

# Appeal Tribune

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## ARMED FORCES DAY

# World War II veterans honored at State Capitol

**Virginia Barreda** Salem Statesman Journal  
USA TODAY NETWORK

World War II Army combat medic Vern Staley still remembers the brutal winter of 1944, when his toes froze as his battalion fought the Germans.

Staley and other troops in the 70th Infantry Division arrived at Bischoff on the west bank of the Rhine River on Christmas Eve.

Dinner consisted of a box with Spam, crackers, four cigarettes and a stale cookie.

"We called it our Christmas present," said Staley,

95. "We heard machine guns and we knew we had arrived."

Staley was one of the World War II veterans from Oregon who were honored at the National Guard Career and Armed Forces Day celebration Tuesday at the State Capitol. Veterans Dick Cox, 91, and John Schneider, 93, also attended with their families.

The ceremony began at noon and featured music from the Oregon Army National Guard's 234th Army Band. The Howitzer salute was performed by the "Governor's Own" Bravo Battery, 2nd Battalion, 218th Field Artillery Regiment and the 142nd Fighter Wing also

had a fly-over.

Military equipment from various units throughout the Oregon National Guard were also on display.

"It really touches you that people are taking their time to honor military," Staley said. "It's an honor."

### Navy veteran Dick Cox

Dick Cox enlisted in the Navy when he was 17, after the attack on Pearl Harbor in December 1941. He tend-

See **VETERANS**, Page 2A

# SILVERTON BAND COMPETES IN CORVALLIS



Silverton High School's Wind Ensemble under the direction of Frank Petrik during the OSAA Class 5A band competition on May 8 in Corvallis.

DONNA BAHR/SPECIAL TO THE STATESMAN JOURNAL



**Forward This**  
Capi Lynn  
Salem Statesman Journal  
USA TODAY NETWORK

# Friendship Brigade zeroes in on nursing homes

Nadine Owings makes the rounds every week, going room to room at a Keizer skilled nursing facility.

She isn't a nurse or a psychologist, but she's making a difference in the physical and mental well-being of residents.

They're not her patients. They're her friends.

"I really enjoy it and look forward to it," Owings said during one of her recent Thursday morning visits. "I'm having the best time ever."

Owings is a volunteer with the Friendship Brigade, which recruits, trains and connects caring volunteers with isolated seniors living in community care and nursing facilities in the Salem area.

The Friendship Brigade is a two-year pilot project sponsored by Larry Tokarski's Mountain West Investment Corporation in partnership with Friends of Center 50+, the Salem senior center.

It was launched about a year ago with the goal to spread awareness about senior isolation and loneliness, something one-third of older Americans experience.

### Loneliness triggers health risks

Research has linked social isolation and loneliness to a higher risk of physical and mental health problems.

Loneliness increases the risk of dementia by 40 percent, according to a study by the Florida State University College of Medicine. Other studies claim it's more dangerous than obesity and as damaging as smoking.

And its impact will become more widespread as the aging population grows.

"You can't assign people a friend," said Heidi Miller, coordinator of the Friendship Brigade. "We're creating space and occasion for people to discover one another, and that's a challenge."

Miller is a familiar name and face in the community. She's a former director of the local Meals on Wheels program.

"The meals program was really a daily contact with a caring volunteer, that was the signature of the

See **HOMES**, Page 3A



Mateo Pineda, 2, Eva Pineda, 4, and Zora Thaggard, 3, all listen to a story during a visit by the Friendship Brigade, a group that focuses on intergenerational programming, at Avamere Transitional Care at Sunnyside in Salem May 6.  
ANNA REED/STATESMAN JOURNAL

# Endowment helps bridge funding gap at Willamette U.

**Ben Botkin** Salem Statesman Journal  
USA TODAY NETWORK

Willamette University's revenues have fallen short of expenses in recent years by millions of dollars annually, tax filings show.

But the shift in the university's financial picture doesn't mean it's in a downward spiral or facing insolvency. School officials say the university is on a sustainable path forward with its endowment fund still growing.

The declining revenues for Willamette University reflect a change in fortunes and broader challenges facing liberal arts schools nationwide.

Competition for new students — and revenue — is intense. Online schools hawk convenience. And many students opt for vocational-tech training to more

quickly enter the workforce, a niche filled by community colleges after the Great Recession swept the country in 2008.

Willamette University, located across the street from the Oregon State Capitol and one of the oldest schools in the West, isn't immune. Its October enrollment was the lowest of the last decade — less than 2,500.

Meanwhile, net revenues have changed rapidly.

For the tax year ending May 31, 2015, Willamette University reported a net gain of \$33.6 million in revenue after expenses. Since then, that figure has plummeted negatively, tax records show.

The annual gap between revenues and expenses has ranged from \$13.9 million to \$10.6 million for each

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