



BLACKJACK BANNER



From the Captain's Desk

Greetings,

I hope this newsletter finds everyone in good health and spirits as summer has certainly hit Hampton Roads. This month's newsletter is packed with stories on events that have taken place over the past few months. Detachment TWO is now three full months into their deployment and everyone is doing a great job both as a detachment and individually. It's wonderful to see all the warfare and positional qualifications that they are able to achieve! Back at home, the squadron has kept busy including a highly successful FIELDEX. The squadron as had some fun too competing in the annual Little Creek Command Challenge and playing softball.

Ending on a high note, our team, after losing to TACRON 22 to start the season, won a nail biter against them in the last game of the season.

The Family Readiness Group continues to gather and support our deployed Sailors. I trust that many from the detachment were able to enjoy some goodies that they sent out. There won't be a meeting this month due to the holiday, but I hope everyone will come out for the Command Picnic on July 19th. Summer is starting off strong for the BLACKJACKS! Great job and keep it up!

The newsletter received a facelift this month. I hope it's a bit more enjoyable to read with the new format. Thanks to everyone that helped put this newsletter



CDR Laubach

together. As a reminder, there are a couple of ways to get the newsletter, either by email or going to our website, <http://ww.tacron21.navy.mil>, and selecting "newsletter." If you know of anyone that you'd like to receive the newsletter, please send their email address to: Deborah.dennler@navy.mil.

CDR Jon Laubach

Senior Enlisted Corner

Hello Blackjacks, family and friends! Hats off to all our Sailors serving on USS Iwo Jima and their loved-ones back home. Your service to our great country and Navy is greatly appreciated. 21 rocks!!!

Congratulations to all who recently were selected for promotion: AC1 Fortier, AC1 Taliaferro, AC2 Hutcherson, OS2 Davis, AC3 Simpson, OS3 Rosenbaum, OS3 Grippi, OS3 Bustamante, AC3 Pugh, and YN3 Abreu.

BZ!, to the Sailors that participated in the Command Challenge held on board NAB Little Creek. What a blast it was to watch you guys compete.

Welcome aboard to our newest Blackjack, ACAA Megan Mills.

Up and coming: On July 19 the MWR committee led by OS1 Kennedy is hosting the Command's Summer Picnic at the Foc'sle Recreation area (behind bldg. T111). Families and friends are invited to join in on the food and fun for all ages. More info will be

distributed shortly.

Sincerely,

Kelly E. Smith

ACCM(AW/SW)



ACCM (AW/SW) Smith

JULY 1, 2012

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SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST:

- *Command Challenge*
- *Pictures from Spain*
- *WIC*
- *Things to do in Hampton Roads*

Command Challenge

The morning of June 1, 2012 was a warm and exciting one due to one thing, the command challenge. Everyone was excited for this day as the command had a chance to show its superiority to the other commands in terms of athletic sports such as basketball, dodge ball, handball, volleyball, football, and iron team.

The flag football team consisted of AC3 Shipman, AC3 Cunningham, AC1 Morris, AC1 Adams, AC2 Smith, AC1 Fortier, OS2 Davis, ACAN Gardner, IT2 Julien, and ITSN Doerfler. Unfortunately, the flag football team lost the first



round and was eliminated. The top winners for the sport were: 1st ACU-2, 2nd ACB-2, and 3rd UCT-1.

The Iron Team consisted of AC3 Shipman, AC3 Cunningham, YNSN Price, IT2 Julien, LT Holland, and AC1 Fortier. The Iron Team was unfortunately defeated the first round as well. The top three teams were: 1st LOGSU-2, 2nd ACB-2, and 3rd UTC-1.

The sand volleyball team was made up of ACC Bacon, ACC Sweet, ACC Trammell, AC3 Eyges, ACAN Cooley, ACAN Gardner, and ITSN Pera. The volleyball team made it to the second round but then lost. The top three teams were: 1st ACB-2, 2nd LOGSU-2, and 3rd NIOC.

