

Soldiers excel at regional marksmanship match

Virginia National Guard Soldiers returned from the Marksmanship Advisory Council Region II marksmanship match as champions after competing on both pistol and rifle Aug. 27-30, 2015, at Fort Indiantown Gap, Pa. Eight Soldiers, broken into two teams, competed in a field of 63 Soldiers and Airmen in a variety of different matches, all designed to test the skills of the marksmen from different distances, positions and levels of stress.

“Words don’t even explain how proud I am of these Soldiers and how far they’ve come in such little time,” said Sgt. 1st Class Sammy Jones, state marksmanship coordinator.

Virginia shooters excelled at the match and one Soldier, Sgt. Jeremy Steffel, of 2nd Squadron, 183rd Cavalry Regiment, 116th Infantry Brigade Combat Team earned his Distinguished Pistol Shot Badge. He previously received the Distinguished Rifleman Badge and is believed to be only the second Virginia Soldier to become double distinguished.



Members of the Virginia National Guard Marksmanship Team pose with their trophies at the regional marksmanship match, held Aug. 27-30, at Fort Indiantown Gap, Pa.

Read more: <http://vanguard.dodlive.mil/2015/09/10/8000/>

Virginia National Guard News Headlines

Airmen, veterans, families celebrate 30th anniversary of 203rd RED HORSE

Current and former members of the Virginia Air National Guard’s Camp Pendleton-based 203rd RED HORSE Squadron celebrated the unit’s 30th anniversary Aug. 8, 2015, at Camp Pendleton, Va. The ceremony kicked off the 203rd’s Family Day activities, which featured food, games and a boat race.

Read more: <http://vanguard.dodlive.mil/2015/08/28/7984/>

MP platoon prepares for federal duty in Guantanamo Bay, Cuba

To prepare for their upcoming federal mobilization to Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, Virginia National Guard Soldiers assigned to the Virginia Beach-based 229th Military Police Company completed more than 100 pre-mobilization tasks during their annual training held Aug. 1 to 20, 2015, at Fort Pickett, Va.

Read more: <http://vanguard.dodlive.mil/2015/08/27/7992/>

Fort Benning-based training team brings Air Assault, Pathfinder to Virginia

Hundreds of Soldiers and Airmen from across the nation converged at Fort Pickett in August for the U.S. Army Air Assault and Pathfinder Schools, taught by cadre from the Fort Benning-based Warrior Training Center. Nearly 275 showed up for Zero Day of Air Assault, while more than 40 started Pathfinder.

Read more: <http://vanguard.dodlive.mil/2015/09/02/7970/>

Virginia Guard schoolhouse certifies new rappel masters

Rappel masters and instructors from the Fort Pickett-based 183rd Regiment, Regional Training Institute conducted the U.S. Army’s Rappel Master Course, Aug. 24-28, 2015, at Fort Pickett, Va. The course started with 16 rappel master hopefuls and certified seven at the end of the five-day course.

Read more: <http://vanguard.dodlive.mil/2015/09/02/7964/>

Mark Your Calendars!

Sept. 26, 2015

1st Battalion, 183rd RTI

Change of Command

A change of command ceremony for the Fort Pickett-based 1st Battalion, 183rd Regiment, Regional Training Institute will be held at 9:30 a.m. Sept. 26, 2015, at the RTI Auditorium.

Lt. Col. Paul C. Gravely will take command of the unit from Lt. Col. Charlton T. Dunn.

A reception will follow the ceremony.

CBRNE capabilities demo shows off Guard response ability

Soldiers and Airmen from the Virginia National Guard's Chemical Biological Radiological Nuclear High Yield Explosive Response Force Package, also known as the CERFP (pronounced "surf-p"), and 34th Civil Support Team hosted a capabilities demonstration Aug. 26, 2015, in Richmond, Va. The demonstration was designed to educate local, state and federal law enforcement, firefighters and medical personnel with the abilities of the units and how to request their assistance.

"The Virginia National Guard plays a critical role in preparing our Commonwealth to handle a variety of incidents that would require a large-scale and orderly response," Virginia Del. Betsy Carr said. "After attending the informative CBRNE capabilities conference and learning about our readily available equipment, decontamination, medical and communication capabilities, I am confident that Virginia is ready to respond."

The intent of the Virginia CBRNE Capabilities Day was twofold, according to Maj. Colin Noyes, who is both commander of the 276th Engineer Battalion, 91st Troop Command, and the CERFP. The first intent was to initiate dialogue between localities, state and federal agencies "so when an emergency happens we are not meeting for the first time," he said. The second was to show the Virginia Guard's capabilities to those agencies so they can better understand how their operations can work together.

"The biggest thing is you have such a large array of equipment that's useable for us," said Capt. Mark Rowland of the Henrico Fire Department. "Your decon equipment is awesome. It's topnotch. I love the mobility of it and it would come in perfect if we had an emergency."

In addition to the CERFP and 34th CST, personnel from the Virginia Defense Force were on hand and demonstrated their mobile command post trailer, which can provide communication capabilities over several different types of networks, both digital and analog. 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.

The CERFP can conduct tasks associated with incident management, urban search and rescue, mass causality decontamination, technical decontamination, medical triage and treatment and fatality search and recovery. The force is made up of Soldiers and Airmen from Virginia Guard units based in Petersburg, West Point, Rocky Mount and Langley Air Force Base, as well as personnel from the Washington, D. C. Air National Guard. The unit's mission is to provide immediate response capability to the governor for searching an incident site that might include damaged and collapsed buildings, rescuing casualties, decontaminating them and performing medical triage and initial treatment to stabilize them for transport to a medical facility.

The Fort Pickett-based 34th CST supports first responders in potential biological, chemical, nuclear, radiological and explosive incidents. The unit can identify chemical, biological and radiological substances, assess current and projected consequences, advise an incident commander on response measures and assist with requests for additional state support.



Personnel from the Fort Pickett-based 34th Civil Support Team conduct a capabilities demonstration Aug. 26, 2015, in Richmond, Va.

Both the CERFP and the 34th CST are classified as National Guard – Civil Support assets and are federally resourced, trained, sustained and operated under control of state leadership. The Adjutant General of Virginia may deploy either team to support state emergency response under the direction of the governor or to support another state's response under a supported governor.

"This was a very successful event with over 130 participants and over three hours of dialogue between federal and state agencies like the FBI and VDEM and localities from the Eastern Shore to Charlottesville and Fairfax County, along with Richmond, Henrico and Farmville," Noyes said. "I am pleased that there is such a desire to see how the National Guard can be a key player in a response if need be."

Read more: <http://vanguard.dodlive.mil/2015/09/01/7951/>

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<http://vanguard.dodlive.mil/2015/09/01/7943/>

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Photos: Va. Guard joins in at NFL military appreciation night

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