

Maneuver Training Center earns new award

On page 2: Fort Pickett training year in review

Fort Pickett recognized for environmental excellence

Fort Pickett was one of three Virginia military installations recognized by the Commonwealth of Virginia as winners of the first Virginia Department of Defense Eagle Awards for Environmental Stewardship. Representatives from the three military installations received the awards during a presentation ceremony at the State Capitol Building Oct. 14.

In addition to Fort Pickett, Fort A.P. Hill and the Defense Supply Center Richmond were selected for the award.

Col. Thomas P. Wilkinson, commander of Fort Pickett, accepted the award on behalf of the post. He has been in command for just over a year, and he gave credit to the staff of the Fort Pickett Environmental Office for the award.

"It was my environmental folks that kept me straight every day," he said. "We couldn't have done it without you. All my accolades go to our environmental staff. We had a great year. Let's have a better year next year."

Read more: <http://vko.va.ngb.army.mil/VirginiaGuard/news/oct2009/EagleAward.html>



Recipients of the 2009 Eagle Award for Environmental Stewardship stand behind the banner that each installation recognized will be able to display in their headquarters.

Virginia National Guard News Headlines

Virginia Guard Soldier relinquishes authority at Joint Warfighting Center

Col. Edward R. Morgan of the Virginia National Guard relinquished responsibility as the Joint Warfighting Center J-7 Reserve Director to Col. Steven N. Jones in a ceremony held Oct. 3 in Suffolk.

Read more: <http://vko.va.ngb.army.mil/VirginiaGuard/news/oct2009/JFCOM.html>

Virginia Beach-based military police company begins duty in Iraq

The Virginia National Guard's Virginia Beach-based 229th Military Police Company, 91st Troop Command officially began its mission in Iraq with a transfer of authority ceremony conducted Oct. 19 at Camp Liberty with the Tennessee National Guard's 267th Military Police Company.

Read more: <http://vko.va.ngb.army.mil/VirginiaGuard/news/oct2009/229thMPTOA.html>

Virginia Guard kicks off 2009 Combined Federal Campaign

The Virginia National Guard kicked off the 2009 Combined Federal Campaign Oct. 9 with words of encouragement and support from the Adjutant General of Virginia and presentations from organizations that can benefit from CFC donations.

Read more: <http://vko.va.ngb.army.mil/VirginiaGuard/news/oct2009/CFCkickoff.html>

New commander takes over 29th Army Band

Warrant Officer Donald Carlson assumed command of the Virginia National Guard's 29th Army Band from 1st Sgt. Fred Lewis in a change of command ceremony conducted Oct. 18 in Roanoke.

Read more: <http://vko.va.ngb.army.mil/VirginiaGuard/news/oct2009/29thBandCoC.html>

Mark Your Calendars!

Oct. 23: Masquerade Ball

Fort Pickett will host the Commander's 1st Annual Halloween Masquerade Ball at 7 p.m. at the Fort Pickett's Officer's Club. Cost is \$25 per person or \$40 per couple.

Oct. 24: Fort Pickett Open House

Fort Pickett will host its first ever Fall Festival and Open House at the Blackstone Army Airfield from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. with a Haunted Hay Ride from 7 p.m. to midnight. Admission is free for the Open House and the Haunted Hay Rides is \$4.

Oct. 24 WOCS Recognition and OCS Graduation

A ceremony to recognize newly appointed warrant officers will be held at 10 a.m. and OCS graduation and commissioning ceremony will be held at 1 p.m. Both events will be held at the Fort Pickett Theater.

Fort Pickett not just for annual training anymore

Since being turned over from active duty to the Virginia National Guard in 1997, Fort Pickett has completed one of its most active years for both its facilities and training events. Since Sept. 1, 2008, Fort Pickett saw growth in the number of areas on the installation. Training man-days will be expected to top out at 875,000. Fort Pickett also saw a variety of new construction and the improvement and upgrade of facilities.

Virginia Guard units are given priority of training, but a variety of units from around the region and services conduct training. Along with National Guard and Army Reserve units, active Army, Air Force, Navy, Marines and Coast Guard units from across the country train at Fort Pickett.

National Guard units from North Carolina, West Virginia, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, and Connecticut have trained at the Maneuver Training Center throughout the year. The Maneuver Training Center also sponsors a yearly training exercise held each February called Southbound Trooper which includes Soldiers from Canada and Great Britain.

"We have some really awesome capabilities here and we are very customer oriented in allowing units to conduct their training as they request," said Col. Tom Wilkinson, the commander of Fort Pickett. "We always focus on safety, but we try to give units the latitude to build their own training plans. The active units like Pickett because our resources are more readily available than the ones they have to compete for at active bases."

MTC can offer commanders a wide variety of training to individually and collectively train their Soldiers. It has about 41,000 acres of available training land. Included are 21 ranges for individual and crew served weapons qualification and a Multi-Purpose Range Complex.

Collective training ranges include convoy live fire, Infantry Platoon Battle Course and a Joint IED Defeat Organization lane, which is in the final stages of construction. Also included is a Military Operations in Urban Terrain site, urban assault course, and a fully instrumented shoot house. MTC has facilities to include training for aviation. It has an airfield capable of landing a C-17 and a combat assault strip. Fort Pickett offers restricted airspace to 18,000 feet, making it very desirable for UAV operations.

As a training installation with many aging facilities, MTC had a busy year with upgrading and improving buildings and training areas. Part of the President's stimulus package included \$7.5 million in funds for facilities improvement at Pickett. The money will be used to upgrade barracks, administrative buildings and dining facilities. About \$2.5 million was obligated in 2009 to improve barracks. The administrative buildings and dining facilities will begin work in the 2010 fiscal year. About \$1.7 million will be put into energy saving initiatives for some of its facilities. Funds will be used to upgrade HVAC, electrical and insulation in the 2400 block of buildings. Additional funds were secured to retrofit compressors with higher Seasonal Energy Efficiency Ratio rated models to make heating and cooling more efficient, reducing costs in the long run.



Canadian Army Reserve Soldiers trained at Fort Pickett along with U.S. Army Soldiers during Exercise Southbound Trooper IX in February.

Morale, welfare and recreation facilities have also seen an improvement. A new leisure center was improved this year. Located at Bldg 2403, it offers pizza, drinks, games and big screen television. There is also an internet café located in the building. Fort Pickett is coordinating with the Fort Lee Post Exchange manager to facilitate upgrades to its PX. An outdoor café as well as a "Java Café" kiosk is planned to open in the future.

"I hope to see 2010 as a banner year for Fort Pickett," said Wilkinson. "Reaching the one million man-day mark would be great. Fort Pickett is a diamond in the rough and I encourage units to use our assets to the fullest. I also look forward to continuing the great rapport and relationship we share with Nottoway County and working together to expand the opportunities and support to our great Soldiers."

Read more: <http://vko.va.ngb.army.mil/VirginiaGuard/news/oct2009/MTCreview.html>

MORE ON THE WEB

Governor Announces Winners of Eagle Awards

<http://www.governor.virginia.gov/MediaRelations/NewsReleases/viewRelease-print.cfm?id=1113>

Joint Warfighting Center

<http://www.jwfc.jfcom.mil/>

Combined Federal Campaign

<http://www.opm.gov/CFC/>

Virginia Guard Public Affairs Flickr Photostream

<http://flickr.com/photos/vanguardpao>

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