The handball team was composed of AC3 Shipman, AC3 Cunningham, LT Holland, OS2 Macias, AC1 Morris, YNSN Price, ACAN Cooley, AC1 Adams, ITSN Pera, and AC2 Smith.

The team made it to the third round before being bested.



The winning teams were: 1st CNSWG, 2nd NIOC, and 3rd LOGSU-2.

The dodge ball team had AC3 Cunningham, AC3 Eyges, AC3 Shipman, ITSN Pera, OS2 Macias, AC1 Adams, AC1 Morris, and ITSN Doerfler. The team made it all the way to the semi-finals before they lost. The team

ultimately finished 4th. The top three teams were: 1st UCT-1, 2nd TACRON 22, and 3rd NIOC.

The basketball team did the best of the teams and made it to the semi-finals before they lost. OS2 Davis, ITSN Doerfler, IT2 Julien, ACAN Gardner, ACAN Cooley, and AC2 Smith made up the team. The team was ranked 3rd for the sport. The top three teams were: 1st LOGSU-2, 2nd NCDOD, and 3rd TACRON 21.

At the end of the day the top contenders were ranked overall and LOGSU-2 took the crown followed by NIOC and TACRON 22.



DET TWO

As TACRON 21, Detachment TWO (DET TWO) was steaming across the blue waters of the Atlantic aboard the USS Iwo Jima, little did they know of the wonders they would be seeing; mainly the junior enlisted. It did not “sink in” or occur to them that some would soon be seeing things that their history and geography teachers were droning on about as they were day dreaming and doodling merely a year ago.

After five days in Rota (see “DET TWO in Spain” on page 3) the USS Iwo Jima was back on track and making good time going through the Straits of Gibraltar and the Mediterranean Sea. Up next was the transit of the Suez and into the Red Sea. During these times across the Atlantic and the Mediterranean morale was staying high and not just due to an unexpected port call. Movie nights have become a much anticipated event by officers and enlisted alike. Overseen and coordinated by IT1 (SW/AW) Calkins, maiden name of Abel, with the help of AC3 Simpson, these nights the detachment can kick back while enjoying some camaraderie, snacks, drinks, and most times a good movie.

It isn't all fun, games, movies and port calls though. We have had great progress with qualifications, pins, re-enlistments and taking care of business on a daily basis. It is common knowledge on the ship that TACRON 21 gives some of the better briefs to flight crews, staff and pilots between our TACC Supervisors, TACC Watch Officers and Plans Team. With exercises yet to come and unforeseen tasking, all from TACRON 21 DET TWO feel “up to the job” and are sure they will perform admirably.



The USS New York and USS Gunston Hall

Midnight Adventures



Monkey leaping for Senior Chief Midnight

TACRON 21's mascot Midnight has had quite the adventure as of yet. He posed for a few pictures out on the flight deck with the squadron and then was taken around in Spain. He had a minor disagreement with one of the local monkeys of Gibraltar (called Barbary Macaque). AC3 Simpson was at the scene of the altercation and when asked what his thoughts were as the monkey was mid air on its way to attack Midnight he responded with: “I had

two thoughts instantly run through my head; my first thought was ‘Well... this is how we are going to lose Midnight.’ And then my second thought was ‘Why is this wild monkey not fearing this well-dressed panther?’ I'm happy to say that both the monkey and Midnight are now okay and have settled their differences.”

Chief Presnell, also being at the scene, was asked if he had any concerns or fears for Midnight at the

time and his response was a little different: “Not at all; Midnight is a panther and a Senior Chief. There is no way a monkey can take out a panther or a Senior Chief!”

Fortunately though, AC3 Simpson quickly intervened and smoothed the whole mess over. A Legend holds that as long as Gibraltar Barbary Macaques (monkeys) exist on the Rock, the territory will remain under British rule. That would be nice since after all the adventures with the monkeys Midnight and a few of the guys had some delicious Fish n' chips in a local pub to wrap up their tour.



