

146th AIRLIFT WING

E-130

THE 146TH AIRLIFT WING'S MONTHLY ELECTRONIC NEWSLETTER



E-130 FEATURE

146th Airlift Wing Maintenance Squadron keeps MAFFS planes in fight.

STEP IT OUT

Security Forces embark on a eight mile team building hike through the Sycamore Canyon trail in Malibu.

THE CHIEF'S MOCK BOARDS

The Chief Master Sgt.'s new plan to help prepare the enlisted force for the challenging promotion board.



INSIDE THIS ISSUE KEEP EM' FLYING!

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146th Maintenance Squadron works around the clock to keep MAFFS planes in the fight.



Mock board promotions prove a success with 146th members participation.



146th Security Forces Squadron complete eight miles team building hike through Malibu.



GROUND CREWS KEEP MAFFS PLANES IN THE FIGHT

Story by MAJ. Kimberly Holman
photos by Senior Airman Nicholas Carzis
146th Airlift Wing

On Sept. 5 the MAFFS mission stood down after a very busy year so far. It most likely isn't over, though, as we are approaching the fall season, which is traditionally when fire season begins. This year's fire season, however, began very early in May, and nearly 1.4 million gallons of retardant have already been dropped this year to date on fires across the western U.S.

The C-130s fly continuously, fighting a relentless battle, seemingly without issue. But it is only due to the tireless efforts of some of our unsung heroes that the aircraft are able to keep flying. After a full MAFFS day, which can be more than 10 drops and long flight hours to and from the fires, the engines are shut down and the flight crews go back to the hotels for their crew rest. It is at this time, usually just after sunset, that the maintenance crews push up their sleeves and get to the task of getting things ready for another day.

"Once the aircraft returns we wash off the excess retardant from the outside, update all the routine inspections, and then if there's anything else wrong or broken, we stay and fix it," said Senior Airman Josh Calabrese with the 146th Airlift Wing's Aircraft Maintenance Squadron. "All of these checks and inspections are very critical, and we cannot cut any corners. We want to be timely, but we have to be thorough. Everyone is

counting on us to hand over a safe aircraft to fly a very dangerous, demanding mission." "Stay and fix it" meant stay until midnight just a few nights ago when one of the aircraft needed a prop change, and another had a problem with the MAFFS compressor unit.

"Usually we have about a 10-hour work day, but there are times when we are forward deployed that we work as many as 16 hours, since we don't always have all the comforts of home," said Calabrese who has been with the unit for three years, and with MAFFS for two and a half years. "We just do whatever it takes to get the job done, on the road and here at home station."

MAFFS missions take an extra big toll on the aircraft with numerous take-offs and landings, very high aircraft weights, high outside air temperatures, and quick turn-arounds on the ground.

"Maintainers have to be at the top of their game to ensure the aircraft are airworthy for crew members," said 146th Maintenance Squadron Command Chief, Chief Master Sgt. Rodrigo "Rico" Gamba. "Both positions [aircrew and maintainers] have their unique and intense requirements which can only be performed by true professionals."

GROUND CREW CONT.

“We sometimes don’t realize until the day is over that a plane needs a few new tires on top of everything else that we still have to do,” explained Calabrese. “We recently have had to deal with electronics issues, HUD (heads-up display) replacements, and routine extensive prepping to prevent corrosion from the retardant on the outside of the aircraft. We have to tape off any small holes, crevices or areas where the retardant can get in and corrode the skin of the airplane. “Every night we high-pressure wash the whole belly and back end of the plane because the retardant is so corrosive. Then we have to wait and let it dry overnight before we tape off the holes in the morning so that the tape will stick. We also rinse the planes off throughout the day when the planes are reloading.”

In times when more must be done with less for those in the military, the maintenance guys from both the C-130J and C-130H-model units have come together to share resources. Although there are significantly different qualifications required between J- and H-model aircraft for most maintenance career fields, the attitude of “one team, one fight” prevails. “We are the only MAFFS unit with J-model C-130s, but we all train together at the same school on H-models,” said Calabrese. “This comes in handy when we need to help out our fellow crews from Cheyenne, Charlotte and Colorado Springs. When we had to relocate from Colorado to Phoenix a few months ago we had a hydraulic pump go out, and the guys from Cheyenne were able to cannibalize a part from an aircraft they had that wasn’t flying—that was a huge time-saver for us.”

