

First Female Depot Commander Speaks on Women's Equality Day

Former Depot Commander Lt. Col. (Retired) Marie Baldo spoke to Umatilla Chemical Depot workers on national Women's Equality Day, August 26. Women's



Equality Day each year, plus August as Women's Equality Month, commemorates the 19th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution, which guaranteed all American women the right to vote. It was ratified in 1920 after decades of tireless effort by advocates and supporters.

Baldo, currently director of the Hermiston Public Library, was the first female Army officer to serve as depot commander (1995-1997). Yesterday, she shared her experiences with sex discrimination as she worked her way up through Army ranks starting in 1976 when she joined the Women's Army Corps (WAC). The WAC was eliminated three months after she joined when the Army began integrating male and female Soldiers into a single force.

"Tolerance for what I saw as a second lieutenant totally changed," Baldo noted. "We all came to understand a new standard for language, pictures and more."

Though Baldo was the first female in several units and missions during her career and encountered sex discrimination, she "didn't want to destroy unit morale." She recounted how she used a combination of listening skills, support from other female officers, and her sense of humor to survive various challenges of that earlier era.

"It was a good career, an amazing career," she added. "It was a true joy to come here to Umatilla. I saw great dedication and knowledge in depot civilian workers."

Current depot commander Lt. Col. Kris Perkins thanked Baldo for her efforts, adding "due to the extraordinary efforts of many brave and determined women throughout our history, our generation and those that follow will live in a time full of opportunities."

UMCDF Highlights

- It has been 1,146 days, or more than 5 million work hours, since a lost-time accident occurred at the UMCDF (July 7, 2006).

Umatilla Chemical Agent Disposal Facility Processing (Aug. 20 - 26, 2009)

Total number of originally stockpiled HD-filled ton containers destroyed this period	16
Total number of originally stockpiled HD-filled ton containers destroyed to date	124
Percentage of originally stockpiled HD-filled ton containers destroyed to date	4.7
Total "recipient" HD ton containers* destroyed this period	1
Total "recipient" HD ton containers* destroyed to date	47
Pounds of HD agent destroyed this period	30,400
Pounds of HD agent destroyed to date	222,173
Pounds of total agent destroyed to date <i>Includes GB, VX and HD</i>	2,988,319
Total munitions destroyed to date since start of operations (Sept. 7, 2004) <i>including non-stockpile GB and VX ton containers</i>	218,101
Nominal tons of chemical agent destroyed to date	1,494.16
Percentage of total agent tons destroyed	40.19

*Recipient ton containers are byproducts of mustard disposal and were not a part of the original stockpile.

UMCD/UMCDF Milestones

- June 11, 2009:** Began first HD ton container destruction in the Metal Parts Furnace (MPF).
- June 4, 2009:** First HD ton containers transported from depot storage to disposal plant.
- Nov. 5, 2008:** Completed VX munitions campaign.
- Oct. 26, 2007:** Began VX munitions campaign.
- July 8, 2007:** Completed GB munitions campaign.
- Sept. 7, 2004:** Began GB munitions campaign.

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