

With War Abroad, Are We Prepared at Home?

continued **▲** from Front

but the actual need is nearly \$40 billion.

Braibish said he did not know what Oregon's share of the \$21 billion would be.

The National Guard Armory on Northeast 33rd Drive is not experiencing a shortage of equipment — their battalion is in charge of supplying equipment to other units in the area and providing support for community, state and federal missions — but the ongoing war has affected them in other ways.

"The big impact for us is personnel," said Dora Van Zandt, the armory's human resources coordi-

nator.

Van Zandt said the federal mission in Afghanistan took the majority of her battalion's personnel — around 350 members out of a total of around 500.

They were deployed to Afghanistan in February 2006 and are expected to return this summer. In the meantime, the battalion is finding "imaginative and more specific" ways to train with a much smaller unit, Van Zandt said.

"We could do a state mission but we'd have to prioritize how to best use our resources," she added.

Since the Iraq invasion dozens of funerals have been held for Oregon soldiers lost in the war.

Many of them were members of the Oregon National Guard.

Gov. Ted Kulongoski has been a vocal advocate for our troops, attending and speaking at funerals for fallen soldiers, but at the same time he is a vocal critic of the troop

decisions concerning the guard's federal missions — the Pentagon holds exclusive authority over National Guard deployment outside of the United States.

So Kulongoski "continues to use the bully pulpit," said his spokes-

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— Dora Van Zandt, Kliever Armory's human resources coordinator

build-up in Iraq.

Although the governor has expressed dissent over the war and is Commander in Chief of the Oregon National Guard, he cannot make

man Jake Weigler.

He said the governor is working with the U.S. Congress to discuss the guard's resources, and in an indirect way is taking action to re-

duce what he perceives is the root cause of the conflicts.

"The governor sees the conflict is mostly about our dependence on fossil fuels and our need to continue open access to resources in the Middle East," Weigler said. "His agenda here is intimately tied to reducing our dependence on foreign oil."

Kulongoski has also created a regional global warming agreement with five other states to set limits to reduce carbon emissions, with reduction targets over the next 18 months.

Critics of the war within the Oregon House of Representatives passed a bill last month urging the president to reconsider the expan-

sion of troop levels in Iraq.

The bill also urges Congress to halt further funding for the war's escalation. Two of the bills sponsors were Rep. Chip Shields and Sen. Avel Gordly, both of whom represent north and northeast Portland. The bill passed in the house 33-25, with the support of three Republicans.

"I don't want this to be a Democrat versus Republican issue," Shields said. "I think that no matter, many will see that our involvement in Iraq at this point is only making things worse."

Senate President Peter Courtney said his group of lawmakers will also consider a resolution on the Iraq war, but no timetable has been set.

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PHOTO BY MARK WASHINGTON/THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

An ex-gang outreach worker and his associate are accused of vandalism at The Victory Outreach Church on Northeast Alberta Street.

Ex-Gang Worker Arrested

After church hit by graffiti

An ex-gang outreach worker and his associate were arrested early March 31 after spray painting foul language, gang signs and police code for murder on Victory Outreach Church on Northeast Alberta Street and 30th Avenue.

Samuel Benitez, 31, was arrested with Jose Gonzalez, 21, around 3 a.m. Saturday after the church alarm alerted Portland police, who stopped the pair in a 1995 Nissan Maxima after it sped in reverse from the church with its headlights off.

Victory houses a recovery facility and offers shelter assistance as well as an extensive anti-gang ministry.

The graffiti sprayed on the church and a van parked outside mostly referenced the "13th Street" gang, and the gang code "187" which is code for murder in California, on the front and side of the church.

Benitez began volunteering with the non-profit agency Northeast Coalition of Neighborhood's Youth Gang Outreach last year, but was let go in November after his parole officer said he could no longer work with youth.

Benitez and Gonzalez face felony charges of first-degree criminal mischief and Benitez faces allegations of attempting to elude police and reckless driving, plus a detainer for a parole violation.

Church members cleaned up the graffiti before Sunday's service.

Girl Killed on Bicycle

(AP) - A 5-year-old girl was killed Sunday in Vancouver after she was hit by a truck while riding her bicycle.

The victim was Selena Bailey of Vancouver.

She died at Southwest Washington Medical Center of head trauma after the 11:30 a.m. accident.

The accident was witnessed by the girl's twin sister. It happened outside her home near Southeast 188th Avenue and 11th Way.

Police say the driver of the 1999 Ford F350 pickup truck that struck her, 31-year-old Kenneth Jones of Vancouver, was not speeding.



Selena Bailey

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The **Portland Observer** Established 1970

USPS 959-680

4747 NE Martin Luther King, Jr. Blvd., Portland, OR 97211

EDITOR-IN-CHIEF, PUBLISHER: Charles H. Washington

EDITOR: Michael Leighton

PUBLIC RELATIONS: Mark Washington

CREATIVE DIRECTOR: Paul Neufeldt

OFFICE MANAGER: Kathy Linder

REPORTER: Sarah Blount

REPORTER: Nicole Ronal Hooper

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POSTMASTER: Send address changes to **Portland Observer**,
PO Box 3137, Portland, OR 97208

CALL 503-288-0033 FAX 503-288-0015

news@portlandobserver.com ads@portlandobserver.com
subscription@portlandobserver.com