

WARRIOR

The South Florida

Homestead Air Reserve Base Joint Service Monthly Newsletter

February 2013

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U.S. Air Force photo/Ross Tweten

HARB Airmen gather for Airmen Appreciation Day



Airmen from Homestead Air Reserve Base, Fla., gathered for an Airmen Appreciation Day at the base Jan. 12. The day featured a commander's call, an Airmen recognition ceremony, sporting events, food, and live music. (U.S. Air Force photos/Senior Airman Jacob Jimenez & Senior Airman Jaimi Upthegrove)

The South Florida WARRIOR

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The South Florida Warrior is an Air Force Reserve online magazine geared toward members of the U.S. military services at their families as well as friends and members of Homestead Air Reserve Base.

Contents of The South Florida Warrior are not necessarily the official views of the U.S. government, the Department of Defense, or the Department of the Air Force.

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Restoration project on remote national park brings together military, community

by Ross Tweten
482nd Fighter Wing Public Affairs

The national parks have long inspired a national pride and love of country among the citizens of the United States. But perhaps more importantly, the national parks provide a physical linking of Americans of the past to present-day Americans, bridging generations.

These virtues are realized on a small remote island in the Dry Tortugas National Park. There, Air Force reservists both active and retired from Homestead Air Reserve Base's 482nd Civil Engineer Squadron gathered at Fort Jefferson over several days in January to participate in a maintenance project for the National Park Service.

Fifteen active reservists, six retired reservists, and one civilian contractor set up shop at Fort Jefferson as a training mission. The main project of the training was the construction of four reinforced concrete bases for large, 24-ton restored cannons to replicate



A fully restored cannon on a reproduction carriage and concrete base at Fort Jefferson in the Dry Tortugas National Park Jan. 17. (U.S. Air Force photo/Ross Tweten)

the historical weapon's footprint. They used reinforced concrete with a wood grade "stamp" that gives it the appearance it had in the mid-1800s when the cannon base was actually made of timbers.

Fort Jefferson, roughly 70 miles west of Key West, Fla., is a 19th century military fortification. With a varied and complicated history, it was initially built as a strategic naval post protecting the southern coast of the United States. During the Civil War, Union warships capitalized on its prized location. It also served the Union as a prison. Abandoned by the late 1800s, the fort was later used as a coaling station for warships. As the usefulness of the fort subsided, the cost of maintaining it could not be justified as the tropical climate and frequent hurricanes took their toll. Now, visitors venture to Fort Jefferson for its remote location and the captivating sight that is Fort Jefferson. Visitors also come for the natural resources, such as the snorkeling, swimming and fishing.

A truly rare event across the whole of Air Force Reserve Command, this project features active and retired reservists teaming-up with another govern-



Retired Chief Master Sgt. Walter Horlacher, formerly of the 482nd Civil Engineer Squadron, and Master Sgt. Michael Wilton, 482nd CES, lift a faux wood stamp from the concrete base for the restored cannons at Fort Jefferson in the Dry Tortugas National Park Jan. 17. The faux wood stamp gives the base a wood grain appearance it had in the mid-1800s when the cannon base was actually made of timbers. (U.S. Air Force photo/Ross Tweten)

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ACC command chief visits Homestead's active duty Airmen, addresses Total Force Integration

by Ross Tweten
482nd Fighter Wing Public Affairs

Air Combat Command's command chief master sergeant, Chief Master Sgt. Richard A. Parsons, visited Homestead Air Reserve Base Jan. 14 and 15 to get a first-hand look at how the active duty Airmen of Detachment 2, 20th Operations Group, are integrating with the 482nd Fighter Wing.

Parsons' two-day trip focused on addressing the challenges and successes of Homestead ARB's Total Force Integration.

The concept of TFI is to integrate active duty Airmen with their guard and reserve counterparts, just as guard and reserve Airmen have been serving with various active duty units throughout the Air Force for many years. The goal of TFI is to enhance the Air Force's ability to conduct its mission through the sharing of resources, to include aircraft, crews, maintenance, and support, between active duty and the air reserve component.

