

2009 TAG Match, p. 4



Engineers battle it out in Dallas, p. 6



Oregon Sentinel

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THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE OREGON NATIONAL GUARD

Wing to temporarily relocate flight operations to Idaho

Story by
Tech. Sgt. Jefferson Thompson,
Oregon Military Department Public Affairs

KLAMATH FALLS, Ore. -- For the first time in many years, there will be no F-15s flying in or out of Kingsley Field. The pending removal and reconstruction of the old runway has forced the 173rd Fighter Wing to move its flight operations to the 124th Wing at Gowen Field, Idaho during the last week of April.

"We'd like to have the contractor begin the full rehabilitation and reconstruction of the runway by April 1," said Derek Martin, the Klamath Falls Airport Director.

As of March 12, the project was running on schedule and is currently waiting on the Federal Aviation Administration to release the necessary funds to begin actual construction. Martin estimates the project will be completed this October.

"We're deploying all of our jets and about 225 people during the last week in April," said Maj. Gregory Johnson, 173rd Operations Support Officer and deployment project officer for Sentry Displacement.

Johnson said there were a variety of reasons for choosing Gowen Field, located near Boise, including affordability and the ability to accommodate the 22 Kingsley Field F-15 Eagle aircraft.

"We selected the location based upon three criteria: mission, money and people," said Johnson. "Ultimately, Boise was the best at satisfying all three."

"Without the support from the 124th



Photo courtesy, 173rd Fighter Wing Public Affairs Office

A 173rd Fighter Wing F-15 Eagle takes off from the Kingsley Field runway in Klamath Falls. The runway is scheduled to undergo total renovation. The project will serve to extend the life of the runway for many years and will update safety systems including a cable arrester. Flight operations will relocate to Gowen Field, Idaho for the duration of the project which is estimated to last until November.

Wing we wouldn't be able to accomplish our mission," said Col. Jim Miller, 173rd FW Commander. "We are grateful to them for accepting us. The guard is a wonderful network of support in times like this and during state or national emergen-

cies."

The logistics involved in relocating the unit make it a highly unusual deployment.

"The number-one challenge is simply the magnitude of it all. We never deploy this many for this long, to accomplish our

primary mission," Johnson said.

That mission is to train the best air-to-air combat pilots to fly one of the most sophisticated air defense aircraft in the world.

See **173 FIGHTER WING** on PAGE 8

Oregon names 2009 soldier and NCO of the year



Oregon Army National Guard Staff Sgt. Jesse Ginestar loads rounds into a magazine for his M-4 rifle for qualification during the Oregon National Guard's 2009 Soldier of the Year/NCO of the Year competition, Feb. 27-March 1, at Camp Rilea, Warrenton, Ore. Ginestar, of Klamath Falls, Ore., who is a platoon sergeant with Charlie Troop, 1st Battalion, 82nd Cavalry, won the title of the Oregon National Guard's 2009 NCO of the year.

Story and photos by
Sgt. Eric A. Rutherford,
Oregon Military Department Public Affairs

WARRENTON, Ore. -- Twelve Oregon Guard members from around the state met at Camp Rilea, Feb. 27 - March 1, for the 2009 Oregon Soldier of the Year/Non-Commissioned Officer of the

year competition.

The competitors, six soldiers and six NCOs, faced lack of sleep and physical and mental challenges in a shot at the title of Oregon's best.

The competitors had previously been recognized as the best soldiers and NCOs at the unit level before heading to the state level competition. Winners of the event

will continue on to a regional competition later this year.

Guard members put on their class-A uniforms for the first two events; an appearance board followed by an essay.

After a few short hours of sleep, the competitors were back at it before dawn, taking a physical fitness test before moving out to a land navigation course. The soldiers got a short break for lunch before heading back out to the field to compete against each other in an obstacle course, which consisted of rope ladders, low-crawl course, and log obstacles.

With no rest time they moved out again to a rifle and pistol range, staying outside in the rain until after dark to qualify with their rifles in a night-fire event.

After a short dinner, they headed back to the field to compete in a night land navigation course before getting a chance at any more sleep for the evening.

The final day wrapped up with weapons familiarity tests before the award ceremony.

Brig. Gen. David Enyeart, State Command Sgt. Maj. Brunk Conley and retired Maj. Gen. Curtis Loop, president of the Columbia River Chapter of the Association of the United States Army, presented all competitors with awards and engraved pocket knives before announcing the winners of the competition.

Staff Sgt. Jesse Ginestar, of Charlie

See **COMPETITION** on PAGE 3

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COMMAND

Make safety a priority in the Year of the NCO



Maj. Gen. Raymond F. Rees,
The Adjutant
General,
Oregon National
Guard

We are in an historic time not only for the Oregon National Guard but the National Guard in its entirety. While the 41st Infantry Brigade Combat Team is conducting pre-mobilization training for its upcoming Iraq deployment we have more than 350 Oregon National Guard members deployed across the world in support of global military operations. The National Guard itself now has the first four-star chief, Gen. Craig R. McKinley, as well a newly appointed Director of the Air National Guard, Lt. Gen. Harry M. Wyatt III. A new Director of the Army National Guard will soon be announced.

Historic changes have already begun. We have received federal

stimulus dollars from the National Guard Bureau in order to fund state projects. Additional projects were made possible through legislation granting approximately \$4.5 million in state stimulus funds that will assist in updating our armories and alleviate maintenance backlogs at facilities throughout the state. These projects not only help set the Guard up for the future but also help sustain and create new jobs within our communities. These projects also include elements helping to reduce overall energy consumption into the future.

The 173rd Fighter Wing at Kingsley Field is preparing to temporarily move its flying operations hundreds of miles away while construction crews refurbish the Klamath Falls Airport runway. A federal stimulus package of \$4 million will totally renovate the emergency barrier arrest system. This refurbishment will allow Kingsley Field

to train the world's best fighter pilots for decades to come.

We continue to pursue the stationing of F-22s to protect what is called the "Five Corners" of the United States. F-22 Raptors would be at five bases in the following states: Massachusetts, Florida, Louisiana, California, and here in Oregon. I believe fielding the best airframe for our Air Sovereignty Mission is absolutely the best way for the Oregon National Guard to continue in its successful protection of our nation.

The Oregon Military Department has received national recognition in our environmental branch for the second year in a row. The Army National Guard Environmental Security Award was presented by Mr. Addison D. Davis IV, Deputy Assistant Secretary of the Army for Environment, Safety and Occupational Health, in March. The Oregon Military Department continues to demonstrate good stewardship with what we are provided. I am proud of what our environmental branch has been able to achieve and expect continued success.

Finally, April is Earthquake Tsunami Preparedness Month.

The Office of Emergency Management continues to work alongside other civilian and government agencies to ensure the Oregon Military Department is prepared in the event of an earthquake or tsunami. Oregon sustained damage from two moderate earthquake events in 1993 and a distant tsunami from Alaska in 1964. There will be several events throughout the state to include training to better prepare communities in the event of an actual disaster.

This is truly an amazing time in our history. As we prepare to send an additional 2,600 soldiers on deployment, I want to assure Oregonians that the Oregon Military Department and the Oregon National Guard will continue to serve the people of Oregon and the United States here at home. There is no better time for us to demonstrate the overall effectiveness of our Guard. Regardless of difficulty we must accomplish both state and federal missions simultaneously. We are and will be: Always Ready! Always There!

