



Photo by Staff Sgt. Jacob McDonald, 50th Public Affairs Detachment

Sgt. Kiwian Christian, E Company, 429th Brigade Support Battalion of the Virginia National Guard, and a native of Richmond, Va., crosses the “threshold” to become a non-commissioned officer during a joint Army and Air Force NCO induction ceremony at Camp Arifjan, Kuwait, Feb. 13.

The Office of the Adjutant General  
 State of Virginia  
 ATTN: Public Affairs Office  
 Bldg. 316 - Fort Pickett  
 Blackstone, Virginia, 23824



—	PRESORTED
—	STANDARD
—	U.S. POSTAGE
—	PAID
—	PERMIT NO. 316

Mail to:

A firefighter in a yellow jacket and helmet is working in a smoky forest. The firefighter is wearing a yellow jacket, a helmet, and a tactical vest. They are holding a tool, possibly a chainsaw, and are surrounded by thick white smoke. The background shows a forest with bare trees and a ground covered in fallen leaves.

*Virginia*  
**GuardPost**

SERVING THE ARMY & AIR NATIONAL GUARD OF VIRGINIA

***Virginia troops  
battle forest fires in  
Commonwealth***

JANUARY - FEBRUARY 2008



## FROM THE TOP



# A year of challenges awaits the Virginia Guard

By Maj. Gen. Robert B. Newman, Jr.  
Adjutant General of Virginia

The first few months of 2008 have shown us all very clearly the many challenges faced by the Soldiers and Airmen of the Virginia National Guard. In February and early March we welcomed units home from Iraq and conducted Freedom Salutes to formally recognize service in Kosovo. Later in March we will once again conduct a departure ceremony to send a unit off for combat duty.

In addition to our federal missions, we also had Soldiers on state active duty help battle the worst outbreak of wild fires in Virginia history. In every case, the Virginia Guard has met these challenges head on and achieved success, and I am confident we will continue to do that throughout the rest of the year.

Our communities were out in force to welcome home units from the 116th Infantry Brigade Combat Team. In early February, Fredericksburg welcomed home A Co. of the Brigade Special Troops Battalion and in mid February we welcomed the 116th headquarters back to Staunton. I am always deeply touched to see the warm welcome our Guardsmen receive when they come home, because I can remember another time and another war where that wasn't the case.

Virginia Guard Soldiers for the 29th Infantry Division Headquarters and 1st Battalion, 116th Infantry serving in Kosovo returned home in November 2007, and we conducted Freedom Salutes at Lynchburg and Fort Belvoir in early February and March. These ceremonies are important to recognize the sacrifices made not only by the Soldiers, but also by their families.

Almost half of the approximately 100 Soldiers that responded for state fire fighting duty went from their Freedom Salute on Sunday to preparing for firefighting duty



Maj. Gen. Robert B. Newman, Jr.

on Monday. By Tuesday, they were out on the fire line working side by side with local fire fighters and Virginia Department of Forestry personnel to help safeguard Virginians and their homes.

In early March we bid farewell to the 1710th Transportation Company as they

taking part in their second, third or fourth deployment.

These events all serve as vivid examples of the challenges we face in meeting the obligations of our state and federal missions. These challenges will be amplified by state budget constraints as we are asked to do more with less.

The rest of this year will be no different in terms of what will be asked of the Virginia Guard. With hurricane season approaching, we must stand ready to respond if called to ensure the safety and security of our fellow Virginians. We have a busy annual training season ahead as units hone their skills for supporting civil authorities and sharpen the combat prowess to prepare for possible overseas deployment.

As we meet all these many challenges, we must be steadfast in our commitment to safety. Every officer, noncommissioned officer, warrant officer, Soldier and Airmen has to make safety a part of their every day routine, because nothing that we do is worth losing the life of a Virginia Guardsman because we were not conducting ourselves in a safe manner.

Because of the demands placed on each of us, I ask that everyone make the most of every opportunity they have to spend time with their family.

We can't do all the things that we do without the support of our families and I am well aware of how much being in the Guard means time away from family and community. When you are home, make the most of these times with family and friends and be sure that they know how much we appreciate the support they give to our mission.

I continue to be very proud of the commitment and competence of our Soldiers and Airmen in the Virginia National Guard. There is no doubt in my mind that will meet all of these challenges and continue the great tradition of service to Commonwealth and country as we have in the past.

---

*In every case, the Virginia Guard has met these challenges head on and achieved success, and I am confident we will continue to do that throughout the rest of the year.*

---

head to Camp Atterbury for their final train up before deploying to Iraq. More than half of the unit's leadership has already served in Iraq and they will be sharing that experience with the rest of the unit to help ensure their success. This unit is an example of how many of our Soldiers are



*U.S. Air Force photo by Tech. Sgt. Phil Landram*

**Maj. Micah Fesler, a 433rd Weapons Squadron pilot, flies an F-22A Raptor from a Lockheed-Martin factory in Georgia to Nellis AFB, Jan. 9. This Raptor is the first to be delivered to the 57th Wing from Lockheed-Martin, and is scheduled to be used by the U.S. Air Force Weapons School for training of PhD-level instructor pilots.**

## ***Va. pilot delivers F-22 to U.S.A.F. Weapons School***

**By 2nd Lt. Jennifer Richard  
Nellis AFB Public Affairs**

Maj. Micah Fesler, 433rd Weapons Squadron pilot and Virginia Air National Guardsman, delivered the 57th Wing's first F-22A Raptor to Nellis Air Force Base, Nev., on Jan. 9.

The aircraft is scheduled to be used by the U.S. Air Force Weapons School as it stands up the first F-22A Weapons School course.

The F-22A Raptor arrived from a Lockheed-Martin facility in Marietta, Ga.

"Flying that F-22 was exciting because I literally picked it up from the factory," said Fesler.

