

Cox

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I met a lot of nice people and saw a lot of nice places," Cox said. "I always had the support of my parents, and the calls home to my mom got me through being away from home."

Being deployed and Dehdadi

In March 2007, Cox was deployed to Iraq. In 2008 she was deployed to Kuwait. In January 2010, she was deployed to Afghanistan to build Dehdadi 1 and Dehdadi 2, two bases for troops.

This project was one of Cox's favorites because she had the opportunity to be a crew leader. She enjoyed working with different people, working with the equipment and being able to see a project come to fruition.

"We started from the ground up," Cox said. "We took the dozers out there and started mining it down a couple feet. Then we built the burrows around it and then leveled out the area with scrapers to cut down anywhere from a foot to 6 or 7 feet."

Her crew also brought gravel in where they were going to have the equipment yard and built the security gates. Anything a base needed — they built it from scratch. Construction did have trials, since some of the locals created tension and tried to prevent the base from being completed.

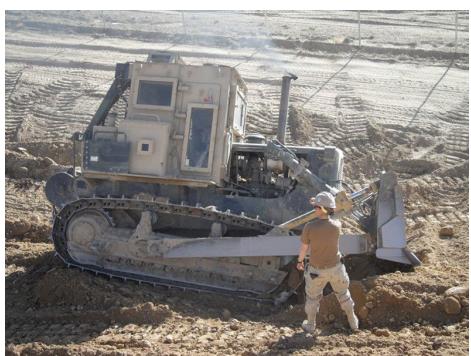
"When we were trying to build the main supply route, people destroyed the roads ... so supplies could not go in and out of bases," Cox said. "They would RPG (rocket-propelled grenade) the roads or have small arms fire at the camp at night. They were just trying to make it (so) there were no suppliers out of those bases."

After 10 months of construction, the projects were finished and Cox returned to California to finish her service with four years of shore duty.

Being a woman in the Navy

The entire time Cox served in the Navy, she said she was never treated differently or singled out for being a woman. She was treated the same as everybody else.

However, there were times when her gender came into play. Cox was once called to go on a project on the Pakistani border, but no



Contributed photo/Cheltsy Cox
Cheltsy Cox guides a dozer as the crew leader in Afghanistan.

women were serving on the base.

"It was all guys. There was nothing set up on those bases for women," Cox said. "My chief wanted me to go, but they said, 'There are no bathrooms set up for women.' They talked to me, and I said that I wanted to go."

So she went to work on the project, despite the lack of amenities. While at the base, the men were respectful but didn't give her any special treatment, she said.

Advice from a veteran

When considering joining the Navy, it is important to choose a job that you would stick with, Cox said.

"Take the positive out of everything that you do with your job," Cox said. "It's not always gonna be bad. There's always gonna be something good in the end."

Letters and packages from family and community members also help people in service feel support that can help them get through tough times, she said.

"When I was on deployment, my parents sent me care packages all the time and that really helped," Cox said. "That always perked things up and helped when I got things in the mail. Other people would send letters, and that would always help me, too."

Since being home, she has been working at Top Ranch and living the ranch life in Monument. She spends her time raising cows, raising pigs, building fences, catching fish and doing all of her favorite outdoor activities.

She said her time in the Navy taught her patience and gave a different perspective on how to carry out projects for different pieces of equipment.

Rudishauser

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California, Rudishauser caught pneumonia and was hospitalized for more than a week.

"It fouled me up," he said. He received more than six weeks of training in infantry, then advanced infantry, and later became a supply sergeant, specialist 5 rank.

Rudishauser's first area after training was at Camp Hanford in Washington, a highly protected area.

"The first atomic bomb, tested in New Mexico, was made at Camp Hanford," he said. "We were there for aircraft protection. We had several 120mm cannons. The purpose was to shoot down airplanes if they came, which they never did."

He added, "We practiced shooting them down — took about three days for my ears to quit ringing. The shells were huge."

