

Squadron 2 receives weather briefing via video conference



Photo by Andrea Hohenforst

Members of the E-3A Component Squadron 2 listen to a meteorological briefing via a video teleconference before a mission April 2 at NATO Air Base Geilenkirchen.

From E-3A Component Public Affairs

Members of Squadron 2 and the Meteorology Branch conducted the first official mission weather briefing via a video teleconference (VTC) system April 2 - adding another fully operational capability to the E-3A Component's arsenal.

"We have been working to set up the video briefing system for the last few years," said Rob De Wolff, Meteorology Branch chief. "It's been

tested and today we are ready to go fully operational for all squadrons."

The whole flight crew received two briefings, meteorological and aeronautical information services, on a projection screen in the squadron building via a live feed from the control tower before heading to their aircraft for take-off. The Component deputy commander (DCOM) explained that in the past only part of the crew received the information before a mission.

"There just wasn't room for the whole crew to fit inside the weather station," said Col. Ton van Happen, DCOM. "Half the crew would get the briefing and the other half would head to the aircraft. By implementing the VTC briefing system, it makes the pre-launch sequence smoother and helps maintain crew integrity."

The need for this new system became apparent during the winter of 2008. "With the bad weather, crews had about a 15 minute take-

off window, but they were getting backed up at the weather station," van Happen said. "There wasn't even room for all the buses to park while the crews waited for the briefing."

The initial thought was to build a bigger parking lot for more buses, but that didn't seem like it was the best solution.

"Why move people, when it is easier to move the data," DCOM said. "It's all about working smarter, not harder."

Crew recognized for SAR mission

By Maureen Geraets-Head

Members of Squadron 2 recently flew a Search and Rescue mission to assist Norwegian and Swedish rescue teams.

The crew was recognized for their extraordinary performance on March 30. Col. Ton van Happen, E-3A Component deputy commander, visited the squadron to hand out certificates.

"Your performance showed flexibility, quality and quickness. This was an excellent way to show

what the Alliance can do," he said.

The crew was deployed to Forward Operating Base Oerland, Norway, to participate in Exercise Cold Response when a Norwegian C-130J crashed on the Swedish side of the border. The NATO AWACS directed all search and rescue traffic.

"The extra ordinary performance was not only displayed by the crew, but also our colleagues at Force Command, FOL Oerland, the Commande Post and our liaisons at the Norwegian Joint Air Operation Center," van Happen added.



Photo by Andrea Hohenforst

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Courtesy photo
Children play with Spongebob Squarepants at the 2011 International Children's Festival.

International Children Festival

By Maj. Huseyin Guler

The annually celebrated International Children Festival (ICF) will take place May 5 from 1 to 6 p.m. on Geilenkirchen NATO Air Base.

The E-3A Component will be transformed to create an amazing experience especially for children with free activities including Turkish Folk Dance, Portuguese Folk Dance, Zumba show, E-3A static display, hockey games, NATO train ride, face painting, martial arts show, clowns, magicians, pony ride, inflatable toys, and more.

The celebrations will kick off the Component Mass Briefing Facility with opening remarks followed by the announcement of the winners of the drawing contest and a ballet performance by International Youth Activities (IYA).

This year's theme for the drawing contest is "A joyful day in a joyful place". The contest is broken into three age categories. Ages 4 to 6, ages 7 to 9 and ages 10 to 12. The top three performers of each age group will be awarded with a gift voucher. All drawing materials are welcome. Please limit drawings to a maximum size of A3.

The drawings can be submitted to National Support Unit Turkey in Building 83 or sent to NAEW&CF E-3A Component, NSTU, Stop 8, 52511 Geilenkirchen.

Please write the artist's name, address, phone number and date of birth on the back of the drawing. The drawings should be turned in no later than April 23.

Come and have a joyful day with your family.



Flying Club shows models

From the Skywatch Archives

Editor's Note: This story was featured in Skywatch Volume 2, Number 8. This story is re-printed, in its entirety, how it was published on April 18, 1986.

