

OREGONIZER

Inside This Issue:

Greetings1
 Veteran’s Day Statement from David Slimp,
 International President1
 Pets For Vets2
 New Measure of Economic Activity in Oregon3
 Legislative News.....3
 In Honor of Veterans 4
 A Date To Remember 4
 Well Being5
 10 Reasons to Join Professional Organizations5
 Awards6
 Welcome New Members6

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 Vice President – Grant Axtell
 Treasurer – Judy Mattos
 Past President – Jeff Hunter

November 2011

Greetings from the President:

The month of November brings veterans to the foreground of our thoughts. We had several articles submitted regarding the veterans around us.

I do hope each office is busy working on award nominations for those co-workers who deserve to be recognized. This is a way to let the individual know that their work had not gone unnoticed.

Stephanie Stevens, President Oregon Chapter

**VETERANS’ DAY STATEMENT
 DAVID G. SLIMP
 IAWP INTERNATIONAL PRESIDENT**

Frankfort, KY – This Veterans’ Day the International Association of Workforce Professionals (IAWP) proudly join the millions of Americans throughout our nation, and indeed with people throughout the world, in honoring and paying tribute to the brave men and women who have served in the armed forces protecting the freedoms we enjoy.

Veterans’ Day (November 11th) formally became a federal holiday on May 13, 1938. The legislation creating the holiday stated it would be “a day to be dedicated to the cause of world peace and to be thereafter celebrated and known as 'Armistice Day'”. On November 8, 1954, Congress formally renamed Armistice Day as Veterans’ Day. As workforce professionals every day we help our service members with unemployment benefits and employment possibilities. Thus for us, Veterans’ Day is not just a day off, it is a time to reflect upon and honor those who have served.

IAWP would also like to pay a particular tribute to the men and women who have been lost in the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. We honor your sacrifice and keep your loved ones in our thoughts and prayers.

PETS FOR VETS: HELPING TURN LIVES AROUND

BY: ERIN J. BERNARD, Cannon Beach Gazette Reprinted with permission as appearing in the Nov 10, 2011 Seaside Signal.

Seaside resident Jim Ballos has a favorite saying: "There's no better psychiatrist than a puppy licking your face."

For Ballos, it's more than just a cutesy bumper sticker slogan. Not long ago, he was homeless, socially outcast, and almost completely unhinged by a two-year tour of duty he's taken during Desert Storm.

Upon returning home from the Persian-Gulf War in 1992, Ballos found himself in an abyss so deep, no amount of counseling or medication or entreatings could pull him back out again. His family couldn't help him. His therapists couldn't help him. And the medicines they put him on left him in a dreamy stupor.

Then came Digit, a docile, Jack Russell terrier and constant, doting companion. And, with him, a second chance that Ballos is determined to pay forward to other veterans across the Pacific Northwest.

In high school, Ballos enrolled with the National Guard. He served in Longview and Seattle for four years, but he was hungry to see combat action, so he enlisted in the army. Ballos deployed to Germany with the A/40th Field Artillery MLRS (Multiple Launching Rockets System) 3rd Armored Division. From there, it was off to the Persian Gulf War, a mere two weeks after the birth of his youngest son.

Ballos worked primarily as a cook, but he also manned a 50 caliber and made regular ammunition and ration runs. He found himself unsettled by what he witnessed: land mines a few steps in front of him, carpet bombings, spates of oil well and chemical fires that regularly blackened the sky.

When he returned to the States in 1992, Ballos and his family moved to Austin, Texas, where he served a prestigious two-year apprenticeship as a chef's apprentice at the Hyatt Regency. Things were good, for awhile.

The family returned to Washington State, and Ballos began working as a fine dining chef.

But as the years passed, Ballos sunk into a deep depression. He started drinking heavily and was in and out of the local psychiatric ward and - after a second divorce - Ballos attempted suicide.

"I ended up in a mental institute because I had a breakdown," he said. "And that was the beginning of a very difficult four-year road. It was nasty."

