, critical thinking, and building stronger relationships.

"The goal of the pilot program is to translate [those] skills to provide families with a common language around which to build resilience and performance skills," said Robin Cordovez, acting program manager for the Child and Youth Programs

Branch at the National Guard Bureau.

The teen program, meant for those between 11 and 18 years old, has already been well underway within the active Army community, where the curriculum was vetted, Cordovez said.

But by bringing the Army Guard and its child and youth program coordinators into the program, it allows the Army and Army Guard to work jointly to enhance the program curriculum, she said.

"Nineteen states have initially signed on for the pilot program," she said. "In these states there are child and youth program coordinators who are responsible for providing this teen curriculum to the population."

Oregon is one of these pilot states, incorporating teen resiliency into the Child and Youth Program. The other states include: Alaska, Alabama, Arizona, California, Florida, Hawaii, Iowa, Indiana, Michigan, Montana, North Carolina, Nevada, Ohio, Oklahoma, Tennessee, Utah, Washington and Wisconsin.

In these states, teen participants have the option of attending one two-hour workshop focusing on three specific skills, or learning all of the skills, Cordovez said.

"The curriculum consists of 14 skills that teens will learn over the course the year, such as how to hunt the good stuff, goal setting and activating event(s), thoughts and consequences, or ATC," Cordovez said.

She added that teens were hand selected for the pilot and are



Photo courtesy Oregon National Guard Child & Youth Program

Military-connected youth ages 13-18 pose with a HMMWV during the 2014 Oregon State Youth Symposium, September 26-28, 2014, at Biak Training Center in Central Oregon. The teens learned about military culture and participated in team-building activities, including tackling the low-ropes course.

typically also serving on their state Guard Teen Panels, which are the voice to Guard leadership on issues teens of Guard families face. The teens will be incorporating the teen-focused resiliency pilot program curriculum into their regularly scheduled meetings, Cordovez said.

This was due to the fact that these teens already meet regularly, which allows them to complete the program's curriculum within the fiscal year, she said.

"That is important ... because it allows a more accurate overview of the success of the program," she said.

A successful program could lead to a more resilient Guard family, Cordovez said.

"By tailoring it to the youth population, it enables us to have a stronger and more resilient [Guard] family," she said. "It's also important because it allows our youth who face challenges, especially those in the National Guard geographically dispersed in the states, to better cope with those stresses and help them answer the

questions of how are they going to cope with that stress or how are they going to get through that situation."

The pilot is scheduled to conclude at the end of fiscal year 2015. Teens within the program have provided feedback and many have already found the program to be beneficial.

"This program has taught me the importance of resiliency," said Christian Keenan, a teen from Oklahoma. "I feel better prepared to combat adversity I encounter in my life, not only as a National Guard youth, but everywhere."

Cordovez said that she and her colleagues continue to receive that kind of positive feedback. She believes that the teen resiliency program could become a permanent part of the Army Guard youth program and continue to grow.

"We really see this as a program that will continue to grow within the Army National Guard," she said, adding that having the matching skills to deal with challenges in life really allows the individual to endure.



Photo courtesy Oregon National Guard Child & Youth Program

Military teens tackle the low-ropes course at Biak Training Center in Central Oregon to learn team-building and problem-solving during the 2014 Oregon State Youth Symposium, September 26-28, 2014.

## OFFICE OF EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

## Kazakhstan emergency professionals tour Oregon emergency operations facilities

Story and photo by

Cory Grogan,

Oregon Office of Emergency Management

SALEM, Oregon — Kazakhstan emergency response professionals from the Emergency Situations Committee (ESC) visited the Oregon Office of Emergency Management (OEM) Emergency Coordination Center (EOC) and the Oregon Military Department's Joint Operations Center (JOC), March 3, as part of the World Affairs Council of Oregon, International Visitor Program.

"The mission of the World Affairs Council is to connect Oregonians to the world, and the meeting at OEM was a great example of that," said World Affairs Council, Oregon President Maria Wulff. "Every year we bring over 500 emerging leaders from nearly 100 countries to our community to interact with professionals and area families. It's a win-win for visitors and locals — and a great form of grassroots diplomacy!"

Wulff added that the council hosts many other programs and that the International Speaker Series has become the largest foreign policy series in the nation.

The Kazakhstan ESC delegation included leaders from the nation's Disaster Medicine Center, Civil Defense Division, Disaster Mitigation Department, Firefighting Service Management Division, and the Aeromobile Operational



Oregon Office of Emergency Management (OEM) Deputy Director Laurie Holien (second from left), OEM Director Andrew Phelps (left center), and Director of Military Support for the Oregon Military Department's Joint Operations Center, Lt. Col. John Prigmore (second from right), pause for a photo with emergency management leaders from the Kazakhstan Emergency Situations Committee, March 3, in the OEM Emergency Coordination Center in Salem, Oregon. The Kazakhstan ESC delegation visit was part of the World Affairs Council of Oregon, International Visitor Program.

