



The Bugler

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Virginia Defense Force

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On Mission

The Annual VDF Division Field Training Exercise last month was an extremely professional training session for the nearly 600 members that participated at Ft Pickett. Take this training experience and continue your individual and collective training during 2010. Train as you will respond during an actual disaster response anywhere in the Commonwealth during 2010!

The VDF has had another great year; we reached 1,000 volunteer members this year and will go to 1,200 members as per Maj. Gen. Newman's guidance as the Adjutant General of Virginia. This size of force in 2010 will significantly increase our response capability to enhance the Virginia National Guard forces during a major disaster such as a snow or ice storm during the winter of next year.



Maj. Gen. John Taylor

Challenges for 2010:

- a. Retention and training of individuals throughout the VDF to become a more professional organization.
- b. Leadership and communication with subordinates at all levels within the VDF to take care of our members.

c. 1,200 members by December, 2010 with all units becoming response capable as an individual organization.

I am very grateful to each of you for your service to the VDF organization and appreciate your support during the past year. 2010 will be another great year for the VDF based on your individual contributions. Take the time to enroll in leadership and FEMA courses and become more qualified as an individual in the VDF.

HAPPY HOLIDAYS to you and your families; be SAFE at all times!

Joint civil support exercise prepares Virginia Defense Force

CHARLOTTESVILLE, Va.-Members of the Virginia Defense Force's Charlottesville-based, Company C, 13th Battalion, and the Virginia National Guard's Charlottesville-based, Company A, 3rd Battalion, 116th Brigade Combat Team conducted a joint training exercise Aug. 1 for access control and perimeter security at a simulated plane crash site. This exercise was one of a number of joint exercises taking place in Virginia combining members of the VDF's Black Horse Brigade and the Virginia National Guard 116th Brigade with local responders.



Platoon leader Milton Chen of the Virginia Defense Force trains with Virginia Army National Guard at the central checkpoint Aug. 1 during a joint training exercise.

The exercise was designed to provide the Charlottesville-based VDF and National Guard companies an opportunity to conduct a civil support exercise that reflects the type of state mission that they could be called upon to execute while expanding the working relationships of the two companies. As 2nd Lt. Randy Brooks of Augusta County and the commander of C Company stated, "We want to use this exercise as a good learning experience for possible future missions and develop relationships with our Virginia National Guard counterparts."

After a joint briefing conducted by Capt. L.G. Yacubian, commander of the Guard's A Company, the units

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VDF trains on land, in the air and on the water

By Maj. Cotton Puryear
Joint Staff Public Affairs Officer, VNG

FORT PICKETT, Va. -The Virginia Defense Force conducted its annual division-level field training exercise at Fort Pickett Nov. 6-8, and the all-volunteer force trained on its ability to provide support to the citizens of the commonwealth on the ground, in the air and on the water.

The training scenario for the exercise focused on mock disaster drills including search and rescue training, mass evacuation and medical triage techniques. These ground forces were supported by the aircraft from the VDF's aviation battalion, and the VDF's Riverines Detachment took to the water for the first time with the unit's newly refurbished boat.

The VDF trained side-by-side with emergency response agencies from Blackstone and Nottoway County. Nearly 500 members of the VDF took part in the training.

The Virginia Defense Force is an all-volunteer force authorized by the Code of Virginia and organized under the Virginia Department of Military Affairs. "The Virginia Defense Force augments the Virginia National Guard," said Maj. Gen. John Taylor, commander of the VDF. "The average volunteer is here to serve the commonwealth."

Taylor compared the VDF to the volunteer fire fighters and rescue squad the VDF trained with in Blackstone during the exercise. "The only difference is that we are structured as a military organization as part of the Virginia Department of Military Affairs, and in a disaster situation, we can be called up on state active duty," he said.

The VDF's Lynchburg-based aviation battalion has companies in the Hampton Roads area, Orange and Danville. All of the battalion's 15 aircraft are privately owned, and the pilots pay almost all the costs of operating the aircraft other than fuel.

"Flying is fun under any circumstance," said Maj. Raymond Matthews, Jr., one of the VDF's pilots. "If you have a meaningful reason to fly, it is much better. We are going to fly anyway, so we might as well put it to good use."



A VDF pilot conducts preflight checks before flying a training mission at the November field training exercise.

The aviation battalion is capable of conducting flight operations for missions such as damage assessment, aerial reconnaissance and search and rescue.

With their new boat, the Riverine Detachment is capable of conducting aquatic search and rescue operations as well as transport and security operations, explained Maj. Tom Guthrie, commander of the Riverine Detachment.



Members of the VDF's Riverine Detachment took to the water for the first time during the November field training exercise.

VDF units are located in more than 38 Virginia Army National Guard installations throughout the Commonwealth. The division headquarters is located in Richmond and there are three operational brigades: Lafayette in the Hampton Roads area, Black Horse in Northern Virginia and Highland in Roanoke.

The division currently has a total of more than 1,000 members and has the long-term goal is to have 1,200 volunteers in four to five brigades and 12 to 15 battalions.