"We are very enthusiastic about the chief's visit because we want to showcase the success we've had here at Homestead," said Lt. Col. Scott Walker, Detachment 2 commander. "The 482nd FW has been an unbelievable host and made the transition of active duty and reserve Airmen a seamless process."

Given the success of Detachment 2's integration to Homestead ARB, the ultimate goal of TFI, and the chief's visit, is to tackle issues that, when solved, will make the integration even better. Underpinning issues addressed during Parsons' visit were support challenges active duty Airmen do not normally encounter at a typical active duty base.

"This is an opportunity for both Detachment 2 and the 482nd FW to address those challenges so the chief can take them back to Air Combat Command, and with Air Force Reserve Command's help, we can work on finding solutions that benefits us all," said Walker.

During his stay, Parsons held an enlisted call with the Airmen of Detachment 2, met with 482nd FW leadership and groups of Airmen throughout the wing,



Air Combat Command's command chief master sergeant, Chief Master Sgt. Richard A. Parsons, discusses Total Force Integration with active duty Airmen of Detachment 2, 20th Operations Group, during a visit to Homestead Air Reserve Base, Fla., Jan. 14. Parsons visited to get a first-hand look at how the active duty Airmen of Detachment 2, 20th OG, are integrating with the 482nd Fighter Wing. (U.S. Air Force photo/Ross Tweten)

and attended a dedicated crew chief ceremony. The dedicated crew chief ceremony was especially poignant as it's the first assignment of an active duty crew chief to an F-16 at Homestead ARB since Hurricane Andrew.

Parsons stressed both the current and future challenges the Air Force is facing.

"One of the biggest challenges the Air Force is facing is our fiscal crisis," said Parsons. "Priorities have to be reevaluated. We have fewer people and fewer dollars. We need the very best people operating at their most efficient. So if you look around and you don't see others doing their best, tell them to step it up or step out."

The challenges of fewer people and dollars cut to the core of TFI. In part, TFI is a cost-saving measure, and according to Walker, Parsons can take the challenges and successes of Homestead ARB's TFI back to Gen. Mike Hostage, ACC commander, to then report up to the Chief of Staff of the Air Force.

Here at Homestead ARB, Detachment 2, 20th OG, is an active associate organization much like the clas-

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Team Homestead Spotlight

Senior Airman **Rossalyn Decena**

482nd Force Support Squadron
chief of customer support



U.S. Air Force photo/Senior Airman Jaimi Upthegrove

“What I like most about my job is helping and interacting with people from a diverse range of backgrounds.”



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- The 482nd Fighter Wing Public Affairs Office welcomes story ideas about Team Homestead events and activities; honors and awards; and programs and initiatives. Email story ideas and announcements to 482FW.PA@us.af.mil

Lt. Col. David Sundlov assumes command of Homestead ARB's 93rd Fighter Squadron

by Ross Tweten
482nd Fighter Wing Public Affairs

Lt. Col. David Sundlov assumed command of the 93rd Fighter Squadron in a change-of-command ceremony at Homestead Air Reserve Base Jan. 12, as the legacy of the Makos was passed to him from Lt. Col. Michael Hohman.

Sundlov was previously the director of operations for the 93rd FS. He succeeds Hohman, who will be continuing his Air Force career with the 482nd Operations Group.

"This is a proud moment for me," said Sundlov. "I've wanted to be a fighter pilot since I was in middle school. And to be a squadron commander is obviously a great honor. I look forward to taking the squadron to combat."

As the commander of the 93rd FS, Sundlov will lead a fully combat-ready unit capable of providing F-16C multi-purpose fighter aircraft, along with mission ready pilots and support personnel, for short-notice worldwide deployment.

According to Col. Michael Hernandez, 482nd Operations Group commander, Sundlov has an outstanding pedigree, and he's capable of doing anything in the Air Force.

"Those of you who have been around a long time know a good pedigree can be a dangerous thing, because, often, a guy with a sharp pedigree might not be a very good leader," said Hernandez. "However, in absence of all the great things he's done, if you came here having known none of those things, he would still be the absolute right guy for this job, because, like Hohman, Sundlov

has that intangible natural leadership ability."