Rescue Detachment.

"It is always very interesting to study the experience of other countries in the area of emergency management and prevention," said Lt. Col. Assylkhan Khudalbergenov, Deputy Chief, Firefighting Service Management Division, Emergency Situations Committee, Ministry of Internal Affairs for Kazakhstan.

He said that visiting OEM taught him that the decision to activate and involve partner organizations can be made by the

member of the executive duty officer on call.

"It considerably cuts down decision-making time and decreases the number of casualties and people affected in an emergency," said Khudalbergenov.

OEM Director Andrew Phelps said the opportunity to share ideas with peers from Kazakhstan was appreciated.

"Emergency management is the same whether you are in Kazakhstan or Klamath Falls: develop and implement

strategies to prevent, protect and mitigate against; respond to; and recover from any emergency or disaster, regardless of cause in order to reduce or eliminate the impact on lives, property, and the environment," explained Phelps. "We can all benefit from looking at the challenges we face through a different lens."

The project that brought the Kazakhs to OEM is unique because it highlights U.S. methods of preparing for, managing, and responding to natural and man-made disasters, and focuses on the challenging steps to recovery for communities and affected populations, said Sydney Snead, Program Officer for the International Visitor Program in Oregon.

"The natural disasters we face in Oregon are very similar to those in Kazakhstan," said Snead.

The purpose of the Office of Emergency Management is to execute the Governor's responsibilities to maintain an emergency services system as prescribed in ORS 401 by planning, preparing and providing for the prevention, mitigation and management of emergencies or disasters that present a threat to the lives and property of citizens of and visitors to the State of Oregon.

"We are serious about preparing for and responding to emergencies and appreciated the opportunity to share some of our successes and lessons learned," said OEM Deputy Director Laurie Holien.

## Emergency experts train for disaster response

Story courtesy

Oregon Office of Emergency Management

SALEM, Oregon — The Oregon Office of Emergency Management (OEM) conducted a statewide emergency response exercise, Feb. 12, at the OEM Emergency Coordination Center (ECC) in Salem, Oregon. The exercise simulated a Cascadia Subduction Zone earthquake and resultant tsunami.

The exercise was designed to test specific response capabilities during an emergency declaration for 26 counties and 2 tribal nations. Participants included Department of Human Services, Department of Corrections, Oregon State Fire Marshall, Oregon Department of Forestry, Oregon State Marine Board, Oregon Health Authority, Oregon Department of Environmental Quality, Oregon Military Department, and a Department of Homeland Security-Protective Security Advisor.

"Today we are testing several of our core capabilities for emergency management, including communications, coordination and situational awareness," said Kelly Jo Craigmiles, ECC Manager. "This is critical for ensuring that public safety response agencies can work closely with city, county, state and tribal emergency managers to deliver the best possible services."

The exercise was in preparation for Cascadia Rising 2016, a major functional exercise scheduled for June 2016, involving multiple county, state and tribal nations in Oregon, as well as the state of Washington, FEMA Region X, along with a variety of military and other partners to improve regional response capabilities during a Cascadia Subduction Zone earthquake and tsunami.

Exercises ensure OEM can support trained responders who know how to deliver services during large incident response, added Craigmiles.

## Phelps brings unique experiences as OEM director

Story and photo by

Cory Grogan,

Oregon Office of Emergency Management

SALEM, Oregon — New Oregon Office of Emergency Management (OEM) Director Andrew Phelps was working as an actor in New York City when he received a call from his girlfriend on Sept. 11, 2001 describing the ominous fireball she had just seen. While observing the scene from the roof of his East Village Apartment, Phelps realized one of New York City's iconic twin towers was on fire.

When Phelps saw a second plane flying toward the fire he said he thought to himself, "maybe it is coming to help." However, as the plane got closer and the wings began to tilt, Phelps said he remembers trying to will the plane to miss the building during a very surreal experience.

Phelps and his girlfriend spent most of the morning atop their apartment with a view of the terrible scene, he explained. When they saw objects flying from the tower, Phelps said he grabbed a neighbor's binoculars to take a closer look, only to realize the objects were people. That fateful moment had a profound effect, changing his path in life, Phelps said.

"I wanted to donate blood or do something like move pallets for the Salvation Army," Phelps explained. "I just wanted to do something, anything to help."

Phelps remembers making his way toward the scene with gloves, goggles and a hard hat, but feeling helpless about his efforts on the rubble pile moving buckets of debris by hand. That is when Phelps said he decided that next time something happened like 9/11, he would be in a position to do something to help. He said it was that tragic experience that inspired a career in emergency management.

Shortly after, Phelps helped start the first FEMA sponsored Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) in New York City.

"When we started, we thought it was a good idea; and now I am proud to say there are more than 50 CERT Teams in the city," said Phelps.

