



More than 140 Soldiers reunited with friends and family

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1710th TC Soldiers return to Va. from Afghanistan

Virginia National Guard Soldiers from the Emporia-based 1710th Transportation Company reunite with family, friends and fellow Guard Soldiers Feb. 22, 2014, in Richmond after serving on federal active duty in Afghanistan since June 2013. The company returned to the United States Feb. 15, and approximately 145 Soldiers returned to airports closest to their home of record. A formal ceremony recognizing their service will take place in about 90 days. The 1710th began serving on federal active duty on April 1, 2013.

“It was a long and rewarding deployment,” said Capt. Rodney Rhodes, commander of the 1710th. “I am proud we were able to bring back each and every Soldier to their families. The Soldiers did an excellent job, and they did everything with a great sense of pride. I couldn’t ask for anything more. They were always professional, and our motto of ‘You call, we haul’ is known all over Afghanistan.”

Read more: <http://vanguard.dodlive.mil/2014/02/25/4992/>



Soldiers from the Emporia-based 1710th Transportation Company reunite with family, friends and fellow Guard Soldiers Feb. 22, 2014, in Norfolk.

Virginia National Guard News Headlines

Va. Air Guard F-22 pilot soars past 1,000 hours

Lt. Col. Mike “BOK” Schaner made Air National Guard history recently when he flew an F-22 Raptor mission that gave him the distinction of becoming the first Air National Guard pilot to fly more than 1,000 hours in the cockpit of the stealth fighter.

Read more: <http://vanguard.dodlive.mil/2014/02/18/4967/>

Va. Guard leaders join exercise focused on Washington, D.C. response ops

Several senior Virginia Guard officers as well as members of the Joint Force Headquarters-Virginia staff joined nearly 200 members of a catastrophic response team from the Department of Defense and National Capital Region gathered Feb. 11 and 12, 2014, for a two-day exercise named Ambitious Guardian.

Read more: <http://vanguard.dodlive.mil/2014/02/24/4986/>

Military Saves Week encourages fiscal fitness

The Virginia Guard’s Personal Financial Counselor Bethy Vallejo will be at Fort Pickett March 1, 2014, and Fort Belvoir March 2 to help members of the military community sign up for the Military Saver Pledge.

Read more: <http://vanguard.dodlive.mil/2014/02/27/4997/>

Va. Guard wraps up snow response operations

Four Soldiers from Company C, 429th Brigade Support Battalion, 116th Infantry Brigade Combat Team were the last personnel on state active duty Feb. 15, 2014, after nearly 300 total supported response operations across the state.

Read more: <http://vanguard.dodlive.mil/2014/02/16/5011/>

Mark Your Calendars!

Feb. 24 - March 2: Military Saves Week

Military Saves Week is an annual opportunity to promote good savings behavior and a chance for service members and their families to assess their own saving status. Sign up to take the Saver pledge and get your FREE myFICO credit score.

To promote this campaign, the JFSAP Personal Financial Counselor can sign service members up on site. Get in touch with your PFC to find out how to have her come out to drill so your units can take advantage of this opportunity.

For more info, contact Bethy Vallejo, MFLC Personal Financial Counselor at (804) 236-7867 or bvallejo@mflc.zeiders.com.

1945th CCT departs for Afghanistan mission

Family members, friends, fellow Soldiers and Virginia Guard senior leaders bid a formal farewell to the Soldiers of the Virginia Beach-based 1945th Contingency Contracting Team, 529th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion, 329th Regional Support Group, Feb. 8, 2014, at Camp Pendleton in Virginia Beach. The four-Soldier team will travel to Camp Shelby, Miss., for pre-mobilization training before they head to Afghanistan in support of Operation Enduring Freedom. The mobilization is scheduled for approximately 12 months.

Virginia Sen. Jeffrey L. McWaters of the 8th District, Maj. Gen. Daniel E. Long Jr., the Adjutant General of Virginia, Command Sgt. Maj. Dennis A. Green, the Virginia National Guard Senior Enlisted Leader, Col. Michelle Rose, commander of the 329th Regional Support Group, Lt. Col. Michael Waterman, commander of the 529th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion, Lt. Col. Brent Carey, team leader of the 1940th CCT, and Capt. Bert Hankins, commander of the 1945th CCT, were among the speakers at the ceremony.

"I'm here today to represent the many who rely upon you for protection and safety, who turn to you in times of crisis," McWaters said. "We want to say thank you and ask for your forgiveness for when we take you for granted."

"When we call you a patriot warrior or a hero, the words are not strong enough," he added. "But it's all we have in the English language to express the gratitude and admiration we have for the valor that you show us every day. Our prayers are with you and your family during this deployment."

"As you listen to people talk, you hear words like teamwork, sacrifice and patriotism," Long said. "That's what the National Guard is all about."

While in Afghanistan, the officers and noncommissioned officers of the 1945th will provide forward contracting support to ongoing war zone and humanitarian missions. The mission of contingency contracting is to responsively, effectively, and legally contract for the supplies, services, and construction necessary to support the mission of the supported organizations.

Over the past year the four Soldiers spent countless hours away from their families in order to conduct training for their deployment. But in addition to the Army Warrior Tasks and other skills they were required to hone, they spent an equal amount of time training for different contracting scenarios and situations they may encounter, according to Hankins.

"I'm proud of what these Soldiers have accomplished in the short amount of time we've had to get prepared," he said. "We've built a unit of trust, loyalty and camaraderie. I thank each of you for making this team better by bringing your personal values, skills and experiences."

Rose explained to the audience that, because of their specialized skills, the team members will likely be working separately overseas. She offered the Soldiers advice on how to work together as a team and be combat multipliers while being far apart.

"As Col. Rose said, these guys have put in a lot of extra work



Maj. Gen. Daniel E. Long Jr., the Adjutant General of Virginia, addresses the four Soldiers of the 1945th Contingency Contracting Team at their departure ceremony Feb. 8, 2014, at Camp Pendleton in Virginia Beach.

and training for this deployment. Thanks to the families for the extra sacrifices they've made," Waterman said. "They will definitely be an enhancement to the unit they will be working for."

All the speakers in attendance thanked the Soldiers' families for their support and commitment.

"You may not put your lives on the line every day in a uniform but you certainly make a huge personal sacrifice for your loved ones and we thank you too for your service to our country," McWaters said.

"You wouldn't be here without your families so make sure you communicate with them and keep those lines of communication open," Rose said to the Soldiers of the 1945th.

Read more: <http://vanguard.dodlive.mil/2014/02/21/4978/>

MORE ON THE WEB

Photos: Va. Guard Senior Enlisted Leader recognizes Airmen of the Year

<http://www.flickr.com/photos/vanguardpao/sets/72157641541932814/>

Photos: AG and SEL recognize 183rd RTI's "Institute of Excellence" status

<http://www.flickr.com/photos/vanguardpao/sets/72157641335062813/>

Virginia National Guard Family Assistance Centers

<http://vanguard.dodlive.mil/fac/>

1710th Transportation Company on Facebook

<https://www.facebook.com/1710thTransportationCompany>

Virginia National Guard Family Programs on Facebook

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

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