



Hikmet Bastug took this "first place" photo with his iPhone.

Picture perfect...

By Staff Sgt. R. Michael Longoria

The E-3A Component Public Affairs Office held a photo contest over the summer to find the best picture from the 30 Years Jubilee. Component members and their dependents submitted 30 images to the contest.

"Judging the contest was rather difficult," said Col. Ton van Happen, Component deputy commander. "A lot of great pictures were sent in and all the judges had their own favorites. It was only after a heated debate that they were able to reach a consensus on the top three."

A panel of judges, which included the Skywatch editor and three personnel from the base's multi-media section, selected the winners and the top three photos and a "fan's choice" were announced via the Component's Facebook page on Aug. 14.

Hikmet Bastug's image, "SoloTurk," received the top honors; Dennis Owen's picture, "Lighting up the Sky," came in second; Andreas Fucke's submission, "History and Present," rounded out the top three; and Chris Braun's photograph, "Feuerwerk," received 142 "likes" on Facebook, making it the Fan's Choice.



Photo by Hay Janssen

Colonel Van Happen presented each of them with a printed and framed copy of their picture as well as a certificate of recognition on Aug. 22.

As a bonus, Hikmet Bastug will have his photo highlighted in the Component's 30 Years of History book slated to be published later this year.

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Sports Department hosts soccer camp for kids



Story and photos by
Staff Sgt. R. Michael Longoria

The E-3A Component Sports Department, in cooperation with Germania Teveren, hosted a bilingual soccer camp for children, ages 7 through 15, from Aug. 6 to Aug. 10 at the soccer stadium on NATO Air Base Geilenkirchen.

"We've been hosting the camp since 2008," said Stephanie Chalmers, Sports Department Youth Coordinator. "It started out as an Integration Program with Germania Teveren and has been a success every year so far."

This year, 45 children, 11 girls and 34 boys, participated in the

Component's summer soccer camp. "Demand is big and it shows," Chalmers said. "With the most participation, youth soccer is easily the main sport on base."

The camp consisted of high quality practices to improve footwork and coordination as well as technical, tactical and physical development. The children spent each day working on their dribbling, passing, trapping skills and team play.

At the end of camp, everyone received a t-shirt, certificate and a surprise gift in addition to improved skills and new friendships.

"The camp gives the kids a chance to focus on their skills for an entire

week and meet German kids," Chalmers explained. "Plus, it gets them out of the house during their summer break."

For the children, the highlight of the week was the Parent-verse-Child Game and Festival on Aug. 10.

"On the last day of camp, the parents come out and play soccer with their kids," Chalmers said. "This is the time when all the children show their parents what they have learned during the week."

The next soccer camps are planned from April and August of 2013.

For more information, call Stephanie at +49 (0)2451-63-4946.



Photo by Andrea Hohenforst

Car wash raises more than 1,000 euro for cancer research

The 2012 Canadian Contingent Terry Fox Committee recently held a car wash on NATO Air Base Geilenkirchen to help raise money for cancer research. With the help of 25 volunteers, the committee was able to wash 65 cars and collect 1,010 euro in seven hours.

The highlight of the Terry Fox Campaign is the Terry Fox Run, which will take place Sept. 13 during the Component Fitness Week. Additional fundraisers for the campaign this year include a Pancake Breakfast at Terry Fox Halle in Niederheid on Sept. 7 and the Geilenkirchen Realschule 4th Annual Run on Sept. 21.

For more information on the events, please contact the Chairperson, Sgt. Randy Dowden at ext. 3664 (or +49 (0) 1773 474137 – Cell) or Vice-Chair, Sgt. Richard Lachance at +49 (0) 2451 717 136.



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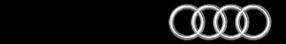
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Newcomers briefing educates incoming personnel

Photo Andrea Hohenforst

On the morning of Aug. 16, newcomers who arrived to the E-3A Component in June, July and August attended a very special briefing. Sixty newly assigned personnel attended an informative briefing to familiarize them with NATO Air Base Geilenkirchen. The Component Commander, Brig. Gen. Andrew Mueller, who also is a newcomer, gave a short introduction that was followed by background information on the Component MWA system, the base program for flight, ground and environmental safety and ACCI. These compose the three main pillars for personnel at the base namely, wellbeing, safety and security. The next newcomers briefing is scheduled Nov. 29.

