

Soldier serving second tour of duty in Iraq

On page 2: National Volunteer Week

Soldiers, Sailors and Airmen mourn the loss of Virginia Guard Soldier

CAMP ARIFJAN, Kuwait – Several hundred service members filled the chapel here, April 15 to pay their last respects to Staff Sgt. Jesse A. Ault, who died of injuries sustained when an improvised explosive device struck his vehicle April 9.

Tears fell from the eyes of Soldiers, Sailors and Airmen who knew Ault, as they gathered to listen to several speakers at the memorial.

The ceremony began with a short prayer from Capt. Erik Grambling, the Joint Logistics Task Force 28 Battalion Chaplain, “[God] knew us before we were born, he knew our lives before we lived a single one of them.”



Staff Sgt. Ault

“We are not left alone in our grief and sorrow, but are confident [of God’s] desire to be with us now,” said Grambling.

Chaplain Grambling then introduced the JLTF 28 Battalion commander, Lt. Col. Christopher Benoit.

“I did not have the opportunity to know



Members of the Virginia Guard’s Echo Company, 429th Forward Support Battalion salute the memorial centerpiece for Staff Sgt. Jesse A. Ault.

Staff Sergeant Ault beyond his firm handshake and smile,” said Benoit. “His death again reminded me of the great sacrifice we are prepared to make for one another, our families and our country.”

Ault, a native of Dublin, Va., was a husband, father and son. He previously deployed in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom twice.

Link: <http://vko.va.ngb.army.mil/VirginiaGuard/news/april2008/aultmem.html>

Virginia National Guard News Headlines

Three infantry companies return to United States from Iraq

Soldiers from infantry companies headquartered in Charlottesville, Leesburg and Woodstock assigned to 3rd Battalion, 116th Infantry Brigade Combat Team returned to the United States April 20 and 21 after serving in Iraq and Kuwait since September 2007. The Soldiers flew into the demobilization station of Camp Shelby, Miss., and will conduct a number of different administrative activities to transition from active duty back into traditional National Guard status prior to returning back to Virginia.

Link: <http://vko.va.ngb.army.mil/VirginiaGuard/news/april2008/abc-3-116return.html>

Fort Pickett hosts Earth Day celebration

The Virginia Army National Guard environmental programs office hosted the 6th annual Earth Day celebration at the Twin Lakes recreational area on Fort Pickett April 22.

Link: <http://vko.va.ngb.army.mil/VirginiaGuard/news/april2008/earthday.html>

House of Delegates Resolution honors fallen Virginia Guard Soldier

Family and friends of a fallen Virginia National Guard Soldier gathered in West Point, Va. April 21 to honor his memory with a resolution from the Virginia House of Delegates. The Honorable Phillip A. Hamilton, Delegate of the 93rd District representing the City of Newport News and County of James City, presented the widow and mother of Sgt. Derek R. Banks with the resolution during a ceremony at the West Point High School Auditorium.

Link: <http://vko.va.ngb.army.mil/VirginiaGuard/news/april2008/banksresolution.html>

Mark Your Calendars!

April 26: Presentation of Virginia House and Senate Resolutions

Virginia Senator Mark Herring will present the Senate Joint Resolution commending the Virginia Guard at the Virginia Officer’s Association Conference in Fredericksburg and Virginia Delegate John Cosgrove will present the House of Delegates Joint Resolution at the Virginia Enlisted Association Conference in Portsmouth.

Holocaust Remembrances

The Virginia Guard Equal Opportunity Office will host a series of Holocaust Remembrance Lunches April 28, 29, 30 and May 2. For times and locations, call Capt. Antoinette Allen at (804) 236-6596.

Virginia Defense Force volunteers time and energy for fellow Virginians

National Volunteer Week will be celebrated April 27 to May 3. It recognizes the many volunteers in our state that contribute individual time and efforts that benefit the citizens of the Commonwealth. The Virginia Defense Force exemplifies the selfless spirit of volunteerism found in many organizations in communities throughout the state that support our citizens.

The Virginia Defense Force is an all-volunteer force that is part of the Virginia Department of Military Affairs. It provides support in the event of disasters in support of the Virginia National Guard under the command of Maj. Gen. Robert Newman, the Adjutant General of Virginia, specifically to assist citizens throughout the Commonwealth, whenever and wherever relief is.

The volunteer members are located in over 38 Virginia Army National Guard installations throughout the Commonwealth. They support the Virginia National Guard in performing state missions to provide interoperable communications, less-than-lethal security, emergency medical triage, traffic control, fix-wing aviation flights, and general manpower support as specified by the Governor of Virginia.

The division headquarters is located in Richmond, and there are three operational brigades: Lafayette, located in



A member of the Virginia Defense Force renders a salute to busload of Virginia Guard Soldiers headed out for mobilization training. Members of the Virginia Defense Force volunteers hundreds of hours supporting the Virginia Guard and the Commonwealth.

the Tidewater area; Black Horse, located in Northern Virginia; and the Highland, located in Roanoke. Two new battalions will be activated on the eastern shore and in northern Virginia in this year.

The division currently has a total of over 700 members, and in 2007 they contributed over 7,500 mandays of volunteer service. This resulted in a financial contribution to the Commonwealth of over \$1 million. The goal of the VDF is to exceed the past year's

mandays for volunteer service to the state by increasing the number of new members throughout the Commonwealth.

The long term goal is to have 1,200 volunteers in four to five brigades and 12 to 15 battalions.

For more information about the Virginia Defense Force contact by e-mail at vdinfo@vdf.virginia.gov; or call the Division Headquarters in Richmond at 804-228-7018 or 866-791-9164.

Link: <http://vko.va.ngb.army.mil/VirginiaGuard/news/april2008/vdf.html>

Family Readiness Volunteer Advisory Council looking for new volunteers

The revitalized Virginia National Guard State Family Readiness Volunteer Advisory Council is currently looking for volunteer council members for the Roanoke and Virginia Beach/Norfolk/Chesapeake areas. The council meets for two hours every other month in Richmond.

The council, which is made up of 11 volunteers representing different regions of the state, was reestablished for the purpose of identifying needs of military families, offer solutions and make recommendations on current and future programs as well as to provide empowerment of military families through education, communication, resources and community involvement.

Interested parties should contact either Mrs. Jill McMillin at 434-294-7349 or Mrs. Christina Hice at 434-223-2787.

Link: <http://vko.va.ngb.army.mil/VirginiaGuard/familyprograms/index.html>

MORE ON THE WEB

Army Earth Day

<http://aec.army.mil/dev/publicaffairs/earthday00.html>

Virginia National Guard Environmental Program

<http://vko.va.ngb.army.mil/VirginiaGuard/environmental/index.html>

Virginia Defense Force

<http://www.vdf.virginia.gov/>

Senate Joint Resolution No. 143

<http://leg1.state.va.us/cgi-bin/legp504.exe?081+ful+SJ143ER>

House Joint Resolution No. 360

<http://leg1.state.va.us/cgi-bin/legp504.exe?081+ful+HJ360ER>