

More than 160 Soldiers prepare for duty in Afghanistan

On page 2: Top Soldier, NCO selected

1710th Trans. Co. begins federal active duty

Along with approximately 160 Soldiers of the Emporia-based 1710th Transportation Company, 529th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion, 329th Regional Support Group, family, friends, and senior leaders from the commonwealth and the Virginia National Guard packed the Greensville County Elementary School auditorium April 3, 2013, for a departure ceremony, held to bid an official farewell to the Soldiers of the 1710th. The 1710th entered federal active duty April 1, and departed April 4 for Fort Hood, Texas, where they will train for 45 to 60 days, before heading to Afghanistan.

“This is it – this is the threshold we talked about so many times,” said Maj. Geoffrey O’Neill, commander of the 529th CSSB, during his remarks. “For some of you guys this is your first mobilization and for some you it’s your second, third or fourth one. Regardless, for all of you, you’re about to cross over and do a very important and historic event.”

Read more: <http://vanguard.dodlive.mil/2013/04/08/3300/>



Soldiers from the 1710th Transportation Company and family members said their final goodbyes in Emporia April 4, 2013, as the unit departed for final mobilization training.

Virginia National Guard News Headlines

429th BSB Soldiers exercise sustainment capabilities during drill weekend

Soldiers from the Danville-based 429th Brigade Support Battalion, 116th Infantry Brigade Combat Team focused their drill weekend training effort on squad and section mission essential tasks at Fort Pickett April 5-7, 2013, to prepare for the brigade’s annual training in June.

Read more: <http://vanguard.dodlive.mil/2013/04/11/3355/>

116th BSTB Soldiers conduct combined arms exercise

Soldiers from the Fredericksburg-based 116th Brigade Special Troops Battalion, 116th Infantry Brigade Combat Team conducted a combined arms exercise April 6, 2013, at Fort A. P. Hill.

Read more: <http://vanguard.dodlive.mil/2013/04/09/3293/>

203rd RED HORSE Airman awarded 2013 Air National Guard Senior NCO

Master Sgt. Andre S. Davis, an Airman from the 203rd RED HORSE Squadron represented the Virginia Air National Guard as the winner of the Senior Non-Commissioned Officer of the Year in the Outstanding Airmen of the Year program for the entire Air National Guard.

Read more: <http://vanguard.dodlive.mil/2013/04/10/3344/>

Top Air Guard recruiters recognized

Brig. Gen. Zane R. Johnson, Virginia Guard Air Component Commander, presented the Top Accessions Award for an outstanding team effort that resulted in record-high recruitment numbers for the 192nd Fighter Wing April 7, 2013.

Read more: <http://vanguard.dodlive.mil/2013/04/10/3350/>

Mark Your Calendars!

May 23: Registration deadline for Teen Wilderness Adventure Camp

The Teen Wilderness Adventure Camp is for Va. Guard teens ages 13-17 years old and held in New Castle at the Wilderness Adventure at Eagle Landing from June 21-27, 2013. The cost is \$50.00.

Outdoor elements include kayaking, mountain biking, spelunking, high and low ropes, a 900 ft’ zip line, and much more!

For all camp inquiries, please contact Drew Davis, Lead Child & Youth Coordinator, at drew.s.davis@us.army.mil or Allison Mecadon, Child & Youth Coordinator at allison.e.mecadon@us.army.mil.

Top Va. Guard Soldier and NCO selected

Nineteen junior enlisted Soldiers and noncommissioned officers from around Virginia converged on Fort Pickett March 30-31 for the 2012 Virginia Army National Guard Soldier and NCO of the Year competition.

Following two days of demanding physical and mental competitions, the two representatives from the 429th Brigade Support Battalion came out the winners. Spc. Timothy Yonts of Headquarters Company, 429th BSB in Danville and Staff Sgt. Ken McEnaney of Detachment 1, Company F, 429th BSB in Winchester will each go on to represent the Virginia Guard at the regional Soldier and NCO of the year competition May 2-5, 2013 at Camp Dawson, W. Va.

"The level of competition and professionalism displayed by each of the Soldiers and NCOs during this event was nothing less than outstanding," said Command Sgt. Maj. Carl Holcomb, the Virginia Army National Guard Command Sergeant Major. "The competition seems to be getting better with each year displayed by the fact that one point separated the winner and runner up for NCO of the Year."

This was the second year in a row a winner and runner up were separated by one point, according to Holcomb.

"Virginia has a lot to be proud of when it comes to the caliber of young warriors I witnessed in action this weekend," Holcomb said. "What I saw was a testament to their determination, their training and the mentorship each had received in getting them to the state-level competition."

The Soldiers began the two-day event early Saturday morning with the Army Physical Fitness Test. That was followed by a marksmanship competition using the M-4 rifle. In the afternoon the 19 Soldiers competed in land navigation. They each had two and a half hours to find five points on the Fort Pickett Land Navigation South course.

Late that afternoon the competitors tackled Army Warrior Tasks. Four different stations were set up at the Fort Pickett Air Assault course where the Soldiers were tested on a total of eight different Army Warrior Tasks. Command sergeants major from across the Virginia Army Guard ran each station and tested the Soldiers on their knowledge.

The night concluded with a group meal before resuming the next day with appearance boards. Following the boards on Sunday morning, scores were tallied and McEnaney and Yonts were named the winners.

"I knew we took two good Soldiers in there but I also knew the competition was tight," said Command Sgt. Maj. Wesley Pinckney, the 429th BSB command sergeant major. "I thought they were going to win but to actually see it, to have two Soldiers from my battalion win such a prestigious competition was overwhelming."

"I think it demonstrates there are some really good Soldiers in the 429th," he added. "The maneuver elements need to know that we have some good Soldiers to support them, so to show them that we do have these great Soldiers is important."



Lt. Col. Billy Tucker (left), commander of the 429th Brigade Support Battalion, recognizes Spc. Timothy Yonts (center) and Staff Sgt. Ken McEnaney (right) during a battalion formation April 5, 2013, at Fort Pickett, Va.

"I am proud but at the same time very humbled because I had nothing to do with it," said Lt. Col. Billy Tucker, commander of the 429th. "It was a program conducted and evaluated by the NCOs of the battalion. It makes me proud for the quality of Soldiers we ran through the competition, but also for the quality of the NCOs who prepared the Soldiers for success."

A resident of Richmond who is originally from Ellicott City, Md., McEnaney is a wheeled vehicle mechanic who served 14 years on active duty before joining the Virginia Army National Guard in 2007.

Yonts, a Cincinnati native who now resides in Lynchburg, is a chaplain assistant who has served in the Virginia Guard since 2010.

Read more: <http://vanguard.dodlive.mil/2013/04/03/3326/>

MORE ON THE WEB

Army Tuition Assistance reinstated

<http://www.army.mil/article/100662/>

DMV 2 Go, VA Mobile Vet Center on hand to assist 1710th Soldiers as they prepare to mobilize

<http://vanguard.dodlive.mil/2013/04/03/3333/>

Photos: Va. Guard youth and families honored at Richmond Squirrels game

<https://www.facebook.com/media/set?set=a.632768516738545.1073741826.186133484735386&type=1&f=c952d5a5ef>

Va. Guard Family Programs launches Facebook Page

<https://www.facebook.com/VaGuardFamilyPrograms>

Va. Guard Youth Programs on Facebook

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

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