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HEADQUARTERS
OREGON AIR NATIONAL GUARD
Portland International Airport, OR 97218

CC

9 February 1978

Nomination for Oregon National Guard Association Minuteman Award

TAG/AFDA

1. I would like to nominate the 244th Combat Communications Squadron and Flight for award of the Oregon National Guard Association Minuteman Award for their participation in the Happy Fire in the Mt. Hood National Forest.
2. On 2 August 1977 under the terms of a support agreement with the US Forest Service the 244th Combat Communications Squadron and Flight received a call for assistance with a forest fire burning in the Mt. Hood National Forest. The call was received at 1800 and the two communications units swung into action. A Command Post was set up and by 2130 the first communications van had deployed to the fire area. Working through the night three relay teams and two terminal teams intalled a 60-mile lone FM radio/telephone network in the area to provide the fire fighters a communications network. Terminal teams were deployed to the US Forest Service Headquarters at SE 195th and Division Sts; Raad Fire Camp southwest of Estacada, OR; and relay teams to: Larch Mt, Oak Grove Butte and Whale Head Mt. This system provided the forest service with a 12 channel communications system, the Fire Boss used five channels for telephones and one channel for facsimilie to coordinate and support the direction of the fire fighters.
3. This system of two terminals, three relays and the Command Post was manned around the clock for six days. The manpower was provided mainly by highly skilled Guardsmen who quickly responded to the call.
4. After six days of operation the Forest Service had the fire sufficiently under control and the communications system was returned to the base. Letters of appreciation were received from the US Forest Service stating that the flexible and high quality communications capability had greatly helped to contain a fire which had been expected to burn an area of 600 acres to 200 acres.
5. The publicity which the 244th Cmbt Comm Sq and Flt received on local television and from the national wire service reflects very favorably on the Oregon National Guard. Further publicity has been received in the National Guardsman and the AFCS Intercom as well as the USFS Green Sheet.

SIGNED

PATRICK E. O'GRADY, Brig Gen, OreANG
Commander



244th Combat Communications Squadron (Contingency)

Oregon National Guard Association Minuteman Award

For Happy Fire support in the Mt Hood National Forest August 1977

From The Information Office

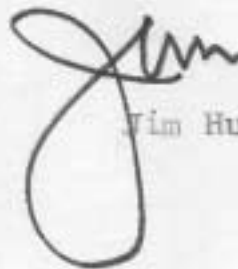
U.S.FOREST SERVICE P.O.BOX 3623 PORTLAND,ORE.97208

9-14-77

Dear Keith:

I thought you folks might be interested in seeing how we used the story on the cooperative agreement. The Greensheet goes to about 5,000-plus Forest Service employees in the Pacific Northwest Region (R-6), Oregon and Washington. I'll try and attend your next fire "outing" so I can get a better idea of what goes on.

Regards,



Jim Hughes

PS- I'm also sending
a copy to Gen. Austin .



ANG communications net available for Hood fires

Communication between remote fire camp locations and the outside world is often a problem and always a vital necessity, but it shouldn't be a problem anymore on the Mt. Hood National Forest.

The Mt. Hood and the Oregon Air National Guard have "battle tested" a cooperative agreement which places an elaborate communications capability at the disposal of Mt. Hood firefighting leadership.

The test came in early August on the Happy Fire when the Air Guard's 244th Combat Communications Squadron set up and operated a radio relay network linking the fire camp with the Mt. Hood supervisor's office.

Air Guard and Mt. Hood personnel agreed at a recent critique that the system worked well and can be improved on future fires, thanks to lessons learned on the Happy Fire.

"You provided us with an excellent service. It filled a void we've always had, and that's good communications with a fire camp out in the boondocks someplace," said Mt. Hood Supervisor Dale Robertson.

"We were proud to do it," responded Maj. Keith Hallmark, deputy commander of the 244th. "This works hand in glove with our military mission — it's one of the few things we can do in community service."

The system allowed Happy Fire staff people to pick up a telephone and talk directly with a counterpart in the Mt. Hood forest supervisor's office. A facsimile was also available to transmit maps and other material. Five telephones were in use, plus the facsimile.

