



Force Protection



Current FPCON: Alpha
Threat Level: Low

**"6-5...
IN THE FIGHT!"**
FY 2011

625 SORTIES

11,678 LODGED

3.3 million gallons FUEL ISSUED

Appointment:

Base: 535-3261
Off base: 295-573-261

Emergency:

Base: 911
Off base: 295-571-911



Weekend

Weather Forecast (Lajes Weather Flight)

Saturday (a.m. / p.m.)

Mostly Cloudy with Showers
Wind NE 15-25 mph
NE 15-25 mph



High 61F / Low 54F

Sunday (a.m. / p.m.)

Mostly Cloudy with Showers
Wind E 25-35 mph
E 30-40 mph



High 61F / Low 54F

Lajes Airman receives DOD Image Award



By Staff Sgt. Olufemi Owolabi
65th Air Base Wing Public Affairs

An Airman here received a Department of Defense award on behalf of the Air Force for doing what she loves best – volunteering and helping others.

Tech. Sgt. Shari Owoh, 65th Air Base Wing protocol office, was recognized as the Air Force recipient of the 2011 DOD National Image Meritorious Service Award. She was recognized for outstanding work done from May 2009 through March 2011.

Sergeant Owoh was presented the award during a ceremony in Orlando, Fla., April 28.

The award honors military members and DOD civilian employees who support the DOD mission, overseas contingency operations, or whose attributes best epitomize

quality and core values of their military service.

"I feel honored to be the wing's and Air Force's representative for such a prestigious award," Sergeant Owoh said. "The fact that I was chosen to represent the Air Force is still such a big shock to me, and I am truly honored."

The service award acknowledged Sergeant Owoh for promoting programs and activities that brought awareness to women, minorities and youth.

In 2009, while stationed at Bolling Air Force Base, Washington, D.C., Sergeant Owoh served on the African American Heritage Council and the Women's History Month Committee, and she led a program that promoted the civil rights of all Americans including minorities and

To read more on "Image Award" see page 4

18 Weeks remaining until the... ORI



Axe Bids Farewell

By Col. Eric Axelbank
65th Air Base Wing vice commander

After just 10 short months on this incredible island, the Axelbank family is saying goodbye to our teammates and friends here at Lajes. The minute we landed here, we felt welcomed and a part of the "6-5" family. Since last July, we've welcomed those who arrived on Saturday and said farewell to those who've left the following day. However, it wasn't until we said goodbye to Nathan "Little Chainsaw" McCullough, who had his first sleep-over with our sons, and little Andrew Witt, who walked into our home everyday to "check out our fridge," did we realize how much we were going to miss the Lajes family. As we've fare-welled those who've left the island, I always asked if each person was going to miss this assignment, and I always got the same response... "I'm going to miss the people here!"

As we gather our belongings from our small lodging room, and get ready to leave beautiful Terceira, we wanted to say "thank you" to the Airmen who comprise Team Lajes. When Col. Rivera said "Airmen" means everyone to include our military, civilian and family members, I think he was on to something special. To quote our boss, he said, "I don't like the word 'dependents' because we rely more on our families than they do on us." Nowhere is

this more evident than here at Lajes. From the "Little Base that Could," to the "Little School that Could," we've accomplished more together than most bases three or even ten-times our size. Why? Because of all the people here! Leaders merely point us in the right direction and make course corrections to ensure we're on the right path, but it's our Airmen who make us successful.

My family and I would also like to welcome my replacement, Col. David "Bogey" Parr, and his wonderful family--his wife, Col. Liza Parr, their daughter, Kaitlan, and son, Christopher. The Parr family is excited about their return to Lajes, where they were stationed as young officers.

I'm very proud to have served here with some of the finest Airmen in our Air Force and I've learned a lot from each of you. After visiting here three weeks ago, Dr. Tom Apel-Schumacher, the USAFE SARC, said, "Lajes is not the little base that could... it's the little base that's doing it!" One thing I'll regret is not being here to watch this awesome wing get an "outstanding" on our ORI. I would only ask that someone send me an e-mail and let me know the minute we get it. Please stay in touch with us and if you're ever in San Antonio, don't hesitate to look us up! From my family to yours, obrigado... "6-5" rocks!

Commander's Action Line
535-4240
65abw.actionline@lajes.af.mil

The Commander's Action Line is your link to the commander for suggestions, kudos and as a way to work problems or issues within the 65th Air Base Wing for which you can't find another solution.



Your chain of command should always be your first option — but when that's not the answer, call or e-mail the Commander's Action Line at 535-4240 or 65abw.actionline@lajes.af.mil.

