VETERAN

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reminders of veterans in their families to fill the display. Musgrove says he will probably bring in his drill sergeant hat.

He also plans on traveling to Albany today with his wife, Robin, to watch the Veterans Day parade.

Robin Musgrove says she spent a total of 12 years in Germany, helping to raise their three daughters while her husband served. Going to the parade reminds her of the lifestyle they once had, she says.

She also wants to go to the parade to honor her husband for the years he spent serving the country, she says, adding that today will be the fourth time they've attended together.

But he won't be participating in the parade; he already spent years marching in drill teams and on flag teams.

"I'm a spectator now," he says, "so I'll just be watching it."

Joining the Army

Musgrove's father, Bill, approached his son and told him it was time to leave.

Musgrove was bewildered. He wasn't sure what his dad meant by that. He was enjoying his senior year at Thurston High School, and he'd completely forgotten about enlisting in the Army the previous September.

The day after his graduation in June 1977, Musgrove left his home in Springfield for life in the Army. When he joined, he decided he was going to make a long-term commitment to the service. His father had fought in World War II and spent 11 years in the Army, crawling his way up Omaha Beach during the D-Day invasion and fighting in the Battle of the Bulge, where he was wounded.

But Bill Musgrove never told his son about having to run away from advancing German Panzer tanks, Musgrove says, adding that he was left trying to follow his father's legacy — almost.

"My dad wanted me to be a cook," Musgrove says. "And that's what I signed up for. But I changed it without him knowing to artillery because I wanted to fire the big guns. To me, that's exciting. Until I went to Germany and it was 20 below, and I said, 'Oh, I made a mistake.'"

Musgrove says he was sent to dusty, dirty, snake-ridden Fort Sill, Okla., to get his basic and artillery training. It was at Fort Sill that Musgrove, a huge music fan, first got word that Elvis Presley had died.

"They stopped the rifle range to tell us that," he recalls. "It was big news … it was like the president dying back then."

Fighting the Cold War

Musgrove trained in Oklahoma until September 1977 when he was sent to a West German town called Hanau, outside Frankfurt.

In Hanau, Musgrove says he did everything from working with radar to doing administrative work for the company commander and even deciphering potential orders for the deployment of nuclear weapons.

It was an anxious time to be in Germany, he says. It was during the Cold War, and Russian forces occupied East Germany and much of Berlin. The Berlin Wall still divided East from West and would continue to stand for more than a decade.

"It was very tense all of the time," he says. "We had to watch out for the terrorists because they were trying to get in and blow up our ammunition dumps, which they did if they could catch people asleep. I didn't sleep; I was too scared."

He described one night when he and some friends went to see a "new group" called Van Halen playing in Frankfurt. While they were at the concert, an alert erupted designed to test American response to a hypothetical Russian attack. Musgrove and his friends had to ditch most of Black Sabbath's set to get back to the post, and by the time they got back the whole post was gone, he remembers.

"We really got into trouble because we didn't tell anybody where we went," he says.

Despite the tense conflicts of the Cold War, Musgrove says, living in Germany had its good points. He used to go on hiking trips through the countryside and go sightseeing in cities with his German friends. He bought them cigarettes and Jack Daniel's and, in exchange, they took him everywhere, he says.

Musgrove also remembers hearing about the eruption of Mount St. Helens. Shortly after, one of his friends from school sent him an envelope with a bunch of "white stuff" in it.

"I threw it away because I was like 'Oh crap, it's drugs,'" he says. "I wrote him back and said, 'Don't send that crap.' We were more naïve than kids now. It was ash; I thought it was cocaine."

Musgrove also remembers how close he and his fellow soldiers were. He still keeps in contact with 10 to 12 of them today.

"I still talk to those guys now that we're all older and our chests have sagged some," he says. "One of them traveled through here last summer and stopped in Gateway (Mall) and called me, and I ran out there and had lunch with him. That's what I'd like to do — just go traveling and stop at somebody's house."

Serving on American soil

In 1980, at the end of his three years in the service, Musgrove returned to the United States. But that didn't mean his military days were over; he decided to stay in the Army.

A couple of factors kept him in, he says. One was his boss — a man Musgrove greatly respected — who convinced him to stay and advance in rank. Another was the bad economy, which convinced him not to abandon the financial security of military life.

