

OREGON SENTINEL

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE OREGON NATIONAL GUARD

Brig. Gen. Alan R. Gronewold sworn in as Oregon Adjutant General

Story and photos by John Hughel,
Oregon Military Department
Public Affairs

SALEM, Ore. - Oregon Governor Tina Kotek served as the Presiding Officer for Brig. Gen. Alan R. Gronewold's investiture as The Adjutant General (TAG), Oregon during a ceremony held at Salem, Oregon on Nov. 28, 2023.

"I am honored to stand alongside Brigadier General Gronewold as he takes our oath to serve as the next adjutant general," Kotek said to those in attendance. "Moments like these are sobering reminders of what it means to be part of something greater than ourselves."

Governor Kotek appointed Gronewold to the position in October with the retirement of Maj. Gen. Michael E. Stencil. The ceremony took place at the Oregon State Library and was attended by family, friends, and members of the Oregon National Guard, including former Adjutants Maj. Gen. (Ret.) Michael E. Stencil and Maj. Gen. (Ret.) Raymond F. Rees, who later served as the Deputy Assistant Secretary of the Army for Training, Readiness and Mobilization from 2014 to 2019.

"The Oregon National Guard has distinguished itself many times over in its service to our state in times of need, dedication to supporting federal missions, and commitment



Oregon Governor Tina Kotek administers the Oath of Office for Brig. Gen. Alan R. Gronewold during the Investiture Ceremony held at the Oregon State Library, Salem, Oregon on November 28, 2023. During the ceremony, Brig. Gen. Gronewold was sworn into the office as The Adjutant General for the Oregon National Guard.

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Oregon Adjutant General Michael Stencil retires



Photo by John Hughel, Oregon Military Department Public Affairs

General Daniel R. Hokanson, Chief of the National Guard Bureau (left), presents the American Flag to Maj. Gen. Michael E. Stencil (right) the outgoing Adjutant General, Oregon, during his retirement ceremony held at Camp Withycombe, Clackamas, Oregon on November 4, 2023.

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COMMAND

Honored to serve as the 32nd Adjutant General for Oregon

Greetings to our Oregon Military Department and Oregon National Guard community! It is a great privilege to have been selected by Governor Tina Kotek to serve as the 32nd Adjutant General for the Oregon National Guard. As your new Adjutant General, I do not take this commitment lightly and it is my distinct honor to serve in this position.

I will remain committed to our Soldiers, Airmen, civilians, state employees, and families as we remain focused on readiness and resilience. I hope we all envision that our service to our agency should be fulfilling and a source of pride.

Our success is intrinsically tied to the strength of our units and a winning team is built of qualified individuals who bring their unique and diverse skills and experiences to the table. It is grounded in cohesion where each member understands their role and works seamlessly with others. It is defined by our collective capability, the ability to execute our missions with precision and respond to the needs of our fellow Oregonians during emergencies.

I pledge to lead with a focus on

readiness, resiliency, cohesion, and capability. We will continue to invest in the professional development of our Guard Members, ensuring they are equipped with the training and skills necessary to excel in their roles.

We will foster a sense of cohesion, building a culture of teamwork and mutual support that extends beyond individual units. We will enhance our capabilities, constantly refining our readiness to face any challenge that comes our way. And we will continue to refine how we will get after these objectives.

If we rise together to the standard of excellence, we will not only fulfill our duty to the citizens of Oregon but will exceed their expectations. We will be the service of choice because of our commitment to excellence, our responsiveness to the force, and our reputation as a winning organization.

I am honored to lead this remarkable organization and I look forward to working alongside each of you as we strive for excellence, build winning units, and ensure that the Oregon National Guard remains a source of pride for all.

As we approach this upcoming



Brigadier General
Alan R. Gronewold,
Adjutant General,
Oregon National Guard

new year, I want to personally thank you and your families' sacrifice in support of our state and federal missions. Your dedication to service and commitment to duty does not go unnoticed. These past few years, I have personally witnessed our Guard Family rise to meet numerous operational missions and I know you will remain dedicated in overcoming future challenges with courage, commitment, and perseverance. I look forward to our collective success in the New Year and I wish you and your families the best this holiday season.

Always Ready, Always There!

NCOs have an amazing amount of influence

Non-Commissioned Officers, here are some things to consider when you are trying to build your team. Always Enforce the standards. There are hundreds of standards and regulations, some minor such as tuck your laces in your boots and some major standards and regulations, such as, there will be no sexual misconduct.

You could literally spend hours researching and studying all of the different ones but here is a basic guide. The major standards and regulations are pretty cut and dry. Know them and enforce them with no wiggly room. If one of your service members violate a major standard such as sexual misconduct, then proceed with the legal process immediately. Choose the violations of standards that you will not tolerate and be swift with your disciplinary action with the violator.

The minor standards, such as button your pockets or all OCIE should be organized the same or whatever it is you feel necessary for your team, enforce but enforce with compassion, even humor.

Compassionate Leadership can still be standard enforcing.

Be 100% professional, no favors for your favorites or your buddies. What happens to the rest of the company if you take care of your buddy or favorites? Well, other team members will see that, and the result will destroy unit moral.

Always require accurate service member evaluations. If you are not honest about their performance or are taking care of a buddy, sometimes that results in the wrong people getting promoted.

Your team relationship is critical. Take the time to spend with each other, discuss issues, ideas and the plan forward together. Do this every drill and even in between drill so you show you are a confident and unified team all the time. This could be as simple as a Team Leader calling or getting together with their Soldiers or a Platoon Sergeant meeting the Platoon Leader and planning in detail for next drill period. Constant communication with your team



Command Sergeant Major
Lee G. Smith,
Command Senior Enlisted Leader,
Oregon National Guard

members and First Line Leader is essential for a productive unit. Constant communication will also enhance the teams trust and moral.

We need committed leaders to build a team and build Trust. Trust will build moral, good moral breeds productivity, good trust and moral will keep Soldiers and Airmen in our organization. Take care of your Soldier's needs, make them your priority. It is the Non-Commissioned Officers that leads this cause amongst their team.

ANG Director visit Airmen during Enduring Partners 2023



Enduring Partners Engagement 2023 is a first-time event to improve combat readiness and combined and joint interoperability between the Royal Thai Air Force, Washington Air National Guard, and the Oregon Air National Guard, while enhancing strong defense relations and the State Partnership Program between the two countries. The official logo/patch for the exercise was created by Aaron Perkins, OMD Public Affairs.

Air National Guard photo by Senior Airman Yuki Klein, 142nd Wing Public Affairs
Lt. Gen. Michael Loh, Director Air National Guard, greets 142nd Wing Airmen before take off on the KC-135 Stratotanker on Korat Air Base, Royal Kingdom of Thailand for Enduring Partners 2023, Sept. 19, 2023. The general and his staff visited to see the State Partnership Program engagement between the Kingdom of Thailand, the Washington and Oregon Air National Guard. See the full story about the exercise on pages 8-9.

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Maj. Gen. Michael E. Stencel retires after nearly four decades of military service

Feature story by John Hughel,
Oregon Military Department Public Affairs

CLACKAMAS, Ore. – U.S. Air Force Maj. Gen. Michael E. Stencel delivered a wide-ranging reflection of nearly four decades of military service during his formal retirement ceremony held at Camp Withycombe, in Clackamas, Oregon on November 4, after serving as The Adjutant General, Oregon over the past eight years.

Presiding over the ceremony was General Daniel R. Hokanson, Chief of the National Guard Bureau. Having served as Oregon's Adjutant General from August 2013 to July 2015, Hokanson had just become the new Deputy Commander, U.S. Northern Command at Peterson Air Force Base, Colorado, as Stencel succeeded him in August—first as the acting Adjutant General and then with his official appointed by Gov. Kate Brown on Sept. 25, 2015.

“In many ways, his (Maj. Gen. Stencel) promotion to Adjutant General in August of 2015 was literally a baptism by fire as the state was hit by one of the worst wildland fires in our nation's history,” Hokanson said, describing Stencel's first major test in his new position. “In Oregon alone, over 631,000 acres burned as 125 members of the National were deployed in support of OPLAN (Operation Plan) Smokey—and it had been more than a decade since the Oregon National Guard ground troops had been called to fight fires.”

Hokanson aptly expanded the wildfire metaphor to illustrate both a broader theme and distinct membership Stencel now found himself part of.

“For those of you here today who haven't been involved in fighting a wildland fire, there's one thing you should know. Wildfires can change directions quickly, you can be behind the blaze when suddenly the wind switches, and now you're in front of it. You have to be ready for hazards to come from any and all directions. The pace is unpredictable and many times unrelenting. And as it turns out, it's a pretty good analogy for being a TAG (The Adjutant General),” he said.

Legacy and Landmark Achievements

During his remarks, Hokanson touched on additional challenges that Stencel had overseen during his eight years as ‘TAG’. This included both domestic operations and overseas mobilizations that guard members were routinely mobilized to support.

“In the eight years since he took the mantle of Adjutant General, Mike [Stencel] has navigated the formidable challenges, responding to the global pandemic, civil unrest, multiple overseas deployments, supporting Operation Allies Welcome, and managing wildfire season that transformed into wildfire years,” Hokanson said, detailing the extensive list of challenges during Stencel's tenure. “Ultimately, Mike oversaw the mobilization of Oregon Guardsmen from almost every mission our National Guard does.”



File photo by Master Sgt. John Hughel, 142nd FW Public Affairs
Maj. Gen. Michael Stencel, adjutant general, Oregon, congratulates ORANG Chief Master Sgt. (ret.) James W. Hotaling (center) and ORARNG Command Sgt. Maj. (ret.) Brunk W. Conley (right) following the conclusion of the Order of the Minuteman ceremony on April 21, 2018, in Eugene, Oregon.



File photo by Sgt. 1st Class April Davis, Oregon Military Department Public Affairs
Oregon Governor Kate Brown (left) administers the oath of office to Maj. Gen. Michael E. Stencel, Oregon's new adjutant general (right), with his wife, Sue Stencel (center), during an investiture ceremony, November 18, 2015 at the Governor's Ceremonial Room at the State Capitol in Salem, Oregon.

Yet adding some brevity to the ceremony, Hokanson took the opportunity to inject some lighter moments and some interservice rivalry, having shared their common bond as military aviators over many years.

“He earned his wings at Columbus Air Force Base, trained at the Squadron Officers School at Maxwell (AFB) and completed the aircraft mishap investigation course at Kirkland (AFB) as well as the air base combat engineering course at Wright-Patterson (AFB). He earned and holds a Command pilot rating of more than 1,900 hours in military aircraft, a majority of those in the F-15 [Eagle] ...and for those not familiar, that's quite an achievement—just short of being a helicopter pilot,” Hokanson punned—which was quickly met by laughter with those attending, with a humorous, yet subtle swipe at the Air Force.

Hokanson pointed out that due to Stencel's advocacy, the Oregon National Guard is better prepared for future endeavors. This includes aircraft upgrades, as well as two future cyber operations squadrons.

“Mike has never been afraid of asking the hard questions, making the hard decisions, or grappling with harder problems. He brings thoughtfulness, perspective, and a tremendous breadth of experience to every endeavor. And through that, he makes everyone, and everyone around him better,” Hokanson said.

There were other momentous changes within the Oregon Military Department that Stencel expedited and helped foster enduring his eight-year term. Most notable was the progression of new fighter aircraft for the 142nd Wing and 173rd Fighter Wing.

With the aging F-15C Eagle models flown at Portland and Klamath Falls, the Air Force announced on August 14, 2020, that Oregon and Florida would receive the first F-15EX Eagle II air superiority aircraft to continue their NORAD readiness missions. Then this past May, the 173rd Fighter Wing was selected to receive the F-35A Lightning II, continuing the unit's mission as a fighter pilot training squadron with the Air Force's latest and most-capable fifth-generation fighter aircraft. This was the result of years of perseverance to recapitalize two vital Oregon Air National Guard locations and two district missions.

At other military installations around the state, infrastructure was modified and repurposed to enhance existing operations and retool for new missions. In June of 2018, Stencel cut the ribbon on the Joint Reserve Intelligence Center (JRIC) at the Portland Air National Guard Base. The JRIC now supports more than 225 Reserve and active duty personnel as well as government civilians

providing IT and network capabilities to the Department of Defense.