Sailing to the Seas to Flying the Skies: Navy officer interns at the Component

Text by Katharina Golz

"What brings a navy lieutenant to the E-3A Component?" This was the question, I was asked quite a lot during my three-week internship at NATO Air Base Geilenkirchen.

Long story short, I wanted to know how air force personnel helped the navy complete its mission.



Nine years ago, I joined the navy and earned my master's degree in Aeronautics and Space engineering. I became a navigator and first lieutenant in FGS BRAUNSCHWEIG, the first ship of the new German Corvette Class. During this assignment, I was deployed to FGS BAYERN as an assistant navigator and on the FGS SACHSEN as an assistant operations officer.

The next stop on my career path was the Principle Warfare Officer Course at the Naval Operations School in Bremerhaven, where I spent 10 months learning how to act as anti-air warfare, anti-submarine warfare or an anti-surface warfare commander. Until then, I had little to no contact to the E-3A Component. During the training, we learned about the use and support of specific air assets as well as the operational variety of the AWACS to ensure the best use of this essential asset during our final exercise.

I only knew what services the E-3As provided to the navy, but I didn't know the working processes behind it. My interest peaked and I wanted to understand the specific work and procedures of the E-3A Component, which led to my internship here.

I've had the opportunity to see the base, the E-3A, the flight simulator and the Flight Control Tower during my cross training in the Operations Wing and Squadron 2.

Furthermore, I had the great chance to participate in the mission planning process and simulated flights, which gave me a deeper insight to the whole planning sequence.

I accompanied the different working steps, from preparation to execution, that are necessary for maritime scenarios. As a naval officer, it has been very interesting

to observe a maritime scenario from the air force perspective.

This short visit gave me an outstanding overview of which information is needed from the maritime task force to execute a successful operational task.

I was also able to see into the differences between navy and air force while conducting joint missions.

The highlight of the internship was definitely the flight to Preveza, Greece, where I had the chance to fly with the crew on a mission flight with Greek F-16s and another one with Romanian MIG 21s.

It has been a great experience to be involved in a "live" mission and the planning process. After an eye-opening 21 days, I can head back to the sea with a better knowledge of the sky.

NATO vessel Rotterdam frees hijacked dhow

From www.nato.int

On Aug. 13, the armed boarding team of the Dutch naval vessel HNLMS Rotterdam freed a pirated vessel in the Gulf of Aden and detained six suspected pirates.

The successful action was the result of a jointly-conducted operation of ships and patrol aircraft from NATO and the European Union. HNLMS Rotterdam is the flagship of Operation Ocean Shield, NATO's counter-piracy operation.

The initial search for the suspected pirate vessel started Aug. 8 when local Puntland port authorities reported a possible hijacking of a dhow. The dhow was detected two days later by the European Union

naval vessel Lafayette. After boarding the vessel it was determined that the suspected pirates had transferred to another vessel, the Bourhan Nour, which was subsequently located by another EU Naval Force unit, the German frigate Sachsen.

Naval intelligence suggested that the pirated dhow was heading for eastern Somalia to link up with other pirates. NATO and EU forces then decided to set a trap and remove this threat to international merchant shipping.

"There was not really anywhere for them to go", explains Captain Huub Hulsker, Commanding Officer of the HNLMS Rotterdam. "The situation was clear and some strict orders and two warning shots later, the suspected

pirates surrendered. The boarding team was on board and in control of the vessel within the next 20 minutes, separating the pirates from a grateful dhow crew. A grateful dhow crew, an impressive first action of my whole team early in my deployment and six suspected pirates detained on board, awaiting further decisions - this is a result that counts."

