



Blackjack Banner



From the Captain's Desk

SUMMER EDITION 2013

Greetings Blackjack family and friends! I hope everyone enjoyed the last days of summer as we move back to working with our kids on homework, longer commuting times and the onset of cooler weather.

The summer for the "Blackjacks was an eventful one as we maintained a sense of family and camaraderie while preparing for our 2014 deployment. We had the pleasure of welcoming back AC1 Anderson from Djibouti and AC2 Cunningham from Bahrain. We said goodbye to some really good Shipmates and welcomed aboard some new ones. We were also fortunate to see two of our current Sailors (OS1 Kennedy and GM1 Thierry) and one of our departed Sailors (IT1 Calkins) be selected to Chief Petty Officer, and I had the distinct pleasure of Meritoriously advancing YN3 Abreu to Second Class Petty Officer!

June brought about the command challenge where we competed in several athletic events for the Joint Expeditionary Base Little Creek Captain's Cup. Although challenged due to prior military commitments, the Blackjacks represented well, while our sister squadron went on to be the best on the base. I am proud of our sister squadron and the skills they exhibited during the competition. Well Done TACRON 22...we will see you on the field of competition next year!

In July we decided to get the families together and held our command picnic. All hands pitched in to make this a fun-filled event. There was much to do to keep people entertained with the highlight being water guns. I tried to stay dry, but even the CO falls victim to a water gun from time to time. It was great to see the families come together and hopefully we will continue to see more of this as a function of the Family Readiness Group in the future!

We took another opportunity to break bread with our sister squadron and test out their athletic ability. We overwhelmed TACRON 22 in kickball, but gave up two significant leads in ultimate Frisbee. That's ok; we plan to take it all the next time we get together.

It has not been all fun and games. There is definitely some work in progress. We sent several folks underway with USS BATAAN to conduct tests on the Theater Battle Management Core System (TBMCS), which allows us to integrate and schedule flights and missions



with the Combined Airspace Operations Center (CAOC). We also conducted multiple weapons qualifications; participated in two Marine Realistic Urban Training (RUT) exercises; and sent a team of Air Traffic Controllers to Pensacola Florida to complete certifications which marked the beginning of our basic phase in the Fleet Readiness Training Plan (FRTTP).

Today we received a grade of outstanding during an administrative inspection allowing us to transition to the integrated phase of the FRTTP.

Yes, deployment is just around the corner with workups beginning with the Amphibious Squadron (PHIBRON)/Marine Expeditionary Unit (MEU) Integration Training (PMINT) in the next two weeks. As previously reported, we have invested heavily in developing our relationships with PHIBRON, MEU and the Sailors on the BATAAN. This investment will pay huge dividends as we begin workups and move forward to deployment.

As I mentioned in the last newsletter, we began providing support to the Norfolk Tides baseball games by working concessions. We finished out the season strong with expected MWR earnings of over \$2400.

There are a couple of ways to get the newsletter, either by email or going to our website, <http://www.tacron21.navy.mil>, and selecting "newsletter." If you know of anyone that you would like to receive the newsletter, please send their email address to:

Deborah.Dennler@navy.mil or
Victoria.Laginness@navy.mil

I continue to be proud of all that we do!

Sincerely,
CDR Lloyd B. "Chilly" Mack

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Senior Enlisted Corner

Greetings Blackjacks, families, and friends! Another summer has come and gone since our last newsletter and there have been plenty of changes here at TACRON 21 with plenty of new faces here at building T-111 replacing those who have departed. The past three months we've been keeping busy with training and preparation for our upcoming workups and eventual deployment early next year. Along with training, plenty of studying has been going on for the September advancement exams. I have no doubt we'll be frocking quite a few sailors to the next paygrade in a few months.

Two of our First Class Petty Officers were selected to Chief Petty Officers, OSC Eboni Kennedy and GMC Vante Thierry. Congratulations to both of them.

Also, congratulations also to YN2 Abreu for his Meritorious advancement to Second Class by CDR Mack through the Command Advancement Program.



OSC (SW/AW) David McElroy

OMBUDSMAN

TACRON 21 is looking for a new Ombudsman!! Our current Ombudsman, Angela Monti, will be departing the pattern soon and will need to turn over with the new incoming Ombudsman by the end of the year.

