

VDF supports ceremony with parking assistance

On page 2: VDF conducts state-wide exercise

Past and present Veterans honored at War Memorial

Governor Terry McAuliffe recognized the service of Veterans past and present at the Commonwealth's Veterans Day Ceremony Nov. 11, 2014, at the Virginia War Memorial in Richmond, Va. Brig. Gen. Timothy P. Williams, the Adjutant General of Virginia, and his wife Cheryl presented the Virginia National Guard memorial wreath to recognize the contributions of Virginia Guard Soldiers and Airmen.

"The courage and commitment of the men and women who served before us in conflicts such as World War II, Korea, Vietnam, Desert Storm and other military operations both hot and cold showed all of us the true meaning of selfless service," Williams wrote in his Veterans Day message. "These great Veterans defended the freedom of people they didn't know in lands far away from home because they knew how important it was to the democratic lifestyle we all enjoy. We owe them a special debt of gratitude for the shining example they set."

Read more: <http://vanguard.dodlive.mil/2014/11/14/6363/>



Brig. Gen. Timothy P. Williams and his wife Cheryl present the Virginia National Guard memorial wreath at the Virginia War Memorial Nov. 11, 2014, in Richmond, Va.

Virginia National Guard News Headlines

1945th Contingency Contracting Team returns from deployment

Four Va. Guard Soldiers from the Virginia Beach-based 1945th Contingency Contracting Team, 529th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion, 329th Regional Support Group returned to Fort Hood, Texas, Nov. 8, 2014, after deploying to Afghanistan in February 2014.

Read more: <http://vanguard.dodlive.mil/2014/11/14/6318/>

429th BSB holds open house in Danville

Local elected officials, friends, relatives, and members of the Danville community were invited to an open house held by the 429th Brigade Support Battalion, 116th Infantry Brigade Combat Team Nov. 1, 2014, in Danville, Va.

Read more: <http://vanguard.dodlive.mil/2014/11/10/6343/>

Target haul mission provides real world experience for 1032nd TC Soldiers

Soldiers of the Virginia National Guard's Gate City-based 1032nd Transportation Company braved the cold and rain Nov. 1, 2014, and provided drivers on the road between Norfolk and Blackstone with an unusual sight as their camouflaged trucks hauled bright orange boats from Naval Station Norfolk to Fort Pickett, Va.

Read more: <http://vanguard.dodlive.mil/2014/11/09/6347/>

34th CST trains with Navy, Chesapeake firefighters

Soldiers and Airmen of the Virginia National Guard's Fort Pickett-based 34th Civil Support Team trained with firefighters from the U.S. Navy and City of Chesapeake during an aircraft mishap exercise Nov. 5, 2014.

Read more: <http://vanguard.dodlive.mil/2014/11/12/6335/>

Mark Your Calendars!

Dec. 6: Memorial Ceremony

The Virginia National Guard will host a memorial ceremony to honor Sgt. Nicholas C. Mason and Sgt. David A. Ruhren at 9 a.m. on Dec. 6, 2014, at the Fredericksburg Readiness Center. Sgt. Mason and Sgt. Ruhren were killed in action during a suicide bomb attack on Dec. 21, 2004, on Forward Operating Base Marez, in Mosul, Iraq. The attack killed 22 people, including 14 U.S. troops, and injured 70 others.

Sgt. Mason and Sgt. Ruhren were both combat engineers and members of the 229th Engineer Battalion, which is now the 116th Brigade Special Troops Battalion, based in Fredericksburg.

VDF exercises plans, procedures for large-scale missions

The Virginia Defense Force tested communications capabilities and simulated a massive hurricane response Nov. 8, 2014, when more than 200 VDF members from around the state conducted their first ever full-scale, collective communications exercise. Operating at the Virginia National Guard Joint Operations Center in Sandston and at regimental headquarters in Winchester, Lynchburg, Manassas and Camp Pendleton as well as other company locations, the VDF established a voice and data communications network that crisscrossed the entire state.

The exercise involved units at various home station readiness centers throughout Virginia and focused on exercising all of the organization's organic communications capabilities, including fixed and mobile high-frequency radios, tactical satellite communications systems and the Statewide Agencies Radio System, or STARS.

"This gives our personnel the opportunity to validate the operational readiness of the VDF from an equipment and personnel perspective," said Brig. Gen. (Va.) Justin Carlitti, commander of the VDF. "It's about people actually working the gear."

The primary mission of the Virginia Defense Force is to provide the Department of Military Affairs command and control augmentation, Carlitti explained. He said that instead of having all VDF units converge at Fort Pickett as they have in previous exercises, he wanted everyone to test their equipment at their home station readiness centers to evaluate their ability to communicate across the state.

The morning was dedicated to creating a command and control network to conduct a hurricane response exercise in the afternoon.

The VDF operated their four mobile command post trailers with communications capabilities over seven different types of communication networks including digital and analog high frequency radio, as well as Incident Management Assistance Teams. The headquarters section operated from the Sandston-based Virginia National Guard Joint Operations Center to coordinate the exercise and to collect and transmit information.

"We're training to test to our fullest capability, all of our communications equipment." Sgt. Julie Wine, lead noncommissioned officer of one of the VDF's JOC Augmentation Teams. "It's important because we have to achieve and maintain our communications capability. The only way that businesses can be effective is through constant communications—if you don't have communications, you don't have anything!"

The IMATs operate the mobile Tactical Command Packages, or TAC-PAKs, with wireless internet and satellite phone capabilities and were communicating with the JOC to provide status reports and incident updates.

With the voice and data capabilities provided by the VDF, accountability information was quickly transmitted back to the JOC. The test of the communications capability was also part of the Guard quarterly test of different communication resources used during emergency response operations.



Members of the Virginia Defense Force conduct radio checks during a state-wide communications exercise Nov. 8, 2014, in Winchester, Va.

"We are building the communications foundation this morning, then this afternoon we will execute the operational scenario," Carlitti said. "Without the communications, you can't execute the scenario."

The VDF is an all-volunteer force authorized by the Code of Virginia and organized under the Virginia Department of Military Affairs reporting to the Adjutant General of Virginia. Members of the VDF volunteer their time during monthly drill periods, but are paid when called to state active duty by the Governor of Virginia.

"I think this success of this exercise really validates what we've been doing for the past 29 years and shows the strength and professionalism of our volunteers," Bentley said.

Read more: <http://vanguard.dodlive.mil/2014/11/15/6313/>

MORE ON THE WEB

F-35 and F-22 combine capabilities in operational integration training mission

<http://www.aetc.af.mil/news/story.asp?id=123431709>

Photos: CNGB speaks at the 116th Muster

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Photos: Charlottesville-based Soldiers honored by AG

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Photos: 34th CST conducts FTX to prepare for evaluation

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Photos: Cavalry Soldiers complete traditional Spur Ride

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Photos: Soldiers gain confidence during CBRN training

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