

[<<Back](#)

Galva, IL

Families, friends prepare for 202nd's homecoming

Mar 9, 2005, 10:46 AM

GALVA -- In two weeks a Henry County-based National Guard unit comes home from Iraq. The 202nd Air Defense Artillery Unit out of Galva left for Iraq in late 2003.

Friends and families in Galva are celebrating the news and preparing for the homecoming.

The reservist come from, Annawan, Dixon, Kewanee and Galva. Around 120 soldiers are expected to come home March 20th.

over one thousands signs are being custom made for the 202 nd at Breedloves in Kewanee.

Families of Foxtrot Battery spent the day making preparations.

There's still much work to be done. The troops are expected to arrive at the Galva Armory in less than two weeks.

"Right now we all have a sense of relief," said Mike Bowman

Bowman is counting the days. He said goodbye to his son, Tim, a-year-and-a-half ago.

"He's changed from the 20-year-old kid who went off to basic training ... to a man who seen more done more than I ever hope to."

Yellow ribbons and signs of love and gratitude will line city streets for a welcome like no other.

"There's a young man who said when you see the signs it makes a lot of the hurt pain and war go away," Bowman explains. "These guys have gone through so much we want as much to go away as can."

Several soldiers will come home wearing purple hearts, others are still recovering in military hospitals.

"The amount of combat they have seen is phenomenal."

The unit spent much of it's time guarding Airport Road in the Green Zone.

"They did Airport Road for four months and had no casualties--the only unit to have done that," said Bowman. "For them to come home in that shape the community needs to be proud we raised some superior soldiers."

The unit's most seriously injured soldier will not be back for the celebration. Dusty Hill, a graduate of Annawan High School, is undergoing extensive rehab in a military hospital in Texas. He lost an eye and both of his hands in a roadside bombing.



All content © Copyright 2001 - 2005 WorldNow and WQAD. All Rights Reserved.
For more information on this site, please read our [Privacy Policy](#) and [Terms of Service](#).