Airmen of the 93rd FS have supported, and continue to support, numerous operations and deployments, flying combat missions in support of the war on terrorism. The Makos fly more than 5,700 hours and 4,400 sorties each year.



Lt. Col. David Sundlov, the new commander of the 93rd Fighter Squadron, addresses the audience during a change-of-command ceremony at Homestead Air Reserve Base, Fla., Jan. 12. As the commander of the 93rd FS, Sundlov will lead a fully combat-ready unit capable of providing F-16C multi-purpose fighter aircraft, along with mission ready pilots and support personnel, for short-notice worldwide deployment. (U.S. Air Force photo/Senior Airman Jaimi Upthegrove)

Air Force Academy cadets take to skies in Homestead ARB's F-16s

by Senior Airman Jaimi Upthegrove
482nd Fighter Wing Public Affairs

Six Air Force Academy cadets, during their winter break, participated in orientation flights, flying in the backseat of an F-16 with pilots from the 93rd Fighter Squadron at Homestead Air Reserve Base, Fla., Dec. 17 through 21.

Academy cadets are authorized an opportunity to ride on certain aircraft, Air Force wide, during a regularly scheduled training mission as a way of familiarizing them with the occupational Air Force. Here at Homestead ARB, cadets take to the skies in what is characterized by most as an unparalleled thrill ride.

"The flight was definitely the coolest thing I've ever done in my life and definitely one of my greatest experiences since being at the Academy," said Cadet Patrick Lobo, a recent orientation flight survivor and beneficiary. "I was on the fence about being a pilot, but after the flight, I am leaning a lot more toward trying to become one."

It's a long-standing tradition amongst the 93rd FS, also known as the Makos, to try and accommodate cadets who reside in south Florida. Once the cadet has the green light to fly, they're taken through the same process a regular pilot would go through before going up in the air. They're medically cleared, fitted for a flight suit, and given egress training and a mission briefing.

While in the air, the cadets experience loops, supersonic speeds, and various tactical maneuvers. The cadets are able to ask the pilots questions and converse for portions of the flight. But while they are executing tactical maneuvers, the cadet is left to endure the crucible that is the backseat of an F-16.



Air Force Academy Cadet Patrick Lobo (left) receives pre-flight instructions from Lt. Col. Adam Meyers, 93rd FS F-16 pilot, before takeoff for Lobo's F-16 orientation flight at Homestead Air Reserve Base, Fla., Dec. 21. (U.S. Air Force photo/Senior Airman Jaimi Upthegrove)

"Like several other Mako pilots, I was given the opportunity to fly in the F-16 as a young cadet and it completely shaped my subsequent career choices," said Lt. Col. Adam Meyers, 93rd FS F-16 pilot. "Putting some detailed perspective on airpower will have that effect - that and the Viper is just incredibly addictive. This program is a relatively low impact way to provide them what could be a career-building education."

When Lobo went into the Academy two years ago, he originally aspired to become an acquisitions officer, but the Viper's venom may be seeping into his bloodstream.

"This experience helped me to see the atmosphere associated with a fighter squadron and to actually experience the best part which is getting up in the air and flying around," he said. "Lt. Col. Meyers gave me a ride that I will certainly remember for the rest of my life."



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Congratulations to recent quarterly award winners

Congratulations to the following quarterly award winners for the months of October through December 2012:

- Company Grade Officer: Capt. Raymond Ng, 70th Aerial Port Squadron
- Senior non-commissioned officer : Master Sgt.

Susan Varmuza, Detachment 2, 20th Operations Group

- Non-commissioned officer: Tech. Sgt. Adam Cola-prete, 482nd Maintenance Squadron
- Airman: Senior Airman Gregory Burroughs, Detachment 2, 20th OG

Congratulations to Operational Readiness Inspection outstanding performers

Congratulations to the following Airmen who were recognized as outstanding performers during the 482nd Fighter Wing's recent Operational Readiness Inspection:

