



The Virginia
Defense Force

Bugler



JUNE 2015

MESSAGE FROM THE COMMANDING GENERAL: *Service*



From Webster’s Dictionary, a volunteer is defined as “one who offers to enter into service of one’s free will.” The events over this past month of May have clearly proven the meaning of being a volunteer, particularly in providing service to one’s fellow citizens. This virtue is alive and prospering in the VDF, and has always been a source of our strength. At the beginning of the month, as supported by the Force Headquarters and the regiments, we had nearly 100 soldiers deploy in support of the Apple Blossom Festival in Winchester. At the end of the month, some of these same soldiers supported the Memorial Day ceremony in Richmond. In between these events, our personnel from across the Commonwealth continued to train in a variety of tasks. This snapshot of time is indicative of the caliber of the men and women who form our ranks. Selfless service is the underlying principle that guides us as a force of dedicated professionals.

Repeatedly, in various settings, the men and women of the VDF demonstrate this enthusiasm to serve whether in the armory or manning a post in support of an operational deployment. Leaders of any rank must carefully shepherd this very powerful but fragile tenet as we recruit and train. We will continue to carefully build upon this foundation as we position our soldiers of the VDF for continued mission success as a force of dedicated professionals – true volunteers providing selfless service to the citizens of Virginia.

Yours in Service,
BG (VA) Justin P. Carlitti, Sr.

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VDF keeps traffic moving at Apple Blossom Festival

Article appears courtesy of the Virginia Army National Guard PAO

WINCHESTER, Va. — Members of the Virginia Defense Force operated traffic control points and provided mission command support May 1-2, 2015, at the 88th Shenandoah Apple Blossom Festival in Winchester, Va. In addition to providing a valuable service to their community, it also provided the VDF with an opportunity to train on multiple communication systems and rehearse procedures they would use if they were called to state active duty to augment the Virginia National Guard.

Nearly 90 members of the all-volunteer VDF from units across the state augmented local law enforcement to help ensure traffic flow for the races and parades on Friday and Saturday.

“We love having the Virginia Defense Force out here, and we could not make this big event happen without them,” said Winchester Chief of Police Kevin Sanzenbacher. “These people are amazing because they are out there all day, on their feet, directing traffic and you never hear any complaints.”

The Shenandoah Apple Blossom Festival is a series of more than thirty events held from April 24 to May 3 in Winchester and Frederick County including band competitions, dances, parades and a 10K Race. Crowds in excess of 250,000 attend the festival each year.

Sanzenbacher explained that the VDF operated almost all the traffic control points for the one mile kids race and Firefighters’ Parade on May 1 as well as the 10K race and Grand Feature Parade on May 2 in order to make sure that vehicle traffic didn’t come on to the race or parade routes.



The VDF Keeps the Traffic Moving con't

He and several other Winchester officials commended the VDF on their professionalism and expressed their appreciation for the VDF's support during the planning phases for the festival as well as event itself.

"This is a great chance to get out into the public and tell our story," said Brig. Gen. (Va.) Justin Carlitti, commander of the VDF. "Our members come from the community, so this is a great recruiting opportunity for us as well. People see us out there helping out and ask how they can join."

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 members of the VDF volunteer their time for training and are only paid when called to state active duty by an authorization from the Governor of Virginia.

"We are very fortunate to have our state defense force in Virginia, because not every state has one," said Brig. Gen. Timothy P. Williams, the Adjutant General of Virginia. "The opportunity to use this organization to get out and help in our communities is a tremendous thing."

Members of the VDF perform a similar function for the Virginia War Memorial in Richmond when they volunteer their time to assist with traffic control during Memorial Day and Veterans Day events.

Because the VDF's structure can be modified to meet mission demands, it is a force that provides a great deal of flexibility, Williams said. The VDF has evolved in recent years and become experts on the National Incident Management System and also provides interoperable communications capabilities that could be used during domestic response operations.

Planning for this year's support to the festival began in June of last year, almost as soon as the festival ended, said Lt. Col. (Va.) William Robbins, commander of the VDF's Winchester-based 3rd Regiment. Robbins also served as the commander for Task Force Shenandoah, the overall mission command organization for VDF personnel on duty for the mission.