Joint civil support exercise *(continued)*

deployed to the site where a command post was established, a central checkpoint and access points secured, and perimeter security initiated. The VDF not only trained alongside of the Guard, but also served as role players to test access control. Additionally, the two units conducted communications training to evaluate their ability to communicate using different types of radio systems.

Sgt. Bradley Risk of Ruckersville and platoon sergeant for 1st Platoon, C Company, worked with the Virginia National Guard and stated he "was able to successfully establish communications with brigade headquarters utilizing VNG field equipment in very little time under worse case conditions...assuming a power outage." Risk went on to say, "The joint exercise provided an excellent opportunity to work with our National Guard counterparts and forge an alliance for future exercises or state missions."

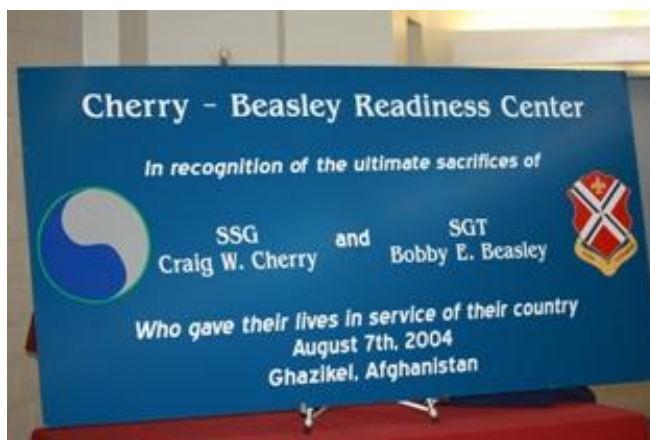
CREATION OF COMPANY A, 23RD BATTALION, BLACK HORSE BRIGADE, VDF

Effective 1 September 2009, Division Headquarters activated Company A, 23rd Battalion, Black Horse Brigade in Annandale, Virginia. Under a memorandum of understanding negotiated between the Adjutant General and the Mason District Supervisor, Company A is operating out of the Mason District Government Center, as there are no Virginia National Guard Armories within the I-495 sector. This is a unique and perhaps precedent setting arrangement, as all other VDF units are housed in National Guard Armories.

Under the able command of Capt. Jerome Headley, formerly of the U.S. Army, recruiting for the new company has been so successful a request was recently placed for the authorization of an additional platoon. Drills are held on the second Saturday of the month. Anyone in the Alexandria, Annandale, and Arlington area interested in joining the Virginia Defense Force should contact Capt. Headley at 703-870-4744.

Virginia Defense Force supports opening ceremony of Winchester Readiness Center

WINCHESTER, Va. -A formal dedication ceremony was held on October 5, 2009 for the new Virginia National Guard readiness center. It will be the headquarters for the Virginia National Guard's, 3rd Battalion, 166 Brigade Combat Team and the Virginia Defense Force's, 33rd Battalion. The readiness center was named for two soldiers of the 3rd Battalion, 116th Infantry Regiment, 116th Brigade Combat Team that provided the ultimate sacrifice, SSG Craig Cherry and SGT Bobby Beasley who were killed by an improvised Explosive Device in Afghanistan in 2004.



The dedication ceremony, hosted by Lieutenant Colonel William Zana, the Commander of 3rd Battalion, included remarks recognizing the battalion for being the Army's most outstanding National Guard Unit as well as remarks by U. S. Senator John Warner, Governor Tim Kaine and Maj. Gen. Robert Newman, the Adjutant General of Virginia, on the benefits of the new readiness center and the contributions of the two soldiers to their country. The armory's operation center is named for Senator Warner in recognition of his support for the Virginia National Guard and his assistance in obtaining funding for the center. The ceremony was closed by the moving remarks of the soldiers' First Sergeant, retired SFC Hampton Thomas, who recounted the character and commitment of SSG Cherry and SGT Beasley.

The Virginia Defense Force's, 33rd Battalion, Headquarters Company, supported the dedication ceremony by providing traffic control support and a military formation, jointly, with the VNG's 3rd Battalion, Headquarters Company during the dedication ceremony. After the conclusion of the ceremony, Maj. Gen. Robert Newman presented the Virginia Defense Force's Commendation Award to Lt. Col. William Zana (VNG) and Lt. Col. Gary Butler (VDF) for their outstanding efforts in force integration and joint operations.

State Guard Association Confers on States Disaster Response

RICHMOND, Va.- The State Guard Association of the United States (SGAUS) held its annual conference in Richmond from October 15 - 18 focusing on how the states' military forces can support civil authorities in disaster response. SGAUS's role is to promote the effectiveness of state authorized defense forces, state guards, or state military reserves while encouraging cooperation between the various state defense forces, the Department of Defense, the National Guard, the active Armed Forces and their reserves, other government agencies, and the general public. This conference focused on the members' roles in augmenting the states' various government agencies response to man-made and natural disasters.