He found himself homeless, disoriented and wandering the West Coast from Olympia to Northern California. In 2007, he made his way back to Washington. At a local crisis center, he was diagnosed with post-traumatic stress disorder and severe depression. He began a heavy course of medication in a respite unit on the local VA Campus.

He thought about the times in life when he'd been happiest, and he hearkened back to his days growing up on a ranch in Kalama, Wash., to the animals he so loved as a boy. So he pitched the idea of a therapy dog to his doctor.

Ballos was matched up with Digit through Pets for Vets, a charitable organization that matches rescue pets with veterans across the country. The animals are fostered and trained before being turned over to the vet. It's a service performed at no cost to the vet, and at a cost of \$500 to the organization, which relies on donations and grants.

As often happens, Ballos and Digit developed a quick and intense bond. "There was a transformation as if I had put a super-hero outfit on," Ballos said. "All of a sudden I was able to socialize, and started being more physically active."

Ballos saw the way other vets warmed up to Digit as the two strolled across campus, and so he got in touch with Clarissa Black, Pets for Vets director. By December 2010, they had a Northwest regional chapter of the organization up and running. So far, they've paired two pets with vets and there are more in the works.

Ballos now sits on Pets For Vets' National Board of Advisors, and he's working to expand the Northwest chapter into more remote areas. To find out more about Pets for Vets, email Jim Ballos at csidejimmer662011@gmail.com.

"So many guys are hesitant to take that first unknown step," he said. "But we're here to offer hope and an alternative to medications. "With 90 percent of the vets I've talked to, it's up to us," he added. "The government is doing things to help, but it's not really enough."

Ballos story is, ultimately, a success story. But like many veterans he had to seek out help for himself.

NEW MEASURE OF ECONOMIC ACTIVITY IN OREGON

Submitted by Gail Krumenauer

Each month Oregon Economic Forum releases the University of Oregon Index of Economic Indicators. The latest release shows an increase of 0.2 percent to 89.1 in September. This slight upturn breaks five consecutive months of UO Index declines.

However, author Tim Duy notes in the September summary that the index has fallen by 5.8 percent (annualized) over the last six months. Duy indicates that declines of this magnitude have foreshadowed labor market recessions in the past, and that planning for the next year should include the ability to react quickly should economic conditions deteriorate.

The UO Index has also expanded, and now includes the new Oregon Measure of Economic Activity! Where the UO Index is -- as its name indicates -- a measure indexed to 1997, the Oregon Measure of Economic Activity is zero-based. A measure above zero indicates above-average economic activity for the state, while a measure below zero reflects below-average activity. The Oregon Measure of Economic activity improved from -1.12 to -0.78 between August and September. The three-month moving average also showed improvement over the period, from -1.13 to -1.03.

While an improvement, the summary emphasizes that these numbers still indicate growth well below the 1990-2011 growth trend. Duy mentions manufacturing, construction, household, and services sectors as contributors to the statewide economic weakness.

Read more in the full State of Oregon Economic Indicators [release](#). Follow the link or if you have a paper copy of the Oregonizer, the link is: <http://econforum.uoregon.edu/indexes.html> .

LEGISLATIVE NEWS

Bill Would Aid Fallen Soldiers' Spouses

Press release reprinted from the Website of Senator Jeff Merkley

Washington -- Oregon's Senator Jeff Merkley and Barbara Boxer (D-CA) introduced November 11, the Spouses of Heroes Education Act, which would amend the Post-9/11 GI Bill to include spousal eligibility for the Fry Scholarship. This expands the program to provide the same full undergraduate education benefits to spouses that are currently available to the children of a member of the Armed Forces who died in the line of duty.

"When a member of the Armed Forces' life is taken while serving our country, the least we can do is to ensure their family has the education they need to succeed," said Merkley, member of the Senate Military Family Caucus.

"We already provide that benefit to the children of our fallen heroes. We should extend that benefit to a husband or wife who often must go back to school to provide a foundation for their family. When a soldier, airman, seaman, or Marine goes into battle, so do their families. It's time to fulfill our commitment to military families."