In Eastern Oregon, Camp Umatilla officially became the Raymond F. Rees Training Center on September 29, 2022, as Stencel hosted the Chief of the National Guard Bureau Gen. Daniel Hokanson along with Rees to mark the grand occasion. The ceremony was part of the transfer of property from the former U.S. Army Umatilla Chemical Depot to the Columbia Development Authority, as nearly 17,000 acres will be used for National Guard training as well as industrial development in the Umatilla and Morrow counties region.

This past spring the Oregon National Guard and U.S. Navy officially opened the Small Unmanned Aircraft System Operating Facility in Boardman, Oregon. The \$13.3 million project includes paved organizational vehicle parking and a runway, a controlled waste facility and flammable materials facility along with the tactical unmanned aerial system flight facility and a machine gun range.

Expansion into solar and other renewable resources was developed at various Army National Guard Armories around the state with other projects in the pipeline for years to come.

When it was Stencel's time to address those in attendance, he was quick to thank those whom he has served with and those who supported his responsibilities.



File photo by Sgt. 1st Class April Davis, Oregon Military Department Public Affairs
Maj. Gen. Michael Stencel addresses ORARNG Soldiers at the Oregon Department of Public Safety Standards and Training in Salem, Oregon, August 28, 2017, as they complete wildland firefighting training. More than 125 Soldiers from the 41st Infantry Brigade Combat Team prepared to deploy in support the Chetco Bar Fire near Brookings, Oregon.

“I owe a huge debt of gratitude to a lot of people, including Governor Brown and Governor Kotek who entrusted me with this position,” he said. “I've been blessed by incredible people and mentors, up-down-sideways...this includes pilots I've served with in the F-4 days, and to the past few years at Headquarters and the Joint Chiefs of Staff, senior enlisted leaders and others...it's just been phenomenal.”

Over his career, he has seen the National Guard evolve into a Strategic Reserve, followed by the last 30 years as an Operational Reserve, and recently being called an Integrative Reserve.

“That assessment is applicable because with the National Guard and active component when we mobilize and deploy now, we do it together,” he said, describing the evolution of current Overseas Contingency Operations.

“The United States cannot deploy without the National Guard. We're affordable, we have an incredible amount of experience, and we are more resilient because of our dispersal across the country, and as a vital link to the Department of Defense and to our communities. That's especially important in Oregon because we don't have any active components.”

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“For me, the million dollar question is this... ‘Is this sustainable?’”

Answering his own question hypothetically, Stencel said it depended on the State or organization and their ability to recruit and deploy service members.

“Over the past two years, that propensity to serve is waning. Our numbers are down 30 percent, it’s not just an Oregon problem but a national problem we need to get after,” he summarized. “It’s because of the operation tempo, the demands on the National Guard, especially from the mobilizations from the pandemic, and an improving economy.”

“During the Covid-19 pandemic, the average Oregon guardsman served more than a hundred days on duty.”

Yet through these challenges of the past several years, Stencel remains optimistic. With the active component downsizing in some areas, it allows the National Guard an opportunity to recruit veterans who still want to serve, but he said, “This comes at a cost when it comes to a declining culture of service” in the nation as a whole.

“We recently celebrated the 50th anniversary of the all-volunteer force and when you look at the size of the military, we’re less than 1 percent of the total population,” Stencel said, expanding on the broader concept of public service. “So here we are, coming up on the 250th anniversary of our independence, and more than 1.1 million service members have given their lives for this country. They’ve been from every race, every ethnicity, every religion and ever sexual orientation...and I think that we should feel a sense of obligation to live our lives as though we owe them something.”

He pointed to an expression from President John F. Kennedy that he feels touches on “what it takes to make our democracy work.”

“To often we enjoy the comfort of opinion without the discomfort of thought,” Stencel said, quoting the 35th President.

An avid reader, Stencel has been an advocate for education, travel, and in many ways, challenging oneself as a life-long learner.

“A mantra I often use is ‘Leaders are learners,’” and he pointed to one of his favorite writers, Historian David McCullough. “He puts the question out there, ‘How can you know where you’re going if you don’t know where you’ve been?’”

Though he weighed and described many of these concepts throughout his remarks, he correlated them on a personal level when he initially spoke about his own decision to join the military.

One of the Last ‘Phantom II’ Pilots Still Serving

Reflecting back to his initial entry into the military, Stencel said he “never thought too much about promotions or a full career in the military but a desire to become an aviator.”

“I just wanted to fly. The standard take-off pattern [of the 142nd] ‘back in the day,’ often had aircraft flying over Camas (Washington) toward the Pacific Ocean. If I was outside as a kid and heard that sound, it was ‘heads up, to where those airplanes are’ ...and that was my dream, to one day fly one of them.”

Stencel’s pathway for his military career began after graduating from the University of Washington in Seattle in 1983 with a Bachelor’s in Civil Engineering. He then received his commission through the Air National Guard Academy of Military

Science in December 1984, and finished his undergraduate pilot training in 1985, completing his training in the F-4 Phantom II. His first assignment was with the 123rd Fighter Interceptor Squadron at the Portland Air National Guard Base. His military service has taken him through nearly every position and type of leadership from the flight, squadron, group, and wing to the State level.

For most of his military career, he served with the 142nd Wing in Portland, as the unit transitioned from the F-4 Phantom II to the F-15 Eagle in 1990, and subsequently rising through the ranks in various leadership positions, culminating as the Wing Commander from July 2009 to December 2012. He served as the Battle Director, deploying to the U.S. Air Force Central, 609th Air and Space Operations Center at Al Udeid Air Force Base, Qatar from September 2010 to February 2011.

It was during his early days of flying in the mid-1980s with the Air Guard that he also met his wife Sue, who was working as an administrative specialist for the

123rd Fighter Squadron.

“Mike had just gotten back from F-4 pilot training at Kingsley Field [Klamath Falls, Oregon] when we first started working together and became friends,” she said, recalling how their military careers and life together crossed paths. “I had enlisted with the 244th Combat Communications Squadron in 1982 and was working towards a possible commission myself. Often you’ll hear service members say the guard is like a family, well in our case it literally was.”

As a couple, they both served as traditional guardsmen, balancing a growing family while additionally pursuing civilian careers.



Photo by John Hughel, Oregon Military Department Public Affairs
Maj. Gen. Michael E. Stencel the outgoing adjutant general, Oregon, delivers a summary presentation of his 39-year military career during his formal retirement ceremony held at Camp Withycombe, Clackamas, Oregon on November 4, 2023.

With promotions and advancement, Michael Stencel took on roles as the Aircraft Maintenance officer and then his first assignment at the Joint Force Headquarters in Salem as the Munitions Officer, Plans and Programs officer. He returned to the 142nd in August 2001 as the Commander of the Civil Engineer Squadron and by 2005, became the commander of the 142nd Mission Support Group.

“On every level, we made it work. The kids would be with grandparents on drill weekends and then the ‘normal work-life balance’ during the week,” Sue Stencel said. “I was able to start a career in real estate and serve in the guard.”

In 2004, Sue retired after nearly 23 years in the Oregon Air National Guard, serving as the 142nd Unit Historian. On many levels, she understands the commitment that military spouses make, especially with her husband’s position as the adjutant general over the past eight years.

“When it comes to work, Mike’s on time—all the time. He’ll get to the office early, will leave late, and has an attention for the details,” she noted, detailing his life-long work habits. “But really, he’s a humble guy, he doesn’t force things—he let’s it happen.”

This attentiveness towards his work was noticed by Maj. Gen. Stencel’s former 142nd Fighter Wing vice commander, Col. (retired) Richard Wedan.

“Fighter pilots are trained to make quick and accurate decisions, yet saying that—he often told me there was no harm in thinking something through overnight,” Wedan said, recalling Stencel’s measured leadership approach. “Nothing rattled him. He was always that steady and calm person when it came to important decisions.”



File photo by Master Sgt. Nick Choy, JFHQ Public Affairs
Col. Michael Stencel, pauses for a group photo with his wife Sue and their children prior to taking command of the 142nd Fighter Wing at the Portland Air National Guard Base, Oregon on October 17, 2009.

When Stencel was promoted to Brigadier General and his new role as the Assistant Adjutant General, Oregon Air National Guard, Wedan became the 142nd Fighter Wing commander and said Stencel’s mentorship was still especially valuable.

“He’s extraordinarily intelligent, and he always made decisions because it was the right thing to do,” Wedan said. “Both in my role as the Wing commander and as the F-15 Weapons System Council Chairman, he never was a micromanager. He really gave me free rein to accomplish the job.”

Wedan recalled how Stencel’s steady determination led to the extension of the unit’s lease at the Portland International Airport. After nearly 15 years of negotiations and the continual work of several 142nd [Fighter] Wing Commanders, the Port of Portland and the Oregon National Guard signed a 50-year lease, on January 16, 2013.

“This process had been in the works for a long time,” Wedan said. “With his unique background and understanding of property and leasing issues, as well as his years of military experience, he was able to complete the lease extension and get it across the goal line.”

This experience helped provide a template for the 173rd Fighter Wing, lengthening their lease to 2095 at Klamath Falls, as the unit signed a 50-year extension on Feb. 19, 2018.

“There’s probably no way the two wings would be in the position they are today without these lease extensions,” said Command Chief Master Sgt. (retired) Daniel Conner. “We were told by the Air Combat Command Inspector General’s office, prior to the extension with Portland, that the wing would be shut down because of not having a lease in place.”

Conner was part of a working group that was tasked to achieve an extension for the 142nd and recalled how Stencel was the right leader at the right time to accomplish the negotiations.

“The timing was impeccable. I watched how he worked as a leader to bring people together, not only on the lease but how he had developed as a leader with each new assignment during his time in Portland,” Conner said. “He was always so well prepared for the next step and next role.”

Maj. Gen. Stencel selected Conner to serve as the Command Senior Enlisted Leader for the Oregon National Guard in October 2020. The COVID-19 pandemic was entering an alarming

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fall surge with daily cases over 58,000 (seven-day average) as more than half the U.S. states were reporting a rise in new infections.

“We looked at the numbers every day, and we had concerns for our members serving both on domestic operations and medical teams,” Conner said, remembering a dramatic rise in case. “We had TUBs (TAG Update Briefs) nearly every day and sometimes twice as the pandemic took on a ‘normal battle rhythm’, yet (Maj.) General Stencel made sure we were prepared to do this for the long term.”

During this period Stencel and Conner made routine site visits, checking in on testing locations, vaccination clinics, and eventually some of the 50 Oregon Hospitals around the state the Soldiers and Airmen were assigned to during the rising cases with the Omnicom variant. He recalled how Stencel’s leadership was crucial.

“One of the key aspects to serving in the military is ‘bringing people to the fight,’” Conner said. “All through this critical period, he remained upbeat and steadfast because our service members on the ground kept saying to us, that ‘they wished they could do more,’ and we got a sense that nothing was insurmountable.”

“Every Soldier and Airman a Leader”

Retiring himself in December of 2022, Conner said that Stencel’s prominent motto he instilled for the Oregon National Guard took on a deeper level of conviction and will live on past Stencel’s time in uniform.

“Every Soldier and Airman a Leader.” It’s more than just a motto, it really resonates with his sense of leadership principles and that everyone contributes to the mission,” Conner explained. “It goes to the core values and ensures a sense of shared responsibility from our senior officers to our junior enlisted members.”

When Stencel became the 142nd Wing Commander on October 17, 2009, then Brig. Gen. Bruce W. Prunk, commander of the



File photo by Tech. Sgt. John Hughel, 142nd Fighter Wing Public Affairs. Brig. Gen. Michael Stencel (left), assistant adjutant general for Air and Maj. Gen. Daniel Hokanson, Oregon adjutant general, talk with Staff Sgt. Matthew Ritchie (right) and other members of the 142nd Fighter Wing Security Forces Squadron at the Portland Air National Guard Base, Oregon, on Aug. 9, 2013.

Oregon Air National Guard, said Stencel’s experience as a traditional Guardsman would benefit the unit because of his varied military and civilian experience.

“We have a very dedicated core of full-time people, but the Citizen-Airmen make up the heart and soul of the organization,” Prunk said.

This sentiment was echoed by Wedan as well. “He’s the perfect example of a traditional Guardsman, rising to the top as he’s mastered every challenge given to him. It’s only fitting that someone of his integrity and intellect would serve as adjutant general for the Oregon National Guard.”