Phelps volunteered as a fire fighter, and in many other roles, to absorb and learn as much as he could about emergency



Andrew Phelps, OEM Director

management and response. He continued the development of a budding career in emergency management by graduating with honors from John Jay College in New York City with a degree in Public Administration/Emergency Management and Planning before receiving a Master of Arts in Security Studies from the Naval Postgraduate School's Center for Homeland Defense and Security — where he was also class president.

"With volunteering and school I was trying to find anything to get my foot in the door," he added.

Phelps got his foot in the door as the Local Preparedness Program Manager

with the New Mexico Department of Homeland Security and Emergency Management before becoming Director of Emergency Management for the City of Santa Fe, N.M., where he was also a volunteer firefighter with the Santa Fe County Fire Department.

"Andrew Phelps has been a great asset for the City of Santa Fe and the State of New Mexico," said Santa Fe City Manager Brian Snyder. "He has a great understanding of perspectives: of emergency responders, of elected officials, and of the public in general."

Santa Fe Fire Chief Erik Litzenberg added that Phelps has a rich skill set perfect for emergency management.

"I'm sure we will miss what he brought to our team in the City of Santa Fe, and am confident that he will thrive as an asset for the State of Oregon," stated Litzenberg.

Previous OEM Director Dave Stuckey, who is now Deputy Director of the Oregon Military Department, said he is very pleased Andrew has joined the team.

"He has a very strong background in multiple levels of emergency management and public safety," Stuckey explained. "His track record of working with partners and stakeholders will prove vital as he leads OEM in the future."

As Phelps leads Oregon's Office of Emergency Management, it will not only be his background and track record that drive him toward success, but also a passion and motivation to help people through the profession of emergency management that stems from the life-changing experience on 9/11 that changed him forever.

## Are you prepared for emergencies?

Being prepared means being equipped with the proper supplies you may need in the event of an emergency or disaster. Keep your supplies in an easy-to-carry emergency preparedness kit that you can use at home or take with you in case you must evacuate.

For more information, or to build a kit, visit the Red Cross website at:

[www.redcross.org/prepare/location/home-family/get-kit](http://www.redcross.org/prepare/location/home-family/get-kit)

**Be a survivor, not a statistic!**

## SPORTS

## Oregon Army National Guard Soldier trains Army World Class Athletes

Story and photos by  
Christopher L. Ingersoll,

Oregon Military Department Public Affairs

**PORTLAND, Oregon** – The Army World Class Athlete Program (WCAP) represents the U.S. Army by training athletes to compete in the Olympic games. The Oregon Army National Guard's own Maj. Dan Browne, former WCAP runner and Olympian, is training the track and field team for the upcoming 2016 Summer Olympic games in Rio De Janeiro, Brazil.

At Nike World Headquarters, Browne and his team, Pfc. Paul Chelimo, Pfc. Paul Katum, Spc. Aron Rono and Spc. Shadrack Kipchirchir, train daily in pursuit of a single goal.

"Our mission here in the WCAP is to make the Olympic team and I think we are on the right track for that," said Rono,

10,000-meter and marathon runner. "We try to improve, train hard and stay healthy so we don't have any issues."

Rono's teammate Katam, a marathon runner, shared Rono's focus.

"My mission is to qualify for the Olympics and get the gold medal in 2016," he said.

With the Olympics on the horizon, the team, comprised of native Kenyans and U.S. collegiate runners, endure a challenging training schedule to improve their already world-class running times.

"Training for running is not something that is easy, you have to endure the pain, sometimes you get injuries," Katam said. "It takes a lot of endurance, it's painful, but once you find your motivation, nothing is going to hinder you from your goal."

The training day for the team begins at around 8:30 a.m. with a core workout,

followed by two hours of various intervals of running. The team then breaks for lunch, where they try to take in as many calories in the form of carbohydrates as possible, to offset the roughly 5,000 calories they burn off in a training day. Afterward, they rest their muscles and stretch to prepare for the second two-hour session of running that usually begins at 3:30 p.m.

Even though every member of the WCAP team is a Soldier first, their Army mission is to train for the Olympics, which frees them of distractions like having to earn a living. Their single focus is to run and rest for the next run.

"We are so lucky and thankful about being able to train full time and focus on that and nothing else, so we try to use this program to the fullest," Rono said.

His teammate, Shadrack Kipchirchir, 10,000-meter and marathon runner, agreed.

"The Army is fully supporting us and giving us everything we need, so now we have to work hard to represent them well," Kipchirchir added.

