

South Dakota National Guard

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

SD Guardsmen advance to national cooking competition

By Sgt. 1st Class Theanne Tangen
SDNG Public Affairs Office

RAPID CITY, S.D. – The South Dakota Army National Guard’s 152nd Combat Sustainment Support Battalion, of Pierre, advance to compete in the national Philip A. Connelly cooking competition in October.

The 152nd earned the highest score from a panel of three judges during the 2012 annual Golden Coyote training exercise in June to win the Region VI Philip A. Connelly title.

The Philip A. Connelly Award was established March 23, 1968, to recognize excellence in Army Food Service. The program is named for the late Philip A. Connelly, former president of International Food Service Executive Association who was responsible for obtaining IFSEA’s sponsorship of the event.

“The 152nd was the best overall,” said retired Chief Warrant Officer 5 (Ret.) Roger De Witz, a senior evaluator. “They competed against the North Dakota and Oregon Army National Guard during the regional competition.”

The competition judges the mess section in ten categories to include: sanitation; food safety; water safety; non-commissioned officer development; equipment knowledge and maintenance; presentation; portion size; temperature and taste.

Competition at the national level will be similar to competing at the regional level.

“They will be cooking the same menu as they did this summer,” said De Witz. “The only difference is they are competing for the Best Army National Guard Field Kitchen and runner-up title. There will be a total of seven states competing.”

Each of the seven units will be judged in their home states. The 152nd will be judged at their armory in Pierre on Oct. 14.

The 152nd had some help in preparing for the competition from two Soldiers who competed at the national level for the SDARNG’s 200th Engineer Company in 2007. Sgt. 1st Class Jackie Bierman, 152nd battalion senior supply sergeant and Chief Warrant Officer 2 Jeff Urban, SDARNG’s Army food service officer.

“I had no doubt that the 152nd would advance to the national level,” said Urban. “Their food was excellent! They work well as a team and they made sure the food didn’t burn, despite having little control of the temperature in a field kitchen – it is either high or low.”

The competition is designed to promote professionalism in the Army Food Service, raise the standards of service and to recognize the outstanding service provided.

“The 152nd is setting the standards high for cooks in the South Dakota Army National Guard,” said Urban. “This competition shows that we have cooks who do their job well and can cook a meal above the Army standard.”

The 152nd will go through the same process once again at the national level with three judges evaluating them for a four-hour period before the meal is served. The judges will evaluate the entire kitchen operation with the goal of the cooks serving a quality meal to the Soldiers on time.

Urban said the competition reinforces the importance of providing a quality meal to Soldiers working in the field.

“Sometimes when Soldiers are out in the field for weeks eating MRE’s (Meals Ready to Eat) the only thing they may have to look forward is coming in for a warm meal,” said Urban. “The biggest morale booster in a field environment is a well-cooked meal.”

The following Army National Guard units from across the United States that will be competing against the 152nd CSSB include; 119th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion, New Jersey; 1032 Transportation Company, Virginia; 690 Military Police Company, Florida; 212th Support Maintenance Company, Ohio; 1167th Brigade Support Company, Nebraska; and the Forward Support Company, 528th Engineer Battalion, Louisiana.

-30-

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120618-A-RN486-001: South Dakota Army National Guard’s Sgt. Jeremie D. Evans (left) and Spc. Daniel Fields both cooks with the 152nd Combat Sustainment Support Battalion, prepares chicken breasts at West Camp Rapid near Rapid City, S.D., June 18, 2012, during the regional Philip A. Connelly Award of Excellence in Army Food Service competition. (SDNG photo by Master Sgt. Donald Matthews) (RELEASED)



120618-A-RN486-002: South Dakota Army National Guard’s Spc. Ashley Jungen, of Sioux Falls, a cook with the 152nd Combat Sustainment Support Battalion, prepares green beans at West Camp Rapid near Rapid City, S.D., June 18, 2012, during the regional Philip A. Connelly Award of Excellence in Army Food Service competition. (SDNG photo by Master Sgt. Donald Matthews) (RELEASED)

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