The brand-new aircraft is the first of six Raptors the 433rd Weapons Squadron plans to have by September of this year.

The U.S.A.F. Weapons School is scheduled to hold a validation course for the F-22A program January 2009 and the first class of students July 2009.

"In the validation course, there will be six instructor pilots basically putting each other through the course," said Lt. Col. Pete Milohnic, 433rd Weapons Squadron commander.

This will prepare instructor pilots for the first-ever F-22A Weapons School course, in which they hope to teach three students. Between now and January 2009, squadron members will be developing the course material.

Instructors have about 360 hours of academics to build, said Fesler. They have to build the syllabus, plan every sortie, and

develop briefings for every sortie.

"It is a fairly large undertaking because we are starting with a blank slate," he said.

The process of standing up the F-22A Weapons School course needs to be a collaborative effort, said Milohnic.

Members of the 433rd Weapons Squadron have been reaching out to Langley, Elmendorf, Holloman, and Tyndall Air Force Bases—bases that currently fly or are scheduled to fly the Raptors, he said.

"We can't do this without their expertise," said Milohnic. "They are the customers. We're making a huge effort to give them what they want."

With the addition of the Raptors, the 433rd Weapons Squadron will be flying both fourth-generation and fifth-generation fighter aircraft.

Having both F-15s and F-22s together in the same squadron is a huge step for the integration of air dominance assets, said Fesler.

The new F-22A course is also a step forward in the integration of Air National Guard into the U.S.A.F. Weapons School. Fesler is the first guardsman instructor pilot in the school.

The founding of the F-22A Weapons School course marks progress in the aircrafts' weapons systems maturity. Pilots trained here will become Raptor experts, carrying a standardized message for the employment of the aircraft.

"The torch of air dominance will someday be passed to the F-22," said Lt. Col. Gary Rose, 433rd Weapons Squadron assistant director of operations. "It is the future of the Air Force."

# News Briefs

## Wear out dates for Army uniforms announced

The Army announced several uniform changes in an All Army Activities message dated Jan. 8.

After April 30, Soldiers are no longer authorized to wear the following items:

- Battle dress uniform
- Brown T-shirt
- Black leather combat boots
- Woodland and desert camouflage pattern caps
- Olive drab green name tape and U.S. Army tape
- Subdued olive green shoulder sleeve insignia and subdued combat patches
- Black rigger belt
- Web belt with open-faced black buckle
- Green and black jungle boots

-(All Army Activities message)

## Army personnel eligible for home copy of Microsoft Office

All Army Soldiers and civilian personnel are now eligible for a licensed copy of Microsoft Office desktop applications to use on a home computer.

The only cost is for packaging, shipping and program administration. An Army Knowledge Online account is required.

“In an information-based Army, this tremendous benefit helps our personnel be better trained in applications they use daily in units and offices,” said Vernon M. Bettencourt Jr., deputy chief information officer for G-6.

Applications include Office for Windows and Mac, Visio, Project and OneNote.

Soldier and civilians will pay approximately \$20 for what is typically several hundred dollars, Bettencourt said. The benefit stems from the Army Microsoft Enterprise License Agreement.

For more information, visit the Army Small Computer Program Web site at <https://ascp.monmouth.army.mil/scp/software/hup.jsp>.

-(Army News Service)

## Virginia Guard launches bi-weekly newsletter

The Virginia National Guard Public Affairs Office has launched a new bi-weekly newsletter titled “The Commonwealth’s Guardian.”

The new publication debuted in January and is aimed at providing additional news and information to Soldiers and Airmen between issues of the Virginia GuardPost. The newsletter features links to the Virginia Guard’s public information web site as well as other online sources where additional information relating to the printed stories in the newsletter can be found.

The newsletter is available online at <http://vko.va.ngb.army.mil/VirginiaGuard/newsletter/index.htm> and you can also subscribe to the PDF version of the newsletter by emailing Maj. Cotton Puryear at [cotton.puryear@us.army.mil](mailto:cotton.puryear@us.army.mil).

The Virginia National Guard Public Affairs Office is always on the lookout for story ideas for the newsletter and GuardPost. If you have any ideas, please email Maj. Puryear or Capt. Dayna Rowden at [dayna.rowden@us.army.mil](mailto:dayna.rowden@us.army.mil).

The public affairs office welcomes feedback and suggestions for all of its print publications and the public information web site.



# Virginia National Guard Federal Deployments

# *	Unit	Where Deployed	Home Town
170	1710th Transportation Company	Capt Atterbury, Ind.	Emporia
170	A Co., E Co., 429th Brigade Support Battalion	Kuwait	South Boston and Roanoke
420	2nd Squadron, 183rd Cavalry	Kuwait/ Iraq	Various Locations
800	3rd Battalion, 116th Infantry Regiment	Kuwait/ Iraq	Various Locations
110	237th Engineer Company	Iraq	West Point
1	192nd Fighter Wing	Guam	Langley Air Force Base
1	JFHQ Virginia Air	Iraq	Sandston
1	203rd RED HORSE Squadron	Kuwait	Langley Air Force Base
47	Various Va. Air Guard Units	Homeland Defense/OIF/OER Support	Various Locations

\* All listings for numbers of Soldiers/Airmen are approximate as of March 13, 2008



# Virginia GuardPost



SERVING THE ARMY AND AIR GUARD OF VIRGINIA

JANUARY- FEBRUARY 2008

## On the Cover



Cpl. Robert B. Anderson, B Co., 1st Battalion, 116th Infantry, works to extinguish some of the remnants of a wild fire near Roanoke, Va., Feb 12. (Photo by Maj. Cotton Puryear, Virginia Guard Public Affairs)

