

Ceremony held at National D-Day Memorial in Bedford

On page 2: Community service in Leesburg

D-Day sacrifices remembered on 68th anniversary

Soldiers from the Virginia National Guard's Lynchburg-based 1st Battalion, 116th Infantry, 116th Brigade Combat Team escorted D-Day veterans and laid a memorial wreath at the commemoration event held June 6, 2012 at the National D-Day Memorial in Bedford to mark the 68th anniversary of the Allied invasion of Normandy. Soldiers from the Clifton Forge-based 29th Army Band also laid a wreath.

"It is an honor to be here," said Staff Sgt. Justin Walkup, an infantry Soldier from the Headquarters Company of 1st Battalion. "I don't want to take anything away from our generation and what we have done, but after hearing the stories about these men who are here, it is hard to compare what we went through with what they went through. It is remarkable what these men did."

Like 11 other Virginia communities, Bedford provided Soldiers to serve in Company A when the National Guard's 116th Infantry Regiment was activated on Feb. 3, 1941.

Read more: <http://vanguard.dodlive.mil/2012/06/09/1391/>



D-Day veterans from the 29th Infantry Division salute their fallen comrades during the playing of "Taps" June 6 at the National D-Day Memorial in Bedford.

Virginia National Guard News Headlines

Virginia school house provides training to light infantry leaders

In the woods of Fort Pickett, Virginia Guard Soldiers from the Fort Pickett-based 183rd Regiment, Regional Training Institute led National Guard Soldiers from across the country in a field training exercise as part of Light Leaders Course. The course began June 2 and wraps up June 16.

Read more: <http://vanguard.dodlive.mil/2011/06/13/1399/>

Sandston-based aviation battalion welcomes new commander

Aviators and Soldiers of the 2nd Battalion, 224th Aviation Regiment welcomed new commander Lt. Col. Perry Jones and bid farewell to outgoing commander Lt. Col. Neal Edmonds in a change of command ceremony held June 10 at the Army Aviation Support Facility in Sandston, Va.

Read more: <http://vanguard.dodlive.mil/2012/06/12/1369/>

Va. Guard Soldiers support funeral for D-Day veteran

Maj. Gen. Frank E. Batts, Jr., commander of the 29th Infantry Division, and Soldiers from the 29th Army Band and Virginia National Guard Funeral Honors Program supported the funeral of Bob Slaughter June 2 in Roanoke.

Read more: <http://vanguard.dodlive.mil/2012/06/06/1375/>

Medical Group First Sergeant receives Commandant Award

The Commandant of the U.S. Air Force First Sergeant Academy at Maxwell Air Force Base, Ala., presented the Commandant Award to Master Sgt. Samantha Cochran, the 192nd Fighter Wing Medical Group First Sergeant, March 16.

Read more: <http://vanguard.dodlive.mil/2012/06/04/1359/>

Mark Your Calendars!

June 17: 116th Brigade Combat Team Change of Command

Col. John Epperly will assume command of the Staunton-based 116th Brigade Combat Team from Col. Blake Ortnier in a change of command scheduled for 10 a.m. at the Wilcox PT Field at Fort A. P. Hill.

For more information or to RSVP, contact Maj. Dave Wheeler at 434-480-6863.

June 27: Diversity Day

The Virginia National Guard Equal Employment Opportunity Office will host the 4th Annual Diversity Day at 11 a.m. at the Mullins Armory in Sandston.

For more information, contact Lori Carpenter at 434-298-8532.

Soldiers perform community service projects

Approximately 40 Soldiers from the Leesburg-based Company C, 3rd Battalion, 116th Infantry Regiment, 116th Brigade Combat Team performed community service projects in the Leesburg and Loudon County areas June 2 to show their appreciation for the great support the community has provided in recent years.

"I think it is great," said Spc. Garry Brown, an acting team leader in Company C who works as a probation officer in Loudon County in his full-time civilian job. "The community was so good to us when we came back from Afghanistan and Iraq and for us to be able to give back to the community is a great thing. It is our time to give back to them."

The Soldiers, along with a number of family members, helped build a memorial garden at the Arcola Elementary School in Aldie, spread mulch and assisted with gardening work at the Banshee Reeks Nature Preserve, painted and cleaned at the Morven Equestrian Center for the Loudoun Therapeutic Riding Association, performed gardening work and clean up at St. David's Episcopal Church, assisted Loudoun Volunteer Caregivers with landscaping for an elderly widow and helped conduct inventory at Loudoun County Interfaith Relief.

"This is fantastic," said Stuart Younkin of the work performed by Company C Soldiers. "It helps us move our program along, and it is a big help. Spreading this mulch is that much less that we have to worry about later this summer, so now we can concentrate on growing our vegetables."

Younkin, a former member of the Virginia Guard who served in the Leesburg unit from 1988 to 1996 and who now works as the youth outreach specialist for Loudon County, explained that the garden at Banshee Reeks is used for young people who perform community service hours, and the food grown is provided to the food bank run by Loudoun County Interfaith.

David O. Dwyer, director of operations for Loudoun Interfaith Relief, said the Soldiers from Company C were "amazing" as they sorted and stacked 500 crates of food in about four hours. "They wouldn't take a break even when I asked them several times," he said. "They worked hard, saw what needed to be done and completed the job. Their help was invaluable."

Approximately 200 people attended a company open house where the unit served food and had static displays along with information displays from the Loudoun County Sheriff's Office, Middleburg Police, Virginia Defense Force, VFW Post 1177, Civil Air Patrol and representatives from the Girl Scouts of America. Soldiers from Company C also challenged the Loudoun County Sheriff's Office to a tug of war and were victorious with the assistance of Leesburg Mayor Kristen Umstatt.

"The community has been super supportive of us through multiple deployments, and I have been really impressed by how much support they have put behind us," said 1st Lt. Kevin J. Hoffman, commander of Company C. "This is a way for us to say thank you and give back a little bit. This is a way for them to do something in the community, do something local and learn about organizations that do things for Soldiers. They can get first-hand



Soldiers from Company C, 3rd Battalion, 116th Infantry Regiment, 116th Brigade Combat Team, spread mulch at the community garden at Banshee Reeks Nature Preserve in Loudon County June 2 as part of the unit's community service day.

knowledge of the folks that are doing important things in the community."

Hoffman singled out the Virginia Defense Force among the organizations that came out to support the unit's open house. "They are more and more becoming an important part of what we do as we focus more on our homeland defense mission," he said. Members of the VDF have strong connections with the community, and those connections have been very valuable for the company during state active duty missions in the past, he said.

Read more: <https://vanguard.dodlive.mil/2012/06/05/1345/>

MORE ON THE WEB

National D=Day Memorial web site

<http://www.dday.org>

116th Brigade Combat Team on Facebook

<http://www.facebook.com/116thBCT>

U. S. Army Diversity web site

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

U. S. Air Force Diversity web site

<http://www.af.mil/diversity.asp>

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>