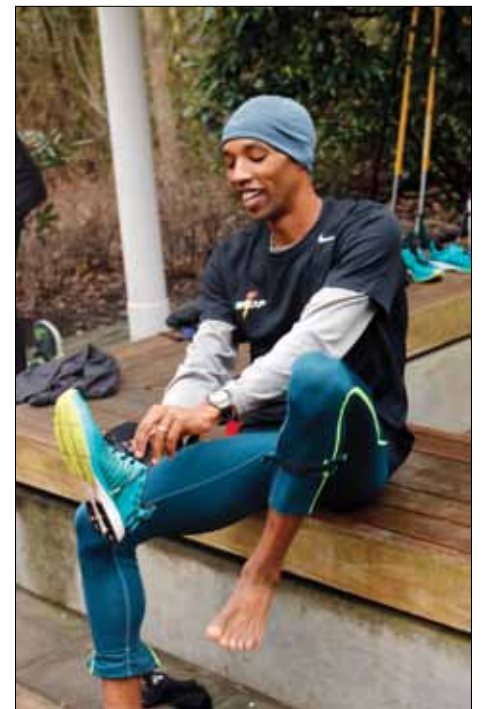
For many members of the team, running professionally is the culmination of a childhood ambition. Chelimo, a 5,000-meter runner, said that he first noticed he could run as a child and has been doing it ever since.

"When I was young, my brothers would chase after me, but they wouldn't catch me," Chelimo said. "That is when I knew that I had a talent, and I have been running ever since."

Katam also began running during his youth, growing up in Kenya.

"Way back when I was in Kenya, I started running in middle school," Katam said. "I loved running and continued until now."

Browne says that for the WCAP team, the next big milestone is the World



Spc. Shadrack Kipchirchir removes his shoes before running his next mile to keep his feet cool at the Nike World Headquarters in Portland, Oregon, Jan. 29.

Championships in Beijing, China, and with the raw talent and a team atmosphere, he is excited to try for that goal.

"I am pretty excited, I have got all my Soldiers here now on the ground and we are working hard together," Browne said. "These guys are very fast."

Browne said Rono ran at the USA Half Marathon Championships, running the equivalent of six and a half Army Physical Fitness tests with a 9:30 pace.

"Running 102.25 for a half marathon is a pretty incredible accomplishment. Now that they are in a team, iron is going to sharpen iron," Browne said.



Members of the Army World Class Athlete Program train at Nike World Headquarters in Portland, Oregon, Jan. 29, in pursuit of their Olympic dreams.

## Oregon Soldier takes military combatives to next level, competes in Jiu-Jitsu

Story and photos by  
Christopher L. Ingersoll,

Oregon Military Department Public Affairs

**TIGARD, Oregon** — Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu, a well-known fighting style to many martial arts fans, has become one of the more popular disciplines according to mixed martial artists. Recently, an Oregon Army National Guard infantry officer earned a bronze medal in his division at the International Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu Federation's World Masters Tournament in Long Beach, California on Nov. 2.

Lt. Col. Ed Winkler, executive officer for Joint Force Headquarters, became interested in hand-to-hand combatives after his first deployment to Iraq in 2003.

"I realized very quickly that our fight was not at 300 meters, but more like three meters or less," Winkler said. "For example, when an unarmed Iraqi approaches a checkpoint operation, shouting in anger and frustration,

we need to have the skills to take him down using the right amount of force."

Over the next few years, Winkler enrolled in the levels one and two Army Combatives courses at Fort Benning, Georgia, for a total of 120 hours of instruction. After the course, he began to pursue martial arts privately. In 2007, he found a local Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu academy where he now trains.

Winkler said he chose Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu as the combat art he wished to study and pursue because the art form enhances not only his specific mission as an infantryman, but also his overall military career and lifestyle.

"Jiu-Jitsu is a non-striking form of martial arts," Winkler said. "The goal is to submit your opponent with attacks that threaten the joints in the body such as fingers, wrists, elbows, shoulders, toes, ankles, knees, neck or to render your opponent unconscious through the application of a

choke that cuts the blood supply off to the brain. Because it is non-striking it is called the gentle art."

He said one advantage of Jiu-Jitsu is that a smaller, weaker person who is well-trained can use leverage and balance against a stronger, heavier opponent. Once they gain a dominant body position, they can use a variety of techniques to incapacitate their opponent.

"As an infantryman, our overarching mission is to destroy the enemy in close combat," Winkler said. "Competitions provide a relatively safe platform to test ones mental and physical mettle against a fully-resistant opponent, while engaging in a combat sport."

While the Army Combatives program is Jiu-Jitsu based, Winkler said the sport of Jiu-Jitsu leaves a number of large gaps in the need for hand-to-hand combat skills on the battlefield.

"For starters, there is no striking or weapons, but I can't imagine a combat situation that would not include strikes and weapons: handgun, knife, stick, rock ... pretty much anything one could get into their hands to increase the odds of survival," said Winkler. "That being said, the Army's philosophy explained at the Combatives School at Fort Benning when I attended is the person who wins the hand-to-hand combat fight on the battlefield is the person whose buddy shows up first with a gun."

