

TF Cardinal returns to Virginia after mission in Texas

Virginia National Guard Soldiers and Airmen deployed as Task Force Cardinal returned to Virginia Aug. 1, 2023, after supporting Operation Lone Star in Texas since July 8. The troops staffed observation posts and conducted roving patrols along the border between Texas and Mexico to observe and detect potential illegal border crossings and criminal activities and reported to Texas law enforcement authorities.

VNG senior leaders joined Governor Glenn Youngkin, retired Maj. Gen. Craig Crenshaw, Virginia Secretary of Veterans and Defense Affairs and other state officials in greeting the troops as they got off the plane in Richmond. The Task Force Cardinal command team presented Youngkin with a Virginia flag flown over their base camp during the deployment to Texas.

“Welcome home!” Youngkin said after he greeted the troops getting off the plane in Richmond. “Task Force Cardinal, I am so proud of you. The call came from Operation Lone Star, and you answered it. You represented the Commonwealth of Virginia with professionalism, treated people with dignity and care, and you protected our border. Thank you.”

Read more at <https://ngpa.us/26443>



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Virginia National Guard News Headlines

DiNonno takes command of 29th Infantry Division

Brig. Gen. Joseph DiNonno took command of the 29th Infantry Division from Maj. Gen. John Rhodes Aug. 5, 2023, on the Long Parade Ground at Fort Belvoir, Virginia. Maj. Gen. James W. Ring, the Adjutant General of Virginia, presided over the exchange of organizational colors.

Read more at <https://ngpa.us/26444>

29th Infantry Division welcomes Hawley as top NCO

Command Sgt. Maj. Timothy Hawley took responsibility as the 29th Infantry Division's top noncommissioned officer from Command Sgt. Maj. Daryl Plude Aug 5, 2023, at the Long Parade Ground, Fort Belvoir, Virginia.

Read more at <https://ngpa.us/26445>

Director of ANG Medical Service visits 192nd Medical Group

Col. Linda Rohatsch, director of the Air National Guard Medical Service, visited the 192nd Medical Group July 8, 2023, at Joint Base Langley-Eustis, Virginia, the first visit to the base since assuming the role at the end of 2022.

Read more at <https://ngpa.us/26446>

VNG Soldiers conduct mountain warfare exchange in Tajikistan

Five Virginia National Guard Soldiers conducted a mountain warfare exchange with soldiers from the Republic of Tajikistan July 24-29, 2023, in Romit, Tajikistan.

Read more at <https://ngpa.us/26447>

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Challenge, camaraderie fuel 11B Infantry transition

A few times each year, the Virginia National Guard's 1st Battalion, 183rd Regiment, Regional Training Institute, conducts an 11B Infantry Transition Course. The Soldiers who attend this course, all junior Soldiers and noncommissioned officers, each arrive with their own reason for being there. Some want to test themselves, to see if they can survive and thrive in the infantry. Others are fulfilling childhood dreams, or chasing promotion opportunities. Whatever their reason, their goal is singular: to earn the 11B military occupational specialty and leave Fort Barfoot with a blue infantry shoulder cord.

"It is not an easy MOS, but it is a very rewarding one at the same time," said Sgt. 1st Class Brian Cook, a long-time cadre member at the 183rd RTI.

During the 11B Infantry Transition course, Cook and the rest of the cadre put Soldiers, who arrive as engineers, medics, intelligence analysts and mechanics, through three rigorous weeks of infantry training. Over those weeks, Soldiers gain proficiency on weapons they've maybe never fired before, improve their land navigation skills, learn how to communicate and move effectively across a battlefield and gain a basic proficiency in infantry tasks. The days are long and often made more challenging by the sweltering heat and humidity native to Virginia.

For many of the students, the challenge of becoming an infantryman is precisely what motivated them as they worked their way through the course.

"The reason I wanted to become an 11B, is because I like to put myself to the test," explained Staff Sgt. Patrick Powers, a 91B Wheeled Vehicle Mechanic in the Virginia National Guard. He's also slotted to attend U.S. Army Ranger School and knew the 11B course would help him establish a strong knowledge base before taking on that next challenge.

Similarly, Sgt. Allison Stanton, assigned to the 82nd Airborne Division as a 35F Intelligence Analyst, was also there to challenge herself.

"I wanted to become at 11B because it's really the only MOS that I felt was out of my comfort zone," she said. "I felt like the whole job would be very challenging for me, so that's why I chose it."

Spc. Steven Schmidt drove across the country to attend the infantry transition course. He started his military career as a medic.

"During my time in the military, I've met all sorts of people, with different MOSs, but the 11Bs stood out to me in their brotherhood," Schmidt said. "I've always believed that going through difficult times is what brings people together and I think 11Bs go through that more than any other MOS. I just wanted to be a part of that."

As the most recent course came to a close, after the Soldiers hauled themselves, their gear and their weapons through the forests, roads and fields of Fort Barfoot, after they tested their endurance with a timed 5-mile run and sent thousands of rounds down range from a variety of different weapons systems, they



U.S. Army Soldiers from across the nation receive their blue Infantry Shoulder Cords July 26, 2023, in recognition of their successful completion of the 11B Infantry Transition Course.

gathered near a small pond. The cadre, decorated with an assortment of badges, tabs and scrolls, formed a corridor through the water. The students, tired and dirty from days spent in the field, were called forward, into the water. There, they were guided through the protected passage formed by the cadre. Then, dripping pond water and steaming in the midday sun, they worked their way to a top of a hill.

This immersion and ascent, they were told, served to mark the transition from what they were before to what they had become.

On top of a Fort Barfoot hill on July 26, 2023, 22 Soldiers received their blue infantry cords and officially became the newest infantry Soldiers in the U.S. Army.

Read more at <https://ngpa.us/26448>

MORE ON THE WEB

192nd Wing receives a Mother's Room

Read more at <https://ngpa.us/26449>

VNG Family Programs volunteers recognized at ceremony

Photos on Flickr at <https://ngpa.us/26432>

First civilian receives payment for VNG REP

Photos on Flickr at <https://ngpa.us/26403>

VNG Youth Programs hosts 18th annual Youth Camp

Photos on Flickr at <https://ngpa.us/26312>

AG visits 192nd Wing at JBLE

Photos on Flickr at <https://ngpa.us/26451>