As Maj. Gen. Stencel enters retirement, Sue Stencel said the family is ready to embrace the next chapter of life, but will remember some of the experiences of the past eight years.

“We’ve hosted receptions for our State Partnership countries of Bangladesh and Vietnam that have been insightful on many levels,” she said.

“But last year, just after Thanksgiving, the First Lady (of the United States), Dr. Jill Biden hosted a ceremony at the White House, highlighting national guardsmen from around the country. It was also the opening of the White House for Christmas so it was one of those once-in-a-lifetime events.”

In his final remarks to conclude his retirement ceremony, Maj. Gen. Michael Stencel asked Sue to join him on stage, helping partake in the moment with those in attendance.

“It’s really that shared vision, those struggles you endure through one’s military experience that creates a bond and level of trust that you just can’t match out there in the civilian population,” he said, pausing at times in an emotional conclusion.

“Going into retirement, I’ve asked so much of everyone in uniform over the last eight years...my ask now is that you get involved. Become proponents for education, because the country needs all of us to be engaged, responsible citizens.”



Photo by John Hughel, Oregon Military Department Public Affairs. Four Oregon National Guard Adjutants General, past and present, gather for a group photo following the formal retirement ceremony held for Maj. Gen. Michael E. Stencel on Nov. 4, 2023 at Camp Withycombe. Pictured are (left to right) Maj. Gen. (ret.) Raymond F. Rees, Maj. Gen. Michael E. Stencel, outgoing Adjutant General, Oregon, Col. Alan Gronewold, newly named Adjutant General, and General Daniel R. Hokanson, current Chief of the National Guard Bureau.

Brig. Gen. Alan Gronewold becomes Oregon’s 32nd Adjutant General

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to continued excellence in training and readiness for the greatest of challenges,” Governor Kotek said. “I am confident that Brig. Gen. Gronewold will continue and expand upon this legacy.”

“The Oregon National Guard as many of you know, has distinguished itself many times over in its service to Oregonians in times of need, the courage that they have displayed in meeting the call to defend freedom in our federal missions and their ongoing commitment in training and readiness,” Kotek said, expanding on the vital role Oregon Citizen-Soldiers and Airman convey both home and abroad. “I am supremely confident that Brigadier General Gronewold will continue to and expand upon this important legacy here in Oregon.”

After Gov. Kotek administered the Oath of Office, Command Sgt. Maj. Lee Smith presented the Colors for Brig. Gen. Gronewold, officially ushering in Oregon’s 32nd Adjutant General.

In delivering his first formal remarks as The Adjutant General, Gronewold stressed his commitment to the Soldiers, Airmen, Civilians, and families of the Oregon National Guard.



Brig. Gen. Alan R. Gronewold, Adjutant General, Oregon, pauses for a family photograph following the Investiture ceremony held at the Oregon State Library, Salem, Oregon on November 28, 2023.



United States Military Academy Class of 1996 graduates gather for a group photograph with Brig. Gen. Alan R. Gronewold (center) following his appointment as The Adjutant General for the Oregon National Guard following the Investiture Ceremony on November 28, 2023.

“Our service is both fulfilling and a source of pride,” he said, expanding on a need for readiness and resilience. “I pledge to lead with a focus on readiness, cohesion, and capabilities. We will invest in the professional development of our Guardsmen and women, ensuring they are equipped with the skills necessary to excel in their roles. We will foster a sense of cohesion, building a culture of teamwork and mutual support that extends beyond individual units.”

Gronewold said that Oregon National Guard service members will be able to “to face any challenge that comes our way,” he said. “In doing so, we not only fulfill our duties for the citizens of Oregon but exceed their expectations.”

Brig. Gen. Gronewold received his commission from the United States Military Academy in 1996 and ten members of his graduating class were in attendance for the ceremony. He holds a Bachelor of Science degree in Environmental Science and a Master of Science in Strategic Studies from the U.S. Army War College in Carlisle, Pennsylvania. Upon graduating from flight School at Fort Novosel (formally known as Fort Rucker), in

Enterprise, Alabama, he then served with the 2nd Infantry Division, Republic of Korea, as the Aviation Brigade Headquarters Executive Officer.

After ten years of active duty service, Gronewold joined the Oregon Army National Guard in 2006 and was first assigned as the Commander, Army Aviation Support Facility in Pendleton, becoming qualified to fly the CH-47 Chinook. Earlier this year he was named the Land Component Commander for the Oregon Army National Guard, before being appointed as The Adjutant General, Oregon.

Having served on multiple mobilizations during his time on active duty and with the Oregon Army National Guard, Brig. Gen.

Gronewold’s first deployment was in 2003 serving in Operation Iraqi Freedom and again in 2008-2009. In addition to his deployments to Iraq, he was also activated in 2005 as the Aviation Maintenance Company Commander for Operation Enduring Freedom in Afghanistan. Most recently, he deployed as the Commander of the 40th Combat Aviation Brigade to the CENTCOM in Kuwait, supporting Operation Inherent Resolve and Spartan Shield in February 2021.

In his closing remarks, Gronewold thanked his family, friends, and co-workers whom he has served with during the past years of service and deployments, yet still looking toward the future in his new role.

“I am honored to lead this remarkable organization and I look forward to working alongside each of you who strive for excellence, build winning units, and ensure that the Oregon National Guard remains a source of pride for all,” he said, concluding his remarks. “We will be the service of choice because of our commitment to excellence, our unwavering dedication, and our ability to adapt and overcome.”

LEADERSHIP

2nd Battalion, 162nd Infantry holds promotion and Change of Command Ceremony

Story and photos by
Maj. Chris Clyne,
Oregon Military Department
Public Affairs

SPRINGFIELD, Ore. — The 2nd Battalion, 162nd Infantry Regiment, conducted a promotion and change of command ceremony at the Springfield Readiness Center on Sunday, Oct. 22, 2023.

Lt. Col. Joseph W. Twigg assumed command of the battalion from Maj. Ronald

C. Clement during the event officiated by Lt. Col. Peter D. Helzer, commander of the 41st Infantry Brigade Combat Team.

Twigg's promotion to lieutenant colonel recognizes his dedicated service and leadership in the Oregon Army National Guard. As battalion commander, he will lead the Soldiers of 2-162 and guide the unit's training and readiness.

"I would like to thank Maj. Clement for his outstanding leadership and congratulate Lt. Col. Twigg," Helzer said. "I look forward to seeing continued excellence from the Volunteer Battalion."

Friends, family, and fellow soldiers gathered to honor Twigg and bid farewell

to Clement's distinguished service leading the battalion. The ceremony reflects the storied legacy of the 2-162nd Infantry Regiment, one of Oregon's most decorated and deployed units.

"We are proud to serve and stand ready to execute our state and federal missions," said Col. Alan Gronewold, the Oregon Army National Guard's Land Component Commander. "We are active in supporting our communities when called on and are the service of choice for Oregonians."

The "Volunteer Battalion" has deployed overseas multiple times since World War II and served in combat in both Iraq and Afghanistan. The 2-162 is



Lt. Col. Peter D. Helzer, commander of the 41st Infantry Brigade Combat Team, passes the unit colors to Lt. Col. Joseph W. Twigg during a change of command ceremony for the 2nd Battalion, 162nd Infantry Regiment at the Springfield Readiness Center on Sunday, Oct. 22, 2023. Twigg assumed command of the battalion from Maj. Ronald C. Clement during the ceremony.



Lt. Col. Joseph W. Twigg holds the 2nd Battalion, 162nd Infantry Regiment's unit guidon as the assumption of command order is read during a change of command ceremony at Springfield Readiness Center on Sunday, Oct. 22, 2023.

scheduled to deploy to Kosovo in the coming year. The unit continues its tradition of service in communities across Oregon when not mobilized for federal missions.

Change of Command ceremony marks transition for 1st Squadron, 82nd Cavalry

Story and photos by
Staff Sgt. Cory Grogan,
Joint Force Headquarters
Public Affairs

REDMOND, Ore. — Officers and Troopers from the 1st Squadron 82nd Cavalry, based in Central Oregon, took part in a Change of Command Ceremony held in Redmond on October 15, 2023. This ceremony marked the transition in leadership, with Lieutenant Colonel Christopher Kerr, the outgoing commander, passing the torch to the newly appointed commander, James Rejzek.

The 1st Squadron 82nd Cavalry is a distinguished unit, operating under the 82nd Brigade Troop Command. The Change of Command Ceremony, held in Redmond, was not only a symbolic transition but also an occasion for reflection and recognition. Brigade Commander Colonel



The 1st Squadron 82nd Cavalry, based in Central Oregon, conducted a Change of Command Ceremony held in Redmond on Oct. 15, 2023. This ceremony marked the transition in leadership, with Lt. Col. Christopher Kerr, the outgoing commander, passing the torch to the newly appointed commander, James Rejzek.

Russell Gibson presided over the ceremony, offering his insights and words of encouragement.

The squadron's storied history is one of valor and service. Their remarkable achievements

include being awarded the Philippine presidential unit citation for their exemplary service in 1944-45. In addition, they were honored with two meritorious unit commendations (Army) for their dedicated service in Iraq during 2009-10 and their contributions to the mission in Afghanistan in 2014-15.

The squadron's commitment extends across multiple campaigns and theaters of operation, earning campaign streamers for their service in places like Papua, New Guinea, Luzon, the Philippines, Iraq, and Afghanistan. This rich history underscores their dedication and significant contributions to the nation's defense.

The Change of Command Ceremony not only marked a shift in leadership but also celebrated the squadron's past achievements and looked forward to the future under the guidance of their new commander, James Rejzek. The 1st Squadron 82nd Cavalry remains a pillar of strength and service in Central Oregon, ready to face new challenges and continue a legacy of excellence.



Brigade Commander Col. Russell Gibson presents an award to outgoing 1st Squadron 82nd Cavalry commander Lt. Col. Christopher Kerr during the Change of Command Ceremony held in Redmond, Oct. 15, 2023.

REFER & EARN \$1,000

The Enrollment Enhancement Program (EEP) aims to gain assistance in enlisting Soldiers into the Oregon Army National Guard. The Program will provide a monetary incentive of \$1,000 to Soldiers and Retirees who can provide a lead to Recruiters that results in an Enlistment.

Learn More At: OregonArmyGuard.com/Referal

142nd Wing Inducts Honorary Commanders

PORTLAND, Ore. — Honorary commanders stand alongside commanders as they swear an oath during an induction ceremony for the wing's newly appointed honorary commanders at Portland Air National Guard Base, Oregon on November 9, 2023. The honorary commander program is a tradition in the Air National Guard that pairs local community partners to units and Airmen in order to gain insight into the 142nd Wing's mission, and share the Air Guard story with their peers and community.



Photo by Master Sgt. Steph Sawyer, 142nd Wing Public Affairs

LEADERSHIP

The 142nd Wing holds Change of Command Ceremony

Story and photos by
Tech. Sgt. Alexander Frank,
142nd Wing Public Affairs

PORTLAND, Ore. — The 142nd Wing of the Oregon Air National Guard has changed command. Col. Todd Hofford relinquished command of the 142nd to Col. Michael Kosderka during a ceremony held on Dec. 2, 2023, at Portland Air National Guard Base, Portland, Oregon.

Former 142nd Wing commander, Brig. Gen.



ORANG Col. Michael Kosderka, 142nd Wing commander, delivers his first remarks as commander during a change of command ceremony on Dec. 2, 2023.

David N. Unruh, Assistant Adjutant General-Air, Oregon Air National Guard, acted as the presiding officer for the ceremony. During his remarks, Unruh thanked Col. Hofford for his tireless service to the Wing and welcomed Col. Kosderka to his new leadership role. In closing, Unruh emphasized the importance of teamwork and leadership throughout the 142nd Wing.

“As Airmen of the 142nd, I want you to expect much of your leaders, and I want you to be Airmen worthy of being led,” Unruh said. “Because it takes a team.”

Col. Hofford will now head to Joint Base Andrews, Md., where he will perform the role of principal deputy director A3/10 for the Air National Guard Readiness Center. Hofford had previously served as the 142nd Wing’s deputy commander



Col. Michael Kosderka (center), incoming 142nd Wing commander, salutes Brig. Gen. David N. Unruh (left), Asst. Adjutant General-Air, ORANG, upon assuming command of the 142nd Wing during the ceremony.

from 2018-2020 and worked as the Director of Staff-Air Component for the Oregon Air National Guard.