482nd Fighter Wing

- Jeff Vaughan
- John Frankel
- Tech. Sgt. Julio Herrera

482nd Mission Support Group Outstanding Performers

- 2nd Lt. Jose Rubio
- Staff Sgt. Michael Cuesta
- Staff Sgt. Christian Delgado
- Staff Sgt. William Kuykendall
- Senior Airman Erika Erazo

482nd Operations Group Outstanding Performers

- Lt. Col. Sean Gustafson
- Capt. Amanda Hacman

- Senior Airman Joe Hernandez
- Senior Airman Sharl Lewis

482nd Maintenance Group Outstanding Performers

- Senior Master Sgt. Larry Webster
- Senior Master Sgt. Carlos Grigsby
- Master Sgt. Miles McQueeney
- Master Sgt. Jose Collazo
- Master Sgt. Juan Guerra
- Tech. Sgt. David Perez
- Tech. Sgt. Berthony St Amand
- Tech. Sgt. Joan Morgan
- Tech. Sgt. James Gitzen
- Tech. Sgt. Jorge Ortiz
- Tech. Sgt. Barbara Clayton
- Staff Sgt. Otto Alvarez
- Senior Airman Robert Mastrangelo
- Senior Airman Samantha Benitez
- Senior Airman Niomi Pezoa

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Development and Training Flight improving training with feedback from returning Airmen

by Senior Airman Jaimi Upthegrove
482nd Fighter Wing Public Affairs

Homestead Air Reserve Base's Development and Training Flight is in full swing, training would-be Airmen on Air Force standards and practices before heading off to basic training to give them a leg up on their Air Force career.

Recently, Homestead ARB's Development and Training Flight welcomed back to the base its first Airman to have gone through the program and return from basic and technical training.

Airman First Class Diego Zambrano, 70th Aerial Port Squadron air transportation apprentice, participated in the base's Development and Training Flight last year, and according to him, his experience with the Development and Training Flight was invaluable.

"It was a great learning experience and I would do it again in a heartbeat because it is definitely worth it," said Zambrano. "The Development and Training Flight prepared me for basic by providing something similar to a crash-course to get in the mindset of a trainee, thus preparing me for the shock and awe of the first week in training."

The Development and Training Flight prepared Zambrano both physically and mentally for the rigors of Basic Military Training and translated into his technical training as well.

Zambrano shared his experiences of basic training and technical school and stressed the importance for current members of the Development and Training Flight to listen and adhere to what they're taught during their training in order to succeed during their formal Air Force training. Because he experienced the Air Force's formal training recently, he can provide the most accurate, up-to-date information to prepare the members of the Development and training flight to navigate the murky waters of an ever-changing basic training environment.

"There are several benefits to participating in the Development and Training Flight," said Senior Airman Cynthia Pichardo, Development and Training Flight Administrator. "The training we provide gives the trainees a peace of mind in that they will be physically ready and they'll have an understanding of basic Air Force knowledge and practices before shipping off to basic."



Chief Master Sgt. Cameron Kirksey (left), 482nd Fighter Wing command chief master sergeant, Senior Airman Cynthia Pichardo, Development and Training Flight program administrator, welcome Airman 1st Class Diego Zambrano, 70th Aerial Port Squadron, back to Homestead Air Reserve Base, Fla., after his completion of basic training and technical school Dec. 7, 2012. (U.S. Air Force photo/Senior Airman Jaimi Upthegrove)

The Development and Training Flight program is growing and expanding, giving its members a place to train and prepare while they wait for their ship dates.

"The program has helped fill the gap, instead of waiting for months and losing the enthusiasm and momentum when they first enlist, members who attend the program on the UTA's get paid to train and learn," says Pichardo. "Homestead Air Reserve Base benefits by having motivated Airmen who have been prepped to succeed in basic training."

Program administrators are seeking wisdom from other bases who have implemented this program as well to make it as successful as possible. According to evaluations submitted by Airmen who have gone through the program and returned from training, it has been exceptionally affective at preparing them for the training environment.

"If the program remains intact at HARB, I expect it to continue to succeed," says Pichardo. "I've received positive feedback from both the trainees and from established members of the wing. Also, I encourage established members from our wing to get involved and help continue to make this program successful."

