

THE SKYLINE



Volume 62, Number 13

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July 11, 2024

On Base

VT-7 welcomes new CO

The squadron's change of command will be July 12, at 1000 in the hangar. CDR Bradley Thompson will be relieved by CDR Austin Ordway.



CDR Thompson



CDR Ordway

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MATSS-1 welcomes new Commanding Officer

From Staff Reports

Marine Aviation Training Support Squadron ONE welcomed a new commanding officer during a change of command ceremony June 28 onboard Naval Air Station Meridian. Maj Marvin R. DiazEscobar relieved LtCol Shawn Loughman during the ceremony.

Maj DiazEscobar enlisted in the Marine Corps in August 1999. His first duty station was in Okinawa, Japan with Headquarters and Service Company, 3rd Marine Headquarters Group (MHG). While at 3rd MHG, Private First Class



Maj DiazEscobar

DiazEscobar performed the duties as a range coach and was meritoriously promoted to

lance corporal.

His follow-on assignments include orders to 9th Communication Battalion (Comm Bn), Camp Pendleton, California, and deployed to Camp Commando, Kuwait for four months in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom.

In May 2003, Corporal DiazEscobar executed orders to 5th Battalion, 14 Marine Regiment where he served as the fiscal noncommissioned officer. While with 5th Battalion, he achieved the rank of staff sergeant. In 2007, he was accepted to the Marine Corps Enlisted Commissioning Education Program.

In August 2008, SSgt

DiazEscobar attended California State University San Marcos and completed the 2009 summer session of Officer Candidate School and shortly after transferred to the University of California Los Angeles (UCLA). In the fall of 2011, he graduated from UCLA with a Bachelor of Arts in Geography and a minor in Geographic Information Systems. He was commissioned on Dec. 15, 2011, and attended The Basic School in June 2012.

In January 2013, 2ndLt DiazEscobar attended the Basic Qualification Course for Supply Officers in Newport,

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COMMISSIONING



Photo by MC2 Molly Tice

Congratulations to Air Traffic Control Chief Robert T. Gabrelcik who was commissioned as an Ensign Limited Duty Officer during a ceremony on board NAS Meridian, June 28.

Training Team



Photo by MC2 Molly Tice

Members of the Installation Training Team conduct an aircraft mishap and small spill exercise at the NAS Meridian flightline, July 9. The exercise prepares various departments for real life incidents.

U.S. Navy's TW-2 Celebrates 1 Million Flight Hours With T-45 Goshawk

By Andrew Stover
The Aviationist

Naval Air Station Kingsville's Training Air Wing 2 (TW-2) recently reached a major milestone with its McDonnell Douglas / Boeing T-45C Goshawk fleet – 1,000,000 flight hours. And that's not including hours flown by other squadrons of the jets.

In a ceremony held on the ramp in Kingsville on July 7, 2024, the Chief of Naval Air Training (CNATRA), representatives from Boeing, and representatives from the City of Kingsville, Texas met to celebrate the achievement.

"On May 1, 1992, the first class of flight instructors from VT-21 assigned to fly the next generation of Naval Aviators in the new T-45A Goshawk began their

training in the T-45. On 26 February, 2024, 30 years and one month after the Navy went full operational capability [with the] T-45 aircraft, Lt. Cmdr. Thomas "Sock" Cruz, from VT-22, operating aircraft 267, BuNo 165067, on a basic fighter maneuver event, crossed over the one-millionth flight hour in the T-45 here at NAS Kingsville, Texas," announced CAPT Aaron "Princess" Rybar, Commodore of TW-2.

Training Squadron 22 (VT-22), the squadron with the honor of reaching the milestone, began as ATU-6 at NAS Corpus Christi in 1949, flying the Lockheed T2V SeaStar. After moving to NAS Whiting Field in that same year, they again moved to their current home at NAS Kingsville in 1951. The squadron has flown the T-45 since 1994. It is one of two training

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Photo by Ensign Alan Wang

CAPT Aaron Rybar, Commander, Training Air Wing 2, addresses the crowd during a commemorative ceremony onboard Naval Air Station (NAS) Kingsville, July 2.