Raymond F. Rees

Discipline and uniformity make good impression



State Command Sgt. Maj. Brunk W. Conley,
State Command Sergeant Major,
Oregon National Guard

Greetings. I hope that all is going well with every member of our organization. I would like to discuss with all of you the basics of our organization: Discipline and Army Standards.

Every single one of us is responsible for our military bearing and appearance. We have all been

trained on the basic responsibilities of being a soldier. Sometimes in our hectic lives, we are tempted to let some of these basics slip, or we forget the lessons we were taught by our leaders and instructors. Other times, we may not know the standard. In that case we must ask our leaders, or research what the regulations say.

There is no second chance to make a first impression. What makes this organization great is the professionalism that we have as individuals and organizations. We belong to Uniformed Services which require us to wear those uniforms according to a standard.

The dictionary at my desk defines uniform as: adj. 1. a. Always the same; unvarying. b. without fluctuation or variation; 2. Being the same as another or others; identical. 3. Consistent in appearance; having an unvaried texture, color, or design. Noun. 1. distinctive

outfit intended to identify those who wear it as members of specific group.

We must all adhere to the standards and make sure that we are in compliance with Army Regulation 670-1 at all times. Our NCO's, Officers, and Governor expect us to show the greatest military bearing at all times. We deal with our subordinates, leaders, and the public at various times when we are in uniform. There is nothing that can discredit our organization as quickly as a sloppily or improperly worn uniform.

Leaders, it is my expectation that you enforce all standards at all times. Our regulations are not open for interpretation. Contrary to popular belief, the command sergeant major and first sergeant do not set the uniform, the commander has that duty. Good commanders, will seek their senior NCOs input before making a

decision, but they have the right to set it depending on location, duties, and conditions. We as NCO's enforce the uniform decisions of our commanders.

When I visit a unit, one of the first things I notice is uniformity and military bearing. It is hard to overcome a bad first impression. It is an indicator of unit pride and discipline. When you walk past a uniform deficiency, you have just authorized a new standard within your unit. That is unacceptable, because there should only be one standard in this organization, from Ontario to Coos Bay, from Warrenton to Klamath Falls.

Lastly, on April 1st, the Adjutant General has published a policy that makes the headgear switch back to the beret. Make sure the word gets out to all. First sergeants and command sergeant majors, make sure you get a copy of that policy and enforce it.

CW5 details changes for warrants

I recently returned from my first Army National Guard (ARNG) Command Chief Warrant Officer (CCWO) Conference.

The theme of the conference was "The Way Ahead." Attendees included all state command chief warrant officers and the chief warrant officer branch chiefs of the various proponents. These warrants presented projected changes in training, manning, current trends and potential new warrant officer MOSs.

I was impressed with the professionalism, courtesy and sincere concern for the young warrant officers.

Of particular interest to all Army National Guard warrant officers is that the National Guard Bureau has created a warrant officer branch in addition to the enlisted and officer branches to deal with administrative and policy issues for warrants.

All state command chief warrants are members of the National Guard Warrant Officer Senior Advisory Council (WOSAC). The council is broken down into six regions, each with its own chairperson. Oregon belongs to region six,

and our chairperson is Chief Warrant Officer 5 Brian Peterson, from California.

The chairpersons comprise the executive council. This group proposed three specific issues or concerns: first, to continue the growth and maintenance of the warrant officer corps; second to ensure that the warrant officer corps remains a cohesive and relevant force; and finally, to recommend changes to civilian and military education requirements for warrant officers. Over the next several articles look for more details on the specific recommendations of the entire council.

Generally speaking and based on the WOSAC's recommendations I feel confident that Oregon is on track with both the Active and Reserve components direction. There were a number of agreements regarding what recommendations are internal and specific to what each individual state will complete.

The immediate take away for Oregon is that we will conduct a warrant officer symposium for all warrants and potential warrants. However, due to our operations tempo coordinating



CW5 Michael Zagyva,
Command Chief
Warrant Officer,
Oregon National
Guard

with the newly created warrant officer branch, the Army National Guard command chief and the proponents poses challenges. At this time I would plan on attending in the fall.

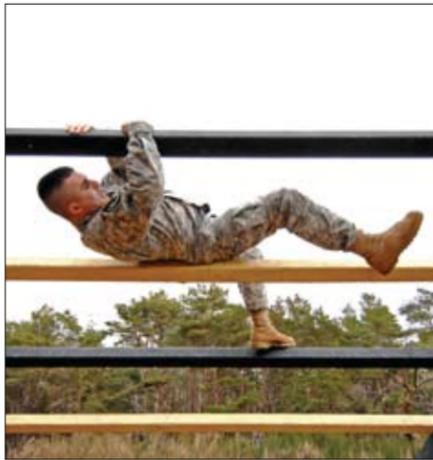
As I wear a number of hats, command chief, intelligence operations officer, security manager and special security officer it would be impossible to accomplish the mission without the support of an outstanding team both on the intelligence and security and warrant officer side. I would like to publicly acknowledge and thank: Mr. Chris Farrell, Master Sgt. Jim Scott, Sgts. Kristin Clarke and Joe Spear, Spc. Michelle Young and Pfc. Dederia for their hard work with security and intelligence issues and Sgt. 1st Class Lenora Landwehr, as the warrant officer strength manager. Well done!

NEWS

Oregon top warriors compete to earn title of 'the best'



Oregon Army National Guard Specialist Donald Snyder negotiates an obstacle course during the Oregon National Guard's 2009 Soldier of the Year/NCO of the Year competition, Feb. 27-March 1, at Camp Rilea, Warrenton, Ore. Snyder, of Tri-Cities, Wash., won the title of the Oregon National Guard's 2009 Soldier of the Year. Snyder is a medic with Detachment 1, 3rd Battalion, 116th Cavalry.



Oregon Army National Guard Staff Sgt. Jesse Ginestar negotiates the "weaver" obstacle during the Oregon National Guard's 2009 Soldier of the Year/NCO of the Year competition, Feb. 27-March 1, at Camp Rilea, Warrenton, Ore. Ginestar, of Klamath Falls, Ore., who is a platoon sergeant with Charlie Troop, 1st Battalion, 82nd Cavalry, won the title of the Oregon National Guard's 2009 NCO of the year.

COMPETITION from front page

Troop, 1st Battalion, 82nd Cavalry, was named 2009 Oregon NCO of the year, and Spc. Donald Snyder, with Detachment 1, 3rd Battalion, 116th Cavalry was named 2009 Oregon soldier of the year.

Ginestar, of Klamath Falls, is an infantry platoon sergeant, and Snyder, of Tri-Cities, Wash., is a medic.

Ginestar said his training and dedication to physical fitness were what helped him win the competition, which he added was fierce.

"It still hasn't sunk in," said Ginestar after the ceremony. "This is a great honor."

Snyder said he was happy to have even made it to the competition, but was also a little shocked that he won.

"This was a really tough competition," said Snyder. "It was the best of the best out there and I look forward to heading to the regional level to represent Oregon."

Ginestar is set to deploy with the 41st Infantry Brigade Combat Team later this year, so he won't be able to continue to the regional competition. He said he plans to compete again next year.



Oregon Army National Guard Staff Sgt. Jesse Ginestar is presented with the Oregon National Guard's 2009 NCO of the Year title by Retired Maj. Gen. Curtis Loop, president of the Columbia River Chapter of the Association of the United States Army and Brig. Gen. David Enyear, Assistant Adjutant General, Army, and Oregon State Command Sgt. Maj. Brunk Conley, March 1, at Camp Rilea, Warrenton, Ore. Ginestar, of Klamath Falls, Ore., is a platoon sergeant with Charlie Troop, 1st Battalion, 82nd Cavalry.