Ironically, the Happy Fire was in the same area where Mark Luedtke, an Air Guard officer and logging engineer, first got the idea several years ago for the Forest Service to utilize the Guard's communications capability on fires.

Tumac Mountain

(Continued from Page One)

rather hesitantly, "We call it the Two Macs Mountain".

"He then told of two Scotch shepherders, McDuff and McAdam, who used to race their hands to try and be first to get pasturage on this mountain. I spelled two as Tu and added the 'mac' to it for Tumac, which makes as fine a looking Indian name as I will ask you to find anywhere. My guess is that it takes humor as well as whimsy to name names."

The GREENSHEET is published twice each month by the Office of Information, Pacific Northwest Region, Forest Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture - PO Box 3623, Portland, Oregon 97208. Jim Hughes, Editor; Garnet Love and Kurt Austermann, Associate Editors.

In 1974, the Mt. Hood and 244th Squadron field tested the system during a summer training period, and concluded that the idea was feasible. Since that time, Guard people have located 63 possible communications terminals and 13 relay points on the Forest. Up to 12 radio-telephones can be used to link the fire camp and supervisor's office, plus teletype and facsimile systems.

"Now we've got to get our fire bosses used to the idea that they can ask for more than one telephone," said Al Boucher, assistant Mt. Hood fire staff officer.

The cooperative agreement was completed in August of 1976, just one year before it was put into actual use on the Happy Fire. The agreement provides for the Oregon Military Department to be reimbursed for costs incurred. Guard people were on the Happy Fire August 2-7.

As it happened, the Happy Fire was in a location not yet surveyed by the 244th. There was some lost time before the system became fully operational, but such difficulties are not anticipated in the future.

Depending on the location, the 244th promises a two to three hour response time. "Our equipment is ready to roll, and we like to provide high quality communications right off the bat," said Chief Master Sgt. Bob Mitchell, squadron communications maintenance supervisor.

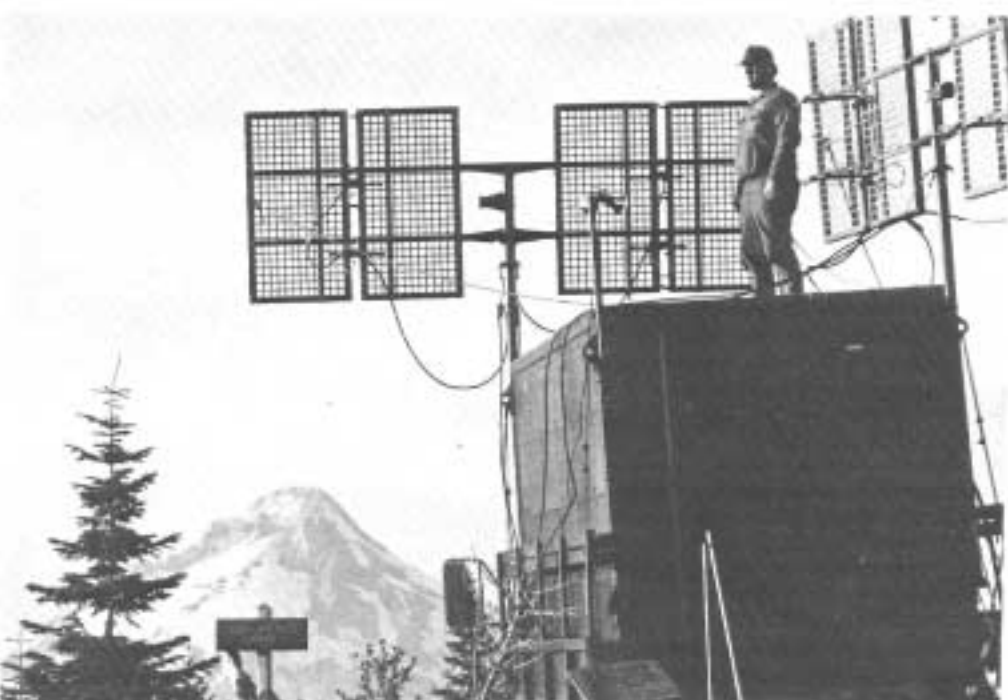
The agreement will be modified somewhat, based on discussion at the recent critique, but it appears that all systems are "go" for the Mt. Hood's next project fire, if and when.