8 aviators earn 'Wings of Gold' in June pinning ceremony

There was a naval aviator designation ceremony June 28 onboard Naval Air Station Meridian.

Eight aviators received their "Wings of Gold" during the ceremony. The naval aviator designation ceremony is not prescribed specifically by U.S. Navy regulations, but has emerged as an honored product of the rich heritage of naval tradition. It marks the culmination of nearly two years of specialized training, which has prepared these officers for the rigorous demands of aerial combat and carrier operations -- earning each the title of "Naval Aviator" and the right to wear the coveted "Wings of Gold."

LTJG Casey Thomas Abraham, USN, is a graduate of the University of Utah, where he received a Bachelor of Science in Health Promotion and Education. While in Advanced Jet Flight Training he earned one Navy "E" for bombing accuracy. He carrier qualified in the T-45C on board the USS Harry S. Truman (CVN 75) on March 18. LTJG Abraham completed Advanced Jet Flight Training with Training Squadron Seven.

LTJG Elizabeth Spensley Downing, USN, is a graduate of the United States Naval Academy, where she received a Bachelor of Science in Mathematics with Economics. LTJG Downing is also a 2021 graduate of Johns Hopkins University, where she received a Master of Science degree in Finance. She was named to the Commodore's List during Primary Flight Training. LTJG Downing completed Advanced Jet Flight Training with

Training Squadron Seven.

Ensign Benjamin Hungler, French Navy, USN, is a graduate of Strasbourg University, where he received a Bachelor of Science in Supramolecular Chemistry. While in Advanced Jet Flight Training he earned one Navy "E" for bombing accuracy. He carrier qualified in the T-45C on board the USS Harry S. Truman (CVN 75) on March 18. Ensign Hungler completed Advanced Jet Flight Training with Training Squadron Seven.

1STLT Fletcher Bailey Kirol, USMC, is a graduate of Cornell University, where he received a Bachelor of Science in Materials Science Engineering with a minor in Biomedical Engineering. 1STLT Kirol completed Advanced Jet Flight Training with Training Squadron Seven.

LTJG Josh Robert Merrigan, USN, is a graduate of Georgia State University, where he received a Bachelor of Business Administration. While in Advanced Jet Flight Training LTJG Merrigan earned two Navy "E's" for bombing accuracy. He carrier qualified in the T-45C on board the USS George Washington (CVN 73) on October 31, 2023. LTJG Merrigan completed Advanced Jet Flight Training with Training Squadron Nine.

Ensign Adrien Rannou, French Navy, carrier qualified in the T-45C on board the USS Harry S. Truman (CVN 75) on March 18. Ensign Rannou completed Advanced Jet



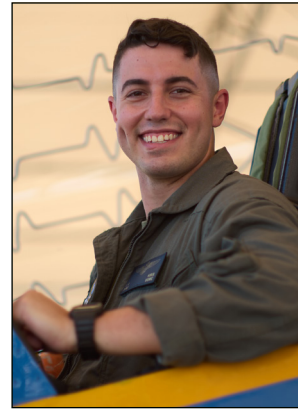
LTJG Casey Abraham



LTJG Elizabeth Downing



ENS Benjamin Hungler



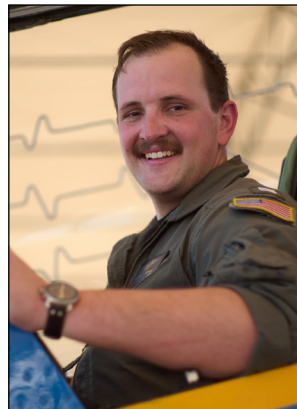
1STLT Bailey Kirol



LTJG Josh Merrigan



ENS Adrien Rannou



LT Benjamin Scholz



LT Paul Vogeler

Flight Training with Training Squadron Seven.