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ment organization, the National Park Service, wherein the reserve component can complete vital training in a cost-effective manner while the NPS accomplishes their mission of protecting, stabilizing and restoring Fort Jefferson.

"It's a win-win-win situation for all parties involved," said Lt. Col. Sean Carpenter, the officer in charge of the project. "Airmen get to perform their annual tour and receive valuable training on civil engineer core competencies in an austere environment from highly experienced, exceptionally competent retirees. The NPS benefits from the incredibly inexpensive labor force that executes the restoration and repair projects at a fraction of the cost they would pay to hire contractors."

According to Nancy Russell, museum curator for the South Florida Collections Management Center, a multi-park museum management program based out of Everglades National Park, the relationship the NPS has with the Air Force is not only mutually beneficial, but it's also beneficial to the American people.

"This is a really great use of resources between two different agencies that has a tangible, visible benefit to not only the preservation of our national heritage but to the visitors of the park who can see the results of this," she said. "The park has so many unfunded needs, and the 482nd represents a huge asset to the park service that we don't normally have. This is a great example of government working together and not being boxed in



Master Sgt. Michael Wilton (left) and Senior Airman Jessica Benitez, both of the 482nd Civil Engineer Squadron, stamp down the faux wood imprint on the concrete base for the restored cannons at Fort Jefferson in the Dry Tortugas National Park Jan. 17. (U.S. Air Force photo/Ross Tweten)

by each other's limitations."

The project has been an ongoing effort with the 482nd CES and the NPS for several decades. The first projects started in 1973. A wide range of maintenance projects and restoration work followed. Recently, the intermittent work on the bases for the cannons began in 2010.

Throughout the years, one face has been a regular fixture at the park. Retired Lt. Col. Jerry Cheeseman, former 482nd CES commander, has dedicated significant effort to maintaining the relationship between the 482nd CES and the NPS by spearheading projects like the cannon restoration.

"Mr. Cheeseman is an inspiration and standout example of the selfless dedication that I saw from all the retired reservists," said Carpenter. "He's the focal point of impetus behind this entire deployment.

Mr. Cheeseman coordinates with the 482nd

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Retired Chief Master Sgt. Walter Horlacher, formerly of the 482nd Civil Engineer Squadron, and Chief Master Sgt. David Hanck, 482nd CES, pour the concrete for the base of one of the restored cannons at Fort Jefferson in the Dry Tortugas National Park Jan. 16. (U.S. Air Force photo/Ross Tweten)

CES and NPS year-round on a variety of logistical and planning issues. In short, he is the conduit between the active reservists of the 482nd CES, the retirees, and the NPS.

"Mr. Cheeseman and the retirees have a long history of work at the park and they're leaving a great legacy," said Russell. "For us to be able to work together toward this goal, to accomplish something that has needed to be done for 100 years, is pretty amazing."

The ongoing projects between the 482nd CES and the NPS at Fort Jefferson just make sense, according to Cheesemen.

"The park service provides the materials and some of the tools and we provide the rest of the tools and the labor," he said. "This is an ideal setup for two government agencies to work together and save the taxpayers money."

The quiet dignity of the retirees rings loudly as one important factor of the project for them is that they participated in the project with zero monetary compensation.

"The retirees pay for their own food and travel and receive no compensation in return," said Carpenter. "They



Master Sgt. Jeff Lafreniere and Tech. Sgt. Fernanda Bergerson, both of the 482nd Civil Engineer Squadron, install a dock buffer at Fort Jefferson in the Dry Tortugas National Park Jan. 16. The installation of dock buffers was one of many tasks the crew absorbed during their stay in order to help the National Park Service with their maintenance backlog on Fort Jefferson. (U.S. Air Force courtesy photo)

volunteer their time and experience to teach the CE Airmen engineering core competencies and share the legacy of the squadron."

The benefits of the project are not only practical, which may shed light on why the project is such a labor of love for the members involved. The intrinsic benefits are numerous as this unique training opportunity provides Airmen with a different type of mission.