### *The Adjutant General*

*Maj. Gen. Robert B. Newman, Jr.*

### *Chief of Public Affairs*

*Maj. Cotton Puryear*  
cotton.puryear@us.army.mil

### *State Public Affairs Officer*

*Capt. Dayna Rowden*  
dayna.rowden@us.army.mil

### *Air Guard Public Affairs Officer*

*Lt. Col. Debbie Magaldi*  
deborah.magaldi@varich.ang.af.mil

### *GuardPost Editor*

*Staff Sgt. A.J. Coyne*  
andrew.coyne@us.army.mil

### *Public Affairs Staff*

*Sgt. 1st Class Michael Hampton*  
*Sgt. Jesse Houk*  
*Spc. Geoff Dudley*

### *Public Affairs Office location*

*Bldg. 316 - Fort Pickett*  
*Blackstone, Virginia, 23824*  
*434-298-6107*

## In this issue:



Page 4



Page 7

From The Top.....	2
Staunton unit returns from Iraq.....	4
A year of combat duty comes to a close .....	4
Charlottesville Guard unit trains with local EMS .....	5
1710th Trans. Co. gears up for Iraq.....	6
Virginia Aviation troops tackle water survival training .....	7
Va. Soldiers answer the call as fires ravage the Commonwealth.....	8-9
Southbound Trooper brings Canadians to Fort Pickett .....	10
Cavalry troops on medical mission help Iraqi bedouins.....	11
Virginia National Guard trains Kuwait National Guard .....	11
29th Infantry Soldiers conduct Freedom Salute.....	12
Freedom Salute honors Red Dragons for Kosovo duty .....	12
Virginia Guard celebrates Black History Month.....	13
New Family Assistance Center opens in Powhatan.....	13
News Briefs.....	14
Virginia Guard deployments .....	14
Va. pilot delivers F-22 to U.S.A.F. Weapons School .....	15

## Virginia GuardPost

The Virginia GuardPost is an authorized publication for members of the Department of Defense, and the Virginia Army and Air National Guard. It is published bimonthly and in accordance with AR 360-1, Army Public Affairs and AFI 35-101, Public Affairs Policies and Procedures. Contents of the GuardPost are not necessarily the official views of, or endorsed by, the U.S. Government, the Department of the Army, the Department of the Air Force or the Virginia Department of Military Affairs. The editorial content of this publication is the responsibility of the Virginia National Guard Public Affairs Officer. Printed by a private firm under exclusive written contract with the Government Printing Office and the Virginia National Guard in no way connected with the U.S. Government. Printed circulation: 10,000.

## Staunton- based 116th troops return from Iraq

By Maj. Cotton Puryear  
Virginia Guard Public Affairs

Approximately 150 Soldiers assigned to the Headquarters of the 116th Infantry Brigade Combat Team, based in Staunton, Va., returned home to Virginia Feb. 21 after serving in Iraq since June 2007. The returning Soldiers were greeted by hundreds of family members, friends and members of the Staunton community.

The plane carrying the Soldiers landed in Richmond around mid-day and travelled by bus with a state police escort to their formal welcome home ceremony at the Staunton armory. Members of the local chapter of the Patriot Riders also provided escort.

During the unit's brief welcome home ceremony Mayor Lacy King of the City of Staunton, Maj. Gen. Robert B. Newman, Jr., the Adjutant General of Virginia, and Secretary of Public Safety John Marshall all delivered messages of thanks to the Soldiers and appreciation to their families.

The Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 116th Infantry Brigade Combat Team, deployed to Iraq to serve as the Joint Area Support Group in downtown Baghdad. The Joint Area Support Group controlled and coordinated all security and infrastructure for the U.S. Embassy Zone in Baghdad. The headquarters also tracked operations for two subordinate battalions and two separate companies assigned to the 116th operating elsewhere in Iraq and Kuwait.

The unit suffered no fatalities during their deployment. One Soldier was wounded during a rocket attack in late summer 2007,



Photo by Maj. Cotton Puryear, Va. Guard Public Affairs

**Sgt. Christina Phillips, a human resources specialist from Staunton, waits with her daughter Jasmine for the start of the formal welcome home ceremony for Headquarters, 116th Infantry Brigade Combat Team.**

but returned to duty after recovering from her injuries.

The 116th Infantry Brigade Headquarters deployed to Iraq during the troop surge, and their mobilization was part of a bridging strategy by National Guard Bureau. The 116th's ability to rapidly deploy their headquarters into Iraq on short notice allowed time for other National Guard brigades to fully organize as brigade elements for mobilization.

While companies and battalions from the 116th Infantry Regiment have mobilized and deployed in recent years, this is the first time the brigade headquarters has mobilized for duty during the Global War on Terror. The headquarters last deployed for combat operations during World War II.

## A year of combat duty comes to a close

By Maj. Cotton Puryear  
Virginia Guard Public Affairs

Nearly a full year of combat duty in Iraq came to a formal close Feb. 4 for about 160 Virginia National Guard Soldiers as they were greeted by friends, family and community at the Fredericksburg Armory for their welcome home ceremony. Crowds lined the streets of Fredericksburg waving flags and banners, and cheering crowds welcomed the Soldiers as they marched into their armory for one final formation before being released to go home with their families.

Approximately 130 Soldiers from A Co., 116th Brigade Special Troops Battalion and approximately 30 Soldiers from C Co. 3rd Battalion, 116th Infantry, from Leesburg, Va., who deployed as part of A Co., departed Virginia early January 2007. After several weeks stateside for final train up, the Soldiers arrived at Camp Cedar

II, Tallil, Iraq in March 2007 where they provided base security.

"We are glad to have you home," said Virginia Secretary of Public Safety John W. Marshall. "Today is a reminder to all of our citizens that we should never take for granted that we have courageous individuals like yourselves with that incredible sense of patriotism that special kind of courage and the honor to put yourself in harms way to keep us all safe in the commonwealth and all across our great nation. We are very proud of each and every one of you."