"We owe it to the spouses of our fallen service members -- who have sacrificed so much -- to offer them the full Post-9/11 GI Bill education benefits," said Boxer, co-chair of the Senate Military Family Caucus. "These benefits would help surviving spouses get the education and skills they need to support their families after a devastating loss."

Currently, spouses of fallen service members are only eligible to receive federal education benefits under the Survivors' and Dependents' Education Assistance (SDEA) program. This program provides an allowance of up to \$936 a month, but it often does not cover the full cost of tuition and fees.

Under this legislation, spouses of these service members could receive the full cost of public, in-state undergraduate tuition and fees, plus a monthly living stipend and book allowance. Spouses would need to use this benefit within fifteen years, and would not remain eligible if they remarry.

Endorsers of the bill include the Military Officers of America (MOAA) and the National Guard Association of the United States (NGAUS).

IN HONOR OF VETERANS

Contributed by: Patrick C. Preston, Major USA (Retired)
IAWP Services to Veterans Subcommittee Chair
(from a Veterans day speech by the late President Ronald Regan).

Many people confuse Memorial Day and Veterans Day. Do you know the difference?

Memorial Day is a day for remembering and honoring those who died serving their country.

On Veterans Day we thank and honor those who served in the military. Veterans Day is observed on November 11th of each year. This day used to be called Armistice Day.

What can you do on Veterans Day?
Just say thank you.

Ronald Regan said "It is, in a way, an odd thing to honor those who died in defense of our country, in defense of us, in wars far away. The imagination plays a trick. We see these soldiers in our mind as old and wise. We see them as something like the Founding Fathers, grave and gray haired. But most of them were boys when they died, and they gave up two lives -- the one they were living and the one they would have lived. When they died, they gave up their chance to be husbands and fathers and grandfathers. They gave up their chance to be revered old men. They gave up everything for our country, for us and all we can do is remember.

"There's always someone who is remembering for us. No matter what time of year it is or what time of day, there are always people who come to this cemetery, leave a flag or a flower or a little rock on a headstone. And they stop and bow their heads and communicate what they wished to communicate. They say, "Hello, Johnny," or "Hello, Bob. We still think of you. You're still with us. We never got over you, and we pray for you still, and we'll see you again. We'll all meet again." In a way, they represent us, these relatives and friends, and they speak for us as they walk among the headstones and remember. It's not so hard to summon memory, but it's hard to recapture meaning.

"And the living have a responsibility to remember the conditions that led to the wars in which our heroes died. Perhaps we can start by remembering this: that all of those who died for us and our country were, in one way or another, victims of a peace process that failed; victims of a decision to forget certain things; to forget, for instance, that the surest way to keep a peace going is to stay strong. Weakness, after all, is a temptation -- it tempts the pugnacious to assert themselves -- but strength is a declaration that cannot be misunderstood. Strength is a condition that declares actions have consequences. Strength is a prudent warning to the belligerent that aggression need not go unanswered.

"Peace fails when we forget what we stand for. It fails when we forget that our Republic is based on firm principles, principles that have real meaning, that with them, we are the last, best hope of man on Earth; without them, we're little more than the crust of a continent. Peace also fails when we forget to bring to the bargaining table God's first intellectual gift to man: common sense. Common sense gives us a realistic knowledge of human beings and how they think, how they live in the world, what motivates them."

What we do not understand is the service is a political tool that when all else fails Politicians refer to in order to settle issues. The military then becomes a vital tool to defend this or any country. As we pay tribute to our veterans let us all take task and thank all who serve military. Police, fire, and emergency personal that put themselves in harms way. THANK YOU for what you do. And keep yourself safe. From a veteran who cares.

A DATE TO REMEMBER 2012

- Jan. 1 - Nominations accepted for Oregon Chapter officers
- Jan. 13 - Deadline for Chapter Award nominations
- Feb. 18 - Oregon Chapter Executive Board Mtg
Salem, OR
- Feb. 25 - WA Chapter Crab Feed/Institute
Westport, WA
- May 9 - Oregon Chapter Executive Board Mtg
Bend, OR
- May 10-11 - Oregon Chapter Educational Conference
Bend, OR

WELL BEING

Mark J. Butterfield, D.C

When I was growing up, there was a popular song written by Joni Mitchell that contained the lyric: “We are stardust...”. At the time I heard these words they seemed like a colorful sentiment and not much more. Years later I was made aware of the literal and very profound concept that all of the products of this earth (including human beings) are truly derived from the stars.