Col. Jose Rivera

Col. Jose Rivera
Commander, 65th Air Base Wing



The 65th Air Base Wing Public Affairs staff prepares all editorial content in the Crossroads.

The Public Affairs Office (Unit 7710, APO, AE 09720) is located in Bldg. T-100, Room 240.

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All photographs are Air Force photographs unless otherwise indicated.

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Reflection on Osama Bin Laden

The death of Osama Bin Laden was very uplifting, and made me proud that our members helped bring closure to thousands of families. I remember being in the 6th grade and watching the towers get hit--it was a chilling feeling that will never leave. The fact that we as Americans are just as vulnerable as other countries motivated me to enlist later on.--Airman 1st Class Andre Nelson, 65th Communications Squadron

If you'd like to share your feelings on this topic, please contact 65 ABW/PA.



True patriots--an Asian Pacific American story

By Tech. Sgt. Mitchell Mercadal
65th Wing Staff Agency

Every Asian Pacific American has a story to tell of his or her journey to the states--and most are quite incredible.

My name is Mitchell Mercadal, and my story began with my father back in 1954. He was recruited by the U.S. Navy to become a supply cook on the Philippine island of Mindanao.

One day his friend broke the news the Americans were in town looking for applicants who wanted to join the Navy. At first my father was reluctant, because it seemed too good to be true, especially for a poor Filipino like him.

Coming from a very humble, poor, hard working family, my dad learned to strive hard at an early age. He woke up at the break of dawn to do his chores, walked barefoot three miles back and forth to school, and traded fruits and vegetables for a piece of paper or pencil. If he couldn't trade, he used banana or taro leaves to write on, and he would dry the ink in the heat of the sun to read it legibly by the end of the day.

Talk about a hard-knock life! Yes, indeed! To this day it still baffles me to imagine those things. With God's blessings, my dad became proficient in speaking and writing Cebuano, Tagalog, two other Filipino dialects, Spanish, and English. And he eventually passed the U.S. Navy entrance exam.

My father served honorably for 20 years, retiring as a petty officer first class. But shortly before his retirement in 1975, he made the

biggest decision of his life...he became a U.S. citizen, which made me and my family Asian Pacific Americans.

I was born in the Philippines a couple years after my dad retired. When I was a kid, I bluntly asked, "So why are we American Citizens? We weren't born there and we don't look like them."

And then he gently looked at me and said, "My son, I didn't exactly know what I signed up for when I joined the Navy--all I knew was to work hard and not complain. I spent years at sea and a lot of times in the Vietnam War side-by-side our fellow Americans. I've also left your mother, brothers and sisters for 16 years in the Philippines, while I was serving this country and fighting for its freedom. I sacrificed a lot, and I believe I deserve to be an American Citizen. The United States has done a lot of good things for us. If it wasn't for them, you'd be plowing the fields right now with me using a carabao (water buffalo), so be thankful to God and be proud that you are a Filipino-American."

Last year, I visited him in the Philippines after my one-year tour in Korea. His body showed signs of deterioration, and I told him, "Dad, without you, we wouldn't be in the states. I wouldn't be an Airman right now, as I dreamed since I was 12. Thank you."

Then I stood straight up and rendered a salute. To my surprise, while he was sitting in his wheelchair, he looked up at me and rendered back a salute, without saying anything.

"Diversity, leadership, empowerment and beyond" is this year's theme for Asian Pacific American Heritage Month, and I think my father's great story encompasses this theme. For me and my family, it feels great to be American, and it's worth dying for!

What you can't learn in a classroom

By Miranda Winn-Poff
Air Force spouse

Today was the day my oldest son, Phil, turned 7. I remember turning 7 very well--it was the age I was finally allowed to have a Barbie! It was also the year I lost one of my best friends, had my first kiss and went on a date. It was a big year! But today Phil learned a little about the world around him, and I watched a bit of his innocence die as I described to him what he was seeing. This made me realize he's growing up, he understands much more than I could imagine, and I would do anything to make sure he always knows the truth about the men and women who serve our country.

We took the boys to the American History Museum in Washington, D.C., today, and they had lots of fun. Of course, the hands-on parts were the best, but we also took them through the "America at War" display, where they walked among relics and photos of war. As my husband, Brent, and my sons' grandfather pointed out various things, they learned about how children not much older than them would collect scrap metal during World War II. They marveled at a Huey helicopter, learning the main job for this machine was not only to bring men into combat, but to take them out--no matter what. They looked at a piece of the Berlin wall, which I remember coming down. I tried to explain why there was a wall in the first place and the joy of watching it crumble.