He said the Warrior Tasks regarding Combatives underscore the philosophy in which Soldiers are required to be proficient in gaining dominant positions over an opponent, allowing time for their buddy to show up with a weapon.

Winkler said Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu also enhances his ability to command as well.

"Every Soldier I have met in my more than 30-year military career, including myself, has a natural respect for those who exhibit the Warrior Spirit and who take training and their combat role seriously,"



Oregon Army National Guard Lt. Col. Ed Winkler (bottom) is taught a choking technique from his instructor, Jared George, during Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu training in Tigard, Oregon, Feb. 5. Martial arts training has become a passion of Winkler's as part of his military career and personal discipline.

Winkler said. "Jiu-Jitsu is one way that I demonstrate both leadership and the Warrior Spirit. It is also one of many ways a leader can earn respect both up and down the chain of command."

Outside of his military career, Winkler says that Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu has been a boost to his health and his family interactions as well.

"Training in Jiu-Jitsu not only provides a tremendous workout, but it also provides a mechanism for mental sharpness through continual learning," he said. "After eight years of training, I still see things I have never seen before in terms of new techniques. It also adds a level of confidence to my day-to-day interactions, whether it is work related or family related."



Oregon Army National Guard Lt. Col. Ed Winkler (left) submits with a 'tap out' to classmate Chase Warren (center) as the two practice choke maneuvers while instructor Jared George watches their technique during Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu training in Tigard, Oregon, Feb. 5.

## NEWS

## Philippines celebrate 70-year anniversary of Palawan Island liberation in WWII

Story by Alisha Hamel,  
Executive Director,  
Historical Outreach Foundation

During WWII, news broke that the Japanese had massacred American prisoners of war on December 14, 1944 in order to prevent their rescue by the rapidly-advancing Allied Forces. The prisoners were herded into two air-raid shelters and were then set ablaze. Escaping prisoners were shot, but amazingly, 11 men did manage to escape, bringing their story to the world.

Two months later, on February 28, Brig. Gen. Harold Haney, Assistant Division Commander of the 41st Infantry Division, invaded Palawan, Philippines, with the 186th Infantry Regiment under Operation Victor III after a decisive Allied naval victory with the Battle of Leyte Gulf.

The 186th Inf. Regiment's "Jungleers," so nicknamed for the 41st Infantry Division's jungle warfare in New Guinea, invaded the island of Palawan in force on the morning of February 28.

Author, William F. McCartney, in his book *The Jungleers: A History of the 41st Infantry Division*, described the beach landing that morning.

"The 13th Air Force and naval units laid down a bombardment and at 0845, following a 10-minute rocket barrage, the assault waves stepped ashore on White Beach I, just west of Banca-Bancao Point on the north side of the entrance to Puerto Princesa harbor. There was some confusion during the landing because of poor beaches. However, since no opposition was encountered, the landing forces were quickly consolidated."

"The 1st Battalion, 186th Infantry, furnished the assault waves," said



Photo courtesy Veterans' Legacies, Historical Outreach Foundation

Soldiers of the 186th Infantry Regiment during the battle for Palawan at the Philippine Islands, February 28, 1945. After completing the New Guinea campaign at the end of 1944, the 41st Infantry Division was ordered to the Philippines. For the rest of the war, the 41st focused on mopping up pockets of Japanese resistance throughout the southern Philippines until hostilities ended in August 1945.

McCartney.

"The assault battalion pushed inland at a rapid pace and moved on the airstrips," McCartney's account continued. "By 1100 it had passed and secured the first phase line, and the reserve battalion had come ashore. The 2nd Battalion was moving very slowly but was closing in on Puerto Princesa. Shortly after noon, it crossed the second phase line, poured over the runways of the airdrome and was patrolling north of the third phase line. Late that afternoon all areas within the third phase line had been secured and patrols were continuing their activities. The town of Puerto Princesa fell to the 2nd Battalion at 1259."

Operation Victor III encountered very little Japanese resistance while securing the town of Puerto Princesa, and it appeared that the Japanese had no intention of

holding the town. The only sign of Japanese occupation were the remnants of air raid shelters. The 186th Regiment continued into Palawan and fought the Japanese and quickly gained the upper hand. They had liberated and secured the island with the help of the Filipino guerrilla forces and the main force departed Palawan by March 18.

McCartney describes what happened after March 18; "During this period, plans were made to utilize the 2nd Battalion, the cannon company and the guerrilla forces for further operations and to establish overall control of Palawan," McCartney stated.

By cutting off supplies, Allied forces had paid a heavy toll on the Japanese and their ability to hold the island. The last holdout of Japanese forces still fit to fight, attacked on March 25 according to McCartney.