Both Marshall and Maj. Gen. Robert B. Newman, Jr. the adjutant general of Virginia, commended the Soldiers for a job well done, and also extended a special thanks to the families and communities that supported the Soldiers during the mobilization.

While the Soldiers appreciated the outpouring of support they received during the deployment, they were still touched by



Photo by Maj. Cotton Puryear, Va. Guard Public Affairs

**A Soldier from A Co., 116th STB is welcomed home to Fredericksburg Feb. 4 after serving a year in Iraq.**

the warm welcome home they received.

"It's good to get packages. It's good to get mail and everything else, but when you get out and you see literally hundreds of people standing right in front of your armory, but the only thing they're here for is to say, 'welcome back,' that's absolutely a great feeling," said Capt. Ryan Thompson.

# Virginia Guard celebrates Black History Month

By Staff Sgt. A.J. Coyne  
Virginia Guard Public Affairs

The Virginia National Guard celebrated Black History Month Feb. 26 at the Fort Pickett Officer's Club. The theme of this year's celebration was "Carter G. Woodson and the Origins of Multiculturalism" and the hour-long program featured music, food and artwork.

In addition to Soldiers, Airmen and civilians from the Virginia Guard community, several dozen members of the Parkview High School Junior ROTC attended. The group also provided a color guard for the event.

The highlight of the event was a performance from Teasley & Williams, an accomplished, Washington, D.C.-based musical duo. The two former servicemembers used music from Africa and writings from famous leaders in African-American history to take the audience on a journey from Africa through



Photo by Staff Sgt. A.J. Coyne, Virginia Guard Public Affairs

**Charles Williams (left) and Tom Teasley (right) of Teasley & Williams perform at the 2008 Black History Month Observance Feb. 26 at Fort Pickett.**

early American history to today.

"This year's program was better than expected," said Capt Antoinette Allen, the

state equal employment manager. "The event highlighted the diversity that Virginia has always been known for."

## New Family Assistance Center opens in Powhatan

By Staff Sgt. A.J. Coyne  
Virginia Guard Public Affairs

A new Virginia National Guard Family Assistance Center (FAC) in Powhatan has brought to nine the total number of facilities in Virginia dedicated to providing assistance and support to Soldiers and their families.

Cindy Leipertz is the FAC specialist at the Powhatan location, which opened on Jan. 28. It's located at 276 Essayons Drive in Powhatan.

"We are dedicated to serving the needs of our military families by placing FACs in the communities where they live thus ensuring access to local resources and referral," said Vicki Sais, the state family program coordinator. "With the addition of the Powhatan FAC, it just reinforces Virginia National Guard Family Programs commitment to the Soldiers and families."

FACs are designed to be "a one stop shop for Soldiers and their families," according to Tina Harrison, the state family assistance coordinator.

"We try to get people in touch with other agencies that can help them with their problems, whether it's legal or employment issues or something as simple as a spouse needing help with yardwork," Harrison explained.

Although Family Assistance Centers were originally established to provide assistance to Soldiers and their families during a mobilization, they now provide support to servicemembers and families from all branches of the military regardless of their deployment status.

The centers focus on six essential services- TRICARE, identification cards and the DEERS system, financial assistance and referrals, crisis intervention and referral, legal assistance and referral, and employment and reemployment issues.

Through contacts with the Veterans of Foreign Wars, American Legion, American Red Cross, Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve, local Judge Advocate General offices and chaplains, Family Assistance Centers can put servicemembers and their families in touch with a person or organization who can provide the assistance they need.

Maybe the centers' most popular and important service is financial assistance and referrals. FAC personnel work with the National Guard Foundation and the Military Family Relief Fund to assist military families who might be struggling financially and need assistance or guidance.

"We can get them to the right place and get things straightened out," Harrison said.

In addition to the civilian and military agencies that FAC personnel work with, they also support family readiness groups and work with commanders and their units.

Each FAC is staffed with a professionally trained specialist who is dedicated to providing assistance to servicemembers and their families. Each of Virginia's FAC specialists has the added first-hand experience of what it means to be either a military service member or member of a military family.

For more information about Family Assistance Centers or to find the FAC nearest you, visit <http://vko.va.ngb.army.mil/VirginiaGuard/familyprograms/fac.html>.

# 29th Infantry Soldiers conduct Freedom Salute

By Maj. Cotton Puryear  
Virginia Guard Public Affairs

Soldiers from the Virginia Army National Guard's Headquarters Company, 29th Infantry Division gathered March 2 at Fort Belvoir to conduct a Freedom Salute in honor of the unit's service in Kosovo during the KFOR 8 rotation from July 2006 to November 2007.

Presiding over the ceremony were the Honorable John W. Marshall, Virginia Secretary of Public Safety, Maj. Gen. Robert B. Newman, Jr., the adjutant general of Virginia, and Brig. Gen. Grant L. Hayden, commander of the 29th Infantry Division.

Marshall said the purpose of the Freedom Salute was two-fold. First, it is to give formal recognition for the return from the deployment, and second it is a chance to say "thank you" to all the Soldiers for their service. In addition to thanking Soldiers, Marshall said it was important to say thank you to the families as well. "Their role is vital to your success," he said.

Marshall recalled how after the Task Force Red Dragon Freedom Salute in early February, many Soldiers went from their Freedom Salute on Sunday to battling forest fires on Monday. "We are always calling on you, and you are always up for the charge," he said.

Marshall concluded his remarks by saying "You make a difference here in Virginia, and you make a difference across our nation. By saluting you and all you stand for, we really are saluting freedom."

The 29th Infantry Headquarters provided command and control for more than 2,500 Soldiers assigned to the Kosovo Force's Multi-National Task Force East. The United States is the lead nation for MNTF(E), one of five multi-national brigades serving in the Kosovo Force, which also has units from Armenia, Greece, Lithuania, Poland, Romania and Ukraine. In Kosovo, the headquarters was referred to as Task Force Falcon.

