

YOUNG VOICES**'I want to see how far I can go in life'**

HRVHS CLASS of 2015 member Stan Ocheskey wrote this essay to apply for the U.S. Service Academies, via the office of U.S. Rep. Greg Walden, and was accepted last winter to the U.S. Air Force Academy. Ocheskey is the son of Brent and Emily Ocheskey.

By **STAN OCHESEKEY**

I awoke to the sound of the front door unlocking in the early hours of New Year's morning. As the lights came on, I saw my dad standing in his bulky police uniform, his thoughts much heavier than his gear. He grimly told me he had just helped cover a bad crash on the freeway, and we both knew that what he had seen would be with him for life. My dad has always been an inspiring influence in my life. As an Oregon State

Trooper, he has helped our community in many ways by making a difference every day. He has sparked a sense of responsibility in me to challenge myself and serve my country.

It is my goal to attend an institution where I am mentally and physically challenged to be my best, where I can support our nation's values. This is why I am requesting your nomination for the Naval, Air Force, and Military Academies. Doing well in school, making careful life choices, taking the lead in my school and district FFA organizations, developing into a poised public speaker and a strong water polo player have brought me to this point. I am ready for more. I want to see how far I can go in life, discover all of my capabilities while dedicating myself to my country.



Photo by Jennifer Furrow

STAN OCHESEKEY gets a hug from his mother, Emily, at Stan's Air Force acceptance ceremony at Hood River Valley High School in December, attended by Rep. Greg Walden.

If I am selected for a military academy, you can expect me to give my best effort every day, to work in an individual or team setting to meet any challenge presented to me. I will serve my country with pride, determination, and a sense of re-

sponsibility. I am a confident leader and public speaker, and I'm excited to contribute those skills to one of the U.S. Service Academies. I find leading natural, but I also diligently take direction from those in charge. I would represent

any of the academies as a student and a member of their water polo team because I'm 6'6" with a long reach, a powerful shot, endurance, and speed. I am a team player who communicates effectively with team members and encourages everyone involved.

A challenging experience is what I expect from the academies. I know I will grow stronger in the skills I already possess. I am eager to discover and develop other capabilities and emerge from an academy a highly skilled, capable and confident leader. "Iron sharpens iron, and one man sharpens another." I expect to discover this truth within one of the academies, surrounded by many inspiring men and women who are as passionate as I am.

I hold myself to high stan-

dards in all areas of my life — social, spiritual, and academic. Besides my academic, athletic and leadership qualifications, I am certain I would excel at any of the academies because I easily adapt to new situations and take a calm, concentrated approach to problem-solving. I believe that America is a positive place that protects the rights of its citizens to the fullest extent. I am eager to actively work to defend these American values at the academies and beyond in service to my country and its citizens. Service requires sacrifice, but I am ready to take on that responsibility, just as my dad did that difficult January night. My father has great mental and emotional strength. I hope that one day I can serve as he has and help those who need my strength.

ANDERSON

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and need."

Anderson was hired through the House Wounded Warrior Program, which is sponsored by the Department of Defense to help disabled veterans transition from military life into a civilian career.

She will work out of the Congressman's office in Bend, where she resides, through the end of 2016.

"I am like a kid in a candy store about this opportunity," said Anderson.

Female soldiers, sailors, airmen and Marines make up 14.6 percent of active duty troops. Although the prohibition against women serving in combat units was lifted in 1994, it has been U.S. policy to exclude women from infantry units.

While discussion continues in Congress and the Pentagon about putting women on the front lines, Thompson said they are already there.

During the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, women served as foot soldiers in door-to-door searches and,

like Anderson, provided convoy security on missions and went out in the field on patrols.

Roadside bombs in the wars of the Middle East have been the number one killer of U.S. troops.

About 160 female soldiers have lost their lives during the Post 9/11 wars and most were killed by enemy action. Thousands more have been injured, some losing legs and arms in explosions.

However, with few exceptions, news stories about their tragic deaths have rarely captured national attention — even though their losses are unprecedented in modern history.

Twenty of the female troops who died were mothers of one or more children age 18 or younger. One woman was mortally injured after the bomb she was attempting to disarm detonated. She died in the arms of her soldier husband, who was stationed nearby.

"I was in a military police company and only 20 of us out of 170 were women," said Anderson. "We all became brothers and sisters — I loved my battle buddies."

She joined the military from her home state of Geor-

gia out of a strong sense of patriotism. She deployed in 2006 with the 127th Military Police Company, which was based in Germany.

Her duties as part of Operation Iraqi Freedom often found her traveling roads laced with IEDs (Improvised Explosive Devices).

She also helped transport enemy combatants who had been captured and identified as "high value targets." For her combat-related work in that arena, Anderson earned a PSYOP (Psychological Operations) patch that has since been mounted for display.

She remembers tensions running high after an Iraqi Police Station was ambushed on Jan. 20, 2007. The men who staged the attack were wearing what appeared to be legitimate U.S. military uniforms and badges but were suspected of being terrorists from Iran.

Once inside the compound of coalition forces, they unleashed a brazen and deadly assault on Americans, killing one service member and capturing four others in a hail of grenades and gunfire.

The enemy combatants headed for the Iranian bor-

der but did not make it because Anderson's squad tracked them down with help from Iraqi policemen.

When U.S. soldiers reached the convoy of stolen American SUVs, the militants shot and killed the four captives and abandoned the vehicles, along with uniforms, equipment and rifles, according to Anderson.