42-year soldier retires from Oregon National Guard

Story by

Tech. Sgt. Jefferson Thompson,
Oregon Military Department Public Affairs

SALEM, Ore. -- After more than forty years of military service the joint chief of staff of the Oregon National Guard retired in a ceremony held at the Anderson Readiness Center in Salem, March 7.

Maj. Gen. Raymond F. Rees, The Adjutant General of the Oregon National Guard recognized Col. Donald F. Bond for his years of service culminating in his tenure as the Chief Joint Staff/Chief of Staff, Army, Salem, Ore., a position he has held since January 2006.

The ceremony began on a festive note as State Command Sgt. Maj. Brunk Conley led those assembled in "Happy Birthday" to commemorate Bond's 60th birthday earlier in the week. Bond celebrated his March 3 birthday at the 173rd Fighter Wing in Klamath Falls in the back seat of an F-15 Eagle.

During the ceremony Rees addressed the crowd with a smile on his face saying, "my favorite task is to send Don [Bond] to D.C.--typically with a tin cup to ask for more money--Don comes back with a wheel barrow full, that's a hooah!"

He went on to thank Bond for bringing millions of dollars back to the state making the Oregon National Guard solvent and able to perform duties in support of both state and nation. He summed up Bond's career saying, "Don is the epitome of selfless service."

In his closing remarks Bond shared

reflections on the last 42 years saying "the majority of us know we are not successful by ourselves, we are successful as teams and because of the people who work for us. From the bottom of my heart I just wanted to say 'thank you' to every one of you."

Bond joined the Guard in 1967 and was commissioned in 1974 after serving as an enlisted soldier. His military education includes: the Infantry Officer Basic Course; Finance Officer Advance Course; the Army Command and General Staff Officers Course; the Advanced Resource Management Course; the Reserve Forces Professional Comptroller Course; Mobilization and Demobilization Planning Course; Defense Resource Management Course, Military Support to Civil Authorities Course and the National Security Course. He holds a Bachelor of Arts degree in Management of Human Resources from George Fox University.

Bond's military assignments include: Infantry Platoon Leader, Company C, 2nd Battalion, 162nd Infantry Regiment; Assistant Finance Officer, Finance Officer, Detachment Commander, and S-1, 141st Support Battalion; Assistant Brigade S-1, 41st Infantry Brigade; Budget Analyst, Readiness and Force Integration Officer, Deputy Chief of Staff, Training, Deputy Chief of Staff, Operations, JFHQ-OR. He spent 14 years in the banking industry prior to joining the technician workforce of the Oregon Army National Guard on a full-time basis in November 1988.

Bond's awards and decorations include



Photo by Sgt. Paul Rushing

Col. Donald Bond enlisted in the Oregon National Guard 42 years ago in 1967 and was commissioned seven years later in 1974.

the Meritorious Service Medal with four devices, the Army Commendation Medal with two devices, the Army Achievement Medal with two devices, the National Defense Service Medal, and the Humanitarian Service Medal.

Bond is married to the former Kathy Kunzman of Salem, Ore. They have two daughters, Katie and Kyla, and granddaughter, Kassidie.

Warrior's Pen

2009 Soldier of the Year, Spc. Donald Snyder, writes about what being a member of the Oregon Army National Guard means to him (excerpt):



I never wanted to be in the Army. I never, ever wanted to go to war. But when I needed money to get back to college and couldn't afford it, the NG offered to help. So first, being a member of the ORANG meant an opportunity to develop as a person, but it was only a means to an end.

October 26, 2007, I left my home in Richland, Wash., to begin Basic Combat Training at Fort Benning, Ga. Starting that day, my membership in this historic brotherhood began to take on a new meaning. By the time I graduated, as Soldier of the Cycle, I had learned the true value of the military, especially the National Guard. At the risk of sounding trite, I will honestly say that the Oregon Army National Guard is my personal vehicle to realizing all my dreams by developing each of the Army Values in my own life.

Loyalty had never occurred to me until my entire platoon in BCT went to "the gravel pit" in support of Pfc. Brian Plant, who confessed to an infraction we all committed, and was being "smoked." After an hour we quit for dinner chow and when the Drill Sergeant took Plante back to the pit afterwards we all followed . . . reluctantly and one by one. That day, a group of recruits had become a team.

At Fort Sam Houston, Texas, duty as a medic became a reality as I attempted to save the life of a wounded mannequin while Capt. Riley relayed in detail the true story of a single mother in Iraq who died of the injuries I was "treating," while the medics made the same mistake I was making. This wasn't a way to college anymore -- I had a job to do, and people WILL die if I fail . . .

. . . Two years ago, I was a bit of a punk. A year ago, I thought I knew -- and now I know I am only beginning to discover where I can go in my life. I am understanding the effects I can have on others and how contagious success is -- as I see it in the NG. I am eager to fully comprehend how a system of values designed to benefit everyone around me will make this old skeptic realize his own potential. The Oregon Army National Guard is a vehicle to greatness as a team and as an individual.

To read the essay in its entirety please visit the official blog for the Oregon National Guard at: www.oregonmildep.blogspot.com/~ed.

NEWS

Guardmembers shoot for the title at annual TAG Match

Story and photos by

Sgt. Eric A. Rutherford,

Oregon Military Department Public Affairs

WARRENTON, Ore. -- Citizen-soldiers and airmen from around the state came to Camp Rilea to compete in The Adjutant General's Combat Marksmanship Match, March 14-15.

The match pitted 80 Oregon Guardmembers against each other as individuals, as well as teams, in several shooting events throughout the weekend.

Soldiers and airmen faced several inches of rain on the firing ranges, shooting their individual weapons at pop-up targets during individual weapons qualification (IWQ), Field Fire, Across the Course, Run Down and the Team Challenge. There were two classes, novice and open. Open class was for shooters returning to the match while novice was for shooters who had never competed.

In the IWQ, competitors fired their rifles at pop-up targets ranging from 50 to 300 meters. Competitors fired 20 rounds from the foxhole supported position, ten rounds from the kneeling, and ten rounds from the prone unsupported positions.

In the Field Fire Challenge, competitors fired at 75 to 300 meter targets to simulate

longer firing distances.

The Across the Course Challenge was a timed, two-minute event where every target on the course was up, and competitors had to shoot each of the 8 targets target twice.

In the Run Down, shooters ran laps on the firing line to simulate elevated heart rate and stress levels prior to firing several rounds at targets.

The scores from all of these events were tallied to determine the aggregate team winner.

The event wrapped up with the Team Challenge, where four-man teams worked together to fire their rifles at pop-up targets, then ran together to a pistol target, and finished by running to a machine gun pit to fire M-249 Squad Automatic Weapons.

Heavy rain didn't seem to dampen the spirits of the competitors who stayed outside with their fellow competitors and team members even when they weren't firing.

"I would love to get some of the younger soldiers out here to get the experience and do some of the fun Guard stuff like this," said 2nd Lt. Rocky Kumlin. "If you want to get involved in great events like this, just ask about

it. Have your leadership get involved and get yourself out here."

Kumlin, a platoon leader with the 1186th Military Police Company, said events like TAG Match help readiness as well by giving soldiers and airmen more opportunities to train and fire their weapons.