"For the most part, the remaining Japanese

were fighting for self-preservation," McCartney said. "Their food stocks had been depleted and their activities consisted mostly of foraging food and dodging Allied patrols. There was one exception to this evasive action on March 25. Guerrillas operating in the vicinity of Moorsom Point encountered an estimated 200 Japanese who were well-organized and believed to be infantry troops. The Japanese attacked from three sides in successive waves, using good fire control, but after losing 52 men in three attacks they scattered."

The 2nd Battalion continued to work with the guerrillas to clean up Palawan and Victor III was officially terminated on June 20, 1945.

On Palawan, many of the 186th Soldiers encountered their first modern town in many years. In Puerto Princesa, they walked on paved roads, reading signs they could understand and saw actual houses, schools and gardens. After Victor III, the 41st Infantry Division created lasting friendships with the Filipinos on Palawan and a strong respect for their fighting ability.

A commemoration of the end of WWII is scheduled in Puerto Princesa, April 20-24, organized by U.S. Agency for International Development Advancing Philippine Competitiveness (COMPETE) Project in partnership with the Department of Tourism, Palawan Provincial Government, City Government of Puerto Princesa, Palawan Chamber of Commerce and Industry Inc., Provincial Tourism Council, and Rajah Travel Corporation. Many dignitaries are invited to attend the ceremony, with a special focus on members of the 186th Infantry Regiment of the 41st Infantry Division. For more information about the event, please go to [www.rajahtravel.biz/palawanliberation](http://www.rajahtravel.biz/palawanliberation).

## NEWS BRIEFS

### Need urgent care? Try the Tricare Nurse Advice Line

When an urgent health problem arises, it's hard to know whether you should try to tough it out or seek medical care. Luckily, Tricare beneficiaries can call the Nurse Advice Line (NAL) to get advice on their health care issues. Not all health problems require a visit with a medical specialist, but a registered nurse (RN) at the NAL can help you decide if you should seek care at an urgent care center.

While going to an urgent care clinic for a high fever or a sprained ankle may seem like the easiest option, calling the NAL first can save time and money. The NAL is made up of a team of registered nurses who can answer your healthcare questions and there is always a real person on the line to address your concerns.

When you call, the RN will ask several medical questions about your symptoms. These questions were developed by physicians to help the RNs get the most accurate assessment of your medical concern. If you are calling for a family member, please make sure that family member is present so you can assess their condition as the nurse asks questions. If the person is more than 13-years old, the nurse may ask to speak to them directly. Feel free to stay on another line or use a speakerphone option if that makes you more comfortable.

Going to an urgent care clinic without a referral may process as Point of Service, which has higher out-of-pocket costs, so calling the NAL and getting referred to an urgent care clinic or getting scheduled with your primary care provider will save you money. The NAL can advise you on all other Tricare plans to seek care within the network.

To access the NAL 24/7, dial 1-800-TRICARE (874-2273) and select option one. For more information, visit [www.tricare.mil](http://www.tricare.mil).

### ARAP tool measures safety, mitigates risk

Would you like to know if your unit is headed for a serious mishap? Would you like to prevent it? Your unit's safety climate is a strong indicator of the risk level in your formation.

The Army Readiness Assessment Program (ARAP) is an effective tool that can help with managing leading indicators of risk. ARAP is a 63-question online assessment that takes less than 10 minutes to complete. The assessment provides Soldiers and employees the ability to communicate anonymously with their commander about those things they believe are critical to safety within the organization and in turn provide a way for the commander to now direct resources to mitigate those risks.

In December 2013, ARAP became mandatory for all battalion and battalion-equivalent sized units in the Army (Army Safety, AR 385-10). When a battalion commander takes command, he's required to register and complete ARAP within the first 90 days. Once ARAP is complete, the commander can review the results and be aware of his unit's overall safety posture along with diagnoses and recommended improvements. Additionally, an expert from the U.S. Army Safety Center will provide one-on-one analysis of the data and guidance pertaining to the battalion's results.

ARAP is not just a great tool for measuring the safety climate in your units, but it can also be a powerful catalyst for changing your safety culture if the areas identified for improvement are incorporated into your overall strategic plans or safety campaign plans. That way, your areas for improvement become part of a documented concept for execution that is tracked, measured and shared by all working toward a common goal.

### What you should know about Equal Opportunity

Story by Maj. Rey Agullana,  
Oregon Military Department Human  
Resources Equal Opportunity (HREO)

**SALEM, Oregon** – If a service member feels discriminated against, there are five protected categories in which they may file a complaint; race, ethnicity, national origin, gender, and religion.

While complaints are handled at the lowest level in the complainant's chain of command, the unit's equal opportunity advisor (EOA) is the only person qualified to take the complaint and walk the complainant through the process.

It's important to note that time limits are established in Paragraph 1-8 of NGR 600-22/ANGI 36-3 to ensure that complaints are processed expeditiously and to ensure the availability of witnesses and information needed for investigation and resolution of complaints. These time limits take into consideration the limited availability of personnel on drill weekends. When participants in the complaint process are full time or Active Guard & Reserve (AGR) personnel, time limits in Paragraph 1-9 apply.