Calabrese also shared that the units all do what they can to help each other as a team all working on one mission. Loading aircraft, helping with routine procedures on the back-end is something that all the maintenance crews are able to do on

any aircraft, no matter which unit they are from. They work together with crews from CALFIRE, USFS and the contracted MAFFS unit mechanics—during the day they reload water and retardant, at night they prepare for the next day’s flights.

“On top of all the challenges [maintainers] face, they are also required to work hand in hand as one team with external agencies to help reduce the impact fires have on lives and property,” Chief Master Sgt. Gamba explained. “These challenges are further exacerbated by long, arduous hours late into the night or launching aircraft during the hot arid conditions of the day, all without complaint!”

“I am amazed by their commitment to the mission,” said Capt. Tony Montes, 146th Aircraft Maintenance Squadron Commander. “These last few weeks we’ve been working here from home station so we have the additional support of the technicians and the on-call specialists. But we are an all-volunteer force, and these guys gave up their time with their families even over Labor Day weekend. These guys are awesome. They get the job done anytime, anywhere.”

““I am amazed by their commitment to the mission.”

- Capt. Tony Montes



146th SECURITY FORCES ON TEAM BUILDING

Story and photos by: Senior Airman Nicholas Carzis



A hot and dry wind blew across the entrance of the Sycamore canyon trail, as members of the 146th Security Forces Squadron exited the blue stagnant bus they had used for transport. A quick head count was called, and the team finalized adjustments to each other's gear before the hike. Previously briefed on the conditions and the terrain of the trail, they were ready to put their boots to the ground as part of a team-building exercise and equipment training.



Staff Sgt. Cookson is an avid hiker, and helped prepare the team by scouting the route and mapping the distance beforehand.

Leading the hike were Staff Sgt. Justin Cookson and Tech. Sgt. Keith Ford who instructed the team to line up in columns of two. The Sycamore Canyon trail winds through the bottom of Sycamore Canyon from Newbury Park to the Pacific Coast Highway.

A quarter of the way into the trail, the team stopped to take a photo along the tops of the rugged and scenic cliffs the trail has to offer. It was an amazing day for a hike as the sun shined bright, illuminating the amazing backdrop behind them. Smiles and laughter erupted from within the group as they prepared for the 1400 foot descent down the trail.

"I really enjoy hiking quite a bit, and usually can find myself hiking seven to eight times a month, usually spending two thirds of my time hiking in the Sycamore Canyon area," said Cookson. "It's a shared interest with many in the local area and makes it a perfect opportunity for training and team building within the Unit."

As the hike continued, the teams split in two groups for a portion of the hike; those who wished to push themselves physically could join a team that would "step it out" and move to a faster pace than the others. Those who wished to remain with the main group could remain at the same pace. This created friendly competition within the groups and made for a fun atmosphere.

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-Staff Sgt. Justin Cookson



“It was outstanding to get our guys together for this hike, team building and the experience of working together as a unit is invaluable for both the leadership and the members of our unit.”
-Tech. Sgt. Keith Ford.



SECURITY FORCES TEAM BUILD CONT.

Towards the end of the hike, both teams reunited and formed one single team to finish the hike together. Along the way, the team took turns calling cadence and helping others stay in formation and in step with the rest of the moving team.

Apart from serving as a team-building exercise, the hike served as an opportunity to field test a new piece of equipment called an Improved Outer Tactical Vest or IOTV for short. This piece of equipment was slowly implemented into the National Guard as supplies became more readily available. Replacing the older Interceptor vests, the consensus about the quality of the new vest seemed to be the same within the group, and they like the upgrade.

“Most people liked them including myself, and to my surprise they managed to be even bigger than the interceptor vest,” said Cookson.

At the bottom of the hike, scenic views from the Malibu coastline and the cool ocean breeze greeted the team as they made their way back onto the bus to take them back to the base.

Tech. Sgt. Keith Ford was satisfied with the overall performance and success of the hike, and hopes to utilize these types of team building exercises in the future.