In addition to the primary security mission, the task force staff also planned and executed an aggressive humanitarian assistance program to help improve quality of life for all citizens. The task force also conducted information operations designed to influence the population to be patient during the Kosovo final status process and reject violent activities as a solution to the issues they are facing.

During the rotation, Soldiers in the task force conducted a total of 21 medical civil



Photo by Maj. Cotton Puryear, Virginia Guard PAO

Among the items each Soldier received at the Freedom Salute were a certificate, a commemorative coin, and a framed United States flag.

affairs programs (MEDCAPs). MEDCAPs consisted of basic health screenings, to include dental and optometry services. Over the course of the 21 MEDCAPs, more than 3,000 Kosovo citizens from all ethnic groups received medical screenings and assistance.

The Freedom Salute Campaign is one of the largest Army National Guard recognition endeavors in history, designed to publicly acknowledge Army Guard Soldiers and those who supported them during the President's call to duty for Operations Noble Eagle, Enduring Freedom and Iraqi Freedom.

As part of the 'Freedom Salute' campaign, each Soldier is scheduled to receive a American flag in a wood display case, a Defender of Freedom certificate as well as commemorative coins and medallions.

## Freedom Salute honors Red Dragons for Kosovo duty

By Spc. Geoff Dudley  
Virginia Guard Public Affairs

Friends, family members and community supporters gathered Feb. 10 in Lynchburg for a Freedom Salute to honor the "Red Dragons" of the 1st Battalion, 116th Infantry Regiment for their service in Kosovo from July 2006 to November 2007.

The Freedom Salute is a ceremony that is held to acknowledge the mission of the Guardsmen and women called to duty.

"An award is a small token of what we can recognize in our Soldiers," said Lt. Col. Lapthe C. Flora, the commander of 1st Battalion, 116th Infantry. "They need to be recognized for not only doing their job but also going above the call of duty,"

The purpose of the Freedom Salute is also to offer a venue for the Soldiers to thank their friends, family members and employers for their sacrifice while their fathers, mothers, sons, or daughters were away defending freedom.

"Family support helps us quite a bit to do our job," explained

Flora. "We need the encouragement."

On hand at the event to offer their support and thanks were Secretary of Public Safety John W. Marshall, as well as Maj. Gen. Robert B. Newman, the Adjutant General of Virginia.

"You've represented us well as Americans and as Virginians," Newman told the Soldiers.

Each Red Dragon was presented with awards and gifts including a commemorative coin, a framed United States flag (each of which flew over the Pentagon), and two service pins. One pin was for the Soldier and the other for each Soldier's family member.

Family members received clocks symbolizing the time spent apart from their loved one.

Soldiers also received a "Future Soldier Foot Locker Kit" to present to their children.

While in Kosovo, the Red Dragons performed peacekeeping missions and also provided humanitarian relief by repairing roadways and rebuilding schools.

## New Air Guard intel unit up & running at Langley

### From Staff Reports

The Virginia Air National Guard's 192d Intelligence Squadron provides near-real-time, high confidence surveillance and reconnaissance reporting to Joint Force and Component commanders.

Previously known as Detachment 2, the unit is commanded by Lt. Col. Marsh Kjelvik and was re-designated the 192d IS on Oct. 25, 2007. It operates in an associate relationship with the active duty's 480th Intelligence Group at Langley Air Force Base near Hampton, Va.

The squadron has grown to meet developing mission requirements and currently has 80-plus individuals assigned to its 100 authorized positions.

The unit provides command and control, intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance (C2ISR) support to primarily Army warfighters on the ground in locations spanning the globe.

They provide critical information and analyses that help commanders make decisions quickly and decisively. Their efforts improve mission effectiveness and help to reduce casualties.

More than a quarter of the unit regularly supports the Global War on Terror efforts. And, unit members routinely and seamlessly support the 480th Intelligence Group with an array of missions.

In addition to its warfighting support, this growing capability has the potential to be of invaluable assistance on the homefront to provide near-real-time assessments to state agencies and leaders on a full range of crisis response scenarios: wildfires, floods, accident response, hurricanes, etc.

## Charlottesville Guard unit trains with local EMS

### By Capt. Dayna Rowden Virginia Guard Public Affairs

Soldiers from the Virginia Army National Guard's Charlie Company, 429th Brigade Support Battalion, headquartered in Charlottesville, and 116th Brigade Special Troops Battalion conducted medical training during the Feb. 8-10 monthly drill weekend. As part of that training, Soldiers conducted ambulance ride alongs with personnel from the Charlottesville Albemarle Rescue Squad.

The training was designed to create confident, skilled medical personnel by expanding their knowledge base, as well as giving them the opportunity to earn Continuing Education Units that are required to maintain their military skills proficiency standards. In addition to the ambulance ride alongs, Soldiers had the opportunity to take part in Emergency Department rotations at the University of Virginia Hospital.

"This is a community partnership," said Maj. Elena Scarbrough, commander of Charlie company. "As the primary military incident response force, we want to make sure we are up to speed with our civilian counterparts."

Much of the Soldiers' emergency medical practices are perishable skills. Charlie Company medical personnel constantly train to maintain certifications, like the Nationally Registry Emergency Medical Technician - Basic, and proficiency in their field. In these training situations, the unit works closely with local medical care providers, so the training being conducted



Photo by Capt. Dayna Rowden, Virginia Guard Public Affairs

**Spc. Roger D. Corker, a combat medic with 116th BSTB trains alongside Riley M. Moore, an emergency medical technician with the Charlottesville-Albemarle Rescue Squad, when his unit conducted ambulance ride alongs with her squad Feb 8-10.**

helps them with their ability to interact with local medical care providers.

"When I first started as a medic, I enjoyed the camaraderie of the unit," said Spc. Roger D. Corker, a combat medic with the 116th BSTB. "I like working around the civilians. You get to see how they do what they do."