During his final address as the Wing Commander, Hofford shared the principles that have guided him across his over 20 years of military service.

“Do what is right, be humble, and care for one another,” Hofford said. “These characteristics will be vital to your contribution to the protection of this free nation.”

Upon assuming command, Col. Kosderka highlighted the hard work of ‘TEAM 142’ and expressed his dedication to earning the trust of the men and women he now leads.

“Together, we are a force stronger than any challenge, adversary... that may come our way,” said Kosderka. “This is not just an honor, but a profound responsibility that I do not take lightly. I ask for your trust, partnership, and your unwavering commitment as we embark on this journey together.”

Before his role as the new Wing Commander, Col. Kosderka previously worked as the director of staff for the Oregon Air National Guard and was the 142nd Maintenance Group Commander from 2020-2021. The 142nd Wing bids Col. Hofford a fond farewell and welcomes Col. Kosderka for this next stage in the 142nd Wing’s history.

The 116th Air Control Squadron welcomes new Commander

Story and photos by
Staff Sgt. Sean Campbell,
142nd Wing Public Affairs

WARRENTON, Ore. — Oregon Air National Guard Lt. Col. Casey P. Robbins assumed command of the 116th Air Control Squadron from Lt. Col. John P. Middlemore on August 5, 2023, in a ceremony held at the Camp Rilea Armed Forces training Center in Warrenton, Oregon.

Lt. Col. Robbins comes to us from the Pentagon in Arlington, Virginia where he served as an Air Defense Officer, Homeland Defense Division, Deputy Directorate for Nuclear and Homeland Defense Operations.

During the ceremony, Robbins took a moment to address members of the 116th Air Control



Lt. Col. Casey P. Robbins addresses the men and women of the 116th Air Control Squadron after taking command of the squadron during a Change of Command ceremony on Aug. 5, 2023.

Squadron and the 142nd Wing.

“Regardless of the mission, regardless of the tasking, the 116th Air Control Squadron has always served well and faithfully

to deliver remarkable results,” said Robbins. “I look forward to continuing this legacy of excellence in sharpening our spirit so that we become unrivaled in our execution.”

Lt. Col. Middlemore’s next assignment will be at the Western Air Defense Sector based out of Joint Base Lewis-McChord in Washington.

Upon leaving the unit, Lt. Col. Middlemore reflected on his time as commander.

“Working with the men and women of the 116th ACS has been the greatest honor of my career,” Middlemore said. “Their professionalism and dedication assures me that Air Force Command and Control

operations will continue without missing a beat.”



ORANG Lt. Col. Casey P. Robbins accepts the 116th Air Control Squadron guidon from 142nd Operations Group Commander, Lt. Col. Daniel B. McAllister as he takes command of the squadron during a Change of Command ceremony.

19th Air Force Commander Maj. Gen. Clark Quinn visits 173rd Fighter Wing

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

KLAMATH FALLS, Ore. — The 19th Air Force Commander, Maj. Gen. Clark Quinn, visited Team Kingsley here on November 27–28, 2023 for the first time since taking command earlier in June.

During his visit, Quinn saw firsthand how the 173rd Fighter Wing accomplishes their mission every day.

Quinn took the opportunity to meet with Airmen across the wing in their workspaces, and hosted an all-call where Team Kingsley Airmen had the opportunity to ask him questions and provide feedback.

“I want to hear from you, and I will do my best to give you an answer,” said Quinn in his opening remarks to the gathered Airmen.

The cornerstone of the visit included a backseat ride in a F-15D Eagle during a student training mission.

Quinn said his flight was outstanding, and what stuck with him the most was Team Kingsley’s access to phenomenal air space.

“In my career, I’ve been stationed in some incredible places where the transition from takeoff to training can take 25 to 30 minutes; here it’s just ten minutes,” he said. “It’s an awesome training location with great airspace, great jets, and it’s clear the Airmen are outstanding as well.”

Quinn also met with the 173rd Resiliency Team and learned about the multiple programs



ORANG Sgt. Josh Fuhrer, 173rd Maintenance Group, shows some of the parts his team was able to construct using a 3-D printer to Maj. Gen. Clark Quinn, 19th Air Force commander, at Kingsley Field in Klamath Falls, Ore., on Oct. 28 2023. Quinn spent two days at Kingsley Field meeting with Airmen and observing their F-15C training mission.

focused on taking care of Airmen. He applauded their “No Wrong Door” concept and encouraged the team to continue their important work for the Kingsley Field Airmen and families.

The 19th Air Force is responsible for operational-level command and control of all formal aircrew flying training missions within the Air Education and Training Command. The 173rd Fighter Wing mission of F-15C fighter pilot training falls under that level of command.

In concluding his visit with the 173rd Fighter Wing, Maj. Gen. Quinn said, “I just want to say thank you for everything that you do for our Air Force and service to our nation — I appreciate all that you do.”

OREGON NATIONAL GUARD COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND REGIONAL EVENTS

WAANG, ORANG and Royal Thai Air Force participate

Story by Lt. Col. Alyson Teeter,
Washington Air National Guard Public Affairs
and Master Sgt. Steph Sawyer,
142nd Wing Public Affairs

KORAT ROYAL THAI AIR BASE, THAILAND - Airmen from the Washington Air National Guard's 141st Air Refueling Wing and the Oregon Air National Guard's 142nd Wing participated in the first ever Enduring Partners engagement with the Royal Thai Air Force, from Sept. 11-21 at Korat Royal Thai Air Base in Thailand.

Enduring Partners 2023 was a National Guard-sponsored State Partnership Program engagement aimed at improving combat readiness and combined and joint interoperability between participants while enhancing strong defense relations and the State Partnership Program between the Washington Air National Guard and Thailand.

This engagement included participation from approximately 230 U.S. Airmen, five F-15Cs from the ORANG's 142nd Wing, two KC-135 Stratotankers from the WAANG's 141st Air Refueling Wing, and 20 F-5, JAS-39, and F-16 fighters from the Royal Thai Air Force.



Photo by Tech. Sgt. Michael Brown, 141st Air Refueling Wing Public Affairs
U.S. Air Force Brig. Gen. Gent Welsh, Washington Air National Guard commander, and Royal Thai Air Force Group Captain Nat Kamintra give comments during the opening ceremony of Enduring Partners 2023, Korat Air Base, Kingdom of Thailand, Sept. 11, 2023.

Brig. Gen. Gent Welsh, commander of the Washington Air National Guard and EP23 creator, oversaw the execution of the engagement and was impressed by the teamwork demonstrated by the American and Thai service members.

"During the exercise, between U.S. and Thai airmen, there was a lot of learning and working through problems together," Welsh said. "Strengthening that alliance and becoming better allies and partners... It was probably one of the best experiences in my career."

ORANG Col. Todd Hofford, 142nd Wing Commander, reflected on the value of partaking in an engagement of this caliber and what it meant for the airmen involved.

"The overall goal and objective of this was of course training, relationship building, but [also] experience," said Hofford. "It was really important to get my Airmen there, primarily for the adventure, to get into the Southeast Asia Indo-PACOM theater, be able to operate



Photo by Tech. Sgt. Michael Brown, 141st Air Refueling Wing Public Affairs

Robert Godec, United States Ambassador to Thailand, sits in the jump seat as Washington Air National Guard Capt. Josh Link, KC-135 Stratotanker pilot, prepares for take-off, Korat Air Base, Kingdom of Thailand, Sept. 18, 2023. Ambassador Godec watched the U.S. and the Kingdom of Thailand participate in the Aerial Refueling between Thai F-16 Viper Jets and a United States KC-135 Stratotanker.

and do their jobs in a foreign country, and then come back. Those experiences are valuable."

Pilots gained critical training experience through combined Dissimilar Air Combat Training or DACT, air-to-air refueling, and ground-controlled interception.

Other Airmen worked in supporting roles on the ground, ensuring the ability to safely and efficiently execute the day-to-day mission.

Maj. Jon Taylor, the assistant director of operations for the 142nd Operations Group, was heavily involved in the planning of this engagement. Having recently transferred from active duty Air Force to the Air National Guard, he brought years of experience

in planning and executing events like EP23 to this endeavor. Taylor spoke of the importance of these kinds of engagements and the benefits they hold for participants.

"[Training engagements] like this bring us and our foreign partners to a common level," said Taylor. "There's a language barrier to get through. There's also a cultural barrier, so essentially, participating in exercises like this with them builds the relationship between the two countries."

In addition to the daily flying operations, there were a number of events that took place throughout the engagement which were aimed at enhancing relationships between U.S. and Thai people.

The Washington and Oregon Air National Guard, along with the Royal Thai Air Force, visited Nong Phluang Yai primary school in Korat during the first week of the engagement.

The visit to the school gave military members the chance to engage with local community members in an effort to build positive relationships and trust.

Military personnel brought soccer balls, volleyballs, toys, and educational materials to distribute to the children at the school. A Royal Thai Air Force band played as some military members and children ran out to play soccer and volleyball.

WAANG Staff Sgt. Darius Carlton, a host aviation resource manager with the 141st Operations Group, reflected on the opportunity to interact and have fun with the kids during the visit.

"This is by far one of the coolest things I have been able to do in the military," he said. "Those kids really wore me down."



Photo by Senior Airman Yuki Klein, 142nd Wing Public Affairs

Military service members from the Washington and Oregon Air National Guard stand alongside the Royal Thai Air Force members on Korat Air Base, Royal Kingdom of Thailand during the closing ceremony for the Enduring Partners engagement 2023, September 21, 2023. The Washington and Oregon ANG members spent two weeks collaborating and building a stronger relationship with the Royal Thai Air Force as part of the State Partnership Program.

participate in first ever Enduring Partners engagement



Photo by Senior Airman Yuki Klein, 142nd Wing Public Affairs

U.S. Air Force F-15 Eagles from the 142nd Wing, Portland, Oregon and F-16 Vipers from the Royal Thai Air Force fly in formation over Korat Air Base Royal Kingdom of Thailand during Enduring Partners 2023, Sept. 20, 2023. The two-week engagement served as an opportunity to gain valuable training through combined dissimilar air combat training, air-to-air refueling and ground-controlled interception for the Washington and Oregon Air National Guard and the Royal Thai Air Force. All participants improved combat readiness and combined and joint interoperability, while enhancing strong defense relations and the State Partnership Program between the two countries.

The second week of the Enduring Partners 23 Engagement culminated with separate visits from Robert Godec, United States Ambassador to Thailand; Lt. Gen. Michael Loh, Director, Air National Guard; and Chief Master Sgt. Maurice Williams, Air National Guard Command Chief.

Welsh commented on what a rare honor it was to have Mr. Godec on a flight during this engagement.

“Having the ambassador on a flight, taking the time that he did out of his busy schedule and going up there with us was really cool,” Welsh said. “Very rarely – at least to my knowledge – do any events rise to the level of the ambassador attending.”

Enduring Partners 23 concluded

with 123 total sorties flown across 11 missions and seven days of flying.

Overall, Welsh noted that EP23 was executed exactly as planners had hoped, and planning for future iterations is already in the works.

“We were able to exercise multi-state, multinational, much the same way that we’d planned,” Welsh said. “It was really cool, kind of a proud dad moment.”



Photo by Senior Airman Yuki Klein, 142nd Wing Public Affairs

Lt. Gen. Michael Loh, ANG Director, views the refueling of U.S. Air Force F-15 Eagles and Royal Thai Air Force F-16 Vipers from the boom pod, alongside Senior Airman Eric Porter, 116th Air Refueling Squadron boom operator, near Korat Air Base, Royal Kingdom of Thailand on Sept. 19, 2023.



Photo by Tech. Sgt. Michael Brown, 141st Air Refueling Wing Public Affairs

U.S. Air Force Brig. Gen. Gent Welsh, Washington Air National Guard Commander, and Royal Thai Air Force Group Captain Nat Kamintra, exercise director, serve lunch to children at Nong Phluang Yai primary school in Korat, Royal Kingdom of Thailand, September 13, 2023. This community outreach partnership was a core part of the Enduring Partners 2023 engagement between the Kingdom of Thailand, the Washington and Oregon Air National Guard.