AC3 Simpson after the monkey was no longer angry.

DET TWO in Spain



AC3 Martin enjoying Sangria

All of DET TWO received a pleasant surprise with an unexpectedly long port call in Rota. It was enough to boost anyone's morale. As ship staff, TACRON was soon getting many hours of liberty, seeing the sites, soaking up sun, enjoying a few pitchers of Sangria, and eating local Spanish cuisine supplemented by some Taco Bell and Subway on base.



Floating Gypsy

CDR Mack, OIC of DET TWO and Executive Officer of TACRON 21, was asked if he had any initial concerns with the long port call. His response is below:

"My biggest concern was whether or not the detachment would get to see out-side the

gates of the base. I have been to Rota on many occasions and I knew if we were confined to on base liberty, our Sailors would miss a great opportunity to experience a beautiful country. Once I learned we would not be confined to the base, my focus shifted to drinking responsibly. I questioned whether or not if I would have to deal with any alcohol related incidents, or would someone skirt the edict to abide by the US drinking age standard when the drinking age in town was 18. Needless to say, there was nothing I needed to worry about."

TACRON had Sailors getting in some golf at the NAVSTA Rota course, some out watching Flamenco dancing accompanied by some wine tasting, while others were out sightseeing.

The sightseeing consisted of guided tours and or striking out on their own in: Rota, a sleepy little town until around 2200 then it becomes a hustle and bustle of good times. Puerto de Santa Maria, the small town on the other side of the base is less over run with military and has some great beach side restaurants. Cadiz is a larger city across the bay and an inexpensive ferry ride from Puerto or Rota. Cadiz has lots of

history and is part of the base indoctrination tour. Sevilla, or Seville to Americans, is the closest "big" city around base being about an hour and 45 minute drive and a "must see" if there. Rhonda is a very old town up on a small mountain and holds one of Spain's oldest bull rings. And last but certainly not least, the Rock of Gibraltar. In the control of the UK, Gibraltar is the home to over 300 monkey's, a few of which DET TWO were able to meet. Between the beautiful buildings, the Gypsy's hawking their wares in alleys and tourist heavy areas, and meeting some monkey's, DET TWO had a lot of fun.



Cathedral in Sevilla

MAT in Morocco



MAT Members ashore

During exercise African Lion between Moroccan and United States militaries, four of our Marine Augmentation Team (MAT) members

were afforded the opportunity to set foot on the beaches of Morocco. In the hurry up and wait pace that all of us are so used to, AC1 Shaw, AC3 Peder, AC3 Martin and ACAN Kauahi were up early and off the ship transported by LCAC's. Once on the beach things slowed down just a tad. Fortunately for the junior Sailors they had AC1 Shaw to look to as he led them in a rigorous napping routine in between picking out the choicest sea shells and taking pictures. That first evening, after hearing earlier in the day that the Marines they were with were never

allowed to use tents, our boys "forgot" about their tents and with very little complaining settled into sleeping bags to weather the elements.

Up early they got the news that the range location had been changed and instead of hiking they were going to be piled in trucks to make their way to the range in a convoy. At the range they got in some sequences of fire to hone up their M-4 skills while getting lots and lots of sun...some more than others.

OSC McElroy's Re-enlistment



May 1 - During Iwo Jima's recent transit through the Suez Canal, OSC McElroy took the opportunity to re-enlist once again for an additional three years.



OSC McElroy's Re-enlistment took place on the flight deck presided over by LCDR Langford

Warfare Pin Qualifications

The Enlisted Air Warfare Specialist (EAWS) Pin is a result of significant personal effort. The designation of EAWS bestows upon you a high degree of prestige among mariners. We have many Sailors working hard to earn their pins with the first two earning them being AC3(AW) CespedesUrena and AC3(AW) Ortiz. They both worked diligently and knocked out the prerequisites and received the qualification in less than two months. It normally takes individuals about six months to a year to complete the entire program. Both were pinned by the USS IWO JIMA's CO on April 14, 2012.