Ever wonder why so many adults like to play with model airplanes? Model flying is a popular sport, and you can have an introduction to it when the International Aero Club's Model Flying Section holds a display of their aircraft models at the Frisbee Club April 25 to 27.

Club members will display their handiwork, including radio-controlled aircraft, boats, cars and a collection of plastic models.

Model helicopter demonstrations will also take place. The models include true-to-scale airplanes with wing spans up to 12 feet.

One of the benefits of the sport is you don't need perfect weather to play; our members have been building all winter, and this show is to show off our work to you!



Preparations for take off of a Mirage.

Lotteries will be held during the day, with prizes like rides in a "real" motor plane, motor glider and glider being given away to the lucky winners.

Children who are interested in aircraft are especially likely to enjoy this as a new hobby. Introduce them to us, and we'll be happy to show them around.

The last three Musketeers



Photo by Andrea Hohenforst

By Senior Master Sgt. of the Reserve Michael Seidel

They first met at the Air Force Language Academy at Appen, Uetersen, which is now the German Air Force Non-Commissioned Officers (NCO) Academy. Senior Master Sgts. Gerhard Nicht, Peter Mehlkop and Michael Seidel sat together in class and graduated in July 1982.

Between July and the beginning of October 1982, this bunch of junior

NCOs from the German Air Force arrived at Geilenkirchen NATO Air Base.

They were assigned to different tasks aboard the NATO E-3A aircraft and awaited the training, which was ahead of them. Gerhard and Michael were trained as surveillance operators and Peter as a communications technician in the AWACS.

Michael left in 1987 after 8 years of service, but Gerhard and Peter stayed on to become professionals. Gerhard went to a radar site in the southern part of Germany in the meantime and Peter changed to an important

assignment in the Airfield Services Squadron on base. Gerhard returned to spend his final time before retiring with Squadron 2, Michael is presently with the German Air Force Command at Cologne-Wahn as a reservist and Peter will retire next year. End of March, we sent a 'Musketeer' into retirement, one he very well deserves.

As his former classmates and comrades, who spent quite a long time together in service, we will always remember the good times and the fun we had.

All the best to you and take care, Gerd.



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Commander
Brig. Gen. Burkhard Pototzky
Chief, Public Affairs
Lt. Col. Antje Kalka
Editor
Staff Sgt. R. Michael Longoria

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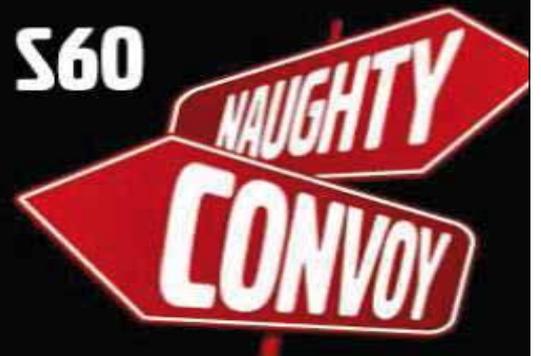
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Discover Mercator and more in Duisburg

By Lt. Col. Antje Kalka

After we published the feature about Mercator's 500th anniversary in the March 16 Skywatch edition, the Public Affairs Office received many requests where to see original maps and where to learn more about the famous cartographer.

Here some proposals for a weekend trip in spring.

The city of Duisburg, 95 kilometers north-east of Geilenkirchen, is celebrating Mercator's 500th anniversary. The famous Duisburg Cultural and Municipal Museum (Kultur- und Stadthistorisches Museum Duisburg) contains one of the largest cartographical collections of Gerardus Mercator's works.

The museum's 'Mercator Treasury' exhibits astronomical instruments designed by Mercator, a large number of famous maps and a pair of precious globes, the Globe of the Earth (1541) and the Globe of the Heavens (1551).

The museum is located at the address below:

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www.stadtmuseum-duisburg.de
(only German)
www.duisburg.de (also English)

The museum is open Tuesdays, Wednesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.; Fridays from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.; and Sundays from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. It is closed on Mondays and has special hours on public holidays. For guided tours, call +49-203-283-2656 or e-mail ksm@stadt-duisburg.de.