NATO's Operation Ocean Shield cooperates closely with other naval forces including US-led maritime forces, EU naval forces and national actors operating against the threat of piracy in the region, which has helped to reduce the rate of piracy by more than half compared to last year, according to the International Maritime Bureau.



NATO naval vessels approach a pirated dhow in the Gulf of Aden on Aug. 13.

Component participates in Red Flag Alaska

The second Red Flag Alaska of 2012 (RFA 12-2) was held from June 7 to June 22 with exercise flying taking place from two bases: Eielson Air Force Base and Joint Base Elmendorf Richardson (JBER).

The aim of the exercise is to form a joint or coalition force and employ that force in such a way that every participating (weapon) platform is challenged to demonstrate its operational capabilities.

This results in flying huge scenarios in which transport aircraft being tasked to perform and execute tactical airdrops and "real" Combat Search and Rescue (CSAR) missions. At the same time, a large scale air war is taking place. The Weasels are defeating Surface to Air Missiles (SAM), Anti Aircraft Artillery (AAA) and Manpads; the Sweep is taking on fights with the Aggressors from the 18th Aggressor Squadron, all before the "package" (or Strike) can press on and drop their bombs on predetermined targets.

RFA 12-2 was the second largest RFA ever held. The exercise had more than 2,500 participants, operating far over 100 aircraft. Eielson AFB hosted most of the fighter aircraft, including F-16's and A-10's from several USAF/PACAF units. The Germans brought their Eurofighters to Eielson; the Japanese brought their F-15J's; and for the first time, the Polish participated in RFA with their F-16.

The larger aircraft operated from JBER including NATO, USAF, JASDF and Australian Air Force AWACS. Other aircraft were tankers and transports in the form of C-130's and C-17's. Another first was the participation of the F-22A Raptors of the JBER based 525FS, strengthening the Blue Coalition.

For the NAEW&CF, Squadron 3 flew an E-3A to JBER on June 4 after making a short fuel stop in Goose Bay, Canada. The rest of the team (maintenance and mission crew) was flown in by TNT on the Boeing 757 on June 6.

This was the first time TNT supported a deployment outside the FOB, FOL or DOB bringing some lessons learned. The first couple of days were spent on the ground, participating in briefings and performing mission planning.

The first mission was flown on June 8. This day most participants went up to do area-, and procedure familiarization and link connectivity tests. The exercise itself started three day later. During RFA 12-2, members from Squadron 3 joined up with both USAF and RAAF AWACS crews to fly missions as pairs.

This first week NATO AWACS flew paired with the Elmendorf based 962nd AACS E-3B, switching every day between the primary and backup (check-in) C2 platform role. The second week NATO AWACS shared

roles with the RAAF Squadron 2 E-7A Wedgetail. During the two weeks, NE-3A scored an 80% mission success rate, gaining a lot of valuable training for both flight deck and mission crews. On the June 25, the whole team, minus ADVON, made it back to GK either with the E-3A or TNT B757.

RFA is the modern version of the Cope Thunder exercise, which was first held at Clark Air Base, Philippines, in 1976. After the eruption of Mount Pinatubo on June 15, 1991, Clark AB was closed and the U.S. Air Force withdrew from the Philippines. The exercise Cope Thunder was moved to Eielson AFB in 1992, and was designated to Red Flag Alaska in 2006.

At that time, Eielson was home to the 353rd Combat Training Squadron (353CTS), which owned three large training areas in Alaska. The presence of a CTS and the immense airspace available (the Joint Pacific Range Complex and even a piece of western Canadian airspace) were key factors for moving the exercise to the cold north.

Back to the origin of the exercise; in the timeframe between the Vietnam War and the first Gulf War less than a fifth of all USAF combat pilots had seen actual combat. Analysis indicated that most pilots got shot down during their first eight to 10 combat sorties. Therefore, the aim of RFA is to give aircrews the experience of these first vital missions, and thus

increasing their chances of survival in combat environments.

