

General Assembly agrees on Joint Resolution

On page 2: 203rd RED HORSE memorial

Legislators recognize Va. Guard accomplishments

Del. John Cosgrove, R-Chesapeake, presented Maj. Gen. Daniel E. Long, Jr., the Adjutant General of Virginia, with House Joint Resolution No. 396 at the House of Delegates March 6, 2012 in Richmond. Both the Virginia Senate and House of Delegates voted on the joint resolution celebrating the 2011 accomplishments of the Virginia National Guard.

“It is my great honor to present this resolution to General Long and the entire National Guard and Defense Force for the unbelievable dedication and sacrifice they make day and night, year after year,” Cosgrove said. “The Soldiers and Airmen of the Virginia Guard are Virginia heroes.”

Long was joined on the floor of the House by Command Sgt. Maj. Dennis Green, senior enlisted leader of the Virginia National Guard, Col. Mike Lawson of the Virginia Defense Force and Chief Master Sgt. Stephen R. Gamache, superintendent of the Virginia Air Guard’s 200th Weather Flight.



Del. John Cosgrove presents Maj. Gen. Daniel E. Long, Jr., the Adjutant General of Virginia, with House Joint Resolution No. 396 at the House of Delegates March 6, 2012 in Richmond.

Read more: <https://vanguard.dodlive.mil/2012/03/07/600/>

Virginia National Guard News Headlines

192nd Fighter Wing welcomes new commander

The 192nd Fighter Wing welcomed a new commander in a ceremony March 4 at Langley Air Force Base, Va. Col. Thomas K. Wark assumed command of the wing from Col. Bryan K. Turner.

Read more: <https://vanguard.dodlive.mil/2012/03/06/605>

Canadian Forces invade Virginia during Exercise Southbound Trooper

Soldiers from the Halifax, Nova Scotia-based 36 Canadian Brigade Group entered Fort Pickett Feb. 18 to engage in Exercise Southbound Trooper, a seven day training exercise designed to bring Canadian troops realistic training scenarios incorporated with U.S. forces.

Read more: <https://vanguard.dodlive.mil/2012/02/29/290/>

29th Infantry Division honors Women’s History Month

In honor of Women’s History Month, the Fort Belvoir-based 29th Infantry Division invited a diverse panel of female Virginia Army National Guard Soldiers to share their experiences March 3 about what it’s like to serve as a woman in the military.

Read more: <https://vanguard.dodlive.mil/2012/03/05/536/>

29th ID officer from Maryland Guard identified as casualty in Afghanistan

Maj. Robert Marchanti, a Maryland Army National Guard officer assigned to the Fort Belvoir-based 29th Infantry Division, was one of two officers killed in the Feb. 25 attack at the Interior Ministry in Kabul, Afghanistan.

Read more: <https://vanguard.dodlive.mil/2012/02/28/625/>

Mark Your Calendars!

March 21: Women’s History Month Program at Fort Pickett

The State Equal Employment Office will host a Women’s History Month program at 1 p.m. at the site of the proposed Fort Pickett Museum to honor the women of Virginia Guard who served during Operation Enduring Freedom and Operation Iraqi Freedom.

The guest speaker for the event will be Lt. Col. Michelle Rose. Rose commanded the Virginia Beach-based 529th Combat Sustain Support Battalion in Afghanistan, and was the first female officer to command a Virginia Guard battalion in a combat zone.

For more information, contact Capt. Coppage at 434-294-5422 or Sgt. Carpenter at 434-298-8532.

Memorial held for 203rd RED HORSE crash

Family members, friends and fellow Airmen from the 203rd RED HORSE Squadron gathered at the State Military Reservation in Virginia Beach March 3 to honor the 18 unit members and three Florida Army National Guard aviators who were killed in a military transport crash 11 years ago.

The Virginia Guard engineers and three Florida aviators from Detachment I, Company H, 171st Aviation Battalion were killed on March 3, 2001, as the 203rd members were returning home after completing a two-week military construction project at Hurlburt Field, Fla. The C-23 Sherpa they were flying in crashed in a cotton field near Unadilla, Ga.

Because of inclement weather, Saturday's ceremony was held in the 203rd RHS auditorium, where a frame with photos of the fallen Airmen was displayed.

"Right around this time 11 years ago today, in similar weather to this, 18 203rd Horsemen were coming back from a two week deployment to Hurlburt Field, Fla.," said Lt. Col. Pete Garner, the commander of the 203rd. "That day will be forever engrained in our minds. We can all probably remember exactly where we were on the fateful day. That day our nation lost 21 skilled warriors. But many lost sons, fathers, husbands, brothers, fellow Horsemen and friends."

The C-23 crash was the worst peacetime aviation disaster in the history of the National Guard, and the worst loss of life in the Virginia National Guard since World War II.

"We're here today to honor and recognize the men for whom the memorial was built, for those who paid the ultimate sacrifice," Garner said. "Each year we take time to honor these fallen heroes and what it means to be a Citizen Airman and Soldier. We don't take this commitment lightly because we know there is a price to be paid for the freedoms we enjoy in this great nation. May we never forget the sacrifices of those who came before us."

Garner then read the names of the 18 Airmen and three Soldiers who perished 11 years earlier. Following that, a color guard laid a wreath of flowers at the base of the displayed frame.

After the ceremony, the weather had cleared up enough so the families and friends could go outside and enjoy the memorial built to the fallen Airmen.

The memorial takes the form of a reflection or meditation garden complete with the unit's mascot: a life-size, rearing red horse. The 30,000-square-foot memorial also includes a large bronze Minuteman statue rising up from a clear pool in front of a waterfall, and a second red horse. This horse kneels in front of a memorial made from a 7,000-pound, black granite boulder with the names of the 21 National Guard men etched into its one polished surface.

Encircling the border of the memorial is a winding path embracing 22 Bradford pear trees, and a plaque at the base of each tree honors each one of the Guardsmen. The 22nd tree bears a plaque honoring those who died during the terrorist acts of Sept. 11, which took place four days before the groundbreaking of the 203rd's memorial on Sept. 15, 2001.

The memorial incorporates ideas from several 203rd members



Family members and friends join Airmen from the 203rd RED HORSE Squadron March 3, 2012 as they pause to remember 18 unit members killed in a plane crash 11 years earlier.

and used a range of the construction skills found in RED HORSE units. Members of the 203rd, assisted by RED HORSE units from Ohio, Pennsylvania, Florida, Washington, Montana and Texas, built most of the memorial.

Read more: <https://vanguard.dodlive.mil/2012/03/05/585/>

MORE ON THE WEB

Video: Canadian Forces invade Va. during Exercise Southbound Trooper

<http://www.facebook.com/video/video.php?v=10100473086283346>

192nd Fighter Wing commander to retire in March

<http://vanguard.dodlive.mil/2012/03/07/609/>

Virginia schoolhouse to host marksmanship contest

<http://vanguard.dodlive.mil/2012/03/07/620>

Women in the U. S. Army

<http://www.army.mil/women/>

U.S. Chamber of Commerce Hiring Our Heroes web site

<https://hoh.greatjob.net/sc/index.action>

Virginia National Guard on Facebook

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

Virginia Guard Public Affairs Flickr Photostream

<http://flickr.com/photos/vanguardpao>

Virginia Guard Public Affairs YouTube Channel

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