"I think one of the reasons why so many members of the 482nd are committed to the work that we do out here, even with the unpaid retirees, is because they can really feel the legacy of the squadron and the work they have done out here over the years," said Russell. "It's a really unique situation because our servicemembers contribute so much in what they do, but this is a very different type of contribution than what they normally are doing. They are contributing to both the preservation and the public understanding of our country."

While the retirees are working with the active reservists, the project provides a venue to foster camaraderie across

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An aerial view of a restored cannon on a reproduction carriage and concrete base in its original placement as it would have been positioned during the height of its use in the mid 19th century at Fort Jefferson in the Dry Tortugas National Park Jan. 17. (U.S. Air Force photo/Ross Tweten)

generations. Living under the same brick and mortar roof, the past and current members of the 482nd CES are participating in a very unique project or, as they put it, opportunity.

"Fort Jefferson is a very special place," said Master Sgt. Jeff Lafreniere, 482nd CES. "Being a part of the long history of the unit working here and enjoying the company of squadron members both past and present, that's really special. Mr. Cheeseman says there's nothing on this fort that the 482nd CES hasn't touched at one point. We're very fortunate to add to the legacy."

Esprit de corps seems to be the main theme among the active reservists and retirees working on the fort. Their unit cohesion and capacity to go above and beyond cannot be understated.

"This is a great group of people," said George Carbonell, a retiree of the 482nd CES. "The best part about coming out here is not only spending time with great Airmen in a beautiful place, but it's the work we get to do as well. We're given a task and we go out there and get the job done. Now I'm old enough to be a lot of these guys' father, and when we older guys get up in the morning, it takes us a little longer to get going, but the work and the people make it worth it."

The fort itself screams history. One can't help but think about the incredible challenge it's construction presented in the 19th century.

According to Russell, it's easy when looking at the fort to transport oneself back to the time it was operational, which is why the creating of the bases for the cannons was so important.

"As visitors approach by boat, those cannons are back to their original positions," she said. "So when you're approaching, you get a vivid sense of the vulnerability that a boat approaching this fort in the 1860s would have had - not with just one cannon aimed at you, but all of them."

Ultimately, the project, for the 482nd CES, is all about training.



Retired Lt. Col. Jerry Cheeseman, former 482nd CES commander, discusses the intricacies of the work being done by the active and retired reservists of the 482nd Civil Engineer Squadron on Fort Jefferson in the Dry Tortugas National Park to Col. Donald R. Lindberg, 482nd Fighter Wing Commander, Jan. 17. (U.S. Air Force photo/Ross Tweten)

"Our Airmen have had to overcome a myriad of logistical and material obstacles due to the remote location," said Chief Master Sgt. David Hanck, 482nd CES. "The retired CE personnel, who have superb knowledge in their crafts, work alongside the active member to help perfect the active member's skills. At the end of any Fort Jefferson trip, we always develop camaraderie, leadership, and a better trained Airman that can handle harsh conditions and overcome obstacles."

The 482nd CES team went to Fort Jefferson

with the intent of pouring four concrete slabs on which restored cannons could be placed to replicate the historical weapon's footprint. The work consisted of excavating the desired slab site, building forms in which to pour the concrete, building rebar cages to reinforce the concrete slabs, setting up a mobile concrete mixing plant consisting of two raised concrete mixers and a concrete pump - the concrete had to be mixed on site and pumped up three stories - pouring the concrete, stamping the concrete with a special faux wood imprint on top of the concrete to replicate the

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A restored cannon and the concrete base in the process of being completed at Fort Jefferson in the Dry Tortugas National Park Jan. 17. (U.S. Air Force photo/Ross Tweten)

wooden planks that were used on the slabs during the fort's original construction, then dismantling and cleaning each site.

While the 482nd CES's primary mandate was to build the bases for the restored cannons, they also absorbed a litany of tasks, putting their diverse skill set to good use for the NPS.

"This is an amazing group of individuals with a lot of skills, and the park has such a maintenance backlog," said Russell. "The 482nd CES has been so willing to step up and help however they can. There's never a question."

Basically, the NPS provides a list of critical repairs or projects they need to have completed. Each day, Airmen are tasked to work orders just like they would at a deployed location. They've tackled numerous demolition and restoration projects, fixed machinery, and took on scores of electrical, plumbing, and carpentry tasks.