"I think I was too chicken to get out because every time I'd come home there was a recession," he says. "The one thing about being in the military is you get fed, paid and you get a place to stay."

But Musgrove decided to look for a different job. He was asked if he wanted to be a recruiter, but he said he didn't like people telling him "no." He was asked if he wanted to be an airborne ranger, but he replied he was too "chicken" to jump out of a plane.

"I got a wild hair up my butt to be a drill sergeant," he says.

After two years in Fort Lewis, Wash., where he worked in promotions and doing other administrative work, he traveled to Fort Jackson, S.C. He served there for three years as a drill sergeant.

But Musgrove says he wasn't like the stereotypical drill sergeants that Hollywood presents, although he did force the recruits from Springfield High School — a rival of Thurston — to do more pushups.

"It wouldn't be vindictive, mean, scary crap," he says. "I would say really funny stuff, like 'Remember when we dumped that horse poop all over your commons?' And they'd be like, 'How did you know that?'"

Civilian life

As a kid in high school, Musgrove worked at a gas station where the Burger King on Franklin Boulevard now sits, right across the street from Oregon Hall.

Now, when he's not attending multimedia classes, he works in Oregon Hall.

"I just think that's wild," he says.

Musgrove's father helped build Oregon Hall. As a construction worker, Bill Musgrove helped construct numerous buildings on campus including the Onyx Bridge and Klamath Hall.

Musgrove remembers visiting Oregon Hall while it was under construction. Standing on the first floor and looking up, he could see only beams, he recalls.

But, ironically, Musgrove had a hard time getting hired at the University. After he got out of the Army in 1997, he turned in applications at several departments within the University but kept getting rejected. Departmental staffs were reluctant to hire him because he was once a drill sergeant, he says.

"Sometimes I'd hand (applications) in and they'd go, 'Oh, we really need a drill sergeant. We'll call you.'" he says. "And I'd be like, 'I don't just yell at people.'"

Then, a group of fellow veterans called him and told him to try the Business Affairs Office. He turned in his application for a receptionist position at 5 p.m. on the last day applications were being accepted.

They called him in for an interview, and things went well.

"She liked my humor and the way I was laid back because I'm nothing like you see on TV," he says.

But, not everybody understood his sense of humor.

"They said, 'Well, you were artillery. What can you do for us?'" Musgrove says. "I said, 'I can hit OSU from here.' I took that for a laugh. One person laughed. Two people went, 'Oh, god!'"

Contact the people/culture/faith reporter at jaredpaben@dailyemerald.com.

ACTIVIST

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of his role in the struggle for civil rights.

"We got in trouble, we got in the way," Lewis said. "It was good trouble."

Lewis also discussed his humble beginnings in rural southeast Alabama, where his sharecropper father tended to 110 acres.

"I didn't grow up in a big city like Eugene," Lewis said.

Lewis first took an active role in the civil rights struggle after he was denied admission to a college near his home.

"As a young child, I tasted the bitter fruits of segregation and racial discrimination, and I did not like it," Lewis said.

Lewis wrote to Martin Luther King Jr. and was soon invited to Montgomery, Ala., to meet King and fellow civil rights leader Ralph Abernathy.

On his trip to Montgomery, Lewis said he encountered numerous signs that enforced segregation.

Now, Lewis said, "They're gone and America is a better place and a better country."

As the 40th anniversary of the March on Washington approaches, Lewis holds steadfast to the non-violent ideals at the heart of the civil rights struggle.

"(Non-violence) is not simply a technique, not simply a tactic, but a way of life," Lewis said.

Melnick praised the congressman for sticking to his ideals.

"In many ways he hasn't changed, and that's what's so wonderful about him," Melnick said. "He still holds strongly on to those values."

Rep. Peter DeFazio, D-Ore., said Lewis is a good friend to have in Congress.

"He's a living inspiration," DeFazio said.

Moe Spencer, a second-year law student, had similar sentiments.

"It is good to hear someone who is living, breathing history in the flesh," Spencer said.

University President Dave Frohnmayer said Lewis' visit was an honor to the University.

"It's a chance to bring alive a period of history that seems to have fled too quickly from our memory," he said.

Contact the campus/federal politics reporter at chuckslothower@dailyemerald.com.

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Oregon Daily Emerald
P.O. Box 3159, Eugene OR 97403

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