The VDF has developed robust interoperable communications capabilities in recent years, and it deployed those capabilities during the Apple Blossom Festival, Robbins said this enabled them to test their systems in a real-world environment and see what works, what doesn't and how to improve. Robbins explained that the traffic control point mission in Winchester supports the VDF's access control mission that is part of the Virginia National Guard's civil support task list, so it is a valuable training opportunity as well as service to the community. Drawing on the experience of VDF members with civilian or military law enforcement background, a training plan was developed to get everyone taking part up to speed on the proper ways to operate a TCP. Many VDF members arrived Thursday evening and were able to conduct training before the missions began on Friday.

Robbins said the support mission was also a chance to work on procedures for personnel accountability similar to what would be used if the VDF was called to state active duty.

"I am extremely proud of the great work the VDF has done to support the Winchester community," Williams said. "They are a vital part of the Virginia National Guard's response capability here in the commonwealth, and this mission allows them to provide an invaluable service while honing their skills and prepare for future requirements."



Notes from MAJ Fein, G-1:

Personal Information Changes

Please remember that your soldiers are responsible for submitting to their 1SGs/ Supervisors any changes in address, phone number, e-mail, etc. These changes are to be noted in red font on the Alpha Roster that is submitted along with the CSR by the 10th of each month.

Promotion Boards

Promotion Boards for Senior NCOs (E-8 and E-9) and Field Grade Officers (O-4 - O-6) will be held at the Fall MUTA (24-27 SEP) at Fort Pickett. Promotion packets must be received by me or the ACTDET *no later than close of business Monday 24 August*. E-mail addresses for submission are:

ACDET -- vdfinfo@vdf-mail.org

G-1 -- mishafein@hotmail.com

Please review VDF Regulation 624-1 for promotion criteria (<http://www.vdf.virginia.gov/pdf/Regulations/VDFR%20624-1,27MAR15,%20complete.pdf>).

Packages must be complete when submitted and the individuals must have met all criteria of TIS/TIG by the date of the orders for the Promotion Boards, which will be 10 SEP 2015.

Packages shall consist of :

- a) Letter of recommendation from individual's current supervisor. Supplemental letters of recommendation may also be included.
- b) Annual evaluation ([http://www.vdf.virginia.gov/pdf/FORMS/600-10%20Appendix%20S%20%20Personnel%](http://www.vdf.virginia.gov/pdf/FORMS/600-10%20Appendix%20S%20%20Personnel%20))
- c) 3-R (<http://www.vdf.virginia.gov/pdf/FORMS/VDF%20FORM%203R%20PERSONNEL%20ACTION.pdf>)
- d) Commanders Certificate of Promotion Eligibility (624-1 app. X) (http://www.vdf.virginia.gov/pdf/Regulations/VDFR_624_1_Appendix_X.pdf)

All of these documents must be signed and scanned as separate documents. It is preferred that they be scanned as .pdf files. It is also preferred that no other documents than those listed above be submitted.





Note from G-1 con't

Upcoming Dates

10 June 2015 -- CSRs and Alpha Rosters from regiments due

15 June 2015 -- Requests for officer commission certificates for individuals whose SSN ends in "6" are due

10 July 2015 -- CSRs and Alpha Rosters from regiments due

15 July 2015 -- Requests for officer commission certificates for individuals whose SSN ends in "7" are due

10 August 2015 -- CSRs and Alpha Rosters from regiments due

15 August 2015 -- Requests for officer commission certificates for individuals whose SSN ends in "8" are due

10 September 2015 -- CSRs and Alpha Rosters from regiments due

15 September 2015 -- Requests for officer commission certificates for individuals whose SSN ends in "9" are due

24-27 September 2015 -- MUTA at Fort Pickett (Promotion Boards for Senior NCOs and Field Grade Officers)

10 October 2015 -- CSRs and Alpha Rosters from regiments due

15 October 2015 -- Requests for officer commission certificates for individuals whose SSN ends in "0" are due

10 November 2015 -- CSRs and Alpha Rosters from regiments due

15 November 2015 -- Requests for officer commission certificates for individuals whose SSN ends in an even number are due