"482nd CES is a worldwide deployable construction team; that's our mission in life," said Cheeseman. "Whether it's concrete pouring or rebar tying, carpentry, electrical, or plumbing, the important part is to keep the people trained in the various construction skills to be available to



Senior Airman Martravis Mallary (right) and Tech. Sgt. Jamia Webb, both of the 482nd Force Support Squadron, dish out fresh-caught fish during a meal at Fort Jefferson in the Dry Tortugas National Park Jan. 17. The two 482nd FSS Airmen accompanied the Air Force reservists both active and retired from Homestead Air Reserve Base's 482nd Civil Engineer Squadron at Fort Jefferson during their maintenance project for the National Park Service. (U.S. Air Force photo/Ross Tweten)

do this on a worldwide deployment."

Two Airmen of the 482nd Force Support Squadron also participated in the project, providing services such as three meals each day to the 22-man team and getting the experience of working in conditions that would be found at a typical bare base.

"Nowhere in my career have I seen a training environment like this that accomplishes so much for all the Airmen involved and gives back to one of our nation's most historic

parks," said Hanck.

Just as the national parks inspire national pride and love of country, so do the men and women of today's military. All the superlatives used to describe both converge in this undertaking at Fort Jefferson.

"There's definitely a deep connection between place, time and people with this project," said Russell. "Historically, in terms of the continuity of the military presence at Fort Jefferson, we've had the Army, Marines, Navy, and now 150 years later, the Air Force. We're truly grateful for their selfless acts."



An aerial view of Fort Jefferson in the Dry Tortugas National Park Jan. 17. (U.S. Air Force photo/Ross Tweten)

sic associations already in place at active duty bases, just in reverse. Detachment 2 is operationally controlled to various units within the 482nd Fighter Wing but reports directly to the 20th OG located at Shaw Air Force Base, S.C. Detachment 2, continues to grow rapidly and will ultimately consist of approximately 170 Airmen across 19 different operations and maintenance specialties.

As the mission of Detachment 2 progresses and Airmen continue to arrive, the Airmen of both Detachment 2 and the 482nd FW continue to strive to fulfill the TFI vision of the Chief of Staff of the Air Force.

"Since we've started receiving the bulk of our personnel, the mission has progressed by leaps and bounds," said Walker. "We are currently ahead of schedule on the number of personnel we have versus the number which we are supposed to be currently manned. This has led to Detachment 2 Airmen being able to integrate into every aspect of operations and maintenance."

TFI associations pair two units; a host and associate; representing two Air Force components, operating together. The host unit is assigned the physical resources for mission accomplishment, such as aircraft, equipment and facilities, and the associate unit shares those resources. Active associations pair a reserve component host and an active component associate to improve access to aircraft and total rotational capacity by assigning active component Airmen in reserve component units, allowing the highly experienced



Lt. Col. Scott Walker, 20th Operations Group Detachment 2 commander, addresses the crowd during a dedicated crew chief ceremony at Homestead Air Reserve Base, Jan. 14. The dedicated crew chief ceremony was especially poignant as it's the first assignment of an active duty crew chief to an F-16 at Homestead ARB since Hurricane Andrew. (U.S. Air Force photo/Senior Airman Jaimi Upthegrove)

reserve component to help develop and season maturing active component Airmen. There are currently 100 TFI associations, both active and classic, across a variety of weapons systems and functional areas and Air Force Major Commands. The CSAF has directed the Air Force to develop additional active associations at all air reserve and national guard component fighter locations to ensure that the Total Force is able to absorb

and season enough young pilots and maintainers to meet future Total Force requirements.

"All 482nd FW leadership and personnel have been extremely helpful and integral to the establishment of the detachment," said Walker. "If you were to walk out on the flightline or enter any of the maintenance shops, you would not be able to tell a reservist from an active duty Airman. This is a testament to how well the integration process has gone for us here at Homestead ARB."



