

**More than 200 VDF members train at Fort Pickett**

On page 2: RTI shows off new barracks facility

# VDF conducts annual training muster

More than 200 members of the Virginia Defense Force took part in a variety of different training events focused on response package proficiency and improving professionalism Sept. 29 and 30, 2012, during the all-volunteer organization's annual training muster at Fort Pickett. Training included professional development courses for staff officers and senior noncommissioned officers as well as a safety officer and NCO course and training for Incident Management Assistance Teams and Mobile Command Post operations. In addition, more than 60 new VDF members took part in Initial Entry Training that focused on basics like VDF history, customs and courtesies, drill and ceremony and map reading.

"This is how we are increasing our level of readiness for our response packages, but also increasing the level of professionalism among members of the VDF," said Maj. Gen. (Va.) John Taylor, commander of the Virginia Defense Force.

Read more: <http://vanguard.dodlive.mil/2012/09/30/2190/>



Members of a VDF's Incident Management Assistance Team take part in training and evaluation during the all-volunteer organization's annual training muster Sept. 29 at Fort Pickett.

## Virginia National Guard News Headlines

### Sling load operations provide valuable training to Virginia Guard aviators

Virginia National Guard Soldiers in a UH-60 Black Hawk helicopter provided aviation support to students conducting sling load operations training Sept. 28 at Fort Lee, Va.

Read more: <http://vanguard.dodlive.mil/2012/09/29/2183/>

### Virginia Guard's 183rd RTI trains new rappel masters

Instructors and rappel masters from the Virginia Guard's 183rd Regiment, Regional Training Institute taught the U.S. Army's Rappel Master Course Sept. 24-28 at the RTI with a starting class of 26 Soldiers from around the nation.

Read more: <http://vanguard.dodlive.mil/2012/09/29/2165/>

### Engineers compete for bragging rights as "best squad"

Soldiers from 1st Squad, 2nd Platoon of the Bowling Green-based 189th Multi-role Bridge Company, 276th Engineer Battalion, 91st Troop Command took first place in the unit's best squad competition held Sept. 22 at Camp Pendleton in Virginia Beach.

Read more: <http://vanguard.dodlive.mil/2012/09/28/2186/>

### Va. Army, Air National Guard troops work with the Tajik Army on fieldcraft

A five-man team from the Virginia Army and Air National Guard, led by Maj. Bill McCarty, completed an 11-day exchange with the Tajik Army Aug. 29. The exchange topics included mission analysis, junior leader development, land navigation, and related issues.

Read more: <http://vanguard.dodlive.mil/2012/09/20/2195/>

## Mark Your Calendars!

### Oct. 7: 29th Infantry Division Change of Command

Brig. Gen. Charles W. Whittington Jr. will take charge of the Fort Belvoir-based 29th Infantry Division from Maj. Gen. Frank E. Batts in a change of command ceremony scheduled for 1 p.m. on Long Parade Field on Fort Belvoir.

For more information, contact 1st Lt. Mitchell Carte at 703-805-3429 or [mitchell.carteti@us.army.mil](mailto:mitchell.carteti@us.army.mil).

### Nov. 1: Tuition Assistance Deadline

The State Tuition website is currently open for registration for Spring Semester. Application deadline is Nov. 1, 2012.

For more information, please visit <http://go.usa.gov/YjtH>.

# 183rd RTI marks completion of new facility

The Fort Pickett-based 183rd Regiment, Regional Training Institute marked the opening of the second and final phase of their new facility during an annual family day event Sept. 23. Phase II includes 123,916 square feet of student barracks spread across three two-story barracks buildings. Each building is equipped with high speed wireless internet, complimentary laundry facilities, and various room configurations all designed to suit the needs of the diverse course offerings of the RTI.

“We are in a class with very few states,” said Command Sgt. Maj. Howard “Skip” Halfacre, commandant of the RTI, on the newly completed state-of-the-art facility. “Students are going to attend a world-class facility, not only in the classroom spaces and in the instruction they’ll receive, but also in the living spaces.”

Previously, Soldiers attending courses at the RTI were housed primarily in 50-person, open bay barracks dating back to World War II. The old barracks lacked air conditioning and modern amenities and were a frequent complaint listed on end-of-course evaluations, according to Halfacre. The all-new barracks facility aims to quell those complaints.

“The new barracks are awesome,” said Staff Sgt. Michael Mateo, from the Guam National Guard currently assigned to the Army National Guard’s Warrior Training Center at Fort Benning. Mateo is among the first to stay in the new barracks while attending the Rappel Master Course at the RTI Sept. 24-28. “Compared with the old barracks, they’re really nice.”

Two of the new barracks buildings are similarly designed and feature room configurations including one and two-man rooms joined by shared latrines as well as two suites with private restroom facilities designed to house VIPs, including commanders or visiting dignitaries. A portion of the rooms are designed specifically for use by the staff from each of the RTI battalions.

The third barracks building, located adjacent to the Officer Candidate School classrooms and administrative spaces, was designed to specifically suit the needs of OCS, but the lodging available in the building can be used by other courses as needed. The lower level of the building includes six 10-person open bays with adjoining latrines with three showers, toilets and sinks, as well as rooms for OCS cadre. The top level is comprised exclusively of two-person rooms joined by shared latrines.

In each of the barracks, every respective level is equipped with a complimentary laundry facility that includes three washers and five dryers and a lounge area with a flat screen TV and space for students to gather. Each of the rooms and buildings are accessed via key cards that are issued to RTI students upon their arrival at the schoolhouse. Key cards enable students to access only the building to which they are assigned, along with their rooms and the laundry facility on their floor.

All of the facilities at the RTI are hardwired for computer access and are also equipped with wireless internet.

The rooms are currently furnished with beds, dressers and desks, and the one and two-person rooms with shared latrines are each equipped with a sink and mirror area located outside the



The new barracks building for 183rd Regiment, Regional Training Institute was on display during the unit’s annual family day event Sept. 23 at Fort Pickett.

shared latrine.

“There’s an awful lot of lessons learned and design features that we observed in our visits to other RTIs,” Halfacre said. “Our visits to those places gave us an opportunity to observe what their best practices were.”

The new barracks are also equipped with state-of-the-art green technology including motion detector lights and automatically flushing toilets and the building was completed with the use of recycled materials. The building also makes use of a rainwater collection system that supplies water to the irrigation system, and should earn the RTI facility silver or gold LEED certification.

Read more: <http://vanguard.dodlive.mil/2012/09/26/2154/>

## MORE ON THE WEB

### STAND TO! Army Energy Awareness Month

<http://www.army.mil/standto/archive/issue.php?issue=2012-10-03>

### STAND TO! Comprehensive Soldier and Family Fitness

<http://www.army.mil/standto/archive/issue.php?issue=2012-10-02>

### Photos: AGs meet with FORSCOM and 1st Army commanders

<http://www.flickr.com/photos/vanguardpao/sets/72157631667999084/>

### Photos: Virginia Guard’s 183rd RTI trains new rappel masters

<http://www.flickr.com/photos/vanguardpao/sets/72157631628021326/>

### Virginia National Guard on Facebook

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