Photo by Tech. Sgt. Michael Brown, 141st Air Refueling Wing Public Affairs

U.S. Air Force Brig. Gen. Gent Welsh, Washington Air National Guard Commander, gathers for a photo with a group of children at Nong Phluang Yai primary school, Korat, Royal Kingdom of Thailand, September 13, 2023. The school visit gave a chance to connect U.S. military, Royal Thai military and the community of Korat.

NEWS

ORNG supports 2023 Pendleton Round-Up rodeo with Navy Leap Frogs

Story and photos by
Staff Sgt. Cory Grogan
JFHQ Public Affairs

PENDLETON, Ore. – The 2023 Pendleton Round-Up Rodeo in eastern Oregon witnessed a remarkable display of precision and patriotism as the Pendleton community celebrated another successful event, on Sept. 14, 2023. At this iconic gathering, Pendleton’s 1st Battalion, 168th Aviation Regiment of the Oregon Army National Guard joined forces with the renowned Navy Leap Frogs, treating rodeo enthusiasts to an unforgettable performance.

Against the backdrop of Eastern Oregon’s vast skies, the Leap Frogs descended from an Oregon Army National Guard CH-47

Chinook Helicopter, earning thunderous applause from the ecstatic crowd. This collaboration between the local National Guard unit and the world-famous parachute team delighted both the local community and rodeo fans, showcasing their unwavering support for military heroes.

The U.S. Navy Parachute Team, known as the Leap Frogs, traces its roots back to 1969 when Navy SEALs and Underwater Demolition Team members volunteered for weekend air shows. In 1974, they officially became the Leap Frogs with a mission to showcase Navy



U.S. Navy Leap Frogs prepare to descend from an ORARNG CH-47 Chinook Helicopter, earning thunderous applause from the ecstatic crowd at the Pendleton Round-up on Sept. 14, 2023.

excellence nationwide. Every member of this elite unit has served in real-world operations, making them among the best in the world.

Both the Oregon National Guard and the Leap Frogs praised each other’s professionalism and skill during this collaboration. A Senior Chief with the Navy Leap Frog Parachute Team, commended the National Guard, saying, the 1-168 was a tremendous asset and that the Leap Frogs had an amazing experience working in Pendleton. “Everyone has performed at the highest level,” he said.

The local National Guard unit also supported other community events during the rodeo, including the Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 922 annual Cowboy Breakfast at Stillman Park in Pendleton. This hearty, all-you-can-eat meal served as a fundraiser for the VFW, benefiting scholarships, Special Olympics, Little League, veteran’s relief efforts, and various local organizations.

For National Guard Soldiers,

serving their communities is a vital part of their mission, as they take immense pride in assisting during emergencies, important events, and fulfilling local missions.

Chief Warrant Officer 3 Charles Neveau, the Pilot in Command with 1-168 Aviation, expressed his gratitude.

“It’s great to be in the National Guard and have a purpose in life helping others. Our unit operates out of Pendleton, and it’s a great honor to have this opportunity to serve the community,” he said.

The Pendleton Round-Up Rodeo, one of the nation’s largest, not only provides thrilling entertainment but also reinforces the strong bonds between the military and the communities they serve. As the Leap Frogs and the Oregon National Guard members showcased their skills on the rodeo grounds, they embodied the enduring spirit of patriotism that defines the Pendleton community and its annual Round-Up event, maintaining such high moral,” said Sergeant First Class Patrick Gonzalez, a military policeman with 1186th Military Police Company. “So many soldiers have told me they appreciate this opportunity and even one of our senior-enlisted soldiers told me that being able to do training like this keeps him re-enlisting.”



The 2023 Pendleton Round-Up Rodeo in eastern Oregon witnessed a remarkable display of precision and patriotism as the Pendleton community celebrated another successful event. At this iconic gathering, Pendleton’s 1st Battalion, 168th Aviation Regiment of the Oregon Army National Guard joined forces with the renowned Navy Leap Frogs, treating rodeo enthusiasts to an unforgettable performance.



A U.S. Navy Leap Frog members lands to the applause from those attending the Pendleton Round-up on Sept. 14, 2023.

ORNG assistance in two Search and Rescue Operations in Marion County

Story by John Hughel,
Oregon Military Department
Public Affairs

SALEM, Ore. – Working with the Marion County Sheriff’s Office on two different search and rescue (SAR) incidents, an Oregon Army National Guard HH-60M Black Hawk Helicopter helped save two stranded individuals on October 26, 2023, near Mt. Jefferson in the Jeff Park Wilderness area located in Marion County, Oregon.

The Marion County Sheriff’s Office received a notification from the father of a missing male Australian mountain biker, routed through the consulate in Sydney, Australia, and stated that his son had texted him from Oregon and was stranded without cold weather gear. The mountain biker was stuck in a four to five-foot snowdrift along a trail near Hawk Mountain, Oregon.



File photo by John Hughel, Oregon Military Department Public Affairs

FILE PHOTO: An Oregon Army National Guard HH-60M Black Hawk helicopter takes off from a landing zone during the 2022 Best Warrior Competition, March 19, 2022 at Camp Rilea near Warrenton, Oregon. Members of the ORARNG conducted two SAR missions using the HH-60 Black Hawk on Oct. 26, 2023 near Mt. Jefferson, saving two stranded hikers.

He was able to shelter in place overnight inside an existing hiking trail structure.

In a separate incident, a female hiker on the Pacific

Coast Trail was caught in whiteout conditions for two days. She initially activated her In-Reach GPS device on Tuesday, October 24, but

ground crews were unable to reach her location due to the snowdrifts and fallen trees.

The State SAR and Oregon Army National Guard Aviation combined the two orders and airlifted both individuals on the same mission, as the two locations were only separated in distance by 11.5 miles – within the Jeff Park Wilderness area. The HH-60M crew flew them to the Detroit Lake Ranger Station where they received medical attention before being flown to Salem.

“The weather conditions delayed the operation because of the heavy snow and whiteout conditions,” said Scott Lucas, State SAR Coordinator, with the Oregon Department of Emergency Management. “Because the two locations were near each other, the helicopter was able to pick them both up on the same flying mission and take them to the ranger station together.”

NEWS

'Full Speed Ahead' for Oregon's Citizen-Soldiers and Airmen in 2023

Story by John Hughel,
Oregon Military Department
Public Affairs

SALEM, Ore. – Travel, training, and transition. Throughout 2023, Oregon National Guard members were active both at home and abroad. Whether it was being mobilized for an overseas deployment, training for wildland firefighting, conducting Search and Rescue Operations, or assisting the State Partnership Program – Oregon Citizen-Soldiers and Airmen continued to make a significant impact on missions around the globe.

Having been deployed in January of 2022, more than 120 members of Charlie Company, 1st Squadron, 82nd Cavalry Regiment were nearing the end of their mobilization in Poland and were welcomed home during a formal demobilization ceremony by Oregon's new Governor Tina Kotek on February 4, 2023. The unit played a vital role in contributing support to U.S. and NATO Allies in Eastern Europe.



Photo by Sgt. Hannah Hawkins, 115th MPAD
ORARNG Sgt. Arthur Alvarez helps secure the tailgate of a transport truck on along with a Bangladesh Army counterpart on March 9, 2023 during Exercise Tiger Lightning '23.

A month later, 75 members assigned to Bravo Company, 3rd Battalion, 116th Cavalry Regiment returned from nearly a yearlong deployment supporting overseas contingency operations as part of Operation Spartan Shield in the Middle East. They took part in the Eager Lion Multinational Exercise and involved service members from Italy, Saudi Arabia, the United Kingdom, as well as the host nation.

While many Soldiers were returning home, Governor Kotek hosted a mobilization ceremony at the State Capital for 10 members of the Oregon National Guard's 641st Aviation on July 14, 2023. The unit mission is to provide fixed-wing air capabilities in support of the Combined Joint Task Force–Horn of Africa and AFRICOM from Djibouti and throughout the AFRICOM Theater of operations.

Traveling overseas and working with numerous countries played a big part in the entire year.

In July, 'Oregon's Own,' 234th Army Band spent over two weeks in Germany to backfill the United States Army Europe and Africa Band. The band played at venues large and small around Germany, showcasing their wide range of music styles.

The National Guard's State Partnership Program celebrated its 30th anniversary in 2023, which began after the breakup of the Soviet Union. It is now paired with over 100 nations with Soldiers and Airmen from every state and U.S.



Photo by Maj. Chris Clyne, OMD Public Affairs
A 3rd Battalion, 116th Cavalry Regiment M1A2 SEPv2 Abrams crew prepares their tank for the night portion of Table VI Gunnery Qualification at Orchard Combat Training Center, near Boise, Idaho, July 23, 2023.

territory, to build partner capacity, increase interoperability, and enhance U.S. access and influence.

Speaking at the 30th anniversary ceremony during the Department of Defense and National Guard State Partnership Program Conference held in National Harbor, Maryland in July, Chief of the National Guard, General Daniel Hokanson spoke of the critical need for enduring partnerships.

"The strategy is clear in this respect – mutually beneficial alliances and partnerships, like the State Partnership Program, are an enduring strength and they will be more critical in the years ahead."

Oregon National Guard Soldiers took part in Exercise Tiger Lightning '23 at the Bangladesh Institute of Peace and Support Operations Training Center from February 26 to March 12. Soldiers assigned to Charlie Company, 3rd Battalion, 116th Cavalry, together with other U.S. military members and specialty teams, worked to strengthen Bangladesh peacekeeping readiness, promote interoperability, and reinforce the partnership between both countries.

In Vietnam, Oregon National Guard members took part in two major training missions over the past year. Held in May, the annual Disaster Management Engagement Activity was held in Hai Phong creating realistic disaster management scenarios.

The state partnership between Vietnam's National Committee for Search and Rescue and the Oregon National Guard is a continuation of the bilateral relations to further the trust, respect, and a shared commitment to regional and international security.

In August, the Pacific Partnership 2023 exercise brought Active Duty, Reserve, and National Guard members was held in Tuy Hoa, Vietnam.

Mission teams worked with host and partner nations to enhance regional disaster response



Photo by Maj. Leslie Reed, OMD Public Affairs
ORARNG Sgt. Hannah Hawkins (Left) and Lt. Col. Soon Yun Ji (Right) engage with Hai Phong University students during an engagement on May 18, 2023 in Hai Phong, Vietnam.

capabilities, increase security and stability, and foster new and enduring friendships in the Indo-Pacific.

Airmen from Oregon's 142nd Wing and Washington's 141st Refueling Wing supported a 10-day exercise in mid-September. Together both states participated in the first-ever Enduring Partners Engagement with the Royal Thai Air Force at Korat Royal Thai Air Base in Thailand.

The Enduring Partners 2023 engagement was aimed at improving combat readiness and combined operations between participants while enhancing



Photo by John Hughel, OMD Public Affairs
ORARNG Soldiers assigned to the 1249th Engineer Battalion work to relocate over 8,500 cubic yards of soil, rocks and from the Centennial High School football field on May 23, 2023 during their two-weeks of IRT.

strong defense relations with the State Partnership Program with Washington and Thailand. The Oregon Air National Guard played a vital role in the exercise providing fighter jets and personnel. This engagement included participation from approximately 230 U.S. Airmen, five F-15Cs from the ORANG's 142nd Wing, two KC-135 Stratotankers from the WAANG's 141st Air Refueling Wing, and 20 F-5, JAS-39, and F-16 fighters from the Royal Thai Air Force.

Closer to home, the Oregon Army National Guard's 41st Infantry Brigade Combat Team spent their annual training taking part in EXportable Combat Training Capability, a major comprehensive training exercise. The Soldiers worked on fine-tuning their tactics, coordinating maneuver and fire support, optimizing intelligence and logistics, and enhancing their communication during the June training at Camp Roberts, California.

The 102nd Oregon Chemical, Biological, Radiological, and Nuclear, Enhanced Response Force Package (CERFP), completed and passed their first joint evaluation in mid-July at Camp Rilea near Warrenton, Oregon. Oregon Army and Air National Guardsmen conducted a collective training exercise to train and prepare for this achievement. They proved they could identify, assess, advise, and assist during a CBRN and all-hazard incident.

Also during summer annual training, the Oregon Army National Guard's 3rd Battalion, 116th Cavalry Regiment sharpened their combat skills during their two weeks of training at Orchard Combat Training Center in Idaho in late July. The battalion focused

on qualifying tank and Bradley Fighting Vehicle crews through intensive live-fire gunnery.