When he turned 21, Rudishauser was sent to Fort Richardson in Alaska to be ground support for Fort Elmendorf Air Force Base, not far from Anchorage. It's now called Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson.

"We were headquarters supply," he said. "Half-ton trucks supplied automatic weapons, self-propelled tanks, half tracks, anything they could attach automatic weapons to and drive around. We would bring them to headquarters."

"Elmendorf had an early warning system," he said, adding it was a cold war, and it had not wound down at all. Although hostilities stopped in 1953, there was never a formal end to the war.



The Eagle/Angel Carpenter
Carol and Byron Rudishauser

He said they were in the "boondocks" and stayed in eight-man Quonset huts with an oil stove in the center and four bunks on each side.

"The weather was bone-chilling, sometimes reaching 45 degrees below zero," he said. "We'd hang wool blankets in front of the door."

The food on base was less than desirable at times.

Once a week, their meal consisted of World War II-era C-rations.

"The Air Force didn't get them, so if we could get off the base and eat there, we would," he said.

Another memorable experience was playing a softball game against another outfit at midnight. "It wasn't bright, but you could see the ball," he said.

While in Alaska, he befriended Robert Sooter of Arkansas, who was also enlisted. After 64 years, they still keep in touch and have visited one another.

For more than 60 years the friends have exchanged Christmas gifts. Sooter gives Rudishauser black walnuts from groves in Arkansas and Rudishauser sends Tillamook cheese from the Oregon coast.

Before Rudishauser's military career was over, he rode on a ship to Kodiak Island, then flew to Fort Lewis, Washington.

He was honorably discharged in September 1956 and married Carol Ricco of John Day two years later.

Through the GI Bill, Rudishauser earned education degrees, including a master's from Eastern Oregon University in La Grande.

The majority of his 33 years in education was spent teaching at Prairie City School. He taught junior high and high school language arts, and he later became Prairie City principal.

When the Bates Mill closed, students who stayed in the area came to Prairie City, but other families left to find work elsewhere. At one point, Prairie City High School had an enrollment of 256.

Rudishauser passed on the job of superintendent/principal, since he and his family put up hay in the summers at Golden Willow Ranch on Indian Creek Road, which had belonged to Carol's family.

He retired 20 years ago, at age 65.

He is now a member of Prairie City's American Legion Post 106 and in the past was on the Prairie City Volunteer Fire Board and was voted a John Day Elks Lodge 1834 Exalted Ruler twice.

Rudishauser said his military service taught him to respect the flag, the country and the people.

He said what stands out the most was learning "tolerance of other people, because we had people from the east coast, south and west, they have different ways, and you just have to learn to be tolerant of others ... and also taking orders."

Meals and events planned for veterans

Blue Mountain Eagle

Are you a veteran? Several Grant County businesses plan to provide meals and more for veterans. On Veterans Day, The Outpost, in collaboration with True Value, will be providing free meals to veterans all day. Veterans can choose between

breakfast, lunch or dinner for their free meal. The Squeeze-In is partnering with Les Schwab Tires to provide a free meal for veterans all day.

The Elks Lodge will be hosting several events for veterans. On Nov. 8, members of the Grant County Piecemakers Quilt Guild will award Quilts

of Valor to several local veterans. The event will provide a taco feed, which will be free for veterans and children under 3, or \$6 per person.

The Elks Lodge and American Legion will host a Veterans Day Ceremony on Nov. 11 at the Seventh Street Complex at 11 a.m. After the cere-

mony is over, the Elks Lodge will host a free beef stew lunch, which is available to anybody who wants to go.

A dinner sponsored by the American Legion Auxiliary Prairie City Unit 106 will be provided at the Prairie

City School cafeteria at 6 p.m. Nov. 11. Glazed ham will be the main dish, and people can bring a potluck dish to share.

Happy Veterans Day
Honoring All Who Served

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Grant County Chamber of Commerce

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