LT Benjamin Eugen Scholz, USN, is a graduate of Virginia Tech, where he received a Bachelor of Science in Civil Engineering. LT Scholz completed Advanced Jet Flight Training with Training Squadron Seven.

LT Paul Robert Vogeler, USN, is a graduate of the United States Naval Academy, where he received a Bachelor of Science in Aerospace Engineering. Prior to checking in at NAS Meridian, LT Vogeler flew the EP-3E Aries II with VQ-1 at NAS Whidbey Island. LT Vogeler completed Advanced Jet Flight Training with Training Squadron Seven.



NAS Meridian's Chaplain, LT Carl Scroggs has the honor of presenting the Golden Stick award to French Navy Ensign Benjamin Hungler during a winging ceremony in the Chapel onboard NAS Meridian, June 28. The Golden Stick is awarded to the student with the highest composite score during training and sponsored by the Mississippi Council of the Navy League.

Photo by MC2 Molly Tice

● Marine, page 2

Rhode Island, successfully earning the 6602 MOS. In June 2013, he executed orders to Marine Aviation Logistics Squadron (MALS) 36, serving in various billets throughout the Aviation Supply Department, Marine Expeditionary Unit Officer-in-Charge (OIC), and Assistant Operations OIC. He was promoted to first lieutenant on Dec. 15, 2013.

In August 2016, 1stLt DiazEscobar was promoted to captain and performed the duties of the MATSS-1 Executive Officer (XO). He assumed command of MATSS-1 from Nov. 17, 2016 to March 10, 2017 and resumed his duties as XO until July 2019, when he was selected for Expeditionary Warfare School (EWS) in Quantico, Virginia. Upon completion of EWS he served as the Assistant Aviation Supply Officer for MALS-13 in Yuma, Arizona.

In November 2021, Captain DiazEscobar was promoted to major

and served as the Department Head, S-4 Department, for Marine Aviation Weapons and Tactics Squadron 1. From July 2021 to July 2023, he oversaw the supply support for four Weapons and Tactics Instructor courses.

In July 2023, Maj DiazEscobar was selected for and reported to Marine Corps Command and Staff College for Professional Military Education where he earned his master's degree in military studies. In June 2024, he was directed to serve as the commanding officer for MATSS-1.

His personal awards include the Navy and Marine Corps Commendation Medal (Gold Star in lieu of Third Award) and the Navy and Marine Corps Achievement Medal (Gold Star in lieu of Second Award). Major DiazEscobar also holds a master's degree in leadership studies from Marshall University, and a second master's degree in military studies from Marine Corps Command and Staff College.

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squadrons attached to TW-2.

The other, Training Squadron 21 (VT-21), began flight operations with the T-45A in 1991. The squadron was established in 1951 as Advanced Training Unit 202 (ATU-202) and assigned to flight training operations with the Grumman F6F Hellcat.

Interestingly, this milestone comes at a time when the airplane's future replacement is up in the air. The Undergraduate Jet Training System (UJTS) program was originally planned to announce a contract winner in fiscal year 2026, but the decision has been moved back to fiscal year 2028.

As for the T-45, the Navy sees itself in need of a replacement because of several issues in the past, including oxygen supply woes and a recent fleet-wide grounding due to an "in-flight engine malfunction", the second grounding in as many years. The issue is also experienced by the aircraft the T-45 was developed from, the BAE Systems Hawk, flown by Britain, India, and others. The T-45, only flying since 1988, 36 years ago, is fairly new when compared to other

airframes the United States military currently flies. Its Air Force counterpart, the T-38 Talon, clocks in at an age of 65 years.

The U.S. Navy is currently in the process of choosing between the Boeing-Saab T-7 (the winner of the Air Force's T-X program to replace the T-38), Lockheed Martin-KAI T-50, and the Leonardo-Tehton M-346N. Interestingly, Navy officials have all but decided the replacement aircraft won't need to be aircraft carrier-capable and won't have an arresting hook for now. The current plan is to cut carrier qualifications out of the training syllabus entirely, instead relying on Field Carrier Landing Practice (FCLP), which involves landing the airplane on a short runway on land. If reversed, all of the three competitors will have to perform major, expensive redesigns to their entries to make them suitable for aircraft carrier operations.