Charlie Company's mission is to provide medical care to all units in the 116th Infantry Brigade Combat Team and units that serve in their area of operations.

The unit also provides medical training

to other Soldiers in the Virginia National Guard. In 2007, the company's Soldiers certified nearly 350 combat lifesavers throughout the Commonwealth.

Charlie Company consists of approximately 80 Soldiers serving as doctors, physician assistants, nurses, medics, x-ray technicians, dentists, physical therapists and psychologists.

They are a highly mobile unit, prepared to rapidly respond and provide short-term medical care during critical incidents in the Commonwealth of Virginia.

## 1710th Trans. Co. gears up for Iraq

By Maj. Cotton Puryear  
Virginia Guard Public Affairs

Soldiers from the Virginia National Guard's 1710th Transportation Company fine tuned their preparations for mobilization to Iraq during a three-week annual training period Feb. 18 to March 4 at Fort Pickett. After their annual training period is complete, the unit will depart for Camp Atterbury, Ind., for a month and a half of final training and preparations before heading to Iraq.

The 1710th headquarters is in Richmond and also has elements in Emporia, Va. Detachment 2 of the 1173rd Transportation Company from Onancock will also deploy as part of the 1710th.

"We are ready to do it," said Capt. Brett Layton, the unit commander. "Our morale is very high, and we are excited about the mission. Our Soldiers are ready to go out and do their jobs."

The unit's mission in Iraq will be to provide line haul truck support that will move critical supplies from logistical support areas out to different forward operating bases in theatre. The unit is organized with about 170 Soldiers in a headquarters section that provides administrative, maintenance and logistical support, and three truck platoons each equipped with 20 M915 tractor trucks and 40 flatbed trailers.

The unit's trailers are 40 feet long and can haul up to 64,000 pounds of cargo, explained Sgt. 1st Class Terry Moody, the truck master for the 1710th. Moody estimated that about 60 percent of the Soldiers deploying for this mission have served in Iraq before.

Moody said that one of the unit's biggest challenges will be integrating new Soldiers into the unit, but having so many people with experience in Iraq will be a huge help. Soldiers from all over Virginia will be joining the unit, a larger number of them being volunteers.

"We have a lot of volunteers from all over the state, and I think that speaks highly of the Virginia National Guard," Layton said.

Some volunteers are joining the unit



Photo by Maj. Cotton Puryear, Virginia Guard Public Affairs

**Soldiers from the 1710th Transportation Company conduct driver's training during their drill weekend Jan. 12**

from North Carolina. Six Soldiers from the North Carolina National Guard requested interstate transfers to the Virginia Guard in order to mobilize for the mission.

"I have always wanted to feel like I was doing my part to serve my country," said Spc. Christopher Roach of Winston-Salem. "I wanted a chance to do my part."

Spc. Tess Smith, also of Winston-Salem, echoed Roach's feelings. "This is what I enlisted for," she said. "I am always up for an adventure, and this seems like the ultimate adventure."

Soldiers in the unit had the opportunity to hone their skills behind the wheel during driver training conducted during the drill weekend. Both Smith and Roach agreed on one of the toughest challenges of their job: backing up the big 40-foot trailer. The training course they went through had several stations where they practiced backing down a simulated alley and up to a simulated loading dock.

Smith just graduated from her Army training school in May, but welcomed the chance to build her skills. "I get excited every time I get behind the wheel," she said. "The more we practice, the better we get."

The unit's training plan emphasizes getting as much training accomplished as possible before hitting their mobilization station. Layton explained that the more general tasks they can accomplish before they reach Camp Atterbury, the more they can focus on theatre-specific tasks once

they get there.

One way the unit is accomplishing their training objectives on their general tasks is by using the Fort Pickett Distributive Learning Center. A number of training classes covering topics such as first aid, risk management, operational and computer security and the Army Code of Conduct can be taken online at the DL Center.

"By doing as much training as we can through online classes, we are able to shorten our time at the mobilization station and increase our boots on the ground time in Iraq," Layton said.

In addition to the preparations for the Soldiers, Layton explained that his unit is also organizing Family Readiness Groups for the mobilization. Staffed by volunteers, FRGs can help assist with information and coordinating for support and assistance during times of need. Layton said that he plans to have FRG volunteers working in Richmond, Emporia and Onancock, along with the unit's full time rear detachment at Emporia.

"FRGs are a vital resource for families and friends of deployed Soldiers, and we are committed to taking care of our Soldier's families during the deployment," Layton said. "We are fortunate to have people who are willing to step up and volunteer their time and energy to help with this important effort."

The unit is scheduled to conduct a departure ceremony Mar. 11 at the Greenville Elementary School.

## Cavalry troops on medical mission help Iraqi bedouins

By Maj. Philip W. Wentworth  
2nd Squadron, 183rd Cavalry

SOUTHWEST ASIA — At the end of December, members of the 2nd Battalion, 183rd Cavalry Regiment traveled to an Iraqi bedouin camp to conduct a medical capabilities operation.

The physician's assistant in charge was Capt. Jon Brillhart. Two female medics from the 3rd Battalion, 116th Infantry Regiment, joined the cavalry team for the mission to treat other females.

The 183rd MEDCAP team treated local Iraqi patients, seeing ailments ranging from sore throats to ulcers to joint injuries. The bedouin families were grateful for the help as they rarely have the means or opportunity to be get access to medical care.

The CAV Soldiers universally expressed satisfaction with the mission, with several stating that "this was the kind of thing I came to Iraq to do."

Developing relationships and rapport with the local populace is an important part of the unit's mission in southern Iraq, and they have focused a large share of their resources and efforts on civil military operations.