10 December 2015 -- CSRs and Alpha Rosters from regiments due

15 December 2015 -- Requests for officer commission certificates for individuals whose SSN ends in an odd number are due



Virginians Helping Virginians

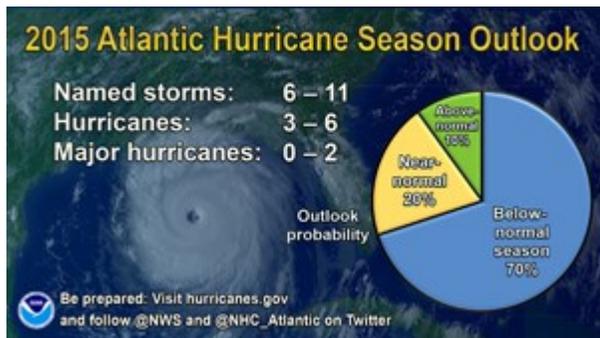


HURRICANE SEASON 2015

I JUNE- 30 NOVEMBER

NOAA: Below-normal Atlantic Hurricane Season is likely this year

Hurricane forecasting evolving with new storm surge products, upgraded modeling



(Credit: NOAA, May 27, 2015)

NOAA's Climate Prediction Center says the 2015 Atlantic hurricane season will likely be below-normal, but that's no reason to believe coastal areas will have it easy. For the hurricane season, which officially runs from June 1 - November 30, NOAA is predicting a 70 percent likelihood of 6 to 11 named storms (winds of 39 mph or higher), of which 3 to 6 could become hurricanes (winds of 74 mph or higher), including zero to 2 major hurricanes (Category 3, 4 or 5; winds of 111 mph or higher). While a below-normal season is likely (70 percent), there is also a 20 percent chance of a near-normal season, and a 10 percent chance of an above-normal season.

"A below-normal season doesn't mean we're off the hook. As we've seen before, below-normal seasons can still produce catastrophic impacts to communities," said **NOAA Administrator Kathryn Sullivan, Ph.D.**, referring to the 1992 season in which only seven named storms formed, yet the first was Andrew – a Category 5 Major Hurricane that devastated South Florida.

"The main factor expected to suppress the hurricane season this year is El Niño, which is already affecting wind and pressure patterns, and is forecast to last through the hurricane season," said Gerry Bell, Ph.D., lead seasonal hurricane forecaster with NOAA's Climate Prediction Center. "El Niño may also intensify as the season progresses, and is expected to have its greatest influence during the peak months of the season. We also expect sea surface temperatures in the tropical Atlantic to be close to normal, whereas warmer waters would have supported storm development."



Hurricane Season 2015 con't:

Included in this outlook is Tropical Storm Ana, but its pre-season development was not an indicator of the overall season strength. Ana's development was typical of pre-season named storms, which often form along frontal boundaries in association with a trough in the jet stream. This method of formation differs from the named storms during the peak of the season, which originate mainly from low-pressure systems moving westward from Africa, and are independent of frontal boundaries and the jet stream. With the new hurricane season comes a new prototype storm surge watch/warning graphic from [NOAA's National Hurricane Center](#), intended to highlight areas along the Gulf and Atlantic coasts of the United States that have a significant risk of life-threatening inundation by storm surge from a tropical cyclone.

The new graphic will introduce the concept of a watch or warning specific to the storm surge hazard. Storm surge is often the greatest threat to life and property from a tropical cyclone, and it can occur at different times and at different locations from a storm's hazardous winds. In addition, while most coastal residents can remain in their homes and be safe from a tropical cyclone's winds, evacuations are often needed to keep people safe from storm surge. Having separate warnings for these two hazards should provide emergency managers, the media, and the general public better guidance on the hazards they face when tropical cyclones threaten.

Also new this season is a higher resolution version (2 km near the storm area) of NOAA's [Hurricane Weather Research and Forecasting](#) model (HWRF), thanks to the upgrades to operational computing. A new 40-member HWRF ensemble-based data assimilation system will also be implemented to make better use of aircraft reconnaissance-based Tail Doppler Radar data for improved intensity forecasts. Retrospective testing of 2015 HWRF upgrades demonstrated a five percent improvement in the intensity forecasts compared to last year.