AC1(AW/SW) Adkins
EAWS Coordinator



To our two most recent Warfare pin qualifications we say "Bravo Zulu". It is no easy task. These two Petty Officers showed a high amount of motivation and dedication. Quickly they knocked out the prerequisites of this qualification and were consistently asking the First Classes and Chiefs to get them their books.

In a way, these two were the trial run of the command, and because of these two, it has gone a lot smoother for others who are experiencing their first deployment. No one can say "It can't be done" or "it's too hard," all it takes is a bit of hard work and some dedication. Just ask these two fine Sailors.

AC3 Bacus



Pictures of TACRON 21 in Spain



AC1 Shaw, AC1(AW/SW) Taliaferro, ACAN Kauahi, OS3 Grippi touring Cadiz on a double decker bus.



IT1(SW/AW) Calkins posing in Rota.



AC1(AW) Fryar, ACAN Kauahi, and OS3 Grippi attempting to take a few strokes off their game.



IT1(SW/AW) Calkins having fun in Spain.



IS2 Camp and OS3 Bustamante out in Spain.



Above: ACC(AW) Presnell enjoying a beer with some lunch.

Left: AC2 Brady, AC3(AW) Pugh, AC3 Simpson, OS3 Rosenbaum posing with Senior Chief Midnight with Gibraltar in the distance.



Above: AC3(AW) Ortiz, AC2(AW) Anderson, and AC3(AW) CespedesUrena.

Right: CDR Mack enjoying a meal out in Puerto de Santa Maria.

Below: OSC(SW/AW) Sullivan posing with Midnight and the British Authorities on the Rock of Gibraltar.

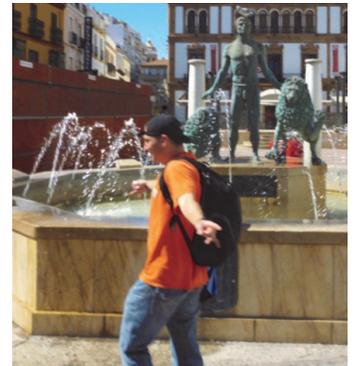


ACAN Rogers, AC3 Simpson, AC3 Martin, and AC3 Bacus posing in Sevilla.



Right: AC3 Peder and IS3 Lohkamp tasting some Spanish wine.

Below: OSC(SW/AW) McElroy next to a thoroughly uninterested Monkey on the Rock of Gibraltar



AC1 Shaw frolicking in front of a fountain in the city of Rhonda.



LCDR Meneses, Capt Lee, LCDR Gantz, LCDR Langford, LT Bravo out in Spain having a good time.

Field EX



Group shot of all the Field Ex participants, active duty and reservist.

Active and Reservist Sailors from TACRON TWO ONE and TACRON TWO TWO participated in a three day field exercise on June 13th, 2012 thru June 16th, 2012.

June 13th was filled with class room instruction taught by OIC Major Gordon, LCPO ACC (AW/SW) Sweet, LPO AC1 Fortier, AC3 (AW) Cunningham, and AC3 Shipman. The students were taught basic land navigation skills, basic first aid, survival skills, familiarization of radio communication, Helicopter Landing Zone (HLZ)/ Landing Zone (LZ)/ Tactical Landing Zone (TLZ) setups, and basic tactical equipment.



AC1 Fortier assisting AC2 Dennler controlling Bay Raider 45 during night ops with CDR Laubach listening in.

Early on the morning of June 14, the participants proceeded to Fort Story and began putting their classroom knowledge to use in the land navigation course. They used team work to navigate through to the course to find nine waypoints by plotting and graphing their way to each one.

This exercise was well executed and took the participants three hours to achieve. The Sailors returned to camp to set

up tents, which they called home for the next two nights.

Bright and early Friday morning the Sailors tested their strength and determination on a 17 station obstacle course. Stations included climbing a wall, high knees through tires, hurdles and a balance beam, to name a few. The teams

pushed and made their way through with flying colors!