"Fire is a pretty serious business. It



John Wilson, Mt. Hood fire staff officer, and Lt. Col. Mark Luedtke, Oregon Air National Guard, were photographed in 1974 as Wilson called his office via a radio relay telephone at Timothy Lake.

lets us get close to our combat mission without being shot at or having to shoot at someone," commented Brig. Gen. Staryl Austin, deputy adjutant general for the State of Oregon.



Equipment such as this is used by the Oregon Air National Guard to relay voice, facsimile and teletype transmissions between the Mt. Hood NF supervisor's office and remote fire camp locations. This photo was taken in 1974 on Clear Lake Butte during an early field test of the system.

CC

30 Sep 77

After-Action Report - Communications Support of U.S. Forest Service during
"Happy Fire"

TAG-Ore

1. SITUATION:

Pursuant to the forest fire Support Agreement of 1 Aug 1976 between Military Dept State of Oregon and U.S. Forest Service, the 244th Combat Communications Squadron and Flight responded to a request for communications support of the "HAPPY FIRE" action at 1850 hours(local) 2 Aug 77. The mission was to link the forest service headquarters command post in Portland Oregon with a fire camp established in the Happy Creek area, 38 air miles away in rugged Mt Hood National Forest, with five telephone circuits, facsimile transmission capability and various on-site telephone service.

2. IMPLEMENTATION:

In preparation for the support plan the unit had previously engineered 76 wideband relay and terminal sites utilizing AN/TRC-24, 12 channel FM equipment. Upon notification, the unit activated a Command Post and selective personnel-alert system and determined that a 60 mile wideband system consisting of five operating sites would be required, three of which were pre-engineered. The remaining sites were hastily engineered (on paper) and two AN/TRC-61 terminal teams and three AN/TRC-36 relay teams were deployed by 2255 hrs(local) 2 Aug 1977. A fully operational system was handed over to forest service officials at 1030 hrs, 3 Aug 77 and was utilized continuously thru 1000 hrs, 7 Aug 1977 at which time the unit was recalled.

3. MANNING:

Thirty two personnel, 13 technicians and 19 weekend Guardsmen were ordered to State Active Duty in support of the Happy Fire action. A total of 1800 man-hours were expended by this unit, including Command Post and re-supply teams supporting operating sites with food, fuel and spare equipment. Of special interest is the ratio of participation between full time technicians and "weekend" Guardsmen. By phasing in fresh teams, system manning changed over the period from 50% technician/50% weekender to a high of 70% weekender manning, verifying our contention that weekend personnel can effectively participate in civil emergency activities when called upon to do so.

4. RESULTS:

The U.S. Forest Service expressed complete satisfaction with this first actual test of unit capability to respond and provide forest fire communications requirements. The unit has been credited with a substantial reduction in the size and duration of the Happy Fire. SSG Gail E. Spaulding of this

unit was also credited with the discovery and prompt notification of a second fire in the area while on duty at a relay site. His determined effort to locate the fire in fog and smokey conditions enabled fire fighters to quickly contain the blaze. Minor difficulties discovered in the original Support Agreement have been resolved and a new agreement signed, effective 1 Oct 77. Excellent media coverage included all Portland, Oregon television stations and major newspapers, national wire service, OreANG and Air Force publications, and the Pacific Northwest Region, Forest Service Publication "Greensheet".

5. Combat Communications units are uniquely qualified for this type of public service since the requirements closely parallel the combat mission. The 244th Combat Communications Squadron and Flight are extremely proud to have been of service in protecting our nation's timberlands and are prepared to continue this support whenever called upon.

Gene A. Katke
GENE A. KATKE, Major, OreANG
Commander

Cy to: ATD/BSM

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
FOREST SERVICE

Mt. Hood National Forest
2440 S.E. 195th Ave.
Portland, Oregon 97233

5130
September 22, 1977



Military Department
State of Oregon
2150 Fairgrounds Road N.E.
Salem, OR 97303

Gentlemen:

I would like to take this time to express my thanks to the Military Department and especially the 244th Combat Communications Squadron (Contingency) (A.N.G.), headquartered at Portland International Airport, for the very fine communications service that the 244th furnished to the Mt. Hood National Forest, in early August, on the Happy Fire.