To help those living in hurricane-prone areas prepare, NOAA offers hurricane preparedness tips, along with video and audio public service announcements at www.hurricanes.gov/prepare.

"It only takes one hurricane or tropical storm making landfall in your community to significantly disrupt your life," said FEMA Deputy Administrator Joseph Nimmich. "Everyone should take action now to prepare themselves and their families for hurricanes and powerful storms. Develop a family communications plan, build an emergency supply kit for your home, and take time to learn evacuation routes for your area. Knowing what to do ahead of time can literally save your life and help you bounce back stronger and faster should disaster strike in your area."

NOAA will issue an updated outlook for the Atlantic hurricane season in early August, just prior to the historical peak of the season.



HURRICANE PREPAREDNESS APPS & WEBSITES:

Know the Difference

Hurricane Watch—Hurricane conditions are a threat within 48 hours. Review your hurricane plans, keep informed and be ready to act if a warning is issued.

Hurricane Warning—Hurricane conditions are expected within 36 hours. Complete your storm preparations and leave the area if directed to by authorities do so by authorities.



The FEMA App contains disaster safety tips, an interactive emergency kit list, emergency meeting location information, and a map with open shelters and open FEMA Disaster Recovery Centers (DRCs).

WWW.FEMA.GOV

Get your family and home ready for a tornado with the official Tornado App from the American Red Cross. The Tornado app puts everything you need to know to prepare for a tornado – and all that comes with it .



Monitor weather conditions in your area or throughout the storm track, prepare your family and home, find help and let others know you are safe even if the power is out .

www.redcross.org/prepare/disaster/hurricane

All of these APPs can be found at the itunes, Android, or Google APP



Be Red Cross Ready

HURRICANE SAFETY

CHECKLIST

What should I do?



- Listen to a NOAA Weather Radio for critical information from the National Weather Service (NWS).
- Check your disaster supplies and replace or restock as needed.
- Bring in anything that can be picked up by the wind (bicycles, lawn furniture).
- Close windows, doors and hurricane shutters. If you do not have hurricane shutters, close and board up all windows and doors with plywood.
- Turn the refrigerator and freezer to the coldest setting and keep them closed as much as possible so that food will last longer if the power goes out.
- Turn off propane tanks and unplug small appliances.
- Fill your car's gas tank.
- Talk with members of your household and create an evacuation plan. Planning and practicing your evacuation plan minimizes confusion and fear during the event.
- Learn about your community's hurricane response plan. Plan routes to local shelters, register family members with special medical needs as required and make plans for your pets to be cared for.
- Evacuate if advised by authorities. Be careful to avoid flooded roads and washed out bridges.
- Because standard homeowners insurance doesn't cover flooding, it's important to have protection from the floods associated with hurricanes, tropical storms, heavy rains and other conditions that impact the U.S. For more information on flood insurance, please visit the National Flood Insurance Program Web site at www.FloodSmart.gov.

What supplies do I need?



- Water—at least a 3-day supply; one gallon per person per day
- Food—at least a 3-day supply of non-perishable, easy-to-prepare food
- Flashlight
- Battery-powered or hand-crank radio (NOAA Weather Radio, if possible)
- Extra batteries
- First aid kit
- Medications (7-day supply) and medical items (hearing aids with extra batteries, glasses, contact lenses, syringes, cane)
- Multi-purpose tool
- Sanitation and personal hygiene items
- Copies of personal documents (medication list and pertinent medical information, proof of address, deed/lease to home, passports, birth certificates, insurance policies)
- Cell phone with chargers
- Family and emergency contact information
- Extra cash
- Emergency blanket
- Map(s) of the area
- Baby supplies (bottles, formula, baby food, diapers)
- Pet supplies (collar, leash, ID, food, carrier, bowl)
- Tools/supplies for securing your home
- Extra set of car keys and house keys
- Extra clothing, hat and sturdy shoes
- Rain gear
- Insect repellent and sunscreen
- Camera for photos of damage

What do I do after a hurricane?