Red Flag is all about the "Blue" coalition, the "Red" aggressors and the "White" controlling forces. On average, the Blue Coalition brings 1,500 people to Alaska, operating with about 100 aircraft. In addition to fighter aircraft, the coalition operates AWACS, Tankers, Transports and Helicopters. The scenarios flown are either offensive or defensive, meaning that every wave brings new challenges and requires new tactics to be employed.

Red Forces not only operates the aggressor F-16's of the 18th AS, they also operate a wide variety of SAM's, AAA and Manpads spread over the ranges. The Aggressor F-16's are normally being controlled by a ground station to their targets. Making use of EA-188 pods, they can simulate a wide variety of Sukhoi and Mig aircraft.

White Forces is the exercise control, which tracks every wave live and gives mission inputs were needed. Each fighter aircraft, red or blue is equipped with an ACMI-pod. The pod provides White Forces with live mission data as position, speed, weapons available and weapons shot. Combining the feed of all pods, White has a global 3D picture which enables them to give inputs during the wave. This 3D picture is being stored and used for the mass debrief post mission.





Squadron 2 leads deployment to RIMPAC

Rim of the Pacific – RIMPAC in short – is the name of the world's largest maritime exercise. It is held every two years in Hawaii, and it was this year at its 23rd edition. Its importance has been growing over time, as more and more countries increasingly look at the Pacific region as an area of strategic interest.

The E-3A Component participated for the first time in RIMPAC from July 3 to Aug. 3, with one E-3A aircraft and two aircrews (20 consecutive sorties were initially planned).

The 70 deployed personnel under the Squadron 2–led detachment joined another 25,000 RIMPAC

participants coming from 22 different countries.

Other Airborne Early Warning participating assets included one US Air Force E-3B from Kadena AFB, Japan, one Royal Australian Air Force E-7A "Wedgetail", and a few US Navy E-2s.

Thanks to outstanding support from Logistic Wing's Maintenance personnel, with 15 sorties accomplished out of the final 19 planned flying days, NATO AWACS was the Airborne Early Warning asset which flew and trained the most.

The exercise scenario was designed to start-off slowly in order to allow

participants to progressively "fit in the picture", but by the so-called "tactical phase", a full scale conflict between nations was simulated. This provided excellent and diverse training to the crews.

Overall the crews flew 21 sorties (15 of which were in Hawaii), controlled over 200 aircraft, performed 115 training events, and even certified one Instructor Fighter Allocator during RIMPAC – the numbers for the accomplished training speak for themselves.

Of course the exercise could not have taken place in a nicer location, as in their free time the detached

personnel, other than enjoying the glorious Hawaiian weather and some magnificent beaches, also had the opportunity to visit the many attractions of the island of Oahu, such as the Pearl Harbor historical site, the Dole pineapple plantation or the traditional hiking path to the Diamond Head volcano crater.

Squadron 2 didn't skip a beat – a large number of the Squadron's personnel who participated in RIMPAC had just returned from Afghanistan, and many of them are again employed in ISAF operations as this article gets published. A significant change in the landscape, one would say!



Pick up your tickets now

The German NCO Association (DUK) would like to invite all Component members, their families and friends to the 30th annual MOB Geilenkirchen Oktoberfest.

It will take place in Hangar 2 on September 22-23.

Doors will open at 6 p.m. on Saturday, September 22, for an evening of delicious food, special Festbier and live entertainment.

On Sunday, September 23, the doors will open at 10:30 a.m. with the traditional 'Frühschoppen' at 11 a.m.

As the Sunday event is a family day, there will be plenty of entertainment for the kids.

