

Soldiers deployed to Afghanistan with just 60 days notice

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Staunton-based 116th BCT HQs returns to Virginia

Approximately 110 Soldiers from the Virginia National Guard's Staunton-based 116th Brigade Combat Team Headquarters returned to Virginia Jan. 7 after serving on federal active duty in Afghanistan since early August 2011. The unit served as headquarters for Combined Team Zabul where they conducted full-spectrum counterinsurgency operations in Zabul Province in southeast Afghanistan, a region nearly the size of the State of New Jersey. They officially began federal active duty May 15, 2011 and mobilized with just 60 days notice.

Also returning are approximately 20 Soldiers from the Bowling Green-based Detachment 1, Company B, 116th Brigade Special Troops Battalion.

No formal welcome home ceremony was planned for the return. Instead, Soldiers flew back to the airport closest to their home of record throughout the day on Saturday where they reunited with family and friends.

Read more: <http://vko.va.ngb.army.mil/VirginiaGuard/news/jan12/116thBCReturn.html>



Sgt. 1st Class Rick Goodman reunites with his family at the Richmond International Airport Jan. 7. Goodman was one of about 110 Soldiers from the 116th BCT HQs to return to Virginia after duty in Afghanistan since early August 2011.

Virginia National Guard News Headlines

Gov. McDonnell recognizes Virginia Guard Soldiers during state speech

Governor Bob McDonnell recognized three Virginia Guard Soldiers from the Sandston-based 2nd Battalion, 224th Aviation Regiment, 91st Troop Command during his State of the Commonwealth Speech Jan. 11. He also announced support for legislation to give Virginia Guard Soldiers and Airmen in-state tuition.

Read more: <http://vko.va.ngb.army.mil/VirginiaGuard/news/jan12/statespeech.html>

Virginia Guard teen program graduates 116 cadets

The Virginia National Guard ChalleNGe program graduated 116 cadets from Class 35 Dec. 17 on the stage of the Ocean Lakes High School auditorium in Virginia Beach.

Read more: <http://vko.va.ngb.army.mil/VirginiaGuard/news/dec11/Challengegraduation.html>

Former state command sergeant major concludes 56 years of service

A group of Soldiers and civilians gathered Dec. 15 to wish retired Command Sgt. Maj. James Flanary well upon his retirement from civilian service to the Virginia Guard and Fort Pickett.

Read more: <http://vko.va.ngb.army.mil/VirginiaGuard/news/dec11/Flanaryretires.html>

New commander takes charge of Norfolk-based field artillery unit

Lt. Col. John T. Winkler assumed command of the Norfolk-based 1st Battalion, 111th Field Artillery Regiment, 116th Brigade Combat Team from Lt. Col. Roger Hall in a change of command ceremony Jan. 7, 2012 at the State Military Reservation in Virginia Beach.

Read more: <http://vko.va.ngb.army.mil/VirginiaGuard/news/jan12/1-111thcommand.html>

Mark Your Calendars!

Jan. 18: Virginia Guard at General Assembly

Members of the Virginia Guard and Virginia Defense Force will be on hand with equipment displays outside the Virginia General Assembly Building from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. to demonstrate some of the capabilities of the Guard and VDF.

Maj. Gen. Daniel E. Long, Jr., the Adjutant General of Virginia, will present an information briefing for members of the General Assembly at 10:30 a.m. in the 5th Floor East Conference Room in the General Assembly Building.

Jan. 27: Safe Social Networking Training Registration Deadline

Safe Social Networking training for teens ages 13-17 years will take place Feb. 4 in Alexandria. For more information, contact Dayna Ivory at 804.236.7865.

Gate City-based unit wins runner-up food service award

The Department of the Army announced Dec. 27 the Gate City-based 1032nd Transportation Company, 1030th Transportation Battalion, 329th Regional Support Group as the National Guard Runner-up in the 2012 Philip A. Connelly Awards Competition.

"I visited the Soldiers of the 1032nd at Fort Pickett during the competition, and I was confident they would do well at the national level," said Maj. Gen. Daniel E. Long, Jr., the Adjutant General of Virginia. "They are a spirited and talented unit, and they displayed a professional food service operation. We are extremely proud of their performance and accomplishments during the competition."

The Virginia National Guard unit competed against units in seven regions, where they spent a week in early October preparing for the competition at Fort Pickett. In addition to preparing and serving food, the Soldiers were also evaluated on field sanitation, dining conditions and overall setup and presentation.

"I'm extremely proud of what these Soldiers have accomplished," said Lt. Col. Doyle Gillis, commander of the 1030th Transportation Battalion. "They have worked hard and exemplify the Army values."

The Soldiers spent long hours preparing for the actual evaluation. Leading up to the assessment the Soldiers made sure everything they did was exactly as the regulations specified. The Soldiers put in several 18-20 hour shifts in preparation for the competition.

"The 1032nd has a long history of excellence in food service operations and this is a testament to their hard work as well as the extreme level of competition at the national level," said Col. Timothy P. Williams, commander of the 329th RSG. "I'm very proud of their efforts."

The Phillip A. Connelly Award is a Department of the Army food service program. The International Food Service Executives Association and the Department of the Army co-sponsor the program administered by the Army Center of Excellence, Subsistence. The program achieves improvements in the quality of food service by inspiring competition to adhere to regulations and guidelines.



Soldiers were evaluated on field sanitation procedures Oct. 1 at Fort Pickett during the Phillip A. Connelly Awards for Excellence in Army Food Service.



Soldiers from the Gate City-based 1032nd Transportation Company, 1030th Transportation Battalion, 329th Regional Support Group serve the lunch meal Oct. 1 at Fort Pickett during the Phillip A. Connelly Awards for Excellence in Army Food Service.

The Connelly competition uses a point system to determine the winner. Each competing unit began with a set amount of points and that number decreased throughout the grading.

The food service staffs of these units deserve special recognition for their contribution toward improving the Army's food service program and for their superior efforts in enhancing the quality of food service provided to our warriors. All finalists displayed high standards of excellence, and warrant acknowledgment for their outstanding performance, according to Army officials.

Read more: <http://vko.va.ngb.army.mil/VirginiaGuard/news/jan12/1032ndConnelly.html>

MORE ON THE WEB

Virginia Guard Engineers work with Tajikistani troops

<http://vko.va.ngb.army.mil/VirginiaGuard/news/jan12/Tajikistanirecon.html>

Virginia General Assembly web site

<http://legis.state.va.us/>

Commonwealth Challenge on Facebook

<http://www.facebook.com/CommonwealthChallenge>

Virginia National Guard Youth Program on Facebook

<http://www.facebook.com/VANGYouthProgram>

Virginia National Guard on Facebook

<http://www.facebook.com/vanguardpao>

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