

Kalispell, MT – Guards Stand Watch At Local Recruiting Office

0 0 0 0

[July 30, 2015](#)



Rick Delapp of Kalispell, a member of Oath Keepers, stands guard outside the Armed Forces Career Center on Monday in Kalispell. Delapp, a firearms instructor for 30 years, said his vigil is intended to protect members of the military who are not allowed to carry weapons while working in the recruitment center. (Brenda Ahearn/Daily Inter Lake)

[This article comes from DailyInterLake.com.](#)

By Matt Hudson

Outside the Armed Forces Career Center off Hutton Ranch Road, three men sat on stools or stood in front of an open Chevrolet Suburban on Tuesday. The men had handguns holstered at their sides and additional “ordnance” in the vehicle. But nothing appeared far out of the ordinary. People stopped by to chat or waved out of passing vehicles.

Rick Delapp, who had been outside the recruiting center for seven days, said people know why they’re there. “Just having a presence out here to keep these guys protected,” Delapp said.

It’s part of a wave of armed citizens who have assembled in front of recruiting centers across the nation. The civilian guards took position in the wake of the shooting at Chattanooga recruitment center and another military site earlier this month, which resulted in the deaths of four Marines and a sailor. Service members in recruitment centers aren’t armed.

Delapp was standing guard as a member of Oath Keepers, a conservative group whose founder has roots in Kalispell. The group has chapters throughout the country. He said he plans to stand there until Gov. Steve Bullock arms Montana National Guard recruiters, as governors in other states have already done.

The recruiting center in north Kalispell sits in a retail center. There are separate offices for the U.S. Navy, Marines and Air Force. A National Guard center is just down the road. There's also a pizza place and a mailing center nearby.

Tom Evans, who owns Northwest Ink and Toner and the Postal Annex in the complex, has no qualms about the armed visitors. He said that he offered water and bathroom facilities to Delapp and others. "I think it's pretty cool," Evans said.

On Tuesday, Delapp said that they weren't trying to intimidate anyone. One of the other men, John Anderson, said that the tenor has been low-key and positive with community members. Anderson had been coming for a couple hours per day to show support. Delapp said their presence is partly symbolic. They wanted to show support for service members.

"Our danger is not great," he said. "It's the proximity to the border they're concerned with."

While it's unclear how long Delapp and others will post up in front of the building, the men hoped that it might help spark an order to allow service members in the recruitment center to carry weapons. Delapp said that he notified local law enforcement about the guard duty. Kalispell Police Chief Roger Nasset confirmed that and said that there have been no problems. Otherwise, they're just hanging out with permitted, concealed weapons.

"We've had nothing but positive reactions," Delapp said.

Categories: [All](#), [Featured](#)