Photo courtesy of USARCENT Public Affairs

**An Iraqi father holds his son as Capt. Jon Brillhart, a physician's assistant for the 2nd Battalion, 183rd Cavalry Regiment, checks the child's stomach.**

The Cavalry battalion is based out of Portsmouth, Va., and is commanded by Lt. Col. Walt Mercer. The infantry battalion is based out of Winchester, Va., and is commanded by Lt. Col. John Epperly. Both battalions are Virginia Army National Guard units serving in southwest Asia in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom.

## Virginia National Guard trains Kuwait National Guard

By Spc. Jason C. Kemp  
3rd Battalion, 116th Infantry

KUWAIT — Training is not anything new to Soldiers. It's something they do almost everyday, but when you are training a whole other army, that's totally different than your average grenade throwing, rifle marksmanship, driving your Humvee day.

Soldiers from the 3rd Battalion, 166th Infantry Regiment, Virginia Army National Guard is working with Military Professional Resources Inc. to train the 7,000 members of the Kuwait National Guard on the latest soldier tactical skills.

Using riot control tactics, less lethal munitions, pressure holds and the latest vehicle search tactics, MPRI and National

Guard Soldiers are making sure the KNG have the experience and training they need to combat terrorism in Kuwait.

Guarding gates and vehicle inspection is one of the most important jobs on an installation.

According to 1st Lt. Jude C. Lau, 1st Platoon leader, Company F, learning procedures like entry control points allows the Kuwaitis to get a good perspective on how important it for everyone from the officer in charge down to the lowest ranking personnel.

"It's a good experience," said Sgt. Anthony R. Tippins, a team leader in 1st Platoon. "You get to learn one end and see what your counterparts know and they get to see what you know as well.

"The Kuwaiti's are pretty adept at what they have been training on with MPRI and with the 3-116th," he said.

Helping MPRI teach the Kuwaitis tactical skills not only helps give the battalion National Guard Soldiers extra training, but also builds upon the already growing relationship between the U.S. military and the Kuwaiti forces. This training builds future opportunities to train together to defeat terrorist threats both in Kuwait and abroad.



Spc. Jason C. Kemp, 3rd Battalion, 116th Infantry Regiment

**The Kuwait National Guard prepares to defend against rioters in a mock training scenarios with Military Professional Resources Inc. and 3rd Battalion, 116th Infantry Regiment, National Guard Soldiers.**

## Southbound Trooper brings Canadians to Fort Pickett

By Maj. Cotton Puryear  
Virginia Guard Public Affairs

Soldiers from the Canadian Army Reserve conducted a major field training exercise at the Virginia National Guard Maneuver Training Center at Fort Pickett Feb. 22. The training exercise was part of Exercise Southbound Trooper VIII and involved Soldiers from the 36 Canadian Brigade Group from Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island.

Training with the Canadians were Soldiers from the New Hampshire National Guard. The training exercise simulated a peacekeeping operation in Afghanistan with approximately 300 Soldiers conducting a cordon and search operation near a simulated village. The mission of the Soldiers was to find and cease the operation of a bomb maker who has been targeting friendly forces near the village.

The purpose of the Exercise Southbound Trooper is to prepare Canadian Army Reserve Soldiers for possible mobilization and deployment to Afghanistan. The selection of Fort Pickett for the training is to give Canadian Soldiers the chance to train in a coalition environment where they conduct operations with forces from the United States.

Conducted annually in the United



Photo by Staff Sgt. William Newman, 55th Signal Company

**A U.S. Army Soldier from Charlie Company, 3rd Battalion, 172nd Infantry Regiment (Mountain), New Hampshire National Guard receives instruction from Sgt. Joe Plichie while participating in military operations on urban terrain training during operation Southbound Trooper VIII on Fort Pickett, Va., Feb. 16, 2008.**

States since 2000, Southbound Trooper continuously grows in size. Initially conducted at Fort Indiantown Gap, Pa., Southbound Trooper moved to Fort Pickett in 2001 for the MTC's unique aviation training opportunities.

"Coming to Fort Pickett gives us a training opportunity we can't get anywhere else," said Capt. Ron Kronstein, a public affairs officer with the 36 Canadian Brigade Group. "We get great cooperation here; the facilities are first rate, and we get the opportunity to operate with American Soldiers and aircraft from both the United States Army and Navy just like we would in Afghanistan."

Out of the approximately 300 Canadian Reserve Soldiers taking part in the training exercise, approximately 40 to 50 are veterans from Canadian operations in Afghanistan, Kronstein said. Canada currently has approximately 2,500 personnel serving in Afghanistan in the Kandahar Province.

The 36 Canadian Brigade Group consists of mostly light infantry Soldiers but also has engineers, military intelligence, signal, military police and civil affairs personnel.

The training area being used for the exercise is named "Cherry Village" in honor of Staff Sgt. Craig Cherry, a Virginia National Guard Soldier who was killed in action in Afghanistan Aug. 7, 2004. Cherry was a member of the 3rd Battalion, 116th Infantry Regiment headquartered in Winchester.



Photo by Staff Sgt. William Newman, 55th Signal Company

**U.S. Army Soldiers from Charlie Company, 3rd Battalion, 172nd Infantry Regiment (Mountain), New Hampshire National Guard practice room-clearing techniques during Exercise Southbound Trooper VIII on Fort Pickett, Va., Feb. 17, 2008.**

# Virginia Aviation troops tackle water survival training

By Capt. Dayna Rowden  
Virginia Guard Public Affairs

After a helicopter crashes or ditches over water, the crew has only seconds to respond to the emergency. The crew will be bombarded with violent jerking motions and several tons of incoming water. In most cases, the helicopter rolls upside-down, causing what might be a panic-inducing situation.

With over 3,315 miles of tidal shoreline, Virginia Army National Guard aircrew members and pilots face a possibility of an over-water emergency. It is because of this possibility that members of the 2nd Battalion, 224th Aviation Regiment, traveled to Naval Air Station Norfolk to participate in aircrew water survival training on Jan. 5.