One unit, 2nd Battalion, 162nd Infantry Regiment,



Sgt. Tyrone Morris, and Sgt. 1st Class Randall Mitts, both of Charlie Company, 2nd Battalion, 162nd Infantry Regiment, track target data during The Adjutant General's Combat Marksmanship Match at Camp Rilea, Warrenton, Ore., March 14. Mitts and Morris are set to deploy with the 41st Infantry Brigade Combat Team this summer.

sent two four-man teams to compete. The two teams have been practicing, competing in civilian matches and training together in preparation.

The soldiers from 2nd Bn., 162nd Inf., knowing that next time they fire their weapons, it might be the real thing. They are set to deploy to Iraq with 41st Infantry Brigade Combat Team this summer.

"This type of event will help us tremendously," said Sgt. 1st Class Randall Mitts, of 2nd Bn., 162nd Inf., and member of the competitor team "Chaos." "If we need it"

The firing events were followed by an award luncheon where plaques were given to the overall match winner, top three open class scoring competitors, top three novice competitors in the individual aggregate match, top three teams in the aggregate class, the top scoring team in the Team Challenge Match, and the Lt. Col. Brent McTaggart's Unit Achievement

Award for the unit entering the highest number of competitors in the event.

The overall match winner was Staff Sgt. Matt Kuhnel of Charlie Company, 2nd Bn., 162nd Inf. Kuhnel also won the Open Class. Sgt. Tyrone Morris, also of Charlie Company, won the Novice Class. Team Alpha of Kingsley Field's 173rd Fighter Wing won the Team Challenge Match. Team Spotlight of C Co. 2nd Bn., 162nd Inf., won the aggregate team award and 3670th Maintenance Company won the McTaggart Award.

"All I have to say is 'insurgents you better watch out,'" joked Mitts, of Team Chaos about his team's awards.

The winning members of Charlie C Co. 2nd Bn., 162nd Inf., will not be able to continue on to the regional matches due to their deployment this summer.

"If you want to fly us home from Iraq, we would be more than happy to compete in the regionals," Kuhnel Joked.



2nd Lt. Rocky Kumlin, a platoon leader with 1186th Military Police Company, fires his M-4 Rifle during The Adjutant General's Combat Marksmanship Match at Camp Rilea, Warrenton, Ore., March 14.

Senior enlisted leaders meet to network, improve organization

Story and photos by

Staff Sgt. Kevin Hartman

115th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

REDMOND, Ore. -- Nearly 200 Oregon National Guard soldiers and airmen attended the 2009 Senior Enlisted Leadership Conference at the Eagle Crest Resort near Redmond, Ore., 13-15 March. The SELC is designed to bring senior Non-Commissioned Officers from all Oregon National Guard units from across the state together to discuss issues as well as learn from one another.

The conference began Friday morning on the Eagle Crest Golf Course. With the backdrop of Three Sisters and Mount Bachelor, teams of four from each unit spread out across the 18 holes for what's called a scramble. A scramble is where the team plays off the best hit. Oregon State Command Sgt. Maj. Brunk Conley, the organizer of the event, said this style of play was selected to take the pressure off the actual game so players could spend their time getting to know each other better.

Saturday, the senior enlisted leaders settled in for the actual conference. The day began with an address from The Adjutant General, Army Maj. Gen. Raymond Rees, and continued with a series of briefs on issues from recruiting and retention to programs designed to reintegrate military members returning from deployments back into society.

Keynote speaker, Command Sgt. Maj. Neil Ciotola, attended both the conference and the formal dinner Saturday night. Ciotola, the Command Sgt. Maj. for III Corps and Fort Hood, said he's a big fan of the Oregon National Guard, specifically 2nd Battalion, 162nd Infantry Regiment.

"2nd Bn., 162nd Inf., is one of the best units I have had the privilege of serving with in my 33 years," he said in reference to his service with the 2nd Bn., 162nd Inf., during their deployment to Iraq in 2004. "If God grants me one wish, it's to serve with anyone from the Oregon National Guard."

Ciotola said the skills brought to the battlefield by National Guard members greatly helped in the building



Command Sgt. Maj. Neil Ciotola, the Command Sgt. Maj. for III Corps and Fort Hood, poses for a picture with the Oregon Army National Guard's Soldier of the Year and Non-Commissioned Officer of the Year during this year's Senior Enlisted Leadership Conference's formal dinner at the Eagle Crest Resort, 14 March, 2009. Nearly 200 Oregon National Guard Soldiers and Airmen from across the state attended the SELC. Command Sgt. Maj. Ciotola was the keynote speaker.

up of Iraq's infrastructure.

"In 2004, we were looking for electricians, governance experts, and setting up a police force. We found them in the National Guard," Ciotola said, adding, "You took the Active Army to school."

Ciotola also focused on the Army's Year of the NCO, which is being honored this year. The Year of the NCO is designed to highlight the accomplishments of the Army's

NCO corps, often referred to as the Backbone of the Army.

"The thing that sets the U.S. Military above all others is personal leadership," Ciotola said. "Every year is the Year of the NCO as far as I'm concerned."

The SELC is an annual conference designed to continually improve the strength of the Oregon National Guard.

NEWS

Researchers try new treatments for stress

Story by Kim Lippert,
Oregon Military Department
Public Affairs Office

PORTLAND, Ore. -- Soldiers, medical providers, and community members gathered for a conference March 6, 2009 in Portland to discuss treatment options for those dealing with Post Traumatic Stress Disorder.

Some new treatment options include Cognitive Behavior Therapy, medication, exposure therapy, and even complementary therapies like animal therapy, which uses the positive effects of pet ownership to minimize the negative side effects of PTSD.

The symposium brought both healthcare providers and those with PTSD together in an effort to educate families and soldiers about how to deal with possible emotional health issues when they arise.

"Being part of a unit in combat and the feelings of loss and guilt when losing people in the unit are really very powerful experiences," said Blake Chafee, clinical psychologist and Vice President of Integrated Services for Triwest. "The important thing is to recognize troubling symptoms and seek help," he added.

Mandy Martin knows the symptoms all too well. When she returned from Balad, Iraq with Alpha Company 5th Battalion, 159th Aviation Regiment, a reserve unit, in 2003, she took part in the standard reintegration briefing which discusses possible symptoms one may encounter as they assimilate

back into regular civilian life. Martin said not long after she found herself, 'living in that power point presentation.'

"I'm in this 'be careful of bad dreams, be careful of anger, drugs, alcohol and avoidance' when all of these things were just bullet points at one time," said Martin.

Martin said she was irritable, on edge, and had constant anxiety. Still, she thought other people were the problem.

"I thought 'I handled Iraq, this is nothing! You people need to get used to me this is who I am and I'm not going to change,'" she said.

But when Martin suffered a panic attack at work, she knew it was time to seek help.

"I have managed to find post traumatic growth in that I don't have to keep those negative changes in me, I can take those changes and find what is positive in them and expand on those differences and do my best to make a difference," said Martin.

Staff Sgt. Daniel Daggett is the chaplain assistant for the 41st Infantry Brigade Combat Team. He said he will be focused on helping soldiers with any emotional issues that may arise while on the deployment and that the seminar gave him some fresh ideas on the treatment of PTSD.



Photo illustration by Sgt. Eric Rutherford

"We were introduced to new thoughts on mental and family health and some of the new treatments for soldiers experiencing PTSD, which helps bring us up to speed on what we can do to help our soldiers," said Daggett.

Symptoms of PTSD vary from soldier to soldier but often include increased agitation, anxiety, avoidance, and isolation. Just as symptoms can vary so do treatment options.