- Continue listening to a NOAA Weather Radio or the local news for the latest updates.
- Stay alert for extended rainfall and subsequent flooding even after the hurricane or tropical storm has ended.
- If you evacuated, return home only when officials say it is safe.
- Drive only if necessary and avoid flooded roads and washed-out bridges.
- Keep away from loose or dangling power lines and report them immediately to the power company.
- Stay out of any building that has water around it.
- Inspect your home for damage. Take pictures of damage, both of the building and its contents, for insurance purposes.
- Use flashlights in the dark. Do NOT use candles.
- Avoid drinking or preparing food with tap water until you are sure it's not contaminated.
- Check refrigerated food for spoilage. If in doubt, throw it out.
- Wear protective clothing and be cautious when cleaning up to avoid injury.
- Watch animals closely and keep them under your direct control.
- Use the telephone only for emergency calls.



The VDF BOLC Program 2014-5

By LTC Francis Thompson

The Basic Officer Leadership Class is the program by which the VDF commissions junior officers from its ranks. It is a 1 year obligation for active members who have completed basic training and course requirements and have the academic credentials to qualify. The course covers both Commissioned and Warrant Officers

The program was purposefully designed to be challenging and stressful. The course work and training require over 244 hours of additional time over and above their regimental training, their jobs and their family. The commitment requires careful time management and support from family, fellow workers and the BOLC Cadre. In addition to continuing to work and drill at their home regiments, candidates must participate in field leadership exercises as a cadre four to five times a year. The FLXs are held at various locations and involve training with other groups such as National Guard OCS programs. Of the initial cadre of fourteen, six were commissioned on 28 March.

The program year starts with an introductory course in drill and ceremony, as well as plan expectations for the year. Candidates are instructed in guard duty, FEMA course work, uniform expectations, and given psychological profile testing, which is repeated at the end of the plan year to determine the degree of improvement. The extensive FEMA coursework sets the candidates up to qualify for their MEMS badges by the end of their training year, as well as to add to the “stress” factor of having on-going assignments and deadlines to meet.

Last May the BOLC participated in a Field Leadership Exercise (FLX) at Ft Pickett along with the OCS Programs of the National Guard from VA, WVA, MD, DEL, and DC. This led to practical leadership skill development exercises for each candidate and improved the communication skills conducted thru squad lane training, the end state being to prepare and train candidates to become officers in a stressful environment in a professional manner, with all training conducted thoroughly and safely.



Commanding General, BG Justin P. Carlitti Sr, swearing in the BOLC class of 2014 at their graduation, 28 Mar 2015



The VDF BOLC Program 2014-5 con't

In June the BOLC cadre reported to Manassas VA for the annual VDF “Staff Ride”. This year the “ride” was the sFirst Bull Run Civil War battlefield. Conducted under the leadership of COL Dennis Mroczkowski, and LTC Kent Brinkley. Each candidate was given assignments in advance of the ride to prepare and deliver a briefing of specific actions at Bull Run. This helped develop the sense of history, military strategy and planning and execution a mission requires

Time is also spent in the candidates “home Regiments” where they continue to study practice, and memorize the text Small Unit Leadership by COL Dandridge Malone, while under the watchful eye of their Regimental Commanders.

During a MUTA the candidates are assigned course work, drill and ceremony, leadership exercises, and full time KP for the entire force beginning at 0330 and ending at 1800. This stressful atmosphere creates the strain of a mission environment and allowed each candidate to overcome conflicts, communication issues and lack of sleep.

During the fall and winter, time is spent “in house,” mastering skills and doing course work leading to the completion of the FEMA Personal Development Series and the Basic MEMS award.

By the end of the training year all course work to date was required to be certified. From that point any remedial work necessary was initiated with the goal to have all graduate in March as planned.

Each month during the plan year the candidates are assigned leadership roles. One serves as the Officer in Charge (OIC) and another as his First Sergeant. The teams are responsible for the planning and execution of the assigned training and graded on that performance by the TAC Officer. This is the most important leadership development role the BOLC offers. Failure in this capacity is not an option for successfully completing the BOLC program.

In February of the New Year the next BOLC class is selected and reports for the initial introductory training phase along with the current class which then serves as mentors for the new. The new members are designated with a red ribbon under their OCS logo which is eliminated as they master basics.