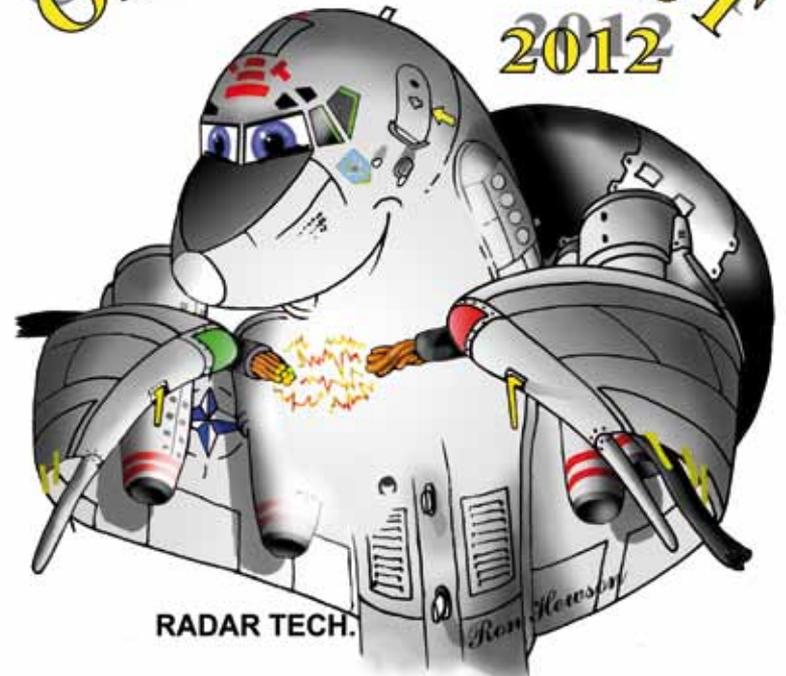
Tickets will be on sale at the German NCO Association (DUK) office, Building 46, ext. 3465, from August 20 until September 20, Monday-Friday from 10 a.m.-15 p.m. Each NATO ID holder is entitled to purchase a maximum of five tickets.

Please use Component Form 34.17 to register your external guests; this will simplify your purchase of tickets.

If you sponsor anyone who does not hold a NATO ID, you have to register their full name, date of birth, nationality and national passport number when purchasing the tickets.

If you need to change names on tickets after buying them, this change has to be registered at the DUK office, Building 46.

OKTOBERFEST 2012



Beate Benzkirch inspects an envelope Aug. 27 at the MWR Store before putting postage on it and sending it on its way to Vienna.

MWR Store offers more than you think

Have you every wondered what services the "MWR Store" offers? It might be more than you think.

Situated in Building 81, opposite the Commerzbank, the MWR Store is open Monday through Friday from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.

The MWR Store offers a variety of services which include the following:

A German Postal service including postage of parcels/letters, sale of postage stamps, telephone cards, express international

mail service and a limited "Postbanking" service.

A dry-cleaning service with general tailoring services.

A Newspaper/Magazine service including a variety of German greeting cards (i.e. Birthday, anniversary, get well, condolence, etc.)

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Gangelt gets Medieval

Does a colorful medieval market atmosphere with archery, hatchet throwing, battles, knight tournament and fire-breather sound like fun?

Of course it does, and that's why you should check out the historic Medieval Times spectacle in the town of Gangelt. The two-day event kicks off with a grand opening ceremony Sept. 8 at 2 p.m.

On the occasion of "Monument Day," Gangelt brings you back in history and shows you long forgotten times where knights have their games, juggler show their tricks, real raptors perform and specialties of the Middle Ages are offered.

Many knights and their companions in historical costumes will meet at the old city wall in front of Gangelt's gates to set up their camp to present Gangelt and its visitors this unique event on Sept. 8 and 9.

This year, the event has "a great program planned for the young and the old, no boredom is guaranteed."

Best of all, there is no entrance fee.

Various attractions like Battle of the Knights, a "children zoo" with donkeys, sheep and ponies, bird show, handicraft objects, traditional music, jugglers, archery and axe throwing are offered. Culinary masterpieces and "medieval drinks" will complete this tremendous opportunity to experience old historical way of living.

Also, Monika Tholen will offer two guided tours: the first is on Sept. 8 at 7 p.m. through medieval Gangelt and the second on Sept. 9 at 2 p.m. through Gangelt and the Church St. Nikolaus. Both tours will start at the Gangelt Town Hall and will be in historical costumes accompanied by the Knights.