"We are more involved with our health than ever before, you get to help decide what therapy is best for you," said Daggett. "If one doesn't work you can try another one."

"Now you have many different treatment options," he added.

Reintegration Summit focuses on soldier PTSD, employment

Story by Kim Lippert,
Oregon Military Department
Public Affairs Office

Community and business leaders came together for a Reintegration Summit in Salem, Ore., March 19.

The meeting focused on the upcoming deployment of the 41st Infantry Brigade Combat Team to Iraq in May. With 3,000 Oregon National Guard soldiers expected to leave with the brigade this spring, the focus of the seminar was on how to help those soldiers and their families reintegrate upon their return.

Maj. Matt Lawson with the 141st Infantry Brigade Combat Team said that as many as 33 percent of the soldiers deploying are unemployed, 58 percent are employed by government entities, and 7 percent are college students.

"How do we get them employed when they get back?" said Lawson.

Employment was just one of the many issues leaders tackled during the four hour seminar. Other topics of discussion included mental health, education, and family issues.

"Without community support we cannot make these things happen," said Brig. Gen. Mike Caldwell, Deputy Director of the Oregon Military Department.

Caldwell discussed the importance of the Oregon National Guard Reintegration Team, which was created in 2004 to focus on the needs of returning soldiers.

Back then the team consisted of a handful of people within the Oregon National Guard who worked tirelessly on employment, referrals for mental health treatment, and any other issues a returning soldier may have encountered as they reintegrated into civilian life.

The team has received national recognition for its efforts and has grown in size and scope.

"Within the medical command we now have over 70 people working on these issues on a daily basis," said Caldwell.

Although the majority of soldiers, about 80 percent according to the Department of Veterans' Affairs, have no longstanding emotional issues some will not be so fortunate.

In the event a soldier needs help for Post Traumatic Stress Disorder or other mental health issues, the reintegration team will refer the service member to a provider.

Paul Evans, Military Liaison for Governor Ted Kulongoski, said over the next few years actions will matter more than words.

"What really matters is what happens in the bad times, we have to make a commitment to do things right," said Evans.

The summit wrapped up with break out sessions focusing on family support, education, and employment.

"We care deeply about the well being of service personnel and we are determined to make a difference in the lives of our soldiers," said Representative Jean Cowan, Chair of the Veterans and Emergency Services Committee.

For more information on Oregon National Guard Reintegration and Service Member Support programs, visit their website at: www.orng-vet.com.

Guard program helps children 'shift' perspectives

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

OREGON CITY, Ore. -- For years educators have approached drug education with the "Just Say No" mantra.

But, according to an Oregon City middle school teacher, that philosophy falls short in today's schools.

"It's not enough," says Ron Weisdorfer. "There needs to be education behind it."

That is why a group of dedicated individuals from the Oregon National Guard's Counterdrug Support Program visited with 7th and 8th graders at Gardiner Middle School March 3. There, they worked to equip students with critical life-skills through a program called The Guard Adventure Program.

Sgt. Karissa Gratrek, who is assigned to the Oregon Army National Guard's 82nd Brigade, works fulltime as a Drug Demand Reduction NCO with the Counterdrug Program. She said the kids might already be practicing important skills such as teamwork, effective communication and cooperation, but they just don't realize how important they are yet.

"We're going to bring it to their attention and help them realize these life skills as a group," Gratrek said.

Prior to the Guardmembers' visit to the school during the first two weeks of March, school officials had never heard of the Oregon Guard's Counterdrug program, said Weisdorfer, who has been a teacher since 1976.

"I routinely teach drug education the old fashioned way: tell the kids about drugs and tell them to stay away, but the

approach here is based on wise decision-making."

The free 10-day program's curriculum is based on research in the area of developing assets and risk protection. The goal is to help youth develop personal and social skills in an effective manner, and to give students an opportunity to practice newly acquired skills through positive peer interaction.

The students are divided up into groups of about 20, with each group cycling through the day's classes one after the other. The team will sometimes administrate up to five classes per day throughout the two-week period. The group will visit schools based on requests by administrators.

One activity involves educating the kids about shifting the way they look at a situation. Called the "paradigm shift", the exercise uses distracting techniques to pull the attention of the kids away from the true message being conveyed.

Tech. Sgt. Bobby Vickery, an NCO with Oregon Air National Guard's 142nd Fighter Wing in Portland, told a story about when he deployed to Iraq to approximately 20 middle schoolers gathered in the Gardiner School auditorium. Vickery explained there was a security guard at the entrance to the compound who had a secret code to allow people to enter the base.

Vickery uses wooden sticks to tap out codes on the wooden floor, and arranges them in patterns in front of the kids, and then asks them to try to guess the secret code he is trying to convey.

The children learned the lesson slowly, but Vickery explained that the code is not



Air Force Tech. Sgt. Bobby Vickery (left), leads 20 students through the "paradigm shift" activity during the Guard Adventure Program at Gardiner Middle School in Oregon City, on Mar. 3, 2009. The program, administered by the Oregon National Guard's Counterdrug Support Program, aims to instill positive interpersonal skills and teach anti-drug awareness to Oregon's school-aged children.

contained in the tapping of the sticks, or in their arrangement, but by tapping his hand on his knee after each performance. Watching the students change their perspective and arrive at the "aha!" moment is all the reward Vickery and his teammates needs, he said.

"When they 'get it', that's when a lot of change takes place," he said.

Each day's lesson, over the course of 10 days of classes, builds upon the previous day's instruction. But according to Counterdrug Support Program member, Vickery, the bulk of the lessons don't 'gel' until toward the end of their two weeks at the school.

Weisdorfer believes the program helps boost the kids' self-worth—a key to keeping kids away from drugs.

"People use drugs because they don't have an understanding of who they are and where they're going," he said.

Tech. Sgt. Matthew Sim-

mons, who is new to the Counterdrug Program, said the life-lessons taught by his group focus not so much on avoiding drugs, but a completely new way of thinking.

"It's about living your life and making wise decisions," he said. "I love the messages we're sending."

Assigned to the Air Guard's 116th Air Control Squadron in Warrenton, Ore., Simmons said his involvement in the program has changed the way he thinks and interacts with his family.

"I hope I can bring some of this back home with me and help make us a more well-rounded family," Simmons said. "I'm right in the middle of my paradigm shift."

The 10-day program is designed to compliment existing drug education and prevention programs in the state.

It is administered free of charge to the requesting school.

NEWS

Local engineers battle at future demolition site

Story by Sgt. Patrick Lair
115th Mobile Public
Affairs Detachment

DALLAS, Ore. -- Soldiers in tightly-knit wedge formations held weapons at the low-ready, took cues by hand and arm signals, and stealthily made their way down a wooded hillside toward their objective, a concrete building attached to an abandoned swimming pool. Inside the building an unknown number of gunmen, and possibly hostages awaited.

March 7, found soldiers from the 1st, 2nd, 3rd and headquarters platoons of the 162nd Sapper Company, 1249th Engineer Battalion, enacting IED explosions, sniper fire, and assault technique training scenarios using the soon to be demolished Dallas Municipal Pool. Each of the participants was armed with a paintball gun.

The training was part of a larger cooperative effort between the Oregon National Guard and the City of Dallas, in which the engineer soldiers volunteered to demolish the decommissioned pool complex, closed for the last six years, and in return they were afforded the opportunity to use the area to practice combat

maneuvers with local volunteers for a day.