The February session is also the evaluation session for the potential graduates, work assigned and submitted is evaluated, work pending is examined, a final psychological evaluation is completed and an individual counseling session is held. From this session we have our graduates and any alternatives necessary for finishing the program or being dismissed.

The cycle for BOLC repeats itself every 12 months. The leadership for the program will vary from year to year. We hope to build upon the initial success and use the new officers as a foundation for the future in bringing to the VDF the finest officers possible, with the values, beliefs and skills needed to succeed in today’s Defense Force.





NCO OF THE YEAR: SGT ERIC MILLER



The Virginia Defense Force NCO of the Year for 2015 is SGT Eric Miller. Sergeant Miller was born in Montgomery Alabama. He and his two brothers grew up in a military family. Their dad was a 20 year veteran in the United States Air Force and he met his wife while stationed in France in the late 1950s. Sergeant Miller attributes everything that he is, and has accomplished, to the influence of those around him. This includes his wife of over 33 years and their three children; SSG Christopher Miller, SGT Colby Miller, and Kayla Walters, who is a public school educator, and his six grandchildren, fellow employees, martial arts students and instructor, and every single member of the Virginia Defense Force. All of these individuals have helped to make Sergeant Miller the outstanding NCO he

is. Miller admits, that even though he was reluctant to accept the nomination for NCO of the year, he is glad that he did. "As NCO of the year, I represent the Virginia Defense Force as a whole, not as an individual. I am proud to be an American, and to be a soldier in the Virginia Defense Force!"

SGT Miller joined the VDF November 05, 2009. He has received numerous ribbons/certificates for community service. He has also received numerous commendation, certificates and letters for outstanding performance and accomplishments. Early in his career with the Defense Force he acquired his Basic MEMS qualification and is currently working on getting the Senior Level MEMS. Miller's military education includes IET, BNCOC, and ANCOC. He has spent countless hours completing FEMA courses, and in 2014 headed the school for PLDC. In addition he is IMAR (Incident Management Assistance Resource) and HFRR (High Frequency Radio Resource) trained. Over the last five years, he has traveled thousands of miles across the state of Virginia attending classes, drills, and MUTAs. While SGT Miller was with Company C, 13th Battalion, Blackhorse Brigade, he was also a member of the Color Guard. From there he transferred to the G-7 T&E, HQ in Richmond. His position with the VDF at present is PME NCO, G-3 FORHQ.





VDF TY 16 Calendar

The following calendar of major events, training programs, and exercises is published for the guidance and planning of all soldiers in the Virginia Defense Force.

July 2015

Regiments: internal O+M/Commex. Madison County Fair.

August 2015

Regiments: internal O+M/Commex.

September 2015

Force HQ: MUTA at Fort Pickett. STX in preparation for Forward Guardian 2015. Leadership PME. MCP PM. Commex.

Regiments: Bluemont Fair.

October 2015

DMA: Winter Operations Plan Review.

Force HQ: PME MUTA at Fort Pickett; IET/BNCOC/ANCOC. ARES Simulated Emergency Test (SET.)

Regiments: Internal O+M/Commex.

November 2015

Force HQ: Forward Guardian 2015

Regiments: STX evaluation of all teams. Note: STX evaluation IAW published.

T+EO Go/No-go standards.

December 2015

Regiments: internal O+M/Commex.





VDF TY 16 Calendar

January 2016

Regiments: internal O+M/Commex.

February 2016

DMA: Wildfire Plan Review.

Regiments: internal O+M/Commex.

March 2016

Force HQ: MUTA at Fort Pickett. PME. MCP PM. Commex.

April 2016

Regiments: internal O+M/Commex

May 2016

Force HQ: Apple Blossom Festival. VA Memorial Day.

Regiments: internal O+M/Commex.

June 2016

DMA: VERTEX. JUICE 2016.

Force HQ: VERTEX. JUICE 2016.

Regiments: MARS Contingency HF Commex. ARRL Field Day.

July 2016 & August 2016

Regiments: internal O+M/Commex.

September 2016

Force HQ: MUTA at Fort Pickett. STX in preparation for Forward Guardian 2017. Leadership PME. MCP PM. Commex.