A complaint must be filed within 180 calendar days from the date of the alleged discrimination or the date the individual became aware or reasonably should have become aware of the discriminatory event or action.

When a commander receives an informal complaint, all required actions will be completed within 30 calendar days or through the next drill period. The lowest level of command will complete all required actions in accordance with Paragraph 2-2c within 60 calendar days after receipt of the formal complaint.

The complainant will be offered mediation by the equal opportunity advisor (EOA) to try and resolve the issue with the responsible person. The EOA can conduct basic fact finding, but will not be used to

conduct an investigation. If the complainant is not satisfied with the mediation, or the informal complaint remains unresolved after 30 days or through the drill period following the filing of the complaint, the complainant can withdraw the complaint or file a formal complaint with the commander.

A formal complaint is filed at the next higher command level above where an informal complaint resolution attempt was unsuccessful. At whatever level of command a formal complaint is filed, the commander at that level will request an National Guard Bureau case number through the State Equal Employment Manager within 72 hours of receiving the complaint, and initiate a Commander's Reprisal Prevention Plan. The commander shall have 60 calendar days from the date of the filing to complete a procedural review to determine whether the complaint will be accepted, dismissed, or referred.

Complaints will be documented by the EOA on the NGB Form 333. The complainant will be informed about the progress of the complaint during the whole complaint process, and decide when the complaint has been resolved.

For more information, reference NGR 600-22/ANGI 36-3 and/or speak with your unit's EOA.

#### Retiree Service Office

Tuesdays, 10:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.  
503-584-2891, or  
1-800-452-7500, ext. 2891

Email: [ng.or.orarng.mbx.j1-rso2@mail.mil](mailto:ng.or.orarng.mbx.j1-rso2@mail.mil)  
Web: [www.ORNG-SMFS.org](http://www.ORNG-SMFS.org)

Via Mail:  
Retiree Service Office  
PO Box 14350  
Salem, OR 97309

AZUWUR



# Former Oregon adjutant general passes away



**Maj. Gen. (Ret.) Gene A. Katke**  
Nov. 15, 1934 – Jan. 30, 2015

he had many aunts, uncles and cousins. He attended Benson Tech High School, where he was active in the Glee Club and radio. One of his other interests was hot-rodding, and he was a founding member of the Road Knights Car Club. He graduated from Benson with a technical electronics diploma in 1952.

Katke earned a Bachelor of Science degree in business and technology from Oregon State University. He later earned a masters degree in business administration from Portland State University in 1975.

He met the love of his life, Harleen Joyce Hardman, and they were married for 55 years. They had three sons; Martin, Gregg and Scott. Gene and Harleen loved international travel, the Oregon coast, and researching their family genealogies.

Katke began his 41-year career with the Oregon Air National Guard in March 1953 as an airman first class and served as a communications specialist until Oct. 14, 1966. On Oct. 15, 1966, he received a direct commission and was assigned as a communications officer with the 244th Mobile Communications Squadron. While assigned to the 244th, he held positions as communication systems staff officer, supply operations officer, and was then assigned as commander of the newly-formed 244th Command and Control Flight. In November 1976, he accepted a position as a supply management officer

with the Washington Air National Guard, 252nd Combat Communications Group, Camp Murray, Washington.

In 1977, Katke returned to Oregon to assume command of the 244th Combat Communications Squadron, a position he held until Sept. 30, 1983. He was then assigned to Headquarters, Oregon Air National Guard, as a communications electronics staff officer before being appointed deputy commander of the Oregon Air National Guard in 1988. He was named assistant adjutant general, Oregon Air National Guard, in June 1990. Katke was appointed as adjutant general, Oregon, on May 28, 1991. He was promoted to, and federally recognized as, a major general on March 11, 1993. He retired in 1994.

Katke's awards and decorations include: the Legion of Merit; Meritorious Service Medal; Air Force Commendation Medal with one bronze oak leaf cluster; Air Force Outstanding Unit Award with two bronze oak leaf clusters; Air Force Organizational Excellence Award; Combat Readiness Medal with one silver and one bronze oak leaf cluster; Air Reserve Forces Meritorious Service Medal with three bronze oak leaf clusters; National Defense Service Medal; Air Force Longevity Service Award Ribbon with one silver and three bronze oak leaf clusters; Armed Forces Reserve Medal with two hourglass devices; Small Arms Expert Marksmanship Ribbon with one

bronze star; Air Force Training Ribbon; Oregon Exceptional Service Medal; Oregon National Guard Meritorious Service Medal-Thirty Year Award; Oregon Thirty Year Faithful Service Medal; Oregon Faithful Service Medal with one silver oak leaf cluster; the Perfect Attendance Ribbon; and the Oregon Distinguished Service Award.