The contract, according to the Request for Information, seeks to purchase 145 total replacement airplanes with a rate of 25 aircraft per year. The contract will include aircraft, simulators, and operating equipment as well as training curriculum.

The Skyline ~ Naval Air Station Meridian, Miss.

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EAP (NAF Civilian): 800-932-0034

FFSC Meridian: 601-679-2360

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Local Happenings

JULY

13: Who is Susie Glover - 10 a.m.-11 a.m. at the Meridian Railroad Museum. This event is a short play depicting the story of a young African woman in need of a job. The documented story takes place in downtown Meridian at Union Station in the 1930s. For more info visit: <https://www.meridianrails.org/magnolia-junction>

19: Love Out Loud 2024 Block Party - 6 p.m.-8 p.m. at the Meridian City Hall Lawn. Free Gospel centered block party featuring Gotcha Covered clothing trailer, inflatables, a rock wall, axe throwing, a petting zoo, cotton candy, snow cones, popcorn, and hotdogs & hamburgers. For more info visit: <https://lolmeridian.com/schedule>

20: Wayne Newton - 7:30 p.m. at the MSU Riley Center. This intimate performance will be unlike any Wayne Newton has done before. It will feature songs and stories told by one of the most celebrated entertainers of all time. For more info visit: <https://msurileycenter.com/events/wayne-newton/>

27: Harry Potter's Birthday - 10 a.m.-3 p.m. at Mississippi Children's Museum - Meridian. Guests will start their journey by conducting a science experiment that sorts them into a Hogwarts house. Throughout the day, students will attend various programs including Defense Against the Dark Arts Yoga, Herbology, and Potions Making. Students can even step into a magical photo station to try on the invisibility cloak! **Costumes are encouraged!** For more info visit: <https://mschildrensmuseum.org/event/harry-potters-birthday-3/>

Area Happenings

AUGUST

17: Luke Bryan - 4 p.m.-11:30 p.m. at Truist Park, Cobb County, Ga. For tickets visit: <https://www.mlb.com/braves/tickets/concerts/luke-bryan>

19-25 - The 26th Annual Sidewalk Film Festival - Located in Downtown Birmingham, Al. Historic Theatre District. For tickets/entries/info visit: <https://sidewalkfest.com/festival/sidewalk-film-festival/>



Photo by MC2 Tice

Congratulations to FC2 Justice Walton who reenlisted during a ceremony on July 2. Walton signed a contract of four more years with a Selective Reenlistment Bonus of \$25,016.25.

ASN EI&E and "The Climate General" Talk Climate Readiness as Mission Readiness

PENTAGON - Assistant Secretary of the Navy for Energy, Installations, & Environment (ASN EI&E) and Chief Sustainability Officer Meredith Berger hosted retired Dutch Gen. Tom Middendorp, former Chief of Defence of the Netherlands, during an all hands call in the Pentagon July 10, 2024.

"As we talk about climate readiness as mission readiness, Gen. Middendorp's experience demonstrates it," Berger said. "His message

resonates with us as we work to build a climate-ready force. From increasing temperatures and sea levels to droughts and wildfires, climate change threatens our forces, communities and economies. Being a climate-ready force enables us to fight and win around the globe while anticipating, preparing for, recovering from, and adapting to the evolving climate and security future."

-- From MC1 Jonteil Johnson

[Read more, click here](#)

\$420M contracts awarded to address F/A-18 readiness gaps

PHILADELPHIA - Logisticians and contracting professionals from NAVSUP Weapon Systems Support's F/A-18 Integrated Weapon System Team and N79 Aviation Contracts Team collaborated to award supply contracts valued at a combined \$420M for the sustainment of spares and repairs of flight control surfaces (FCS) for the F/A-18 aircraft.

