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Local physician, grandfather in the Army now

Inspired to serve, orthopedic surgeon earns spot in reserves



Photo by [Steven Lane](#)

Dr. T. Scott Woll, an orthopedic surgeon at Rebound Orthopedics & Neurosurgery in Vancouver, was recently commissioned as a lieutenant colonel in the U.S. Army Medical Service Corps. After training this fall, he hopes to be deployed overseas for medical diplomacy missions where he would provide medical care to soldiers and civilians.

By [Marissa Harshman](#)

As of Saturday, August 4, 2012



Dr. T. Scott Woll

Dr. T. Scott Woll, an orthopedic surgeon at Rebound Orthopedics & Neurosurgery, is commissioned June 9 as a lieutenant colonel in the U.S. Army Medical Service Corps at the Grant House at the Vancouver Barracks in Vancouver. Woll's wife, Barbara, and Rebound partners Drs. Edward Lipp, left, and Ben McGough perform the pinning of Woll's rank during the ceremony.



By Steven Lane

Dr. T. Scott Woll, an orthopedic surgeon at Rebound Orthopedics & Neurosurgery in Vancouver.

T. Scott Woll isn't what you might expect of a newly commissioned officer in the U.S. Army.

For starters, he's an orthopedic surgeon who's spent the last couple of decades repairing limbs at Rebound Orthopedics & Neurosurgery in Vancouver.

And then there's his prior weapons experience -- or lack thereof. Before deciding he wanted to join the Army Reserves two years ago, Woll had never handled a firearm.

And finally, there's the fact that the lieutenant colonel will be serving beside men and women half his age. Woll is 58 years old and has five grown kids, ages 20 to 29. He also has three grandkids.

None of that matters to Woll.

"Grandpa's going off to be a soldier," he said.

Woll never wanted to be a soldier. His father served during World War II and shared his bad experiences with a young Woll.

"When I was younger, it was the farthest thing from my mind," Woll said.

But then a few years ago, his son's best friend -- a guy who, as a kid, spent many days and nights at the Woll house -- returned from his second tour in Iraq. He told Woll about the need for doctors and urged him to consider doing more than just support the soldiers. He suggested Woll become a soldier.

After the seed was planted, it wasn't long before Woll told his family he wanted to join the reserves.

"Initially, they thought I was going off the deep end," Woll said. "But they've come around. The whole family has been supportive."

Then Woll got to work.

The Portland resident started training with the Clackamas County Sheriff's Office to learn to handle and fire a gun. Two and a half years later, Woll is a firearms coach for the agency.

Two years ago, Woll weighed 235 pounds and was "way out of shape." Motivated by his desire to serve in the military, Woll started exercising daily and made changes to his diet.

Now he's 180 pounds and can meet and surpass all of the Army's physical requirements.

And after two years of waivers, approvals and testing, the 58-year-old finally became a member of U.S. Army Reserves.

In June, Woll was commissioned as a lieutenant colonel -- a rank determined by his profession and number of years in medicine -- in the U.S. Army Medical Service Corps. He's been assigned to the 396th combat support hospital based at the U.S. Army Reserve Center in east Vancouver.

He'll participate in monthly training with the local unit until heading to San Antonio in October for officer training. After that, Woll will be ready to be mobilized to in-country hospitals or deployed overseas.

He's requested to go overseas for medical diplomacy missions. During such missions, which last a couple of months, Woll would care for anyone who needs it -- U.S. soldiers, civilians, kids, police officers, local soldiers and insurgents.

"They say you win more hearts and minds with Band-Aids than you do with bullets," Woll said.

Whatever the assignment, Woll hopes his skills and decades of experience as an orthopedic surgeon can help the men and women -- the "true patriots" -- serving their country.

"If I can save somebody's limbs, that'll be rewarding enough," he said. "It's a way to give back to a country and a career that's given me a lot."

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