Every Command has an Ombudsman who is a spouse of a sailor at the Command. Navy Family Ombudsmen are key resources for family members, particularly during deployments and serves as the liaison between the command and the families. They can assist families with navigating through Navy life through resources and information.

If interested in becoming the new TACRON 21 Ombudsman, please contact Angela Monti @ tacron21ombudsman@gmail.com or OSC David McElroy @ david.m.mcelroy@navy.mil

FAMILY READINESS GROUP

With the upcoming deployment for TACRON 21, we will be standing up the Family Readiness Group (FRG). The purpose of a Family Readiness Group is to help plan, coordinate, and conduct informational, care-taking, morale-building and social activities to enhance preparedness, and command mission readiness and to increase the resiliency and well-being of Sailors and their families.

FRG is open to all family members including parents, grandparents, siblings, boyfriends, girlfriends, friends, or anyone else interested with a Sailor that is part of TACRON 21. Meetings will be starting on October 7th. If interested in coordinating or being part of the FRG committee, please contact Angela

Resource of the Month

Thrift Savings Plan (TSP) is a voluntary savings program for Sailors, Marines, and employees of the Federal government, and is similar to civilian 401(K) plans. TSP is designed to help individuals who want to invest in future financial security for themselves and their family. TSP contributions, including the new Roth option available in October, are tax-deferred (traditional), or tax-exempt (Roth), and can be directed to a diverse mix of investment funds. With new higher contribution limits (\$17.5k base, or up to \$51k when receiving tax-exempt combat-zone pay), TSP's features and options can all work together to provide an opportunity to build significant supplemental funding for retirement. Additional information on TSP can be found on www.tsp.gov



On July 08, CDR Mack re-enlisted AC1(AW/SW) Isom-Brown at the Lincoln Memorial in Washington, D.C



CDR Mack Meritoriously advances YN3 Abreu to YN2 under the Command Advancement Program. This program allows COs to advance eligible personnel to the next higher paygrade without reference to higher authority.



AZ3 (AW) Jane Abreu is all smiles as she poses with her husband after his advancement to YN2.



LT Smith re-enlisted AC2 (AW) Peder on June 21st, downtown Virginia Beach



On August 30th, AC3 Cooley (top row) and AC2 (AW/IDW) Cunningham (bottom row) re-enlisted aboard the USS Wisconsin located downtown Norfolk. Petty Officer Cooley was re-enlisted by CWO4 Phillip Brashear, while LT Holland had the honor of re-enlisting Petty Officer Cunningham.

COMMAND CHALLENGE



TACRON 21 super Sailors ferociously competed in multiple events including handball, volley ball, dodgeball, and basketball, for the annual Little Creek Command Challenge on June 17th.

Though handicapped with limited personnel due to prior military commitments, 21 Sailors came with their game faces on to compete. While a valiant effort was given, our sister command TACRON 22 went on to win the Command Challenge, taking home the coveted Gator trophy.

"We went in with an attitude to win. We didn't want to leave without the Gator," OS1 Wandtke of 22 said.

Despite the purposeful absence of victory, many of the Blackjacks did enjoy themselves.

"It was nice to have fruit and water at the table," OS2 Macias said.

"It was a fun and a good event," stated AC3 Emmons.

"It was a good bonding experience for the command," OS2 Jacob said.

"TACRON 21 worked together like a happy family," OS3 Laginness said,

"Next year, with max participation, we will take the Command Challenge," promised Commander Mack, CO of TACRON 21.



Command Picnic

BlackJacks, family and friends came out to participate in the annual Command Picnic on July 3rd. Children had a blast jumping in the bounce house and soaking each other with water guns and water balloons. Adults played volleyball and soccer until the heat was too much. Corn on the cob from the grill with hamburgers and hot dogs filled everyone's stomachs. The day ended with the MWR pie in the face. The big money makers were LCDR Kesler, OS2 Davis and AC3 Adams. They got a taste of apple, whipped cream and chocolate topped pie.