Then we walked around the corner, and I saw for the first time the World Trade Center. I could reach out and touch it--and as I did, felt the horror of what happened. I had to take my hand off because it was almost hot. As I stared at a mangled piece of metal once part of the 70th floor of Tower 2, my oldest looked at me and pointed to a picture saying, "What happened?" It was a picture we all know, burned in our memories forever. It portrayed the exact moment of impact of the second plane...with fire and buildings and what I can only imagine as hell. I saw this image reflected in the eyes of my baby--my son, who very quickly became a boy.

I told him that cruel people took four planes and used them as weapons, two of which hit these buildings, and one that hit the Pentagon. The other went down, missing the target because of heroes. He asked if the buildings could be rebuilt. I told him no, but that we are building something to remember them. I told him the Pentagon

has been fixed, but there is a permanent scar in the earth where grass has grown over. He asked me if people were hurt. I said yes, and that people died, but some did survive and get out in time. He then asked why bad people did this. I didn't have an answer. How do you respond to a child? I told him this act is why we are at war, and why we can't lose, and that good people are doing something about it.

"People like Daddy?" he asked. With tears in my eyes, I said yes. It hit me that even though my husband wears the same uniform that others wear and drives to an office, he is involved in this war. I looked up and saw a young man standing next to us with tears in his eyes.

"Thank you," he said, and then looked away. I wondered why he'd said thank you. For Brent's service to our nation? For standing there with him in awe at the metal? For telling a child about what and why we are at war?

I have given birth to all of my sons in a time of war, and was just now telling them about it. I feel bad about this--there are men and women currently dying, hurting, crying, and serving, and I owe them more than this. I know they are young, but some things need to be told. There are members of the greatest generation passing away and no one notices. My sons need to hear and know the names like Doolittle, Easy Company, Hal Moore, Etchberger, J. Cunningham, and S. Giunta, but also the ones of those currently serving. These are the heroes of our country. These are people to look up to, and tell children stories about.

I looked around the room, and saw a few uniforms that had been worn by other active duty members. One had been cut away from a young man's body--it's the same one that Brent wears, only this one is torn and there are stains on it. It took my breath away. My son, Phil, hugged me as my tears welled up. I was thinking about what we as a country have been through in the last nine years...and it hit me hard. I was standing there staring at the single moment that has caused me more fear, anger and hate, but at the same time, the most patriotic feelings in my lifetime. And as Phil hugged me he said, "Mom, it's ok...we will fix it."

He is wiser beyond his 7 years, and in the ten minutes we spent in that room, he learned something more than any classroom could teach. He saw what humans do to each other, bad and good. But in the end, he still believes with all of his heart that there is more good, and I saw a glimpse of the man that he will become.



WING EVENTS

Friday, May 13

- First Sergeant dodge ball tournament at Chace Fitness Center, 8 a.m.
- Taste of Asia at Base Chapel, 11:30 a.m.
- School Carnival, 5 p.m.

Tuesday, May 17

- Proud Bulls Booster Club Bowling Tournament, 1 p.m.

Thursday, May 19

- 65th Security Forces Shooting Competition, SFS Firing Range, 9 a.m.

Friday, May 20

- 65th Security Forces Golf Tournament, Terceira Golf Course, 8 a.m.
- Master Sergeant Promotion Party, TORC Ballroom, 3 p.m.

Saturday, May 21

- Combat Dining Out, LRS complex, 5 p.m.

COMMUNITY EVENTS

The local chorus group "Coro Pactis," will perform Saturday, May 14, at 9:30 p.m. in the Auditorium of Ramo Grande in Praia da Vitoria. Their performance, entitled "100 Years of Broadway Music," features famous American shows, such as "Oklahoma," "Jesus Christ Superstar," "Les Miserables," etc. Tickets can be purchased at the box office through Saturday, after 7 p.m.

"Image Award" from page 1

women. Sergeant Owoh organized numerous programs, one of which was adopted by members of the Air National Guard at Andrews AFB, Md.

She also coordinated the 2009 Black History Month's health fair for over 2,000 members, and she was a project officer for the first two-day conference ever held during Women's History Month at Bolling AFB.

When Sergeant Owoh arrived at Lajes in May 2010, she hit the ground running with her innovative community involvement programs. She coordinated the donation of backpacks and school supplies for a Portuguese elementary school. She also hosted an event that highlighted the unity among minorities and non-minorities in the military and civilian communities.