Gerhardus Mercator was buried in the Salvatorkirche (Church of our Saviour) in Duisburg (Burgplatz). This late Gothic church was built on the foundations of a Roman basilica. Inside you'll find the memorial slabs of Mercator. The Mercator memorial in front of the town hall also recalls Duisburg's world-famous citizen.

The city of Duisburg offers many other leisure activities to its visitors.

Duisburg Zoo is a mecca for almost one million visitors per year. Highlights are the Equatorium (one of the most richly endowed primate houses in the world), the Dolphinarium and the Chinese Garden. The zoo is also famous for its koala bears.

Duisport – Europe's largest inland port. Round trips (1 to 2 hrs) take place from April to October.

Landschaftspark Duisburg-Nord – The 180 hectare landscape park unifies industrial culture and nature. You'll find a former metallurgical plant, nowadays used for cultural events. The old gas holder (gasometer) is now a diving centre. Where in the past ore was stored, an alpine crag was built. And much more. Near the entrance at Emscherstraße a visitors' centre informs about the park, its history and its leisure opportunities.

For information, in English, about the City of Duisburg, log on to www.duisburg.de. The brochure 'Duisburg ... discovered a new' can be downloaded (in English and other languages) at www.duisburgnonstop.de. Additional information about the zoo (only in German) can be found at www.zoo-duisburg.de.

To find more information (only in German) about the Landschaftspark, visit <http://www.landschaftspark.de>.

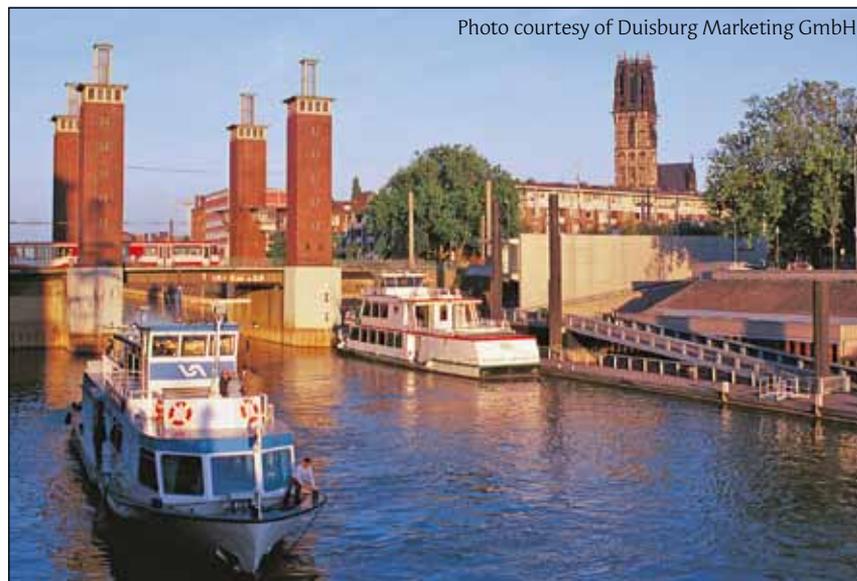


Photo courtesy of Duisburg Marketing GmbH



Photo courtesy of Zoo Duisburg, www.zoofoto.de



Photo by Thomas Berns

UPDATE: A New Building on Component's Soil

Story and photo by Robert Buerger

In February 2012, the first physical step for digging the building pit for the new Building 320 was completed.

Part of the parking lot for IT Wing was temporarily closed when people from the Bundeswehrdienstleistungszentrum (BwDLZ) showed up there and started to cut down all the trees and bushes.

Some people may have asked themselves, "Why are they doing that at this time of the year". There is a simple answer to that. In accordance with German legislation, bushes and trees have to be cut before the bird breeding season starts.

It was freezing cold (at the beginning below -10 degrees Celsius) and the workers worked hard not to get cold blisters on their skin. They cut

down the big chestnut trees that had stood there quite for some years. Once you see the stump of some of these trees, you will find that some of them were sick and became rotten inside.