The soldiers who died that day had been in the process of planning to ensure the safety of thousands of Iraqi people expected to visit the holy city for an upcoming holiday.

The attack, which lasted 20 minutes, occurred on the same day the U.S. lost at least 20 other troops, including a dozen in a helicopter crash.

Questions about how the attackers gained access to the safe zone, and who they were, remain unanswered and have spawned a Facebook page called "Sold out — Blood Betrayal in Karbala," and a documentary of the same name is in the process of being made.

Although Anderson has strong feelings about what happened in Karbala, she declined to comment on the incident during a recent interview with a Chronicle re-

porter.

She returned to Germany from Iraq in 2008 and received her honorable discharge at the rank of sergeant the next year. She then headed to college and earned a bachelor's degree in psychology from Oregon State University before deciding to make Oregon her home.

"The reason I went for that degree was to be able to help vets — that's what I'm all about," she said.

Her former first sergeant, Ray Domenech, posted this message about Walden's hiring of Anderson on the Congressman's Facebook page: "Excellent choice, you will be hard pressed to find a smarter, more motivated and caring individual than Sgt. Anderson..."

Anderson can be reached at Walden's Central Oregon office at 541-389-4408 or via email at Margie.Anderson@mail.house.gov.

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		5		1	2
2		9	3	8	4
7		2	5		6

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TRAINS

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Hood River adopted a resolution banning coal and oil trains rolling through town in December. The document states, "because the rail alignment runs through our downtown area, the impact of existing and proposed oil trains is potentially catastrophic in terms of loss of life and devastation of the City of Hood River community, environment and econo-

my."

In January, The Dalles passed a resolution urging state officials to pursue tougher federal regulations of crude oil shipments.

The goal of the environmental groups' federal suit is to send the new oil train rules back to USDOT in order to make revisions, said Kristin Boyles, an Earthjustice attorney on the case.

Boyles said the suit is primarily focused on "fixing the flaws in the rule" that USDOT released in early May. "We would ask the

court to strike down (those) particular aspects of the rule," said Boyles.

The rail industry also took issue with the federal rules, but in the opposite direction. American Petroleum Institute filed a lawsuit on Monday in the U.S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit that asks for more time — it challenges the timeline for retrofitting rail cars and requirements for electronic brakes.

The new regulations are expected to cost an estimated \$2.5 billion to implement

over the next two decades, according to estimates in a May 1 press release by USDOT.

Lang explained that the suit in favor of tighter rail regulations will likely be "consolidated" with other legal challenges around the nation, and be decided in a federal appeals court. Lang said the Friends have worked with Earthjustice in the past.

The case is Sierra Club, et al v. Secretary of Transportation, U.S. Court of Appeals for the 9th Circuit, No. 15-71461.

DALBEY

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munity members alike and I have no doubt she will continue her commendable service to Hood River County's children as the Human Resources Director for the school district," Superintendent

Dan Goldman said.

Dalbey was raised in South Dakota, graduated with a Bachelor of Arts in Psychology and Spanish from Bucknell University in Pennsylvania, and earned her Masters of Education in Administration from Concordia University.

Her teaching career began in 1996 in the Denver Public Schools as a teacher of Eng-

lish for non-native English speakers. She came to the Hood River County School District in 2000 to teach in the migrant preschool and Kindergarten at Pine Grove Elementary School. Dalbey became the vice-principal at Wy'east Middle School in 2004 and moved into the Wy'east principalship in 2006.

Dalbey is multilingual in

English, Spanish and Russian, plays the viola and violin, and is married to Tom Dalbey, who teaches fourth grade at May Street Elementary School. Catherine and Tom have two children, both attending May Street.

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Soroptomist names 2015 'Women of Distinction'

Soroptomist International of Hood River's welcomes Allyson Pate, Ann Frodel and Tami Swanson as the 2015 winners of its annual Women of Distinction Award.

Each year since 1975, Soroptomist of Hood River

has worked with community leaders and organizations to honor women whose work in a professional or volunteer capacity has made a significant difference in the quality of life in our community.

The three women will be introduced by their nomina-

tors at an awards luncheon in their honor on Wednesday, May 27, from 11:30 to 1 p.m. in the Best Western Hood River Inn Gorge Room.

Tickets for the luncheon are \$24 each and available at Waucoma Bookstore.

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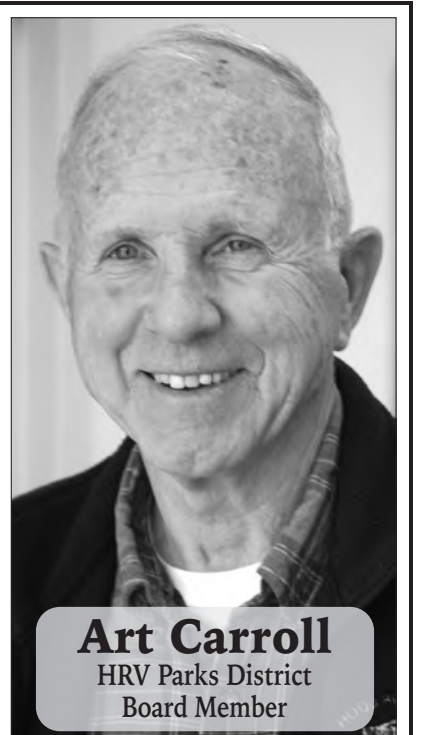


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