Sergeant Owoh is not new to receiving awards. At Lajes, she earned the titles of Military Volunteer of the Year and the wing's NCO of the 1st Quarter.

After receiving the DOD Image award, she described the feeling as "so unreal," and "mind blowing."

"It shows that if you keep doing the things you love without looking for any recognition, God will ensure you are taken care of, and you don't have to worry about anything else," she said.

Keeping a smile on her face at all times, while selflessly serving the military and her community are some of the factors that separate Sergeant Owoh from her peers. According to her award citation, Sergeant Owoh displayed the outstanding qualities that distinguish her as a leader.

"She practiced the tenets of a democratic society, including the U.S. constitution, the belief that all people are created equal and that freedom is a right that must be protected at all times," the award citation reads.

Sergeant Owoh is just another example of the great Airmen at Lajes who do good things every day.



Team Lajes welcomes newest member!

Xavier Robert Labranche was born the 18th of April to Staff Sgt. Ryan Labranche and his wife, Kelly. Congratulations!

Share your newborn's photo! Just send it to 65 ABW/PA, and we'll happily place your newborn's photo in the Crossroads Xtra.

LAJES WARRIORS OF THE WEEK



Name: Alan J. Robinson
Rank: Tech. Sgt.
Unit: 65th Mission Support Group
Hometown: Raleigh, N.C.
Duty Title: NCOIC, Group Executive Support Staff
Accomplishments: Sergeant Robinson arrived with his family from Hickam Air Force Base, HI, and works in the Mission Support Group's command section, where he provides administrative support

for 1,132 personnel in six squadrons. In addition, he handles the Report of Survey program for the base ensuring proper investigation and accountability on missing items. His administrative support increased the processing speed of the group's decorations and evaluations, and greatly contributed to Lajes being recognized as #1 on USAFE's first quarter metrics for late EPRs/OPRs.



Name: Luis G. Moniz
Rank: LGS-11
Unit: 65th Logistics Readiness Squadron
Hometown: Praia da Vitoria, Terceira
Duty Title: Installation Dangerous Goods Advisor
Accomplishments: Mr. Moniz is an essential tool for the installation to help ensure the movement of

dangerous goods is made in a safe way protecting the environment, human life and health, avoiding mission delays and fines by local authorities. He is responsible for the implementation and maintenance of the IDG program for Lajes Field. He is also responsible for ensuring the installation has a military vehicle program in compliance with regulations concerning registration, inspection, and utilization of vehicles for the movement of hazardous material and waste on public roads, and within the installation.

"6-5...IN THE FIGHT!"



Marine EA-6B Prowlers

Five Marine EA-6B Prowlers coming from the Area of Responsibility landed at Lajes Field before returning to Cherry Point, N.C. The EA-6B has been in service with the U.S. Armed Forces from 1971. (Photo by Lucas Silva)



Warrior Departure

Master Sgt. Phillip Craig, 65th Communications Squadron, receives a hero's send-off from Team Lajes during a "Warrior Departure" held for deploying members at the Top of the Rock Club's entrance May 4. Sergeant Craig will be deploying to the area of responsibility in Africa. (Photo by Guido Melo)



Warrior Day Challenge

Lajes Field leadership poses with members of the 65th Security Forces Squadron received the 'trophy' for the 2011 Lajes Warrior Day Challenge during a presentation ceremony held at the base basketball court May 5. (Photo by Guido Melo)



Warrior Day Challenge

Team members participate in a race with their unit's guidon during the Warrior Day challenge relay held at the base track May 5. The 65th Security Forces Squadron emerged the overall winner out of 16 teams. (Photo by Guido Melo)



Mark your calendar

MILITARY FAMILY HOUSING FACILITIES

EXCELLENCE: May 26-27, 8:30 a.m. - 4 p.m., Building T-521 MFH residents are encouraged to take pride in their units. Housing maintenance is providing FREE flowers and shrubs, lava rocks, stepping stones and potting soil to enhance your exterior. They're also providing a variety of hand and garden tools to help residents take care of their unit. Please contact Randy Phillips, 535-2363 if you have questions.



THE PROUD BULLS BOOSTER CLUB: There will be a bowling tournament fundraiser on May 17 from 1-4 p.m. at the bowling alley. The cost is \$10 per person, and includes three games and shoes. Awards for 1st, 2nd and 3rd place. Sign up your five-person team today! Contact Staff Sgt. Elizabeth Scheid, 535-3283.