“It was outstanding to get our guys together for this hike, team building and the experience of working together as a unit is invaluable for both the leadership and the members of our unit,” said Ford.



“It’s a shared interest with many in the local area and makes it a perfect opportunity for training and team building within the Unit.”

-Staff. Sgt. Justin Cook-



CHIEFS HOLD PROMOTION WORKSHOP FOR JUNIOR ENLISTED

Story by: Senior Airman Ashley Ramirez
photos by: Master Sgt. David Buttner



Command Chief Rick Onsgard of the 146th Airlift Wing and other chiefs from the 146th held a workshop in the wing auditorium for junior enlisted on how to maximize their potential during oral board interviews for promotions on Sunday, July 14. The purpose of the workshop was to help maintain uniformity in the interview process for both Airmen being interviewed as well as the board members who are sitting on the panel. Chief Onsgard started the workshop with explaining how he will continue to make the process as diplomatic and fair as possible.

He emphasized the importance of maintaining a fair and balanced board and made sure to enforce the point that no one will be 'given' anything. "We want to give you an edge, we want to give everyone an opportunity," Onsgard said. Onsgard also read the following paragraph from a promotion application: "Meeting minimum eligibility criteria only indicates the member can be considered eligible for promotion. Promotion is not reward for past performance but recognition of the members' potential to successfully serve in the higher grade." After explaining that promotions are not a gift but are earned, Onsgard and other chiefs then explained 'how' to get that promotion. They went through the oral board process to include how to prepare, what to say and what not to say, and what you should do to 'sell yourself.' "Get me to you questions about what you already know. Make yourself interesting," Onsgard said.

"Promotion is not reward for past performance but recognition of the members' potential to successfully serve in the higher grade,"
-Chief Master Sgt.
Rick Onsgard.

To give an example of an opening statement for an interview board, Onsgard picked Master Sergeant Alfonso Martinez from the audience to make a brief statement on his military history and awards. Martinez described his job positions and civilian history in chronological order, speaking for no more than 5 minutes. After the audience was impressed with Martinez's statement, Onsgard admitted that he gave Martinez the heads up about 15 minutes before the workshop started. Martinez gave pointers on what helped him in his recent board and reinforced that it's okay not to be perfect and to focus on the bigger picture, he said.

Chief Onsgard then showed several clips of "mock boards" that several members had before their official promotion interview. With the assistance of the Public Affairs, members are given the opportunity to schedule a "mock board" and have their interview recorded. Members can then review their tape, learn from their mistakes and are able to hone their skills to ensure that they are the best they can be for the real thing. Senior Master Sgt. Cynthia Gregory shared her mock board clips with the audience and although they may not have been the most flattering at first, she said she learned a lot and they really helped her in the process. Onsgard said that the three most important things in to have when going in for a promotion is confidence, the ability to communicate and leadership skills. With the positive feedback he received Onsgard said he plans to hold these workshops quarterly and expects the next one to be in October.

Members of the 146th Civil Engineering Squadron have been using a not-so-new technique in getting ready for the annual Physical Training Assessment (PTA) and are making it a lot more fun. In the last couple of months, the squadron has taken part in a variety of non-conventional exercises to get ready for their test and are planning to continue doing so every month of drill. This approach was the brainchild of Master Sgt. Kelly Abbott and Staff Sgt. Jeff Toyne. The idea behind this new programming is to “create an atmosphere that makes members look forward to the entire PTA process” according to Civil Engineering’s First Sergeant, Master Sgt. Don Simmons.

Each month was filled with different challenges. August events included a tractor-tire-flipping race, tug-o-war, jumping rope and a pushup competition. During July drill weekend, they ran the perimeter road marked with cones that designated stops for different exercises. One cone, for example, was sit-ups, another jumping jacks while another was squats. The idea was to make the exercise more than just pushups and sit-ups, which is what the physical training assessment consists of. “We try to mix it up and encourage a healthy lifestyle while having fun,” said Simmons.