The response was very good, and the communications that were provided were by far the best we have had on a project fire on the Mt. Hood. We will most certainly want to use these facilities and services again, when we have a serious project fire on the Forest.

All the personnel of the 244th were very cooperative and performed in a very professional manner.

I also felt that the meeting at the 244th Headquarters on August 25, 1977 was worthwhile and productive. It was a pleasure to meet General Austin and the Staff of the 244th.

Sincerely,

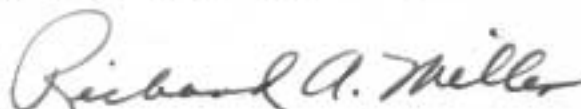
F. DALE ROBERTSON
Forest Supervisor

SGS (22 Sep 77) 1st Ind
SUBJECT: Letter of Appreciation

Military Department, State of Oregon, Salem, OR 97303 6 October 1977

TO: Commander, HQ OreANG, PIAP, Portland, OR 97218

It is a distinct pleasure to forward letters of this nature. The assistance the 244th Combat Communications Squadron rendered the National Forest Service enhances the prestige of the Oregon National Guard and those who serve in it. I add my personal congratulations for a job well done.



RICHARD A. MILLER
Major General
The Adjutant General

2nd Ind

23 October 1977

Hq OreANG/CC

TO: Commander 244 CMBTCS

I am very pleased to add my comments to those expressed by Mr. Robertson and General Miller. This support program will serve to enhance all citizens of Oregon in maintaining and protecting a most vital resource and industry. Additionally, the professional capabilities demonstrated by the men and women of your unit have brought credit and recognition to the Oregon Air National Guard and to themselves. Please extend by sincere appreciation for this most noteworthy accomplishment.



PATRICK E. O'GRADY, Brig Gen, OreANG
Commander

SGS (14 Sep 77) 1st Ind
SUBJECT: Letter of Appreciation

Military Department, State of Oregon, Salem, OR 97303 6 October 1977

TO: Commander, HQ OreANG, PIAP, Portland, OR 97218

It is a distinct pleasure to forward letters of this nature. The assistance SSgt Gail E. Spaulding rendered the National Forest Service enhances the prestige of the Oregon National Guard and those who serve in it. I add my congratulations for a job well done.



RICHARD A. MILLER
Major General
The Adjutant General


2nd Ind

22 October 1977

Hq OreANG/CC

TO: 244 CMBTCS/CC

I am very pleased to forward Mr. Robertson's letter and General Miller's indorsement. SSgt Spaulding's contribution in support of Mt. Hood Forest Service suppression of the Happy Creek forest fire is commendable. Please extend my appreciation for his most noteworthy accomplishment.



PATRICK E. O'GRADY, Brig Gen, OreANG
Commander

MILITARY DEPARTMENT
STATE OF OREGON
2150 Fairgrounds Rd. NE
Salem, Oregon 97303

SPECIAL ORDERS
NUMBER G-74

4 October 1977

Pursuant to the recommendations of the Military Department Awards Board and authority contained in OreANGR 900-9, announcement is made of the award of the OREGON NATIONAL GUARD CERTIFICATE OF COMMENDATION to the following named individual.

STAFF SERGEANT GAIL E. SPAULDING, 518-36-4411
244th Combat Communications Squadron
Oregon Air National Guard

Sergeant Spaulding is cited for his outstanding performance of duty during the State active duty deployment to provide communications for fire fighting in the Mt. Hood National Forest from 2 to 7 August 1977. As a member of the radio relay team at Oak Grove Butte, he spotted smoke and upon investigating discovered a blaze. He immediately reported the fire and it was subsequently suppressed with a minimum amount of damage to the area. Sergeant Spaulding's alert reaction to this emergency reflects favorably upon himself, his unit and the State of Oregon.

BY ORDER OF THE GOVERNOR:



RICHARD A. MILLER
Major General
The Adjutant General

MARINUS A. SPITZ, JR., OreANG
Executive Support Staff Officer

DISTRIBUTION: Special