The next step will be the closure of the parking lot for people working in Building 216. This is most likely to take place in August 2012. Before the construction work can begin, the tarmac will be removed and an

EOD team will come to search for old Second World War ammunition that may be underground. We know from the history of the airfield and the surrounding area that this area was heavily mined and bombarded with shells. In order to prevent a big blast during construction, the team will ensure the safety of the people working in Buildings 244 and 216 by searching for this still dangerous ammunition.



Local teens intern at Component Sports Department

Two teenagers from the local area recently finished an internship with the E-3A Component Sports Department. Upon completion, Alexandra Paulos and Patricia Schmitz submitted a short essay to the Skywatch editor about their experience at Geilenkirchen NATO Air Base. Their article is published below:

Hello lovely readers. My name is Alexandra and I'm 16 years old. My friend Patricia, also 16, and I are from the Gemeinschaftshauptschule in Gangel.

We want to tell you about our internship with the Sports Department. How did this experience start? Well, my mom, Ruth Paulus, and my dad, Hans-Gunter Paulus, came up with the idea for us to intern here. At the beginning, we were here only on Wednesdays but on Feb. 13 that changed and for the next three weeks we'd work full-time. The entire internship was really super. Everyone we worked with was really nice too.

Our duties included regular office work such as answering the telephone and signing out sports equipment to the customers plus much, much more. We were also allowed to workout which we enjoyed. We participated in several fitness classes such as total body fitness with Bert Hendricks and back fitness with Fritz Stelten.

We also had opportunities outside of the Sports Department. One afternoon, we went to the International Youth Activity Center and helped look after the children. On another day, we went on a base tour and met Janina Bien from the Public Affairs Office. The tour began with a presentation about the NATO Air Base at the Sentry Club. After that, we rode a bus to the flight line to see a plane.

When the tour was over, Janina asked us to share our thoughts about our internship and the tour for the base paper. So, we wrote this article and we hope you enjoyed it as much as we enjoyed our time here.

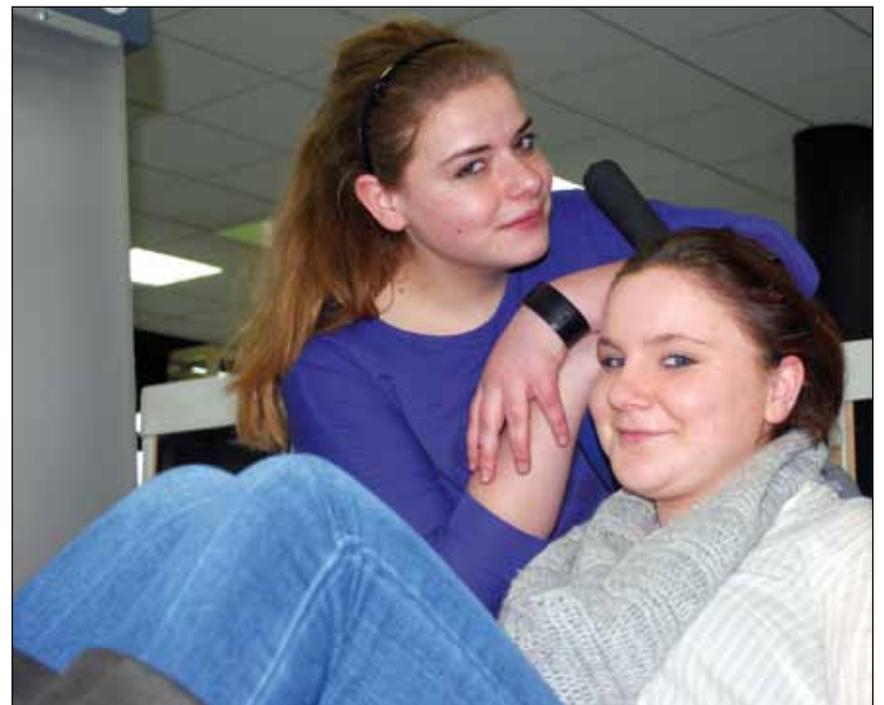


Photo by Staff Sgt. R. Michael Longoria
Alexandra Paulos, left, and Patricia Schmitz pose for a photo at the E-3A Component Sports Department's New Gym.