JAPAN DISASTER RELIEF DRIVE: The Asian Pacific Heritage Association is collecting new or gently used (but clean) blankets, jackets and any other children's clothing, along with un-needed stuffed animals that are clean and in good shape. Please contact Mr. John Peters at 535-1106 or 966-46-8217, or bring them to Lajes Elementary/High School in the administrative office as well as all APHA base events. Let's show our friends in Japan that even though we're over 6,000 miles away, we at Lajes really do care.

65TH COMPROLLER SQUADRON FINANCE AND DISBURSING OFFICES CLOSURE: On Friday, May 13, the 65th CPTS Finance Office will be closed at 11:30 a.m. and the Disbursing Office will be closed at 11 a.m. for an official squadron function. Questions concerning the Finance Office closure can be directed to MSgt Lana Miller at 535-CASH and for the Disbursing Office Staff Sgt. Evon Pierce at 535-2414.

POLICE WEEK GOLF TOURNAMENT: A Police Week Golf Tournament is scheduled for 20 May. The flyer could be viewed by clicking the following links. Click here for the flyer in English and for Portuguese. The National Police Week and the other are planned for the week of 16-20 May.



Phrase of the Week A LESSON IN PORTUGUESE



ENGLISH: I am doing fine what about yourself?

PORTUGUESE: Eu estou bem e você como está?

PRONUNCIATION: Eoo eeshtoh bain ee vohse komoo eeshtah?

At the Movies



- 7 p.m. Friday - Battle: Los Angeles
- 7 p.m. Saturday - Take Me Home Tonight
- 4 p.m. Sunday - Battle: Los Angeles
- 7 p.m. Sunday - Paul

Battle: Los Angeles: In 2011 Earth is attacked by unknown forces. As people everywhere watch the world's great cities fall, Los Angeles becomes the last stand for mankind in a battle no one expected. It's up to a Marine staff sergeant and his new platoon to draw a line in the sand as they take on an enemy unlike any they've ever encountered before. Rated PG-13, 116 min.

Take Me Home Tonight: Recent MIT grad Matt Franklin should be working for a Fortune 500 company. Instead he takes a part-time job behind the counter of a video store. Tori Frederking walks into the store and invites him to a end-of-summer party. With his cynical twin sister Wendy and best friend Barry, Matt embarks on a once-in-a-lifetime evening. Rated R, 97 min.

Paul: An alien named Paul has been hanging out at a top-secret military base. The space-traveling alien decides to escape the compound hopping on the first vehicle out of town. Chased by federal agents and the fanatical father of a young woman that they accidentally kidnap, Graeme and Clive hatch a fumbling escape plan to return Paul to his mother ship. Rated R, 104 min.

Movie times and schedule are subject to change. Call 535-4100 for the latest update.

ASK ED

A column that looks at the culture and history of the Azores.

By Eduardo Lima

Community Relations Advisor



Ferryboats sail again

As in past years, two ferryboats will travel to eight of the nine Azorean islands again this year during the summer months.

The first ferryboat, "Express Santorini," will begin sailing among the Azorean islands on May 17, and will operate through Oct. 2, while the second ferryboat, "Hellenic Wind," will begin operations on June 9 and sail in the central and eastern group of islands until Sept. 11.

These two boats offer a unique opportunity to travel to the other islands, with the exception of Corvo, where you can take your own privately owned vehicle and/or pets at an inexpensive cost. These two ferryboats will also offer additional special trips during the major festivals on the different islands.

"Express Santorini" will also sail weekly to the beautiful island of Flores, which is the most western point of Europe. From Flores you can take a small ferryboat to Corvo, the smallest Azorean island with a population of approximately 400 people.

Traveling by ferryboat can be a very pleasant experience, since it offers breathtaking landscapes of the central group of islands while you travel. Both boats feature passenger cabins, lounges, bars and restaurants that you can use during the trip.

The ferries could take several hours to reach your destination, depending on the stops at the other islands. However, this will give passengers an opportunity to have a glimpse of other islands' coastlines and ports.

You can purchase tickets at the various travel agencies on each island without any additional cost, or at the commercial ports where the boats stop one hour before the boats' arrival.

Round trip prices from the port of Praia da Vitória range between 55 euros (to Graciosa) and 98 euros (to the Island of Santa Maria). A two-bed cabin will cost an additional 40 euros per trip, while a four-bed cabin will cost 80 euros.

You can transport your pets (cats and dogs) inside a cage for 22 euros per cage.

For further information on the ferryboat schedule and prices, call the Public Affairs office at 535-3413 or check the web site at: <http://www.atlanticoline.pt>

Explore the Azores and enjoy your travels!