"Demolishing the pool is something we can do for the city that will give us practice using the big equipment," said 1st Lt. Ben Selander, 3rd platoon leader. "It also created a good opportunity for us to do some training."

The idea for the partnership came about some time ago when National Guard engineers helped the City of Dallas level out an area of town to make way for a basketball court, said Dallas City Manager Jerry Wyatt.

"We told the engineers we had another project, the pool building and the conversation started from there," he said.

The engineers later asked the city if they could combine the demolition with a training and recruiting event, the city manager said.

"We said hey, we wouldn't mind that," Wyatt said. "It's worked out really well."

Soldiers in Humvees established a cordon on city streets around the park during the training event, to prevent city residents from unwarily walking into the path of flying paintballs. The National Guard Mobile Events Team supplied the

soldiers with 50 paintball guns and around 40,000 rounds. The Dallas City Council temporarily waived an ordinance that forbids residents from firing weapons inside city limits.

Around 125 soldiers took turns throughout the day assaulting the pool building, in which a group of Dallas High School volunteers set up an opposition force under the guidance of several National Guard trainers. The high school students had all answered the calls for volunteers that were posted on fliers around the school. Groups of family members watched from the

sidelines, cheering and snapping photos.

Tyson Phelps, 15, a freshman at Dallas High School, and his sister, Shelby, 16, a junior, were the first to volunteer for the event.

"I've played against soldiers

and Marines before," Shelby said. "But this was probably the most fun I've had."

The pool and building were scheduled for demolition later in March. The city has conceptual plans to build a senior center at the location.



Photo by Sgt. Patrick Lair, 115th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

Soldiers from the 1249th Engineer Battalion and civilian volunteers from the city of Dallas maneuver toward an opposition force inside the Dallas Municipal Pool on Saturday, March 7. The engineers used the pool complex for paintball training before demolishing the structure for the city of Dallas.

First cadets sworn into new Guard Officer Leadership Detachment

Story by Capt. Sean Dixon,
ROTC Detachment Commander

Bend, Ore. -- Oregon State University's Cascades Campus, in Bend, swore in their first cadets in Central Oregon Guard Officer Leadership Detachment, Jan. 20.

Through an affiliation with Oregon State University ROTC, the Oregon National Guard, Central Oregon Community College and OSU Cascades, a new ROTC program is being offered to students in Central Oregon.

Cadets can compete for scholarships including a \$10,000 two and three year Guaranteed Reserve Forces Scholarship for their junior and senior year of college. Students can also qualify for a monthly ROTC stipend. This money can be on top of their military college benefits.

OSU Cascades offers third and fourth year college courses that apply towards an OSU degree. The first and second year

courses are offered through COCC. While students earn a four-year degree, they take Military Science classes, when they graduate with their bachelors degree, they receive their commission.

"We want to make sure they graduate in a timely manner, so we monitor their academic progress," said Capt. Sean Nixon, detachment commander.

During their time in ROTC, students continue to drill with their units as assistant platoon leaders where they receive valuable leadership lessons from their unit.

Members of the Guard can transfer directly to the program from a junior college or attend Central Oregon Community College as a first year student.

"This program is bringing great opportunities to Central Oregon for military and civilians alike," said Detachment Cadet Jeffrey Prine, with Detachment 3, Bravo Company, 351st Aviation Support,



Photo by Spc. Karly Cooper

Right to left: Capt. Sean Nixon, Cadet Justin Symons, Cadet Jeffrey Prine, Lt. Col. Michael Daniels.

in Pendleton, Ore. Nixon can be contacted at: 541-322-3143.

The program is also offered at Southern

Oregon University, 541-552-6309, Eastern Oregon University 541-962-3696, and Portland State University, 503-725-3212.

The American Civil War in Oregon: a military perspective

Story by Col. (Ret.) Steve Betschart,
Army of the Willamette

The echo of guns from Fort Sumpter, South Carolina and President Lincoln's call for 75,000 volunteers reached Oregon May 11, 1861. The Governor, John Whiteaker, did not respond at first because he felt our remote geographical position and divided political sympathies should exempt the state from providing troops. Under pressure from the loss of such regular federal units as the 4th U.S. Infantry, he finally agreed (in the fall of 1862) to the formation of the 1st Oregon Volunteer Cavalry. Six companies were raised and sent into the eastern

part of the state. But by the fall of 1864 their enlistments had begun to run out.

In October of 1864 a new call came for a regiment of infantry. Under pro-Union

Governor Addison C. Gibbs, the 1st Oregon Volunteer Infantry was raised with Company A mustered into federal service in Salem Dec. 15, 1864. Of the eight companies that comprised this regiment

most were used for garrison duty at such widely dispersed locations as Fort Dalles, Fort Walla Walla, Fort Vancouver as well as smaller garrisons such as Fort Hoskins. To these cavalry and infantry units were added

the 1st Washington Territorial Infantry and several companies each of the 2nd California Cavalry as well as the 3rd and 4th California Infantry. The 9th U.S. Infantry

also stayed active in the Northwest during this time period.

These units worked hard. In 1862 alone 10,000 emigrants crossed into Oregon, causing conflicts with the Indians of the Snake River drainage including tribes such as the Paiute, Shoshonis and Banocks. Together they were given the generic title of Snakes. Of critical importance was protection of travelers and shipments of military goods along The Dalles - Fort Boise road.

In January of 1863 elements of the 2nd California Cavalry along with the 3rd and 4th California Infantry fought the Battle of Bear River where 224 natives and 24 soldiers lost their lives. The 1st Oregon Volunteer Cavalry waged a series of smaller battles in 1864 under the command of Colonel George Curry that attempted to disrupt the Indians subsistence lifestyle. Colonel Curry continued this approach well into 1865 when he assumed command of the 1st Oregon Infantry by relocating Company A to Camp Polk near the present city of Sisters, Ore. in order to conduct a winter campaign. This,

however, was called off in late October in favor of negotiations.

Secessionists were another threat to the safety and security of Oregon residents. By the start of the war many had joined a secret society known as the Knights of the Golden Circle with the intent to create a "Republic of the Pacific" which would join the Southern Confederacy. There were estimated to be 2,500 members of the Knights in Oregon with the central focus in the mid Willamette Valley. As the war progressed, more settlers came from such states as Missouri and Kansas known for their divided loyalties. It was precisely this threat that provided motivation for the creation of the 1st Oregon Volunteer Infantry in late 1864.

In the end there was no secessionist uprising and no Republic of the Pacific. Most of the volunteers who served in the state, whether they came from Oregon or not, performed very tedious but valuable duty in securing this area and its resources for the Union cause. By mid 1867 they were replaced by regular army units and could return to their homes again.



NEWS

Oregon's first African American soldier celebrates diversity

Story by Tech. Sgt. Nick Choy,
Oregon Military Dept. Public Affairs

SALEM, Ore. -- The Oregon National Guard honored the first African-American soldier during a ceremony commemorating African-American Heritage Month, held at Joint Force Headquarters in Salem, Feb. 26.

Organized by the Oregon National Guard Diversity Council, the ceremony honored retired Master Sgt. Earl Henry Winchester—who joined the Oregon Army National Guard in 1955.

Oregon Army National Guard Joint Chief of Staff, Col. Don Bond, presented Winchester with the Oregon Exceptional Service Medal and a framed copy of the NCO Creed.

Oregon State Defense Force Colonel, Warren Aney, said a lot has changed since Winchester joined the Oregon Guard.