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By Master Sgt. Christopher Brown,
Safety Division

Ride your bicycle, be safe

Riding a bicycle in Europe has many benefits. For starters, it can be a wonderful way to observe and interact with the beauty of the surrounding countryside which is normally missed when traveling by car.

It is also a great alternative when it comes to exercising and can be more enjoyable than running around in circles on a track. Finally, riding a bicycle is a great way to save money on today's fuel cost and can help protect the environment.

In order to fully enjoy bicycle riding, you need to take certain safety precautions to reduce the likelihood of being involved in an accident. The most obvious of these precautions is to be visible to the cars and trucks that are on the roads.

You are required by law to have a front and back light when riding during the hours of darkness or reduced visibility. I promise you, if you don't have these lights on your bicycle, one of these days your luck is going to run out.



In Germany and the Netherlands, the following minimum technical requirements are in place for bicycles used in road traffic:

- Two independent brakes
- Bell
- Non-slip pedals with two yellow reflectors on each
- Independent 3W generator for white front light and red

backlight (battery-powered lights are allowed only as additional equipment; blinking lights are not allowed) (Germany only)

- Two spoke reflectors on each wheel (or retro reflective white line on both tires)
- Front reflector (white)
- Two rear reflectors (red)
- Impeccable tires

Note: Racing bikes up to 11kg do not require permanently mounted lights and can be equipped with detachable, battery-powered lights.

To make bike riding a little safer, most towns and cities throughout Europe have designated bike lanes. These lanes are usually adjacent to the sidewalk or along the street.

Exercise caution when riding on these bike lanes as pedestrians will often unwittingly step into the bike lane.

In order to help prevent you running into someone, the law requires you to have a working bell attached to your bike.

The last thing I want to mention is that there isn't a requirement to wear a bicycle helmet, so wearing one is left to your discretion.

However, the Insurance Institute for Highway Safety (US) states that wearing a bicycle helmet reduces the chance of head injury by 85 percent. Who would have thought protecting your head with a helmet would reduce injuries? Go figure.

Bon voyage: New requirement for driving in France

From E-3A Component Public Affairs

Motorists travelling to France after May will be legally required to carry a breathalyzer kit in the car. The measure, which will come into force July 1, will apply to anyone driving through France.

Anyone driving in France is already required to carry a warning triangle and a fluorescent safety vest to use in an emergency. Now the French say also holidaymakers/tourists have to carry a breathalyzer kit in their car.

The gadgets, designed so that drivers can test themselves to ensure they are under drink-drive limits, are the latest addition to a list of rules for driving on French roads.

Motorists found with between 50mg and 80mg of alcohol in 100ml of blood can be fined €135. Above that, a driver risks a fine of €4,500, losing their license and being sent to prison for up to two years.

Motorists are being urged to carry at least two of the single-use breathalyzers, so if they have checked

themselves with one they can still show police they have a ready-to-use kit if stopped. Police, however, will use their own breathalyzers to carry out any roadside test.

Those drivers caught without a kit will face a fine of €11, but the French have said there will be a period of grace till November 2012 before police start issuing the penalties.

The breathalyzer kits cost between €2 and €5 and will be available at any French fuel station, ferry and tunnel terminals for crossings to France. Police are expected to carry out random checks on drivers crossing into France via Calais and other border crossings to ensure that they understand the latest drink-driving rules.

But even if drivers have the full list of equipment they can still be caught out by the complexity of the rules.

If a motorist carries the luminous vest in their boot/trunk rather than the main section of the car, they can still be fined. Drivers are not obliged to carry a spare set of lights, but if one of their bulbs goes and they do

not have a replacement ready, they can be fined. A fire extinguisher and first aid kit could also be required in

the case of an emergency so not to fall foul of a law about assisting in the event of an accident.



Courtesy photo
An example of a portable breathalyzer kit.