Working in the community, the 1249th Engineer Battalion spent the last two weeks of May performing Innovative Readiness Training, providing equipment and manpower for a new athletic field at Centennial High School in Gresham, Oregon. The long overdue upgrades to the old domed-style football field will provide supplementary benefits to local communities through infrastructure construction and maintenance improvements.

During the late summer months, Oregon Governor Tina Kotek's office declared a "Statewide State of Emergency" in early August due

to the imminent and ongoing threat of wildfires. The Oregon Army National Guard launched two CH-47 Chinook helicopters in support of the Tyee Ridge Complex, located 10 miles west of Sutherlin, in northwest Douglas County, on Aug. 30. Earlier in the spring, nearly 200 Army and Air personnel conducted training and received their Incident Qualification Card, commonly known as a "red card." After the training, the state had over 700 personnel qualified and ready

to assist if called upon. To help battle against the threats of illicit drugs and the damage associated with the well-being of our communities, the Oregon National Guard helps "bridge the gaps" between the Department of Defense and federal, state, and local agencies across a full range of counterdrug operations. The Counter Drug Program provides direct support to law enforcement agencies, as well as community organizations – in turn, helping disrupt and deter drug production and drug trafficking in the state and other regions.



Photo by Spc. Frank Ritchey, 115th MPAD
The Oregon Army National Guard's 234th Army Band gather for a group photo after a concert at Heidelberg Castle in Germany, July 30, 2023.

As 2023 began to wind down, Maj. Gen. Michael Stencel, Adjutant General, Oregon National Guard retired after nearly four decades of military service in early November. Gov. Kotek announced that Brig. Gen. Alan R. Gronewold was selected as Oregon's 32nd Adjutant General and was officially sworn in on November 28, 2023.

"I am honored to lead this remarkable organization," Gronewold said during his Investiture Ceremony. "I look forward to working alongside each of you who strive for excellence, build winning units, and ensure that the Oregon National Guard remains a source of pride for all."

FEATURES

Keeping the Eagle in the Air: The story of Metal Fabrication

Story and photos by
Staff Sgt. Sean Campbell,
142nd Wing Public Affairs

PORTLAND, Ore. — Tucked away on base is the unassuming metals technology shop. The exterior gives no clue to the mission critical work that goes on behind those walls.

Metals technology Airmen produce parts and tools for different units around their respective bases. Whether for aircraft or Aerospace Ground Equipment (AGE), ammo or other maintenance back shops, metals tech supports their missions by creating what's needed to keep the 142nd Wing flying effectively and efficiently.

One of the primary benefits of their shop is the ability to fabricate parts much faster than it would take to order them from a manufacturer. A part that may take five days to be shipped to the unit could be made in

a much shorter period of time. This expedites the ability for maintenance Airmen to get aircraft back in commission.

"We have the ability as a unit to say, 'hey stop what you are doing. We need to have this part made,' and then have that part made in hours or even minutes," said Staff Sgt. Nathan Carssow, an aircraft metals technology craftsman with the 142nd Maintenance Squadron.

Another huge benefit of metal fabrication is being able to bridge the gap when parts are needed which are no longer being produced or manufactured. Recently the unit fabricated an aluminum stringer for an F-15C Eagle tail cone. The fact that the metal fabrication shop was able to make this part saved the wing money and reduced the aircraft's repair time.

In fiscal year 2023, the metals tech shop assisted in generating \$1.2 million in Air Force Repair Enhancement Program (AFREP) funds. AFREP is aimed at enhancing self-sufficiency across the Air Force, and the metal fabrication shop plays a prominent role in this effort.

With the notable and measurable impact the metals tech shop has on the wing's readiness and mission success, metals technology Airmen understand the importance and impact of their daily work.

"In the more intricate parts of our job, if an aircraft is in



A Computer Numerical Control Mill housed within the 142nd Wing's fabrication flight shop cuts metal into an essential part for the F-15C Eagle.

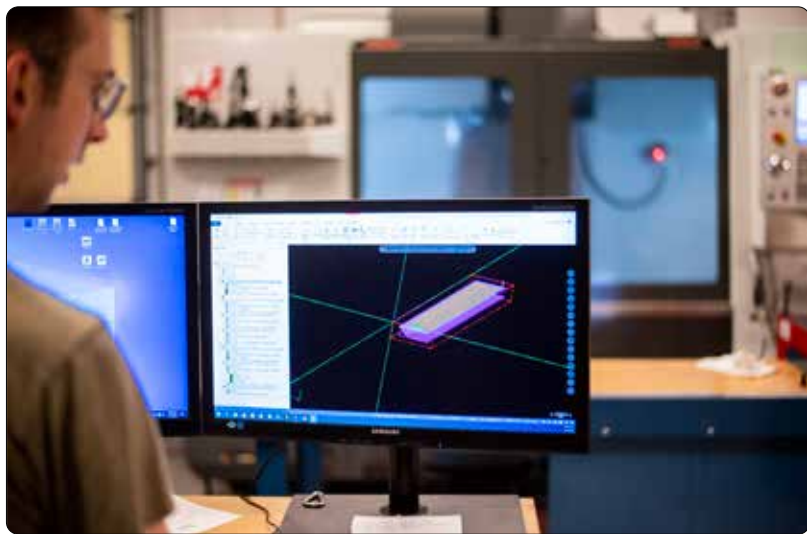
need of something, like the bushings, it's not going to fly until our shop finishes the project," said Tech. Sgt. Nate Brown, a 142nd Maintenance Squadron metals technology craftsman. "...When a job is serious enough to need metals tech, it's not going to fly until we finish the project that's been given to us."

The metals tech shop is able to create all the different parts and tools by using an array of manual lathes, CNC (Computer Numerical Control)

mills, 3d printers, welding tools, and various other tools that allow them to shape metals into useable parts and tools.

A common task the metals tech shop performs here is removing stuck screws from jets. According to Brown, this is a relatively easy task, but it is crucial to keeping airframes flying. This contrasts with the technical knowledge and unique set of skills needed to produce aircraft grade parts, starting with metals and ending with a polished part that keeps the plane in the air.

Despite being tucked away and out of sight for the most part, the metals fabrication shop provides mission critical support throughout the 142nd Wing. Without this cost-and-time-saving capability, the mission could not be carried out as effectively or efficiently as it is.



Staff Sgt. Nathan Carssow, a 142nd Maintenance Squadron aircraft metals technology craftsman, machines a stringer for a tail cone, a part that has become un-procurable, November 4, 2023, Portland Air National Guard Base, Oregon.

Multi-Capable Airmen: Maintainers pursue FAA Airframe & Powerplant ratings

Story by Master Sgt. Jeff Thompson
173rd Fighter Wing Public Affairs

KLAMATH FALLS, Ore. — The life of a military maintenance professional is one of constant training. At Kingsley Field, the sole U.S. Air Force F-15C schoolhouse, the training in many respects mirrors the constant upgrading of the aircraft themselves. Although the airframes are all more than 30 years in age, the integrated technology such as the radar and armament are modern and updated.

A good analogy is that of a classic hot rod. Picture a 1968 Pontiac GTO, with requisite gunmetal gray paint, and white stripe over the hood. It looks classic until you pop the hood—the motor is state-of-the-art, upgraded suspension components are visible in the engine bay and the wheels and rubber are circa 2023. Upon climbing into the passenger seat, you see satellite navigation, modern sound system, and essentially all the modern amenities.

These jets are like that too, with upgraded radar, engines and many other advancements. Upgrades are a continual process in every Air Force airframe. To keep up with that, maintainers also upgrade their training on a near continual basis.

In that spirit several Team Kingsley Airmen pursued a state-of-the-art upgrade to their training, expanding their skills "toolbox" and developing maintenance skills beyond their assigned Air Force Specialty Code.

Tech. Sgt. Jonathan Lastra, a crew chief by trade, is the most recent Team Kingsley Airman to pursue Federal Aviation Administration Airframe and Powerplant certifications.

"I wanted to broaden my experience and just be a better all-around mechanic," he said.

These certifications are broad indeed, covering a wide range of aircraft including

piston, turbine and propeller drive propulsion systems as well as hydraulics, electrical and warning systems, and the airframe.

"If you have your A&P, you've dabbled in every part of the plane," said Staff Sgt. Aidan Tumlinson, a 173rd Fighter Wing Hydraulics Mechanic who earned his A & P Certifications in late July. "You've worked on propellers, you know a lot about engines, landing gear, electrical systems, a bit about avionics and when you troubleshoot problems with other shops you already have a basic understanding of their systems."

Tumlinson says the program dovetails with the concept of multi-capable Airmen. "A big part of what the Air Force is pushing is cross-utilization training," he adds.

Cross Utilization Training formalizes the concept that an Airman's capability isn't locked between the rigid walls of their AFSC; it acknowledges that much of their expertise does apply to other airframes and other disciplines within the maintenance career field.

"The reality is in maintenance when you go out to the jet you are going to do things that are outside of your AFSC; just because I'm hydro doesn't mean I'm only going to touch hydro," Tumlinson said. "When I'm working a jet and an electric guy needs a hand, I'm going to help him out—you are expected to step in and help him out—having your A & P makes that a whole lot easier."

The Air Force at large is also acknowledging this is true outside of aviation maintenance, saying that nearly every Airmen does things outside their specialty to accomplish the mission.

Typically, a two-year college-level program is required to achieve this certification, unless you can demonstrate more than two years of documented experience.

"You either complete a two-year school, or if you have verified 30 months experience like we do in Air Force maintenance, you bypass that requirement and can go take the test," Lastra said.

When asked if that means it's a difficult test, he chuckles, saying, "yes!"

For that reason, he opted for a two-week "crash course" hosted by a civilian agency to help him prepare for the test, and the Air Force paid for it through a program called AF COOL, earning his certificates in early mid-October.

Maj. Richard Schuster, the 173rd Aircraft Maintenance Squadron commander, says this certification benefits his Airmen now and after they retire. "Not only does this help allow folks to speak the same language with industry partners, but it provides our troops an avenue to continue an aircraft maintenance career after they retire from the military."

Tumlinson sums up his experience after earning these certifications saying, "Getting your A & P is a bit like learning another language; you're able to make connections with people that you normally can't because now you understand how their systems work and the issues they deal with in their systems."



Photo courtesy of Tech. Sgt. Jonathan Lastra
Tech. Sgt. Jonathan Lastra, a 173rd Fighter Wing Airman studies the hands-on portion of the Airframe and Powerplant certifications, during a two-week crash course for military members pursuing the FAA rating.

FEATURES

Oregon National Guard helps Vietnam meet United Nations requirements for pre-hospital trauma certification

Story by John Hughel,
Oregon Military Department Public Affairs

SALEM, Ore. — Within the last year, the Oregon National Guard celebrated its 10th anniversary with Vietnam's National Committee for Search and Rescue (VINASARCOM) as part of the State Partnership Program. This long-standing bilateral relationship has been the continuation of building trust and respect, with a shared commitment to regional and international security.

A product of this hard work has allowed the U.S. military and multiple government agencies the opportunity to advance an association with the Vietnamese Department of Peacekeeping Operations, helping develop the country's first International Trauma Life Support (ITLS) training chapter. The goal of ITLS is to provide knowledge and experience to recognize, assess, and care for critical trauma patients and ensure timely transport to the emergency department.

Beginning with a site survey in September of 2022, Oregon Air National Guard Lt. Col. Christopher Webb, traveled to Vietnam to meet with Vietnam's Department of Peacekeeping Operations (VNDPKO), intending to design a plan and help set up the country's first-ever ITLS chapter. As a traditional Guardsman, Webb is the 102nd CERFP Medical Element Commander, a Detachment of the 142nd Wing Medical Group, and works as a Physician's Assistant in private practice in Eugene, Oregon.

"When INDOPACOM (United States Indo-Pacific Command) Global Peace Operations Initiative first approached me about this project, they sold it as a two to three-year process," Webb said. "The multi-phased plan we developed made it happen in about 14 months, so it was pretty aggressive."

Vietnamese medical personnel deploy on an annual UN peacekeeping mission to South Sudan to staff a level-2 hospital. Certification in ITLS meets the United Nations pre-deployment requirement for trauma training and, until recently, Vietnam had largely depended on outside training to meet this requirement.