At the end of each monthly event a set of three trophies is awarded to the members who do the most push-ups in three categories: less than the age of 40, over 40 and women’s division. The trophies are held by the winner’s duty section through the following month when the rest of the squadron has the opportunity to win the trophies for their own section. Currently, the trophies are being held for the second month in a row by Master Sgt. Francisco Gutierrez, Master Sgt. Kelly Abbot and Staff Sgt. Roppert Beltran. So far, they are proving to be the toughest of the bunch.

Master Sgt. Simmons noted that the overall PTA results are trending upward and “that is what we are working to accomplish.”



“We try to mix it up and encourage a healthy lifestyle while having fun.”
-Master Sgt.
Don Simmons



CIVIL ENGINEERING SQUADRON HOST PT GAMES

Story and photos by: Master Sgt. David Buttner



GRATITUDE,

FOCUS OF BI-ANNUAL WINGMAN DAY

Story by: 2nd Lt. Arelis Cuyan photos by: Senior Airman Nicholas Carzis

The theme of gratitude prevailed at this year's second Wingman Day held on Thursday August 28, 2013. In addition to reminding wing members of safe practices as the end of summer approaches, including a Bicycle Safety presentation by Public Affairs' very own Master Sgt. Dave Buttner, the event was filled with guest speakers, awards and service recognitions.

In conjunction with Col. Paul Hargrove, wing commander for the 146th Airlift Wing, the Wing Safety Office wanted this event to focus on gratitude. This year's first Wingman Day, held last May, focused on Drunk Driving Prevention and held a more somber tone. The commander and the Wing Safety Office wanted to find a balance to a very serious, yet important subject, and bring a focus of thankfulness to the wing community.

"We really wanted to focus in on how blessed we are, and on the good stuff that we have," said Lt. Col. Patricia Murray, 146th Airlift Wing Safety Officer. "Talks of furloughs, sequestration, and other undesirable situations called for an upbeat theme and one where we could focus on everyone supporting each other and thinking about things from a positive perspective."

One guest speaker that helped bring this theme to light was Vietnam Veteran retired Col. Kenneth Hughey. Hughey described what would be his last flight over North Vietnam that resulted in his capture in a POW prison from 1967-1973. His story highlighted the importance of resiliency and hope as he held on through six years of captivity. It was because of his resiliency that he returned home six years later to his loving wife with whom he will be celebrating his 60th wedding anniversary this December.

Airman 1st Class Adriana Castañeda, a member of the Force Support Squadron, and an attendee at the event, articulated the impact of retired Col Hughey's account. She said, "He was very passionate about what he did. It made me thankful for what I have and encouraged me to be excited about my job and put a lot of passion into what I do."

Another guest speaker, Deborah Krueger, author of Let's Play Gratitude with Life's Sticky Issues, shared her own personal experience with troubles and her journey to a life of gratitude. She emphasized the idea that in order to move from what she calls a "sticky situation" we need to accept the situation and learn to let go in order to open one's self to gratitude. "When you switch your mindset to gratitude, you will see the blessing in disguise," said Krueger.

In addition to inspiring words and accounts of encouragement, attendees witnessed the presentation of service recognition and quarterly ground and flight safety awards. Senior Master Sgt. Ron Nester was recognized for his exceptional service as a Ground Safety Operator for a period of 9 years and was presented with a Meritorious Service Medal for his accomplishments. This quarter's Safety Award Winners included Master Sgt. Dave Winger from the Aeromedical Evacuation Squadron for the Ground Safety Award and Technical Sgt. Christian Ring from the 115th Operations Group for the Flight Safety Award. Both winners are recipients of a time off/1-day pass award for their excellent adherence to safety standards. The safety office is currently taking new submissions for next quarter's Safety Award through the end of October drill. Contact the safety office to submit someone you think could be next quarter's Safety Award Winner.



Additional Info

AirForceToons



DFAC Menu

Saturday

Clam Chowder

Caribbean mango marinated Chicken
Lemon thyme salmon
Oven roasted potato medley
Plantains
Rice pilaf
Baby carrots
Spiced mixed grilled vegetables

Sunday

Spaghetti

Tarragon dijon chicken
Garlic mashed w/ gravy
Green beans
Italian vegetable blend

Religious Services

Sunday

1100 Catholic mass
1230 Protestant service

All are welcome to attend inside building #119 in the commander's conference room.



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