After the grueling obstacle course, the Sailors jumped right into HLZ and LZ setups and radio communications in preparation for the live flight ops. They successfully executed a full setup for a SH-60, which was provided to us by Helicopter Squadron (HSC-28). During this live operation 11 Air Traffic Controllers had an opportunity to control the helicopter in a stimulated tactical environment. For many, this was their first experience.

After the live operation the Sailors learned basic survival/first aid. The first lesson was instructed by AC3 Shipman and included basic survival skills. The students learned how to make a basic snare, foot trap, death fall trap, noose and some general knowledge on survival if one ever found themselves stranded in the wild. The next lesson was taught by AC3 (AW) Cunningham, where the students learned about basic first aid.

As dusk approached the Sailors began setting up for night ops. The return of HSC-28 gave the students the opportunity to assemble a night HLZ with Chem lights/Infar Red strobes (IR) and allowed the students to use Night Vision Devices (NVDs). After a successful day and night of operations, the team headed back to camp for debriefing and Taps.

We would like to send a thank you to CDR Bailey and his crew from HSC-28 for participating. Additionally, we would like to thank our Commanding Officer CDR Laubach for allowing us to coordinate a successful field exercise.



Field Ex team members just after setting up the HLZ.

Things to do in Hampton Roads

Stars & Stripes Explosion!

Join thousands of residents and visitors in this epic celebration on July 4th from 10:00am-9:30pm.

Musical acts throughout the day offer something to satisfy everyone's ear.

At 8:30pm, the 20th St stage will have performances by Symphoncity and Virginia Beach Chorale playing patriotic songs and movie themes.

Fireworks begin at 9:30pm with a spectacular display over the ocean.

Chalk the Walk Art Explosion!

Saturday, July 7th 10:00-5:00pm

In accordance with the 2012 theme, 200 competitors will draw a 4x4 ft. picture on the Boardwalk.

There are 3 divisions, amateur, professional and youth (12-16). 11 and under are welcome to draw for fun. There is no entry fee.

Trophies and cash prizes will be awarded after a panel of judges evaluates each drawing on composition, color, use of theme and creativity.

Hermit Crab Challenge

Saturday, July 21st 10:00-2:00pm

The Mid Atlantic Hermit Crab Challenge was in the top ten Wackiest Festivals in the WORLD by New York Daily News in 2012.

You may enter your crab in the Crustacean 500 race or the Miss Curvaceous Crustacean Beauty Pageant. Trophies will be awarded for specific categories and all participants receive a medal.

Registration begins at 9:30am and is free.

Family Great Adventures Series!

Back by popular demand, the Family Great Adventure Series is all about Discovery and Entertainment at the Virginia Beach oceanfront!

On select nights, families can take part in an interactive adventure that leads them to various sites along the boardwalk and Atlantic Ave. to unravel a mystery. During each adventure, participants can dress up as characters, use "brain and brawn" to win the contest at hand, and settle into the sand for a family-friendly movie shown on a giant inflatable screen on the beach!

All events are free and open to the public. Each night is themed to the particular movie being shown! Select dates are:

Thursday, July 12

Thursday, August 2

Thursday, August 16 and

Friday, September 7

It's on the beach, 27th Street, 6:00-10:00pm. Children are welcome.

~www.visitvirginiabeach.com



Ynot Wednesdays?

Every Wednesday from June 6th through August 29th. 5:00pm – 9:00pm, there will be a free summer concert series.

The Sandler Center Outdoor Plaza will have pizza, sandwiches, cold drinks & summer treats available for purchase, games more as you listen and groove to the music.

Wed., July 4th, "America's favorite

80's show band will take the stage. The Deloreans, an all 80's group will help you relive all of your favorite hits.

Wed., July 11th hosts The Gangsters of Love, playing a variety of music from classic rock to Top 40.