“You broke ground. You set a standard for all minorities to follow,” Aney said to Winchester.

According to a legal essay by Bill Long, Oregon was known as the “Dixie of the North”, with laws prohibiting African Americans from owning property, and a provision in the territorial constitution, passed in 1857, banning freed slaves from even entering Oregon. As recently as the late 50s, the city of Medford had a “Sun-down Law”, prohibiting African Americans from being out in public after sunset.

“We’ve come a long way,” Aney said. “Master Sgt. Winchester symbolizes our ability to recognize talent no matter what the color of your skin, or your religious background. Thank you Earl.”

Keynote speaker, Ronnie Brooks, who is the Executive Board Member of the Salem Chapter of the NAACP, addressed about a hundred citizen-airmen, citizen-soldiers, and civilian attendees who turned

out for the lunch-time event in the Owen Summers building.

Brooks thanked Winchester for his sacrifice, saying he would not be today’s keynote speaker had it not been for the sacrifices of African Americans like him.

“I stand on the shoulders of this man,” Brooks said, as he pointed and smiled at Winchester, who sat in the front row with his wife, Virginia, sister Norma Kennedy, and son, Peter.

Winchester’s long military career began in 1942 when he joined the U.S. Army. He was assigned to the 356th Engineer General Service Regiment in the European Theater as a truck driver, and served in Normandy and in northern France during World War II.

After being honorably discharged in late 1945, he re-enlisted for three more years, serving at Fort Leavenworth until being honorably discharged in 1948.

After joining the Oregon Army National Guard in December 1955, he rose through several ranks, including company First Sergeant with Company A, 162nd Combat Engineers, and worked for a number of units within Oregon.

In 1974, after being honorably discharged from the Oregon Guard, he re-enlisted with the U.S. Army Reserve, where he served as battalion operations sergeant at Headquarters, 3rd Battalion, 415th Regiment at Vancouver Barracks in



Photos by Tech. Sgt. Jefferson Thompson, Oregon Military Public Affairs Office

Retired Master Sgt. Earl Henry Winchester is joined by members of his family during the invocation at an event commemorating African-American Heritage Month at the Oregon Military Department in Salem, Feb. 26. Winchester was recognized for being the first African-American member of the Oregon National Guard. **Above left:** Winchester sits with family members during the celebration.

Vancouver, Wash. All-told, Winchester compiled 32 years of military service.

Brooks thanked Winchester for his service and sacrifice, and encouraged Americans to come together to bridge the racial divide. He also thanked the men and women in uniform for their “supreme sacrifice for us and our children.”

Brooks spoke about his personal struggles growing up in a segregated society during the late 1960s, and how many people helped him overcome obstacles throughout his life. He eventually graduated from Texas A&M University (formerly East Texas State University), and later returned to work as the diversity program director for the school.

“This angry young man had come full

circle,” he said about his success. “I told myself if I ever get a chance, I’m going to help people as much as I can.”

He said Guard members can help others by talking to young people, and sharing with them the sacrifices made by those in the military. Brooks suggested visiting high schools to talk about the National Guard, and to challenge youngsters to become an active participant in their communities.

“Share with them the sacrifices you’ve had to make. It will arouse the consciousness of our young people help them connect with our country,” he said.

“It starts with you,” he continued. “If you believe in yourself, then you can be somebody that others believe in.”

NEWS BRIEFS

National group offers free camp for military youth

The National Military Family Association’s Operation Purple camp is a time for having fun, making friends, and reminding military kids that they are the Nation’s youngest heroes.

The program aims to help military kids experience carefree fun while also learning coping skills to deal with deployment-related stress and fostering relationships with other children who know what they are going through.

The camp for Oregon youth ages 8-13 will be held at the Oregon 4-H Center in Salem, Ore., July 19-24. Activities will include swimming, horses, crafts, field-games, archery and canoeing.

The camp offered for teens ages 14-17 is set to be held at Canyonview Camp in Silverton, Ore., Aug. 9-14. Activities will include water slide, swimming, paddle boats, zip-line, field-games and a ropes course.

For more information about Operation Purple and to sign youth up for camp in Oregon visit: www.operationpurple.org

Please email Ethan Erickson, Operation Purple Director in Oregon, with specific questions about camp at: ethan@tsuga.org
Registration ends April 19.

Cash stimulus checks due out to veterans, feds say

President Barack Obama has signed the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009.

The Congressionally approved legislation includes tax-related provisions providing cash payments to certain veterans. The Economic Recovery Payment only will be paid by the Social Security Administration, Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) and the Railroad Retirement Board.

Disabled veterans that are in receipt of

VA Compensation and Pension (C&P) will automatically receive a cash payment of \$250. Economic Recovery one-time payments will be deposited to the account on file with VA and are expected to arrive during the summer.

Last year veterans and spouses received an economic stimulus payment. Unlike the last payment, no action is required on the part of the veteran to receive this economic recovery payment. Also, there is no additional amount allotted for spouses of veterans like the 2008 Economic Stimulus.

For more information, please contact the VA at 800-827-1000.

ORANG Chief’s Council offers scholarship

Need help paying for college? You’re in luck!

The Oregon Air National Guards Chief’s Advisory Council will again sponsor a scholarship opportunity this year.

The Chief Master Sergeants in the council contributed \$500, with matching funds from the Enlisted Association of National Guard, Oregon.

The \$1,000 scholarship will be used for undergraduate educational or technical training tuition and books for selected applicants.

EANGOR will provide an additional \$500 scholarship to the next highest runner up that is a member of EANGOR or their spouse or parent is a member of EANGOR.

Eligibility Criteria requires affiliation with the Oregon Air National Guard either as a member or dependent, a GPA of 2.0 or higher, completion of the questionnaire and an educational goals summary essay. The application deadline is May 31, 2009.

Applications can be mailed to 216 Gentile Street, Suite 36, Bldg 211, Kingsley Field, Ore. 97603, ATTN CMSgt. Les Tyree, or by e-mail: leslie.tyree.1@orklam.ang.af.mil.

Oregon soldiers participate in Read Across America program



Oregon National Guard soldier Capt. Bobby Baca reads a Dr. Seuss book to 1st grade students at Yoshikai Elementary School in Salem, Ore. Five other Oregon National Guard soldiers also took part in the Read Across America program at the school.

Story and photo by Kim L. Lippert
Oregon Military Department Public Affairs

For students in Haley Meadows first grade class at Yoshikai Elementary School in Salem story time was a bit different March 2. That’s because the featured reader was an Oregon National Guard soldier, Capt. Bobby Baca.

“It’s great to be here,” said Baca. “Just seeing the kids and letting them know we are here to help the community,” added Baca.

Baca read a Dr. Seuss book to 21 students as part of the Read Across America program.

Read Across America, sponsored by the National Education Association is an annual reading motivation and awareness program that calls for every child in every community to celebrate reading March 2, the birthday of bestselling children’s author Dr. Seuss. The event brings together people from all walks of life to read to children.

“I think it’s motivation for kids and such a special day for them to have all of these different people reading to them,” said Meadows.

The students laughed as Baca read the rhymes from Dr. Seuss. Afterwards they listened intently as Baca told them about the value of reading.

“There is not a career you are heading to that you don’t have to read, reading is very important,” said Baca.

AIR GUARD NEWS

Oregon welcomes home airmen from Iraq deployment

Story by
Tech. Sgt. Nick Choy
Oregon Military Department
Public Affairs Office

WARRENTON, Ore. -- Members of one of the most activated and deployed units in the Oregon Air National Guard participated in a demobilization ceremony at the Rilea Training Facility.