His civilian career included: production, purchasing and sub-contracting assignments with Cascade Corporation from 1958 to 1966; federal credit union management from 1962 to 1966; production control management with Warn Industries from 1966 to 1968; production engineering management and managerial management on the corporate staff of Omark Industries from 1968 to 1974; and manufacturing engineering management with Dillingham, Inc. He owned and managed residential rental property since 1965. In 1979, he turned his love for sailing into a business by purchasing Sexton's Chandlery, a small retail boating supply store. With his sons, he moved the business to a more favorable location, which included a shop and boat yard. Katke was president of both Sexton's Chandlery Inc. and of Tomahawk Boat Works, Inc., founded in 1983. He continued to be a presence in the business until very recently.

Preceded in death by his wife, Harleen, he is survived by their sons Marty, Gregg and Scott.

# Former Oregon Guardsman and veterans' advocate passes away

The Oregon National Guard is deeply saddened by the passing of Brig. Gen. (Ret.) Staryl C. Austin, Jr.

Austin died, Jan. 1, 2015 in Salem, Oregon, at the age of 94. He was born in Condon, Oregon, on Sep. 16, 1920. He later moved to Bend and then Albany before his family arrived in Salem in 1929. He graduated from Salem High School in 1938, and developed an interest in flying from an early age.

He enlisted in the Army Air Corps at age 21 and after early training as an airplane mechanic he was accepted into flight school. Austin became a pilot trainer and was sent to the European theater in 1944 where he flew 58 missions as a P-47 pilot, including air support for the Battle of the Bulge.

Upon returning to Salem after WWII, he married his sweetheart, Jacqueline Judd, whom he had met several years earlier while picking strawberries. Austin soon joined the fledgling Oklahoma Air National Guard, moving with Jackie to Tulsa, where he attended the Spartan



**Brig. Gen. (Ret.) Staryl C. Austin, Jr.**  
Sep. 16, 1920 – Jan. 1, 2015

School of Engineering. Recalled to active duty during the Korean War, the couple moved to France where he was stationed, giving them the opportunity to explore much of Western Europe when not on duty.

Austin joined the Oregon Air National Guard in 1953, commanding the 142nd Fighter Interceptor Group. He and Jackie settled in Portland, where sons Steve and Andy were born, then moved to Salem in 1958 after he was assigned to the Oregon Military Department Headquarters.

In 1963 he was promoted to brigadier general and was appointed assistant adjutant general-Air National Guard. In 1973 he became the first Air National Guard officer to be appointed deputy adjutant general of Oregon, a position he held until his military retirement in 1981. He was the second U.S. Air National Guard recipient of the Order of the Sword, a special program where non-commissioned officers of a command honor individuals they hold in high esteem.

During his 40-year military career he was also awarded the U.S. Air Force Distinguished Service Medal, the Legion of Merit and many other honors, but his true bliss was always flying. In retirement, he was active with the P-47 Thunderbolt Pilots Association and the National Guard

Association. In 2007, he was inducted into the Oregon Aviation Hall of Honor, located at the Evergreen Aviation and Space Museum in McMinnville, Oregon.

Austin's second career began in 1981 when he was appointed by Oregon Governor Vic Atiyeh as director of the Oregon Department of Veterans' Affairs (ODVA). He took on the difficult challenge of restoring financial stability to the Veteran's Home Loan program and succeeded in laying the foundation for today's thriving ODVA. In 1984, he retired from this position, but remained active in a volunteer capacity, serving on the Governor's Veterans' Advisory Committee, the Board of Directors for the Veterans Care Centers of Oregon, and lobbying the Oregon Legislature on behalf of Oregon veterans.

Austin is survived by his wife of 69 years, Jacqueline; sons, Steven and Andrew; daughter-in-law, Kathy; grandsons, Andrew Van Den Bos and Treyvor Austin; brother, Charles; and many cousins, nieces, nephews and friends.

## WWII Vets return Japanese flags to families



Photos by Christopher L. Ingersoll, Oregon Military Department Public Affairs

41st Infantry Division veterans Ed Bartlein (left), former member of the 41st Signal Company, and Leland "Bud" Lewis (right), former member of the 186th Signal Company, attend a ceremony to return flags taken from Japanese soldiers killed in action during WWII, to Rex and Keiko Ziak, of the Obon Society, at the Columbia River Maritime Museum in Astoria, Oregon, March 23. 41st Infantry Division veterans volunteered to return the flags so the families of the Japanese soldiers could have closure for their lost loved ones. The Obon Society plans to reunite the flags with the original families in Japan.

## Oregon State Defense Force undergoes change



Photos by Staff Sgt. Paul Rushing, JFHQ Public Affairs

Above: Members of the Oregon State Defense Force gather, March 1, for a final formation and ceremony marking the organization's restructuring.



Left: Leadership of the Oregon State Defense Force participate in a formal ceremony marking the organization's restructuring.