The water survival training will increase the unit's readiness to answer the call and to respond to natural disasters, like hurricanes, which may require them to fly over water, according to Maj. James Ring, commander of the 2-224th. Keeping pilots and crew members safe is a focus of the Virginia Army National Guard.

Panic is typical in many emergency situations, and the best way to prevent panic is through good, repeated, realistic training. So starting at 7 a.m., nearly 50 members of the 2-224th spent nearly seven hours in a swimming pool learning water survival techniques from the experts- the U.S. Navy.

Starting with learning to do basic survival swimming strokes, the training became progressively more difficult. The aviators swam and tread water in flight suits and boots, practiced opening compartment doors underwater, and completed Shallow Water Egress Training, in which they had to successfully unbuckle their harnesses from a chair that was submerged upside-down. Some of these exercises had to be completed while blindfolded.

All training was designed to build confidence and proficiency and culminated in the Modular Egress Training System (METS), or multi-place helicopter dunker. METS simulates a helicopter making a crash-landing in the water. The crew has to safely unbuckle their harnesses and safely egress the submerged aircraft. Each crew took three "rides" in the dunker; on the final ride all crew members were blindfolded.

After their last "ride" in the dunker, the aviators received training with the Helicopter Aircrew Breathing Device (HABD), which looks like a miniature SCUBA tank. The HABD is a piece of military survival gear that was adopted in order to increase the chances of survival for aircrew trapped in an aircraft which has crashed into a body of water.

After hours in the water, the aviators, many of whom possessed a certain amount of dread prior to the training, left the pool feeling confident that they learned the skills necessary to survive in the water.



Photos by Capt. Dana Rowden, Virginia Guard Public Affairs

**A Navy instructor from Naval Air Station Norfolk explains to Virginia Guard aviation troops how to respond during an emergency situation in water.**



**A Virginia National Guard pilot from the 2nd Bn., 224th Avn. Regt. practices an underwater egress Jan. 5 at Naval Air Station Norfolk.**

# Virginia Guard Soldiers answer the call



Virginia National Guard aviators Chief Warrant Officer 4 John Anderson (center) and Warrant Officer Aaron Trombley (left) review the map location of their target area with Dave Slack, the regional forester for the Tappahannock region of the Virginia Department of Forestry, Feb. 12 as troops were called up to help battle forest fires.

By Maj. Cotton Puryear  
Virginia Guard Public Affairs

Photos by Maj. Cotton Puryear, Virginia Guard Public Affairs  
Bob Boeren (far right) from the Virginia Department of Forestry in Roanoke gives an operations overview to 2nd Lt. Aaron Wallace (far left), 2nd Lt. Sid Leslie and 1st Sgt. Terry Thompson (center) of the Virginia National Guard Feb. 12.

More than 120 Virginia National Guard Soldiers went on state active duty Feb. 11 to join in the Commonwealth's battle against wild fires raging throughout the state. While a Virginia National Guard helicopter dumped 600-gallon buckets of water to help contain fires in the Tazewell area, more than 100 Soldiers trained at Fort Pickett to be prepared for duty on Feb. 12 in Roanoke and Bedford.

"The Virginia National Guard helicopters were amazingly effective today," said Dave Slack, the regional forester in the Tappahannock region off the Virginia Department of Forestry. "Our objective for the Guard was to protect structures in the area from the fires, and we accomplished that mission."

The target area was a housing development approximately one mile southeast of Center Cross, Va., Slack explained. The terrain in that area would have made it very difficult for the Department of Forestry to battle the blaze with their tracked vehicles.

It would have taken a crew of four to six fire fighters and Department of Forestry personnel three to five days to accomplish what the Virginia Guard helicopter did in an hour, Slack said.

As the Virginia Guard aviators were helping contain fires with their water dumps, approximately 100 Virginia Army National Guard Soldiers conducted firefighting training with the Virginia Department of Forestry at Fort Pickett.

The Soldiers left Fort Pickett in the early morning Feb. 12. About 60 Soldiers traveled to the Roanoke Armory to establish a command post and began assisting Forestry Department officials with the fire fighting effort in the Carvin's Cove area. About 40 Soldiers traveled to the Bedford area and assist with the fight against fires in the Smith Mountain Lake area.

The Soldiers supported Virginia Department of Emergency Management and the Virginia Department of Forestry by providing fire line construction and clean-



A Virginia National Guard air crew assisted with fire fighting operations at this site near Center Cross, Va.

# As fires ravage the Commonwealth



**Cpl. Robert B. Anderson, a Virginia Guard Soldier assigned to the Lexington-based B Co., 1st Battalion, 116th Infantry, works to extinguish some of the remnants of a wild fire near Roanoke Feb 12.**

up efforts in the effected areas.

The Soldiers fighting fires are assigned to the 1st Battalion, 116th Infantry and the 429th Brigade Support Battalion and come from Lynchburg, Danville, Martinsville, South Boston as well as other cities throughout Virginia. 1st Battalion recently returned from a year-long mission in Kosovo and was celebrating their return at a Freedom Salute Feb. 10.

Fire fighting operations in the Bedford area were declared mission complete Feb. 14 and the Soldiers remained in reserve for the Roanoke fire fighting effort. Soldiers in the Roanoke area worked through Feb. 16.

Governor Tim Kaine traveled to Roanoke Feb. 28 to personally thank the men and women from the Roanoke County Fire and Rescue Department, the Virginia National Guard and the Virginia Department of Forestry for a job well-done fighting the local wildfires.

Virginia Department of Forestry officials said a record-breaking 348 wildfires burned across the Commonwealth on February 10th and burned 16,000 acres. The last wildfire record was in the 1960s with only about 90 wildfires.



**A Virginia National Guard helicopter from 2nd Battalion, 224th Aviation departs the Tappahannock airport to begin fire fighting operations near Center Cross.**