The "Schildwaechter" from Uebach-Palenberg, Mrs. Tholen, Gangelt's famous City Guide, and the town of Gangelt are the main organizers.

More information and to see a special video about the event, visit www.Ritterfest-Gangelt.de.

Lifeguards stand ready to dive in and save lives

Story and photo by
Staff Sgt. R. Michael Longoria

We all go to the pool for various reasons, but it comes down to relaxing and having fun. Now while we are splashing around and diving into the water, there is a group of individuals keeping a watchful eye out for our safety. It's no secret and I'm sure you figured it out. I'm talking about lifeguards and the ones at NATO Air Base Geilenkirchen are no exception. A lifeguard is always on duty at the pool.

The lifeguards watch the waters to keep all the E-3A Component members and their families that visit the pool safe. To do so, all lifeguards must obtain swimming and first-aid qualifications from the Deutsche Lebens-Rettungs-Gesellschaft (DLRG).

DLRG, the German Lifeguard Association, is a relief organization for life saving in Germany. The most prominent goal of DLRG is the creation and promotion of all activities used to fight drowning.

Although, the lifeguards are ready to dive in at any given moment to provide further assistance, they haven't had to at all this year.

"We are here to look out for all the adults and all children that come to the pool," said Marion Suhr, lifeguard. "Luckily, we haven't had any emergencies here this year. Besides some minor first aid, our job has mainly been to make sure everyone follows the pool rules."

The base pool has 17 rules from no horseplay to no diving in the shallow



Marion Suhr, lifeguard, keeps looks over the water during lap swimming Aug. 23 at the E-3A Component Swimming Pool on NATO Air Base, Geilenkirchen.

end listed at the gate for people to read as they come in.

"The rules are in place to ensure every one stays safe and avoids injury," said Michael Langen, lifeguard. "We want everyone to be able to relax and enjoy the pool."

The lifeguards also offer swimming lessons, which range from basic swimming techniques to more advanced strokes, for adults and children.

For more information on lessons, call +49 (0)2433-458-0038.



Photo by Mary Leard

Summer finally arrives at GK

Summer made its bold arrival to NATO Air Base Geilenkirchen in the middle of August with temperatures near 40 degrees Celsius. The increased heat led to an increase in patronage at the base pool. The head of the E-3A Component's MWA Section, 1st Lt. Scott Davis, explained the normal average for a Sunday is about 100 people and would generate around 335 euro; however, the pool made 1,022.50 euro and had an estimated 450 visitors on Aug. 19.

Support the base community

By 1st Lt. Scott Davis

Without your support and suggestions, the Morale and Welfare Activities cannot exist.

"The Morale and Welfare Activities program is designed for you and your families. It is a self-sustaining program that relies on the solidarity of you, the members of this Component, to ensure its continued existence," said Brig. Gen. Andrew Mueller, E-3A Component commander. "You do this by

paying for MWA services through direct sales, membership fees, and other service charges, although some services are free. But I must emphasize, MWA is for you!"

The Component's Morale and Welfare Activities Branch offers a diverse range of activities, which hopefully meet the needs of all base personnel.

The MWA program supports the physical and mental wellbeing of participating individuals by providing athletic/sports & recreational activities,

food services, billeting, International Youth Activities (IYA), a library, MWR Store, VAT/Tax and Ration Issue Office, Thrift Shop and various officially recognized base clubs and societies. These programs exist due to the needs of the community which are represented by the MWA Council.

The MWA Council (MWAC) is composed of the Senior National Representatives (SNRs) or their designated representatives; the NATO Civilian Staff Association (CSA) and the LWR Works Council. This collection of individuals represents all nations and the civilian workforce of the Component.

Together with the Services Branch, they work together to determine which MWA services to offer to you at an affordable cost. The MWAC advises the Component Commander and supervises the MWA budget execution.

Additionally, they recommend approval, disapproval or dissolution of individual MWA activities. You are highly encouraged to forward any suggestions/concerns in regard to MWA activities to your respective national representative for further consideration by the MWAC. Any input received is taken seriously and evaluated by the MWAC.

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