New Brazilian Jiu Jitsu (BJJ) Classes

Rings of Glory, a fighting foundation, is looking for Component personnel interested in learning BJJ, the art of ground fighting.

New classes in English will be offered on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 6.30 to 8 p.m. at Haefland 8i, 6441 PA Brunssum. Classes are open to beginners and advanced students and will be offered by Prof. Jordy Peute, the only BJJ blackbelt in the triborder region.

Jordy has successfully competed on national and international levels and is a two-time European Champion in BJJ. For more information please have a look on the website: www.Rings-of-Glory.com

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BMW 1 SERIES - SAVE UP TO \$9,130!!



The BMW 1 Series Special Sale! AT PENTAGON CAR SALES!

We're offering selected 2012 stock and demo BMW 1 Series models at lower-than-ever prices! To take advantage and pick up a real bargain, drop by a PCS showroom near you...**TODAY**

	Year	Model	Type	Color	USMSRP	Military Sales Price	Super Saver Price	Total Super Savings
1	2012	128i Coupe	Stock	Titan Silver	\$ 38.655	\$ 34.620	\$ 32.120	\$ 6.535
2	2012	128i Coupe	Demo (< 50 mi)	Le Mans Blue	\$ 44.125	\$ 40.090	\$ 36.995	\$ 7.130
3	2012	128i Coupe	Stock	Crimson Red	\$ 42.025	\$ 37.890	\$ 35.890	\$ 6.135
4	2012	128i Coupe	Demo (< 50 mi)	Alpine White	\$ 44.050	\$ 40.015	\$ 36.500	\$ 7.550
5	2012	135i Coupe	Demo (< 50 mi)	Sapphire Black	\$ 47.000	\$ 41.865	\$ 40.205	\$ 6.795
6	2012	128i Cabriolet	Stock	Alpine White	\$ 39.715	\$ 34.830	\$ 32.830	\$ 6.885
7	2012	135i Coupe	Demo (< 50 mi)	Montego Blue	\$ 48.850	\$ 43.615	\$ 41.885	\$ 6.965
8	2012	128i Cabriolet	Demo (< 50 mi)	Alpine White	\$ 46.125	\$ 41.340	\$ 36.995	\$ 9.130
9	2012	128i Coupe	Stock	Crimson Red	\$ 42.750	\$ 38.615	\$ 36.615	\$ 6.135
10	2012	128i Coupe	Demo (< 50 mi)	Cashmere Silver	\$ 42.725	\$ 38.690	\$ 34.995	\$ 7.730

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- Free US Home Shipping
- US Specifications
- Immediate Delivery
- Trade-In Program available
- Extended Euro Warranty (option)
- Factory Warranty
- Financing assistance
- Tax-Free

PENTAGON CAR SALES

Germany

Ramstein
Kindsbacher Str. 47
66877 Ramstein-Miesenbach
Tel: 06371 61 39 90

Kaiserslautern
Kaiserstrasse 1
67661 Kaiserslautern
Tel: 0631 351 90 40

Heidelberg
Hebelstrasse 3
69115 Heidelberg
Tel: 06221 144 90

Wiesbaden
Ludwig-Wolker-Str. 14
55252 Mainz-Kastel
Tel: 06134 567 80

Spangdahlem
Im Kreuzgarten 1 A
54529 Spangdahlem
Tel: 06565 93 69 90

Italy

Aviano
Via Pordenone 48D
33081 Aviano (PN)
Tel: 0434 676 61-2/3/4

Naples
Tel: 0434 676 61-2/3/4
Email: Naples@pentagoncarsales.com

Sigonella
Tel: 0434 676 61-2/3/4
Email: Sig@pentagoncarsales.com

Vicenza
Viale Della Pace 254
36100 Vicenza (VI)
Tel: 0444 91 09 38

Spain

Rota
Plaza Del Triunfo 6
11520 Rota (Cadiz)
Tel: 956 840 201

THE ONLY OFFICIAL BMW MILITARY SALES AGENCY AUTHORIZED TO SERVE YOU IN THESE AREAS.