During Webb's second trip to Vietnam in February 2023, two ITLS classes were conducted over two weeks by both Oregon instructors and Vietnamese ITLS instructor candidates. In all, eight Vietnamese physicians were fully-certified as ITLS instructors during this block of training, and 50 students were certified as ITLS providers.

"Each class certifies more Vietnamese in ITLS so they can deploy on the UN mission, plus we are selecting students to be developed into future ITLS instructors," Webb said about these training phases. "We are also developing the administrative infrastructure necessary to support a chapter along with the critical roles of Medical Director and Chapter Coordinator."

Phase 3 was conducted in August of 2023, with the two ITLS courses, bolstering the overall training to over 120 Vietnamese soldiers and healthcare providers and producing nearly 20 Vietnamese ITLS instructors during these phases. The curriculum is based on Tactical Combat Casualty Care guidelines,

aimed at saving lives while under immediate threat. During this training the first female ITLS instructor, a nurse, was certified, breaking traditional roles for men and women integrating in Vietnamese culture.

With Phase 4 recently completed in mid-December of 2023, a total of 23 Vietnamese students, consisting of physicians and nurses completed the three days of training. In addition to the constant presence of the Vietnamese Chapter Coordinator and Medical Director, a total of 10 Vietnamese ITLS instructors also participated in the facilitation of the course. The decision on chapter certification will be pronounced by mid-January 2024.



Photo courtesy of Lt. Col. Christopher Webb

ORANG Lt. Col. Christopher Webb, ITLS chapter build lead, demonstrates airway management skills during an ITLS course in Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam during training in Feb. of 2023.

"The chapter will reside at Military Hospital 175 in Ho Chi Minh City, but will train UN deploying members from all over the country," he said. "Once this chapter is fully-certified, Vietnam plans to grow another chapter in the northern part of the country."

Ho Chi Minh City Military Hospital 175 is a dedicated healthcare unit for military personnel with a 1,500-bed capacity for residents of Southern Vietnam.

These critical two-week training phases will be put to the test in December when a U.S. representative from ITLS Chicago will monitor this final training phase without the assistance of American military members, as these classes will be entirely taught by Vietnamese instructors.

If all goes as expected, a formal recognition of Vietnam's first-ever ITLS chapter will occur in April 2024, becoming just the 10th formally recognized Asian country to have an ITLS Training Chapter. Vietnam has already started making plans to start a second ITLS Training Chapter elsewhere in the country using the successful template that Webb and his team have created.

"Vietnam plans to grow another chapter in the northern part of the country so that UN deployers from the south can train in Ho Cho Minh City and deployers from the north can train up there," Webb said.

Several other key partners have been instrumental in the process including the Office of Defense Cooperation – Vietnam, the Defense Institute for Medical Operations (DIMO), and the Global Peace Operations Initiative (GPOI). GPOI is working collaboratively with U.S. and international stakeholders to sustain operational effectiveness in

peace operations and build the capacity of the UN and regional organizations to conduct such missions as the deployment in South Sudan. In 2019, the GPOI first reached out to Webb about this project.

"GPOI realized that Vietnam would benefit from developing their own self-sustaining ITLS Chapter to train UN deployers."

According to the requirements stated in the United Nations Medical Support Manual, Vietnam must have advanced "pre-hospital trauma life support or equivalent training within 12 months of their deployment." DIMO, GPOI, and the Oregon National Guard worked together to provide this support during the training, working toward the goal of generating 120 Vietnamese medical providers and nearly 20 instructors.

A deepening humanitarian crisis has evolved with the ongoing armed conflict in Sudan, causing substantial consequences for the country's health system. The urgent timing Webb established for this training is vital because the continued fighting has threatened the country's fragile health system to a near collapse.

The Vietnam medical team will deploy to Bentiu, South Sudan at a Level-2 hospital which will provide basic surgery and intensive care, advanced life support, as well as basic lab and radiology, dental, and hospital support.

"I've been impressed with the progress of the Vietnamese medical teams," Webb explained heading into the next phase. "My role will only be as a monitor, as the evolutions from ITLS staff will look at hands-on skills, patient assessments, administrative support, the physical infrastructure of the training area, and a written final exam."

While attending the Indo-Pacific Military Health Exchange Conference held in Malaysia from September 26-29, 2023, Webb was



Photo courtesy of Lt. Col. Christopher Webb

ORANG Lt. Col. Christopher Webb receives a 'Challenge Coin' from PACAF HQ Command Surgeon Col. Susan Moran at the Indo-Pacific Military Health Exchange 2023 conference in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, Sept. 26, 2023.

able to present his work during a lecture detailing ITLS to a broader audience. This generated an energetic discussion about the importance of the National Guard's State Partnership Program among the active duty personnel attending the symposium. Following the lecture, Webb was recognized by PACAF Command Surgeon Col. Susan Moran, not only for his 'hands-on work' to establish Vietnam's first International Trauma Life Support Chapter but for "years of relationship building with Oregon SPP partner nations." He also met with INDOPACOM Command Surgeon Navy Capt. Jeffrey Bitterman and the Army's 18th Medical Command Surgeon General Army Maj. Gen. Paula Lodi to explain how partnering with the National Guard's State Partnership Program can lead to better long-term and sustained relationships with partner countries.

Webb is quick to point out that all of this planning and training is a total team effort.

"There are several organizations and individuals that have made all this work possible. I am especially thankful for the support I've received from Lieutenant Colonel Christopher Markesino [Oregon National Guard State Partnership Program Director] and his team, along with Major Marie Messmer [Bilateral Affairs Officer, Office of Defense Cooperation in the U.S. Embassy in Hanoi]."



Photo courtesy of Lt. Col. Christopher Webb

ORANG Lt. Col. Christopher Webb awards students their ITLS certificate of completion during a course in Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam following their training in Feb. of 2023.

FEATURES

Cracking the code on Cybersecurity Awareness: 173rd Fighter Wing Communications Flight keeps Kingsley connected and secured

Story and photo by Staff Sgt. Emily Copeland
173rd Fighter Wing Public Affairs

KLAMATH FALLS, Ore. — The month of October brings a new fiscal year, and a new theme for Cybersecurity Awareness Month: Cybersecurity—Every Airman, Every Guardian – Mission Possible!

Cybersecurity impacts every aspect of our battlefield, whether that be at home or abroad. The U.S. Air Force places an emphasis on protecting the military's cyberspace, as well as seizing the opportunity to modernize for our digital future.

Kingsley Field's 173rd Communications Flight is taking the initiative to prevent network weaknesses and vulnerabilities to lower the attack surface of inside and outside network threats. Due to these threats, it's important to always stay up to date on the best cyber defenses and ensure management of the systems the wing uses daily; this means performing necessary upgrades such as firewall replacement and patching.

"Network security is no different than physical security when it comes to importance," said Staff Sgt. Dylan Riggs, 173rd CF cyber systems operations. "It is vital in protecting data. If adversaries can find vulnerabilities on a network, then they can gain access to data and use it to potentially stop operations, shut down productions, etc."

The base communications flight is responsible for many equipment systems such as computers, switches, servers, phones, printers and radios. In turn, they must perform patching operations while maintaining multiple systems. On top of that, they must also enforce policies such as Security Technical Implementation Guides, provide network monitoring, maintain network availability, support and educate users, and control information technology assets.

Consider the 173rd CF as the cyber security forces that are focused on protecting the integrity and confidentiality of military systems by preventing digital attacks.

Patching is one of the many cyber defenses that the team uses to resolve functionality issues, improve security, and optimize performance of computer systems around the base. To effectively deploy patch management, the 173rd CF must create a script or code that acts as a set of instructions for a computer. The scripts are then processed via a program known as PowerShell which distributes the required updates and patches throughout the Kingsley Field network on a mass scale.



ORANG Staff Sgt. Dylan Riggs, 173rd Communications Flight cyber systems operations non-commissioned officer, right, and Staff Sgt. Daniel Goheen, 173rd CF cyber network systems operations non-commissioned officer, back, installs the new firewall device at Kingsley Field in Klamath Falls, Oregon, October 15, 2023.

"Think of a network or computer security as an ever-changing domain," said Riggs. "You have a hole in your defenses at 'XYZ' that you patch; however, as soon as you patch that hole, a new one can pop up elsewhere. I like to imagine these things as a big, open spot in the base perimeter fence that gets fixed, then a new spot opens on the perimeter soon after. This is and will always be a never-ending battle."

To help aid in the endless threats, the 173rd CF infrastructure team replaced the old base firewall system with a new one on October

15, 2023. This firewall is treated as a two-way filter or barrier that sits on the edge of a network and can be programmed to only let certain network traffic in and block malicious external traffic such as viruses or hackers.

"This process entails a three-part operation of physical installation, powering up the hardware and coordination with the 299th Network Operations Security Squadron to configure and cutover services," said Riggs. "Before the cutover day, we have a Technical Interface Meeting and gameplan how the cutover will occur. Then, we work with NGB and the 299th NOSC to get the network swapped over to the new firewall device."

As equipment becomes older and unsupported, hardware issues can occur, and software releases do not happen. This can leave the system vulnerable and unpatched. The firewall is replaced when the device reaches its end of life and is no longer operating on the needs of the base, or when the device is no longer supported by a Department of Defense contract. Newer equipment will allow for the future growth and expansion upon technical features and capabilities for Kingsley Field computer systems.

"Our work may seem dull from an outside perspective, but there is a lot of behind the scenes work that allows the base to run smoothly and safely from a cybersecurity perspective," said Staff Sgt. Daniel Goheen, 173rd CF cyber network systems operations. "We have a great team of innovators and people who are willing to share knowledge and skills."

If you are interested in what you can do at home to secure your own network security here are a few helpful tips and resources:

- Use strong passwords and turn on multi-factor authorization
- Recognize and report phishing scams
- Update software
- Change the default password on your home internet router
- Do not exchange home and work content
- Take precautions when using social media

173rd Civil Engineers recapitalize historic facility for use in the 21st Century fight

Story and photo by Master Sgt. Jeff Thompson,
173rd Fighter Wing Public Affairs

KLAMATH FALLS, Ore. – The 173rd Civil Engineer Flight mission-ready Airmen executed a unit-led field training exercise for the purpose of bringing a former Department of Defense facility back online for future mission readiness.

Fourteen engineers deployed to a remote tower site on the Oregon Coast constructed and once used by the U.S. Air Force Air Defense Command in the 1950's. Like many of the ADC sites across the western U.S., this one was decommissioned, mothballed, and left for nature to reclaim. This site, though not actively used by the DoD, remained under the span of control of the Air Force and made for an ideal siting location for proposed future development.

Initial site surveys determined that the remaining facility was generally still in good condition. The site however needed some rehabilitation, such as removing nearly 40 years of brush and vegetation now covering the once booming outpost.

This field training exercise aimed to accomplish two objectives for the 173rd CEF. The first was to practice real world examples of Bare-Base Expeditionary contingency skills not typically afforded at home-station, under an Agile Combat Employment construct. The second objective was to perform real-world maintenance on

an historic Air Force property and associated facility the wing may use in the future.

While Team Kingsley CE has only five specific careerfields to pull from, most Airmen in the Flight are prior-service members and engineering professionals in their community. This on-site team represented over 16 different Air Force skill sets and a tremendous amount of additional civilian career disciplines. This team illustrated what the term Multi-Capable Airman means.



Members of the 173rd Civil Engineering Flight work to clear nearly 40 years of vegetation from an Area Defense Command site near North Bend, Oregon in late summer 2023.

On-site personnel trained on the rapid deployment, operation, and safety of various hand tools such as chainsaws, brush trimmers, machetes, and light-duty construction equipment. By the end of the first 48 hours, the team had cleared nearly

an acre-and-a-half of overgrown brush that presented a fire hazard to the facility. This was an amazing feat considering 1.5 acres is roughly 65,000 square feet, or the size of a college football field goal post to goal post. Indoors, the team removed failing partition walls, repaired exterior doors, and restored electricity to portions of the facility with circuitry dating back to the mid-sixties. In addition to field work, the team was able to document and upload various facility condition reports, inspections, and documents to USAF systems utilizing a satellite internet terminal.

The team was lean, but by employing cross-utilized skillsets, they brought a sharpened edge to Agile Combat Support. Some examples of that were practicing alternative radio communications and convoy operations with utility vehicles laden with camping gear, food supplies, and construction equipment necessary. They also used a combination of GPS and old-fashioned land navigation techniques to find the remote location not listed in a phonebook or located on any street map.