SGAUS membership includes twenty-one states and represents over 15,000 defense force personnel. At the conference were commanding generals from six states and over 130 attendees. The participants had the opportunity to hear top safety and security officials from Virginia including the Honorable John W. Marshall, Secretary of Public Safety and Major General Robert Newman, the Adjutant General, speak on the relevance of state defense forces as emergency response providers. Congressman Joe Wilson (South Carolina) provided an update on the status of the amendment to HR 5658, the State Defense Force Amendment. Numerous other speakers provided updates on their state's emergency response operations.



Maj. Gen. John Taylor presents award to Congressman Joe Wilson

As a member of SGAUS, the Virginia Defense Force served as this year's host to the conference where it's current Commanding General, Maj. Gen. John Taylor, was appointed the Association's President. Establishing ambitious goals for

the upcoming year Maj. Gen. Taylor stated, "As the SGAUS President for 2010, I will serve each and every member and all State Commanders to gain national recognition for the State Defense Forces and State Guards with DoD, NGAUS, AGAUS, ARNG and ANG senior leadership and with Congress to pass the SDF Improvement Act. The SGAUS executive organization will develop a membership action plan to reach 5,000 members in 2010, draft a near and far term strategic plan and public relations program, and will explore the possibility of scholarship awards for SGAUS members during the next 90 days for approval by the SGAUS Board of Directors."

SGAUS awards program

**By Charles Rex Weaver, Brig. Gen. (TX) retired
Chairman Awards Committee**

The purpose of our award program is to recognize those who do good work on behalf of the association. The program was not designed as a substitute for the awards and decorations systems of the various sovereign states and territories.

Some members complain, rightly so, that our processing is slow. The executive committee must approve the top three awards, and they only have two meetings a year. Our redesigned web site will help us to get the award recommendations processed via email, and the executive committee can act as needed. This should help eliminate some of the wait time. Another common problem is compliance with the association requirement that a commander in the chain of command must recommend approval on all award requests. You must remember that SGAUS is not a governmental entity. Only the states and territories are authorized to form state guards, defense forces, and military reserves. And we require that someone who is commissioned by the state or territory vouch for the act for which a SGAUS member is being recommended. This procedure helps to weed out potential abuse of the awards system, and keeps the states and territories informed on SGAUS activities. In the very near future we will have full size and miniature medals available for purchase from the association. Stay tuned to the web site for more information.

TELL IT TO THE CHAPLAIN...

By CH (Lt. Col.) Jimmie T. Miles

In an article published in *The Military Chaplain*, Volume Eighty-One, Number Two, Summer Edition Lt. Gen. Hal G. Moore was featured in "An Old Soldier's Letter to Chaplains." He was remembering the chaplains that served alongside him in Korea, Viet Nam and their investments into his spiritual journey.

In that letter he reminded Chaplains how important they are to soldiers. He illustrated his thoughts by using the analogy of the mirror. He stated there were three reasons that Chaplains need to remember their importance in the everydayness of life.

Reason #1 – I believe that the joy in life is the "unexpected presence" of the Lord. And who might most often represent that unexpected presence in the Lord to those in the military? **Look in the mirror!**

Reason #2 – The Lord is the Great Interpreter. But in whom does He rely upon to help interpret His message? **Look in the mirror!**

Reason #3 - Man can never fully understand the mystery of God, but at least we, as human beings do not have to misunderstand the mystery. And to whom does He depend on helping Him help us not to misunderstand? **Look in the mirror!**

General Moore ended his reflections by stating, "What you do, day in and day out, is critical to one's sense of worth and balance in life – and is the most challenging battlefield known to humanity! Where you go and how you function is for the **unseen**, the **unknown**, and for the **eternal souls** of other human beings."

Not only is this a great reminder of the role our chaplains serve in the VDF but should be noted that this article applies to all of us as well. You can read General Moore's letter in its entirety by going to your search engine and type in the words, An Old Soldier's Letter to Chaplains. You will find the letter refreshing and informative.

Recommending Books for Reading

A General's Spiritual Journey by LT. Gen. Hal Moore, Retired

You, The Warrior Leader by Bobby Welch.

The Faith of the American Soldier by Stephen Mansfield

If you liked this type of article, remember, "**TO TELL IT TO THE CHAPLAIN**"

"And the things you have heard me say in the presence of many witnesses entrust to reliable men who will also be qualified to teach others."

2 Timothy 2:2

Congressional Award Program (www.congressionalaward.org)

In today's world, we have many ways to serve, but few provide such a fulfilling opportunity as the Congressional Award Program.

Established by Congress in 1979, the Congressional Award recognizes initiative, achievement and service to others by America's youth. A nonpartisan, voluntary, and noncompetitive program, the Congressional Award is open to all 14-23 year olds. Youth, who have registered for the program, set personally challenging goals in four program areas: Voluntary Public Service, Personal Development, Physical Fitness, and Expedition/Exploration. Once all four program areas are complete, participants are recognized with a Bronze, Silver or Gold Certificate or Medal. Congressional Award Medals are presented by the youth's Member of Congress.