Twenty-seven members of the 116th Air Control Squadron were deployed to Iraq from September 2008 to February 2009, in support of Operation Enduring Freedom.

Governor Ted Kulongoski, Maj. Gen. Raymond F. Rees, The Adjutant General, Oregon National Guard; State Senator Betsy Johnson (D-Scappoose); Oregon Representative Deborah Boone (D-Cannon Beach); Warrenton Mayor, Gilbert Gramson; Brig. Gen. Bruce Prunk, Commander of the Oregon Air National Guard, members of both the Oregon Air and Army National Guard, in addition to family and friends of the returning airmen, attended the event.

Prunk said the airmen were ready when their nation called, and collectively did an excellent job.

"They are an example of what I'm looking for out of the rest of the Oregon Air National Guard. I'm very proud of what they do," Prunk said.

While 22 members provided remote radar and communications support to Balad airbase from a region known as Qayyarah, northwest of Baghdad, a five-

member team worked directly with the Air Operations Center at Balad airbase.

The group was part of the 332nd Air Expeditionary Group, 727th Air Control Squadron, based in Iraq.

Maj. Keith Townsend, Director of Operations for the 116th ACS, who was the Assistant Director of Operations for the 727th EACS while deployed, said the experience helped his airmen improve their skills for both their state and wartime tasks.

"Anytime Oregon's airmen can go abroad, it allows us to do our state mission much better," he said. "But in the AOR (Area of Responsibility), we are challenged in ways we aren't anywhere else."

Rees told the gathering that the units' collective expertise makes them a valuable addition to any deployment.

"There are no apprentices in this organization," he said. "When they go and participate with the Air Force, the Department of Defense knows they're going to get top-rated people."

He also thanked the members of the unit who stayed in Oregon, for their assistance during fierce winter storms in December, 2008.

During the ceremony, the unit was awarded the Iraqi Campaign Medal, The Air Force Expeditionary Service Medal, The Armed Forces Reserve Medal with M Device, and Oregon Faithful Service Ribbon with M Device, for outstanding service in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom.



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

Maj. Gen. Raymond F. Rees, The Adjutant General, Oregon National Guard, presents Senior Airman Rick Lowe with the Iraqi Campaign Medal during the demobilization ceremony for the Oregon Air National Guard's 116th Air Control Squadron, at Camp Rilea in Warrenton, Ore., on March 7. As the lowest-ranking member of the unit, Lowe represented 26 other members of the unit, who also received the award, for their participation in a deployment in support of Operation Enduring Freedom.

Senior Airman Rick Lowe, the lowest ranking member in the unit, was presented the Iraqi Campaign Medal by Rees in front of his fellow airmen.

"I encourage other airmen to deploy, now that I've been there and I know what goes on," said Senior Airman Lowe. "It was my first deployment, but it was a good experience, and a great learning

opportunity."

Lowe, who grew up in Florence, Ore., said the operations tempo was pretty high during the first two months the unit was in Iraq.

"We worked seven days a week, 12 hours a day," he said. "Our annual training is pretty laid back, but it gets a bit more serious, and busy, in a war zone."

Luke Deployment a 'Total Success'

Story by
Tech. Sgt. Jefferson Thompson
Oregon Military Department
Public Affairs Office

Klamath Falls, Ore. -- In January and February, the skies above Kingsley Field were filled with more than just the standard roar of the F-15 Eagle. From Jan. 7 through Feb. 25, six F-16s from the 308th Fighter Squadron were deployed with 76 personnel from Luke Air Force Base, Ariz., provided adversarial support for the 114th Fighter Squadron's flight students through dissimilar air combat tactics training (DACT).

The DACT exercise provided an opportunity for both student and instructor pilots to train against a diverse range of combat aircraft with different capabilities and tactics, enhancing the students flying skills.

The 173rd Fighter Wing and the "Emerald Knights" share a similar mission. While Kingsley instructors train the best F-15 pilots in the world, the 308th's mission is to train the top F-16 pilots. This training gave Eagle and Falcon student pilots a venue to further enhance their skills.

In the time the 308th FS was at Kingsley, they supplied 66 training sorties for pilots with the 114th FS. These additional sorties also allowed six students to graduate during that time. Additionally, the sorties generated by the deployment saved Kingsley pilots from flying on Sundays during four monthly drill weekends.

The "Emerald Knights" commander, Lt. Col. Jeffrey Schroeder, said his unit members were very happy with their stay at Kingsley calling the deployment a total success.

"I'm extremely pleased with all aspects of this deployment and would like to express my sincere thanks to all agencies that assisted in making this training deployment possible," Schroeder said.

Schroeder added that his unit members were also impressed by Kingsley's facilities, personnel, flying airspace and tanker support, and by the community. Many of them took advantage of the recreational opportunities Klamath County has to offer to include skiing and visits to Crater Lake.

Lt. Col. Wes French, 114th Fighter Squadron commander said, "We hope this will be the start of continuing opportunity to fly with the 308th in the future."



Photo courtesy, 173rd Fighter Wing Public Affairs

173rd Fighter Wing F-15s on a training mission out of Kingsley Field in Klamath Falls. Runway and safety equipment upgrades will provide years of future use, once the project is completed in November.

173rd Fighter Wing moves flying operations to Idaho

KINGSLEY from front page

"What many don't realize is that for all of that metal in the air, there is an entire support structure that enables it: maintenance equipment, computers, vehicles, emergency landing cables, runway sweepers-all-in-all nearly 50 trucks worth of equipment, not to mention all the people, have to be transported to Gowen Field," he added.

During the deployment most non-flying support functions, such as the military personnel flight and the finance office, will continue to operate normally. The Idaho deployment is planned to run through the end of November 2009, but Johnson says he expects to finish the deployment before then.

"Thankfully there are a lot of people here with years of expertise in their primary duties as well as in peripheral areas," said Johnson. "Their job skills and knowledge are directly responsible for getting this accomplished, for taking processes that normally take six months to a year, and truncating them to two or three months."

National Guard vehicle license plates available

Recognizing Guard members for their service is done in many ways. A patriotic option is to get Oregon National Guard License Plates through the department of motor vehicles.

Plates are also available for veterans and can be personalized by choosing any one of the five military service branch seals or, to display one of several service-related or campaign medals that a veteran has earned while serving. Combining a service branch seal with a medal is not allowed.

The military service medals that are available for the plates include: Silver Star, Bronze Star, Distinguished Service Cross, Air Force Cross, and

the Navy Cross. Campaign medals that may be attached are: World War II Victory, Korea, Vietnam, Southwest Asia, Kosovo, Iraq, Afghanistan, and the Global War on Terrorism (Expeditionary).

A plate for Gold Star family members; those who have lost a family member who was serving in the military; is also available. Family members must certify that they are a surviving parent, spouse or dependent of a person who was killed in action during an armed conflict while serving the Armed Forces of the United States.

For more details on obtaining your plate, visit: www.oregon.gov/ODOT/DMV/vehicle/platevet.shtml#ng.

Commissary Sales!

Apr 17-19

Pendleton Armory

Apr 24-25

Douglas Co. Fairgrounds
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In an effort to bring the commissary benefit to Guard and Reserve units without commissary facilities, DeCA is bringing the benefit to you. Sales feature staples and dry goods and are open to all military I.D. holders. For more information contact Maj. Steve Newell at (541) 979-1767.