Although this was just one small unit performing at a single remote location on the West Coast, the team demonstrated what the Air Force Civil Engineers do for Resilient Forward Basing around the globe every day. Their efforts have created a facility that is ready for operations and can quickly be reconfigured, upgraded, and modernized to meet future mission requirements.

FEATURES

Oregon Nat'l Guard participates in various Veterans Day events across the state

Story by Maj. Chris Clyne,
Oregon Military Department Public Affairs

ALBANY, Ore. – The Oregon National Guard participated in various events around the state on Veterans Day, Saturday, Nov. 11, 2023, to honor those who have served in the armed forces.

The day began with Col. Russell W. Gibson, commander of the Oregon Army National Guard's 82nd Troop Command Brigade, speaking at a morning memorial service at Timber Linn Veterans Memorial Park in Albany. The Oregon National Guard then performed a rifle salute to honor the nation's veterans.

Later in the day, the Oregon National Guard participated in the Linn County Veterans Day Parade in Albany, which included several military vehicles and a marching contingent led by Col. Dustin Ballard, Oregon Army National Guard Commander of Recruiting and Retention Command. The marching formation was comprised of members of the Air and Army National Guard with a joint color guard. It represented the Oregon



Linn County Veterans Day parade photos by Maj. Chris Clyne, Oregon Military Dept. Public Affairs
Oregon National Guard troops marching comprised of Air and Army National Guard members during the Linn County Veterans Day Parade on Nov. 11, 2023, in Albany, Oregon.

Army National Guard's 41st Infantry Brigade Combat Team, 82nd Brigade Troop Command, and the Oregon Air National Guard's 142nd Wing based at the Portland Air National Guard Base.

The parade's military vehicles included a M1129 Stryker Mortar Carrier crewed by the 1st Squadron, 82nd Cavalry Regiment, and two Oregon Air Guard 125th Special Tactics Squadron M1297 A-GMV (Ground Mobility Vehicle). They were followed by a 141st Brigade Support Battalion M997 Field Liter Ambulance (FLA) Humvee.

Recently retired Oregon National Guard Adjutant General Maj. Gen. Michael E. Stencel served as the parade's emeritus grand marshal.

The Oregon National Guard's 234th Army Band, also known as "Oregon's Own," country music band performed at the Albany American Legion lunch for parade participants. Another band contingent played at the University of Oregon vs. the University of Southern California Veterans Salute football game at Autzen Stadium in Eugene.

Other Veterans Day events included an Oregon Department of Veterans Affairs memorial event in Salem featuring remarks by Col. Gibson.

The Oregon National Guard provides rare opportunities to serve the local community during emergencies while training for missions around the world. Members enjoy benefits like education and career skills training. Most importantly, the Guard fosters a spirit of service above self, commemorating past sacrifices while continuing to serve today.



Former Oregon National Guard Adjutant General Maj. Gen. Michael E. Stencel served as the parade's emeritus grand marshal at the Linn County Veterans Day Parade.



Attendees wave at Oregon National Guard members and other entrants during the Linn County Veterans Day Parade held in Albany, Oregon on Nov. 11, 2023.



Photo by John Hughel, Oregon Military Department Public Affairs
The Oregon Army National Guard 234th Army Band perform at the Moshofsky Center at the University of Oregon, Eugene, Oregon, on Nov. 11, 2023. The '45 Away' rock and pop group played a pre-game performance for those attending the University of Oregon football game on Veterans Day.

173rd spouses experience the F-15 in action during "Spouse Taxi" event

Story and photo by Master Sgt. Jeff Thompson,
173rd Fighter Wing Public Affairs

KLAMATH FALLS, Ore. — The 173rd Fighter Wing gave a number of spouses a unique opportunity to experience a backseat ride in the F-15 Eagle during a "Spouse Taxi" event, September 28, 2023.

Although these aircraft did not ever get airborne during this event, they got as close as they could, accelerating down the runway until the nose rose into the air before raising the airbrake and dropping the front landing gear back to the ground. It's a ride that showcases the acceleration of the Eagle and also all of the preflight required of the pilots and maintenance crews for a regular sortie.

The spouses gathered in the morning at the operations building, where they were greeted with coffee and pastries and were given ground egress training—yes, everyone who sits in the back seat of one of these aircraft must be ready in case of an ejection. It's an unlikely event, but flight safety requires that all eventualities are covered, and it serves to showcase the job

aircrew flight equipment Airmen do every day for the wing.

Like everyone who steps into the cockpit, Aircrew Flight Equipment fits each spouse with a custom-fit helmet, mask and harness, and then they are ready to step to the aircraft with the pilot.

"It was a mix of people being nervous and excited," said Capt. Philip Chu, the project officer for the event. "To go sit in the jet and then go max AB (afterburner); it's an experience many of them have never had."

He went on to say that by the end of the day, "They were all smiling and happy!"

Which is a significant reason for the event. "Our goal is to let family members experience as close as they can to flying so that they more understand what it is we do out here," said Chu, adding a big "thank you" for all of their support to our Airmen.

Setting up the project does require significant coordination both with Air Traffic Control and maintenance crews. The tower maintains control of the airfield and meshes the taxis with ongoing airport operation and air traffic control. Maintenance crews spin each jet up in the same way they do every other

sortie leaving Kingsley Field, Chu explains. Tanner Cox, wife of Staff Sgt. Jacob Cox, who works in the 173rd Fighter Wing engine shop, summed up the experience saying afterward, "It was awesome!"



Kristin Grimes, wife of Chief Master Sgt. Casey Grimes, 173rd Fighter Wing Controller Flight, is fitted for a helmet and face mask by Tech. Sgt. Chris Hernandez in the Aircrew Flight Equipment office.



Oregon Air National Guard Maj. Lance Coldren, steps to a waiting jet with his wife Lindsey, during a "Spouse Taxi" event organized by the 173rd Operations Group, Sept. 28, 2023.



Tanner Cox, wife of Staff Sgt. Jacob Cox, 173rd Maintenance Group, sits in the back seat of an F-15D Eagle prior to closing the canopy and doing a 'hot taxi' during a "spouse taxi" event.

AZUWUR

VETS HONORED IN LEBANON: MULTIPLE ERAS RECOGNIZED DURING CEREMONY

AZUWUR

Oregon & Military History

Story by Cody Mann

Courtesy of the Albany Democrat-Herald

Photos by Maj. Leslie Reed, OMD Public Affairs

LEBANON, Ore. - A group of military veterans were presented with service awards at the Edward C. Allworth Oregon Veterans' Home in Lebanon.

Eight veterans spanning service eras from the Korean War to Operation Enduring Freedom were honored in person with shadow boxes containing decorations they earned in service to the nation.

Three more veterans were unable to attend but will be given their awards at a later date.

The ceremony featured a special guest, Brig. Gen. Jennifer Pardy, chief of staff for the Oregon National Guard, who made the presentations. With more than 30 years of service, Pardy is the third woman in state military history to achieve the rank of general officer, and the second reaching brigadier general in the Air National Guard.

"We're here to pay tribute to these brave men and women who selflessly served their country in times of great challenges and sacrifice," Pardy said. "Their unwavering dedication to preserving freedom and defending the democracy is truly an inspiration to us all, and those of us still serving today absolutely stand on their shoulders."



ORANG Brig. Gen. Jennifer Pardy, Joint Chief of Staff stands together with former service members at the Oregon Veterans Home in Lebanon, Oregon ahead of the presentation of shadow boxes highlighting their service to the nation on Nov. 8, 2023.

Pardy said she was honored to be a part of the ceremony and finally be able to render the proper honors for the veterans who had waited for so long for what they earned.

It's important to reflect on history and show appreciation for what veterans past and present have experienced, she said.

"Beyond the medals, the shadow boxes hold stories of countless shared experiences, bonds forged in the crucible of war, and memories of comrades lost," Pardy said. "It is truly a representation of the enduring legacy that each of them leave behind."

A veteran who received a shadow box of awards two years prior, Sgt. Craig Rice of the 101st Airborne, was missing his Bronze Star Medal from his awards because it wasn't on his record. He went to work, finding his original citation for the award from more than 50 years ago.

Pardy pinned the Bronze Star on Rice's jacket to cap off the award presentations.

"The shadow boxes and medals we presented this morning serve as a symbol of our deepest gratitude and respect for their service," Pardy said. "They reflect the immeasurable courage and sacrifices that were made by each of them."

Five years ago, the Veterans' Home instituted the award ceremonies to recognize residents, employees and volunteers in Lebanon and The Dalles, according to retired Maj. Mike Allegre, a veteran who worked as an advocate for Veterans' Home residents until his civilian retirement in 2021.

Allegre served for 25 years between the Oregon Air National Guard and Air Force before his military retirement in 2007.

Veterans Care Centers of Oregon, which manages both homes for the state, has purchased around 170 shadowboxes, presenting them two to three times annually, Allegre said. The boxes are hung in the veterans' rooms.

Some of the oldest award recipients were WWII

veterans in their late-90s and early 100s, Allegre said, adding that most awardees either never had their decorations, or had been separated from them in one way or another.

Era-specific military insignia patches are also included in the boxes.

"It's one of the best things outside of caring for their health, well-being and other needs that we do as we truly honor, respect and appreciate their service and sacrifice," Allegre said.



ORANG Brig. Gen. Jennifer Pardy, speaks with Sgt. Chris Rice, who served with the 101st Airborne Division during the Vietnam War ahead of the presentation of his Bronze Star at the Oregon State Veterans Home in Lebanon, Oregon, on Nov. 8, 2023.



ORANG Brig. Gen. Jennifer Pardy, Joint Chief of Staff, together with ORANG Staff Sgt. Ameer Elliott, Command Group Operations NCO-IC hold a shadow box recognizing Petty Officer 3rd Class John R. Haeckel, Task Force 117, who served with the U.S. Navy from 1966-1969.

OCS CLASS 66 GRADUATION CEREMONY

Photos by John Hughel, OMD Public Affairs

CLACKAMAS, Ore. - Six Oregon Army National Guard Soldiers graduated from the Officer Candidate School during a ceremony held here on Sept. 8, 2023. ORANG Brig. Gen. (ret.) Todd Plimpton served as the presiding officer for the OCS Class 66 commissioning.



Members of the OCS Class 66 pause for a photo with Brig. Gen. (ret.) Todd Plimpton (center) following their commissioning ceremony held at Camp Withycombe, Oregon on Sept. 8, 2023.

OYCP GRADUATION CEREMONY FOR CLASS 66

Photos by 1st Sgt. Zachary Holden, OMD Public Affairs

Bend, Ore. - The Oregon Youth Challenge Program graduated over 150 cadets from their 22-week program at the Deschutes County Fair & Expo Center in Redmond, Oregon on Dec. 13. Brig. Gen. Alan Gronewold, The Adjutant General, was the guest speaker for the Class 66 ceremony.



Brig. Gen. Alan R. Gronewold, Adjutant General, Oregon, and Dan Radabaugh, Director of the Oregon Youth Challenge Program (OYCP), stand with Cadet Jesse Sweet, the Overall Outstanding Cadet of the Company for Class 66. The OYCP class 66 graduated at the Deschutes County Fairgrounds in Redmond, Oregon.



LEFT PHOTO: Oregon Army National Guard Brig. Gen. (ret.) Todd Plimpton address the OCS graduating class 66 during a ceremony held at Camp Withycombe, Oregon. **TOP PHOTO:** Oregon Army National Guard Col. Marc Mouser leads the six graduates from Officer Candidate School, Class 66 in the Oath of Office at Camp Withycombe, Clackamas, Oregon on September 8, 2023.



Cadets of Oregon Youth Challenge Program (OYCP) class 66 cheer in celebration at the completion of their graduation ceremony, held at the Deschutes County Fairgrounds, Redmond, Oregon. OYCP is Oregon's only accredited statewide alternative high school and aims to provide opportunities for personal growth, self-improvement and academic achievement among Oregon high school dropouts, teens no longer attending and those failing in school, through a highly structured non-traditional environment.



Brig. Gen. Alan R. Gronewold, Adjutant General, Oregon, speaks at the graduation ceremony held for Oregon Youth Challenge (OYCP) class 66, held at the Deschutes County Fairgrounds, Redmond, Oregon, on December 13, 2023.