(Below) CDR Mack gets all wet to cool down from the heat. (Top right) LCDR Miller takes on the young kids with a Super Soaker. (Middle) OS2 Bustamante enjoys a laugh at the expense of OS2 Davis. (Bottom right) OS2 Rosenbaum and AC2 Ortiz get ready for the next victim.



TACRON 21&22 SPORTS DAY



BlackJacks and SkyLords came together on July 26th to enjoy a day of grilling and friendly competition outside of the office. Festivities included kickball, ultimate football, ultimate Frisbee, and cornhole. Officers and enlisted alike competed to show dominance on the fields in support of their command. Kickball included some great plays by OS2 Rosenbaum, AC1 Fryar and AC3 Cooley. Making TACRON 21 the kickball champions.

Unfortunately, TACRON 22 showed superiority in ultimate football and ultimate Frisbee. Everyone was pleased with the success of the event and I think we can expect another in the future.



TIDEWATER Baseball

Every year, starting around the April/May timeframe, the Tides baseball season starts, providing fun and enjoyment for their many fans and guests throughout the spring and summer and usually ending in September/October. What made this season special is the fact that TACRON 21 made its first appearance at these games. Volunteers from the command worked the picnic area beyond left field for 23 functions throughout the summer for various community businesses raising \$2400 for TACRON 21's MWR fund. A job well done by all those involved!



TEAM TRAINER

August 4th a group of 14 Black-Jacks headed south to Pensacola, FL for a two week Team Trainer session to prepare for the 2014 deployment. The team put in many hours of training at the Air Traffic Control School House but also enjoyed evenings of dining out, volleyball and an occasional cookout with cornhole. They got off to a rocky start by leaving AC2 Peder (Mccaulay Culkin) at the airport then again at the hotel the second day of school. After everyone recovered things returned to normal. The team celebrated AC1 Toro's birthday at Crabs on Pensacola Beach. The hard week paid off as they returned with 7 Stat Board qualifications and 4 TAD/TATC recommendations. LT Smith said he was pleased with the accomplishments of the group.



CONGRATS

Welcome to the Chief's Mess



Mayumi Thierry pins a Chief anchor on her husband, GMC (AW) Vante Thierry, during Chief Pinning Ceremony on September 13.



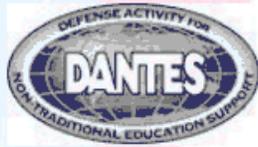
Jasmine Kennedy pins Chief anchors on her mother, OSC (SW/AW) Eboni Kennedy, during Chief Pinning Ceremony on September 13.

TACRON 21 in the spotlight!



OSC (SW/AW) McElroy, AC1 (AW/SW) Adkins, CDR Mack

TACRON 21 was awarded the Combined Federal Campaign (CFC) Goal Buster award for exceeding our goal in the 2012/2013 CFC of South Hampton Roads campaign. CFC is a program allowing certain charitable organizations to solicit contributions from employees of the federal government of the United States. TACRON 21 raised over \$5,000 for various national and local charities through CFC. The 2013 campaign kicked off on September 1st.



**Come to a
"Teaching as a Second Career Briefing"**

When: *Thursday, September 19, 2013*

Where: *CEP 87, 8855 1st St (Corner of 1st & D Avenue)
Room 206*

Naval Station Norfolk (Use Gate 5)