Airmen of Homestead Air Reserve Base and Detachment 2, 20th Operations Group, gathered during a dedicated crew chief ceremony at Homestead Air Reserve Base, Jan. 14. (U.S. Air Force photo/Senior Airman Jaimi Upthegrove)

NSW operators assist Honduran military to establish elite maritime unit

by Navy Ensign Brian Bird and ITC Gino Rullo
Naval Warfare Unit-Four

With a rate of 86 people killed for every 100,000 inhabitants, Honduras is considered one of the most dangerous countries in the world according to statistics from the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) report in 2011.

With a murder rate four times higher than Mexico, these alarming numbers depict a nation where violence is part of everyday life. Many of these casualties are linked to narcotics trafficking, where Honduras and other Central American nations are used as a transit point from South America into Mexico and the U.S.; the preponderance of these illicit activities enter the region by maritime.

During a recent six-month deployment, members of Naval Special Warfare Task Element-Alpha (NSWTE-A), a deployed maneuver element attached to Naval Special Warfare Unit-FOUR (NSWU-4) in support of Special Operations Command South, partnered with their Honduran counterparts to train and increase the military capacity of the newly established Honduran Fuerza Especiales Naval or (FEN). The FEN is a maritime unit of Special Operators capable of combating transnational organized crime in and around their waterways.

NSWU4, stationed in Joint Expeditionary Base, Little Creek, Va., and in support of SOCSOUTH, headquartered at Homestead Air Reserve Base, Fla., designed and implemented a comprehensive training and maintenance plan to build the FEN into a strong counter-narcotic force.

Ten operators from SEAL Team 18, attached to NSWU-4, spent six months training and observing the FEN in a multi-disciplinary approach, resulting in 45 highly qualified Honduran Special Operators by the end of the two, eight-week Basic Underwater Demolition/SEAL (BUD/s) style training. These courses were modeled after the BUD/s selection training done by the U.S. Navy SEALs in Coronado, Calif.

Some of the conditioning assessments included an eight-mile log physical training event and a six-nautical mile ocean swim across the Bahia de Trujillo. After completing these physical and mental hardships to become a member of the FEN, the 45 qualified individuals continued through more rigorous and operationally-focused

skills training, which completed their transformation into a disciplined and dedicated team capable of providing the Honduran Fuerza Naval a capable maritime branch of special operations.

To compliment the efforts of the Navy SEALs, members from Naval Special Warfare Special Boat Team 22 also spent a month with counterparts from NSWTE-A training the FEN in basic watercraft maintenance skills and procedures, nautical chart familiarization, boat vectoring and intercepting techniques, small boat handling tactics, and long-range navigation exercises.

“The combination of SEALs and Special Boat Operators provided the FEN with arguably the best maritime training available within USSOF”, said the NSWTE-A officer in charge.

Outside of the physical and technical training that is associated with a special operator, NSWTE-A focused on creating a team of communication specialists within the FEN to become experts in Harris radio technologies, a skill set that is lacking in most Central American units due to the lack of expertise.

“In my whole military career, I can only remember three times when radios were used successfully on a mission,” said the FEN’s commanding officer. He added that the skills learned during this training should improve the success rate of radios during military movements.

NSWTE-A also focused its efforts on partner nation self-sustainment strategies when seven FEN members were selected as future instructors, shadowing NSW counterparts during all training evolutions. This mentorship provided each Honduran instructor with the competence and confidence to conduct future selection courses and internal sustainment training unilaterally.

Organizational departments were also created to include assault, boats, communications, engineering and training with a senior officer and enlisted advisor assigned to each department.

“The unique task organization, presentation of functional skill sets, and development of unit pride and esprit de corps has effectively paved the way for continued Honduran led training and operations in the future in order to keep their borders secure against transnational organized crime and illicit trafficking,” said the NSWTE-A officer in charge.

Homestead ARB photo caption contest

- The individual with the "best" caption will have their caption and name printed in the next edition of The South Florida Warrior.

- Simply send your captions to 482fw.pa@us.af.mil. Please ensure your name is included in the submission.



Flex your funny bone and submit a humorous or absurd caption to this photo.

Participants can also submit caption entries on **Facebook** to 'Homestead Air Reserve Base' or **Twitter** to @Homestead_ARB



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