

ODVA shines light on Oregon veterans

CAPI LYNN
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Cameron Smith, director of the Oregon Department of Veterans' Affairs, delivered an early Veterans Day message on Friday, Nov. 4.

His department serves 326,000 veterans across the state.

"We are one out of every 12 Oregonians, and we are a diverse community," Smith said. "We are men, and we are women. We are urban, and we are rural. We are young and aging. We are gay and straight, and every ethnicity and every creed.

"These Oregonians are the motivation for our work."

Veterans representing four generations across five major wars, from World War II to Iraq-Afghanistan, stood with Smith in front of the World War I Doughboy Statue on the grounds of the ODVA in Salem.

"We didn't want to favor any one generation over the next," Smith explained of the location.

The ODVA didn't intend to play favorites when it came to representing the branches of service, but three of the six veterans highlighted during the program served in the same branch as Smith.

"I feel like we've got too many Marines up here," he joked.

The tone of the event shifted when an



MOLLY J. SMITH / STATESMAN JOURNAL
Oregon Department of Veterans' Affairs Director Cameron Smith talks to World War II Army nurse Jean Wojnowski on Friday, Nov. 4. Wojnowski served as a nurse in the South Pacific and recently turned 101 years old.

emotional Smith introduced Wendell Pelham, a Gold Star dad representing military families. Pelham's son, Army Spc. John Pelham, was killed Feb. 12, 2014 in combat operations in Afghani-

stan.

"We know they do not always wear the uniform, but there is no question that our military families serve," Smith said. "He's dedicating himself to advocacy for

our veterans and our military families." Here's a snapshot of six of the veterans recognized:

» Jean Wojnowski, who served as an Army nurse who served in the South Pacific during World War II. She turned 101 in May, and will be a speaker at the statewide Veterans Day celebration hosted by the ODVA at 3 p.m. on Nov. 11 at the Oregon World War II Memorial in Salem.

» Bob Cassidy, who served in the 1st Marine Air Wing during the Korean War. He is president of the Korean War Veterans Association, Oregon Trail Chapter.

» Steve Bobb, who served in the Marines during the Vietnam War. He is the Veterans Special Event Board Chair for the Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde.

» Eric Ensley, who served in the Navy during Operation Desert Shield/Desert Storm. He is supervisor of Multnomah County Veterans' Services and president of the Oregon County Veterans Service Officers Association.

» Rosy Macias, who served in the Marines as an aviation supply clerk. She is the veterans outreach coordinator at Salem Vet Center and an executive member of Serving Our Veterans at Home.

» Jerry Glesmann, who served combat tours in Iraq and Afghanistan with the Oregon Army National Guard. He served for more than 28 years in the Army and National Guard.

Price

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country where they could run, play and build forts. 'If that's our end goal then let's just make it happen now,' he said to his wife. 'We could wait and maybe in 5 or 10 years it could work out in Nashville or we could move ahead with the life we want right now.'

While his location may have changed, Price's musical focus has not. He is still writing, playing and pitching songs to artists. Additionally, he is working with marketing companies in Portland to network.

"I'm doing that dream of getting enough irons in the fire," he said.

While in Nashville, Price recorded six songs, which he plans to release on an album in the spring.

"I wrote a ton of songs there, but six I really felt were me," Price said. "Some of the things I wrote on this album feels a little different. It's like it's its own thing. I want to keep it, not exactly a concept

album, but give it its own life."

After his Nov. 12 show, the musician will keep things low key through the end of the year but is looking forward to getting involved in the community, reconnecting with his fellow northwest musicians, meeting new people, making music and having fun together.

"One of the big things I learned in Nashville, there are so many people there," he said, "It's all about the community and your fellow musicians who are also doing cool stuff. It's so much more community versus competition. There are so many of us, let's just all be friends."

The show will start at 7:30 p.m. Doors open at 6:30 p.m. and seating is first come, first seated. While the show does not have a ticketed price, donations will be accepted at the door.

Price is asking people to RSVP on the Facebook event page at [facebook.com/events/1672033069776476](https://www.facebook.com/events/1672033069776476), and also requests that kids younger than 10 stay home.

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COURTESY OF MATTHEW PRICE

After two years in Nashville, Matthew Price is back and the musician is celebrating his return with a concert 6:30 p.m. Saturday, Nov. 12, at the Brush Creek Playhouse in Silverton.

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