Wed., July 18th, come see The Office Band, offering a variety of rock music.

Wed., July 25th catch the Lloyd

Dobler Effect, playing various cover songs from the 60's to present.



**Everybody
loves "FREE!"**

Resource of the Month

WIC is a special supplemental food program for women, infants, and children. The program provides nutrition education and free supplemental foods to eligible persons. The nutrition education is accomplished through individual and group counseling sessions. The foods provided are intended to supplement the existing diet with important nutrients. Food distribution

is made through the issuance of checks redeemable at participating grocery stores.

For more information about WIC, call the LaSalle Center. Normal operating hours are Monday-Wednesday, 8:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.; Tuesday, 7:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.; Thursday, 8:00 a.m. - 7:00 p.m., by appointment only. Call (757) 727-1140, press 4.

Until next time, thanks for all that you do in support of TACRON 21 and our great Navy. Be safe!

Kelly E. Smith
ACCM(AW/SW)



SSA Announces: Workers Can Now Get Access to the Social Security Statements Online!

The Social Security Administration (SSA) on May 1 announced that workers now can get access to their Social Security statements online.

According to the announcement, the new online statement provides Social Security-eligible workers with secure access to their Social Security earnings and benefits information at www.socialsecurity.gov/mystatement.

"Our new online Social Security statement is simple, easy to use and provides people with estimates they can use to plan for their retirement," SSA Commissioner Michael Astrue said in a press statement. Astrue noted that the statement also provides estimates for disability and survivors benefits, and recommend-

ed that people check their online statement once a year for financial planning purposes, and to ensure they are getting proper credit for their earnings.

According to the agency, people age 18 and older who wish to retrieve a statement must be able to provide information about themselves that

matches information already on file with SSA, and clear an identity check provided by an external authentication service. Once verified, a person can create an account with their own username and password,

and view or print out a statement.

SSA warned that some people may not be able to provide answers to

security questions that match information that is on file. Those people can either request that a statement be mailed to them, or go to a local Social Security office to present identification to set up an online account,

"Our new online Social Security statement is simple, easy to use and provides people with estimates they can use to plan for their retirement."

SSA said.

The portal also includes links to information about other online services, such as applications for retirement, disability and Medicare, SSA said.

TACRON 21

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Contributions from:

- CDR Laubach
- ACCM(AW/SW) Smith
- OSC(SW/AW) McElroy
- ACC(AW) Presnell
- IT1(SW/AW) Calkins (Abel)
- AC1(AW/SW) Adkins
- AC2 Dennler
- AC2 Hutcherson
- AC3 Eyges
- AC3 Bacus
- AC3 Simpson
- AC3 Shipman

Photos Submitted by:

- AC3 Peder
- OS3 Grippi
- AC3 Simpson
- AC3 Bacus
- ACC(AW) Presnell
- LCDR Meneses
- Capt. Lee

Happy Birthday



- June 2 IT1 (SW/AW) Bake
- June 3 AC3 Crossett
- June 4 AC3 Bacus
- June 7 ACAN Thies
- June 8 CDR Gray
- June 13 ACC (AW/SW) Sweet
- June 14 CDR Mack
- June 20 AC3 (AW) Pugh
- June 28 AC1 Shaw
- July 2 AC1 Fortier
- July 7 AC1 Adkins
- July 13 LCDR Miller
- July 23 LT Monti
- July 29 Capt Lee



Welcome to the Blackjack family,
IT1 Hazen
AC2 Rowe
ACAN Emmons
ACAN Mills
ACAR Saxton



We would like to wish the following Blackjacks the best of luck as they depart TACRON 21:

- LCDR Morinelli
- IT2(SW/AW) Julien
- AC3 Crossett
- AC3 Cunningham



If you have completed volunteer work or are interested in doing so, please contact OS2 Macias at anthony.macias1@navy.mil or AC3 Eyges at andrea.eyges@navy.mil or stop by the Admin office.

**Check out our
Facebook Page!**