"The scope and timing of the flight control surfaces contract awards is vital to aviation readiness. This is going to pave the way for future warfighting to defend our nation and partner countries," said Capt. Abdul Ceville,

NAVSUP WSS director of contracts. "The F/A-18 Integrated Weapon System Team and N79 Aviation Contracts Team were unified every step of the way to get the job done right—and right now."

These contracts cover the acquisition of both spares and repairs of essential parts within the Naval Aviation Enterprise, ensuring the delivery of FCS to the fleet through fiscal year 2028 and setting the stage for a long-term contract that provides both financial and readiness stability.

-- From Tristan Pavlik, NAVSUP Weapon Systems Support

[Read more, click here](#)

Sale... Or

BOATS/CAMPERS/TRAILERS

21 foot - 2021 Jayco Travel Camper. Like new; beige & walnut interior and mattress kept in original plastic. Selling to upgrade to larger size - Price is \$15,000 some accessories included. To view or request pics please contact: Gary 601-575-5062.

2018 Mallard M185 Travel Trailer. Sleeps 4 with 1 queen bed/2 bunks. Easy to tow at 3,575 lbs; only selling because military member is moving overseas. Great living quarters with lake view. Hooked up and ready to live

in, including cables, hoses, plus the \$500 towing kit. Asking \$17,000. Call 360-434-3035.

AUTOMOBILES, ETC.

2018 Subaru Outback 2.5 limited, 12k miles; Subaru safety features and warranties included. Asking \$29k. Call 601-480-5100.

2017 Dodge Challenger, grey with racing stripe. \$24k. Call 601-880-3237.

HOMES/APARTMENTS

NEW! For Rent: 2 BD/1 BA home located in Dalewood community on the water. \$900 a month. Call

601-683-6038.

NEW! For Sale/Rent: 3BD/2BA located in Dogwood Hills 15 minutes from base. Includes 2 car garage, new appliances, washer/dryer, gas fireplace and surround sound system. Roof < 4yrs; central unit < 6yrs. Buy for \$180,000 or rent for \$1,800 a month. Call 601-934-1455

For Rent: Available July 1, 2024. 3 BD/2 BA, only 5 mins from main gate of NAS Meridian. Nice size private yard / gas and water provided. Pets permitted with deposit. Contact 601-480-1324.

For Rent: Water front home in Dalewood. Spacious two-story home facing the Lake; great for fishing and relaxing. Remodeled kitchen and new appliances. Rent is \$1,800; please call 813-406-9687.

For Rent: Fully furnished home in Dalewood. \$1,500 a month; \$50 application fee; \$900 Dalewood membership fee. Trailer, washer and dryer included. Call Jim 601-480-4865

For Rent: 4 BD/2.5 BA home 3632 sq ft, just over 6 acres with workshop attached to 2-car carport. Owners will consider a

lease of 12-36 months, and rent is negotiable the longer the term. Call (601) 517-1707 or (601) 517-1707.

For Rent: 3BD /2BA home near North Hills. Spacious yard, concrete patio for gatherings, home gym and covered car garage. Rent \$1,100 per month. Call Jeremy at 601-410-8555.

For Rent: 3 BD/1.5 BA home 15 minutes from NAS at 4814 36th Ave. New refrigerator and 2-year old AC & furnace. Call Terrance at 469-318-9769.

MISCELLANEOUS

For Sale: Double wall Frigidaire oven \$500; Bosch dishwasher \$500. Both three years old. Call 601-616-4242.

Nanny or caregiver services. Call Alice at 601-934-1866 or 601-679-8112. Has installation access; can take children to school and pick up and available days, nights and weekends.

Event Space for Rent: Deer Creek Banquet Hall. 6000 sq. ft. indoor with 1600 sq. ft. outdoor spaces for rent for gatherings and events. Call Reginald at 251-455-1559.

Listings in the "Sale...Or" column are free!

Submission deadline is the Wednesday prior to production. Email information to nasmeridianpao@gmail.com

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