Time: *12:00 p.m.*

Directions: *Call (757) 440-4015*

Questions: *Call TTT Office (757) 683-3327*

Benefit: *TTT may pay up to \$10,000 in
Stipends/Bonuses*



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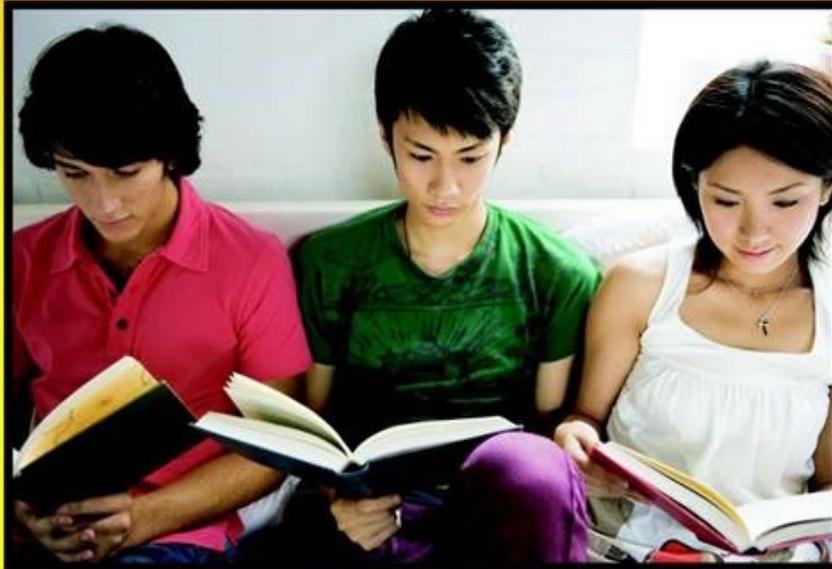
Join us as we celebrate...

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Teen Read Week

Free!



October 13 to 19, 2013

**Read as many books as possible during the month of October!
Keep a log of books read and the author's name
and the three teens who read the most books will
be given a certificate and great prizes!**

**This program is free and open to all
DoD and military family members ages 13 to 16.**

Comics and graphic novels will be accepted.

For more information, call Valarie Wright at 462-7691.

JEBLC-06-24-01



VISIT THE FLEET READINESS WEBSITE FOR UP-TO-DATE INFORMATION ON PROGRAMS, EVENTS & ACTIVITIES.

WWW.DISCOVERMWR.COM



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Corporate Gray Job Fair for the Military Community

9 October 2013 * 9:00 am to 12:30 pm

Plus free, employment-related seminars starting at 8 am -
How to Work a Job Fair and Federal Employment Workshop

Virginia Beach Convention Center

1000 19th Street, Virginia Beach, VA 23451

From the North: I-95S to I-295S to I-64E; take Virginia Beach exit (I-264E) to the end. Turn right at first light (Parks Ave). Go 1 block. Right on 19th Street. Convention Center is on right.

From the South: I-95N to Rte 58E. Take I-64 exit (in Chesapeake). Exit Virginia Beach (I-264E). At end of I-264E, turn right onto Parks Ave. Go 1 block. Right on 19th Street. Convention Center is on right.

Especially for transitioning and former military personnel!

Civilians welcome. Free admission. Business attire recommended.
Bring plenty of resumes. Pre-registration strongly encouraged.

Sponsored by Competitive Edge Services Inc., publisher of *The Military-to-Civilian Transition Guide; From Army Green and Navy Blue and Air Force Blue to Corporate Gray*

To pre-register and for more information, visit:

www.CorporateGray.com

TACRON 21

2200 Knox Road
Virginia Beach, VA 23459
Phone 757-462-4465

Editor-in-Chief

OSC(SW/AW) McElroy
david.m.mcelroy@navy.mil

Assistant editor-in-chief

AC2(AW/SW) Dennler
Deborah.dennler@navy.mil

Layout Designer

OS3(SW) Laginess
Victoria.laginess@navy.mil

Photographer Editor

AC2(AW) Peder

Contributions from:

CDR Mack
OSC(SW/AW) McElroy
OSC(SW/AW) Williams
AC2(AW/SW) Dennler
AC2 Hutcherson
OS3(SW) Laginess
IS3(SW) Lohkamp
Photos Submitted by:
OSC(SW/AW) Williams
AC2 (AW/SW) Dennler
AC3(AW) Peder



Welcome to the Blackjack Family:

AC2 Richardson, AC2 Dunn, AC2 Dunn, AC2 Lowery, AC3 Huffman,
IS3 Lajiness, ACAN Momb, OSSR Winbush, ACAN James, and ACAN Jones

Best Wishes to the following family members as they depart TACRON 21 and move on to future endeavors:

ACCM Smith, AC1 Taliaferro, AC1 Shaw, AC1 Isom-Brown, AC2 Smtih, IS2
Camp, AC2 Simpson, and AC2 Ortiz, OS2 Winchell, AC2 Bacus, AC2 Brady and
AC3 Rogers.