Geophysicists and astrophysicists have come to the conclusion that our galaxy, the Milky Way, is the source of all chemical elements found on earth from hydrogen (element 1) to iron (element 26). Most of the earth, most of a tree, and most of you and me are made from elements 1 to 26. In our own solar system, the sun is constantly making helium (element 2) by fusing two hydrogen molecules. Sunlight and heat are produced by this fusion, but no element is more complex (heavier) than simple helium.

Therefore, as determined by the physicists, any elements heavier than helium have been dispersed into the universe by exploding stars that were able to produce these elements. The dust of these stars condensed to form heavenly bodies including our sun and earth from which our earthly bodies are made.

As miraculous as this process is, it gets better. The human body requires elements for its construction and nourishment that are far more complex than iron. Examples are zinc (element 30) that is part of the hormone insulin and molybdenum (element 42) which the body needs to make enzymes vital for life. Where did these elements come from? In galaxies far, far, away.

Looking at the night sky full of countless stars, it is easy to be overwhelmed by our seeming insignificance as we stare at light that traveled 75 years to fill our eyes. I believe it is of equal consideration how important we each are when you think it took stardust from the heavens to assemble us. I wish you a healthy, happy, and mindful new year.

TEN REASONS TO JOIN A PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATION

Posted by Dean Willson

Definition from Wikipedia:

A professional association (also called a professional body, professional organization, or professional society) is a non-profit organization seeking to further a particular profession, the interests of individuals engaged in that profession, and the public interest.

Reasons to join one:

1. Meet great like-minded people!
2. Opportunity to showcase your experience through peer to peer discussions or public speaking.
3. Bullet item on your resume.
4. See what opportunities and challenges are in the industry[ies].
5. Access to experts in the field – speakers, other members, sponsors.
6. SWAG – discounts or free books, magazines, access to webinars, e-learning, certification exam vouchers.
7. References other than your sister’s husband.
8. Free or almost free training - most of the organizations have meetings focused on educational content.
9. Meet your competition.
10. Exclusive or early notification of job opportunities.

As the President of a professional organization, fwPASS, I often hear about job opportunities directly from industry leaders and recruiters looking for their next technical Rock-star or leader. Note: this is not an invitation for head-hunters to spam me. They know that most of the people that regularly attend or participate in our meetings are passionate about their craft and are interested in staying at the front of the pack. In this economy, most organizations can afford to hold out for the best. Position yourself to be one of them!

Find a local chapter and get involved. If you don’t have any chapters in your area, there is a growing trend toward virtual chapters that utilize technologies like Microsoft Live Meeting and GoToMeeting.

AWARDS

IAWP Oregon Chapter is now accepting nominations for the following awards:

- Merit
- Citation
- Veterans
- Specialized Customer Service
 - Unemployment Insurance
 - Office/Section of the Year
 - Retiree DOER
 - Managerial Performance
 - Professional Employee Performance
- Administrative Support Employee Performance
 - New Employee Performance
 - Public Relations
 - Community Service
 - Service to IAWP

Your assistance is requested to help honor the extraordinary performance of co-workers, supervisors, managers, and our partners who over the past year have provided much needed services to Oregonians.

IAWP Oregon Chapter Awards:
<http://oregoniawp.org/awards.aspx>

IAWP International Awards Program:
<http://www.iawponline.org/imagevault/f1317745291.pdf>

**All nominations should be submitted to:
Julie Davidson and Tracy Johnson
no later than January 13, 2012**

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

Theofanis Skourtis
Nancy Alvarado
Elizabeth Clark
William Ezell
Carol Files
Hamza Sherwani
Steven Bloyd
Ryan Kivett
Kelly Karr
Bonnie Robbins
Heather Partipilo
Elaine Pandolfi