

# Crossroads

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Vol. 15, No. 45 • November 19, 2010

Lajes Field, Azores, Portugal

## Force Protection

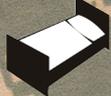


Current FPCON: Alpha  
Threat Level: Low

This is the last edition  
of the Crossroads Xtra  
for November

**"6-5...  
IN THE FIGHT!"**  
CY 2010  
(as of Nov. 16, 2010)

 **1,582  
SORTIES**

**24,587  
LODGED** 

 **5.98 million  
gallons  
FUEL ISSUED**

## Weekend Weather Forecast (As of Nov 17)

### Friday (a.m. / p.m.)

Chance of Rain /Rain  
Wind NNE 24 mph  
High 68  
Low 64



### Saturday

Mostly Cloudy/ Partly Cloudy  
Wind ESE 24 mph  
High 68  
Low 62



### Sunday

Chance of Rain  
Wind SSW 20-26 mph  
High 68  
Low 59



## DV jet gases at Lajes, continues training mission

By Capt. Naomi Evangelista  
65th Air Base Wing Public Affairs

A C-40 on a training mission stopped at Lajes for a "gas-n-go" Nov. 14-15 on its way to Gander International Airport, Newfoundland and Labrador, Canada.

The C-40 is assigned to the 73rd Airlift Squadron, part of the 932nd Airlift Wing based out of Scott Air Force Base, Ill.

While here, the military's version of the Boeing 737-700C transport aircraft, which is used to provide safe, comfortable and reliable transport for U.S. leaders to locations around the world, was provided a variety of services by Airmen of the 65th Air Base Wing, Lajes Field, Azores, Portugal.

"We are responsible for refueling all aircraft that stop at Lajes," said Tech. Sgt. Justin Stellflug, 65 ABW Fuels Service Center NCOIC. "When the aircraft came in, we received a call from transient alert, and we immediately dispatched our driver and the refueling unit."

The fuels section usually receives notification from transient alert or the command post, depending on the hours of the day that the call is made. When the call is made, the fuels section will get an approximate gallons of fuel needed and find out where the aircraft is located in order to respond.

"When we arrive at (the location) of the aircraft, we



On Nov. 15, 2010, a C-40C from the 932nd Airlift Wing, Scott Air Force Base, Ill., departs Lajes Field as part of a training mission. The 729th Air Mobility Squadron and 65th Logistics Readiness Squadron serviced the airplane for trash, water and fuel. (Photo by Tech. Sgt. Chyrece Campbell)

hook up and refuel the plane, and both the crew chief and driver have to sign a DD Form 1898 for our records- it's the accountable-billing document," added Sergeant Stellflug.

The 65th Operations Support Squadron also provided support to the high-priority personnel transport aircraft.

To read more on "C-40" see page 6

## Lajes members take free Space-A to Ramstein

By Tech. Sgt. Chyrece Campbell  
65th Air Base Wing Public Affairs

More than 25 Team Lajes members and their families benefited from a free Space-A flight to Ramstein Air Base on a C-130J Super Hercules while the aircrew conducted training Nov. 6.

The C-130J Super Hercules from Ramstein AB, Germany, landed here as part of their pilot water navigation training. The crew stayed overnight for crew rest before returning to their home base.

"The mission to Lajes was very successful on many levels," said Capt. Matthew Wunderlich, C-130 commander and instructor pilot.

"From the training perspective, my copilots were able to see the unique procedures involved with flying across oceanic airspace to working with Portuguese Air Traffic Controllers, who approved multiple tactical procedures and approaches unique to the C-130J Super Hercules," added Captain Wunderlich

The training mission was not just for



Tech. Sgt. Jason Anderson, 37th Airlift Squadron loadmaster, prepares the web seats for more than 25 Lajes passengers going to Ramstein Air Base, Germany for Space-A, Nov. 5, 2010. (Photo by Tech. Sgt. Chyrece Campbell)

the pilots, the loadmasters also had an opportunity to conduct training.

"It was great seeing our team help another team in U.S. Air Forces in Europe by providing Lajes with Space-A while I received currency training," said Tech. Sgt. Jason Anderson, C-130 loadmaster.

With Lajes Field being the refueling point in the mid-Atlantic there are many different opportunities that are available for Team Lajes members to take Space-A flights.

"There are always aircraft coming to Lajes for training or en-route support that are not always scheduled so people

should call the passenger terminal daily to see if there are changes," said Luis Oliveira, passenger service agent.

"I am not new to flying Space-A, but this was my first time going to a European destination, and I am looking forward to the next opportunity to travel," said Master Sgt. Eric Merkison, AFN-Lajes Defense Media Activity acting First Sergeant.

Team Lajes members can travel Space-A to the United States, Europe and other places.

To find out when a Space-A is available, contact Lajes passenger terminal at 535-3227.



# Thanks-giving

## A uniquely American experience

By Chief Master Sgt. Samuel Hagadorn  
65th Air Base Wing command chief

The Thanksgiving celebration is not unique to the United States, but for Americans, it is certainly unique in its origin, method and purpose. At various dates throughout the year, Canada and a few other nations celebrate their own version of Thanksgiving. Among Europeans familiar with the American holiday, it is often affectionately referred to as "Turkey Day"; the big bird traditionally being the most prominent symbol of the American observance.

It is said that the first Thanksgiving observance in America took place in 1621. A collection of 102 people had sailed west from Europe seeking a new start in the New World. These first pilgrims landed at Plymouth Rock—in modern day Massachusetts—on December 1620, after 66 days at sea in perilous conditions. Although they reached land, the danger continued. With food supplies almost exhausted, a brutal winter claimed nearly half of their lives. However, in the spring of 1621, a native Indian named Squanto taught the pilgrims to survive by growing their own food.

The pilgrims cultivated corn, beans and pumpkins, but a severe draught threatened the summer crops. A full day of fasting and prayer to petition their Maker for rain brought showers that very evening, thereby saving the crops and assuring their survival. In the autumn, the pilgrims hosted a grand feast to thank God for

His bounty and blessings. Many of the native Indians who assisted them in their time of difficulty were invited to share this first expression of Thanksgiving.

In observance of the enduring American spirit, both Presidents Washington and Lincoln uttered impassioned and historic Thanksgiving proclamations in 1789 and 1863, respectively. They are very short documents—I encourage each of you to Google and read them.

Next week we celebrate Thanksgiving on the fourth Thursday of November. This federal holiday is traditionally a day to pause to give thanks. Few will deny that our nation and Americans are uniquely and wonderfully blessed. We have countless reasons to be thankful. I would like to expound, however, on the 'giving' part. Although it technically refers to giving thanks, I believe the celebration is just as much about giving—as in 'sharing'.

Giving and sharing is a way of life. Arguably, no other nation on Earth shares so liberally or outgives Americans. Consider times of need anywhere on the globe, and you'll likely see our nation at the forefront. In our own way, here at Lajes, we'll experience plenty of thanks and giving. Families and individuals will join together to feast and celebrate. As they are able or have sufficient space, supervisors will invite subordinates to their home for this special meal. Nobody should celebrate this day

Read more on "Thanksgiving" on page 6

## Partnership capacity in Belgium

By Chief Master Sgt. Samuel Hagadorn  
65th Air Base Wing command chief

In the spring of this year, U.S. Air Force command chiefs from across the globe converged upon Montgomery, Ala., for a Senior Enlisted Leadership Summit. Limited in previous years to U.S. participants only, Chief Master Sgt. of the Air Force James Roy extended the invitation to chief master sergeant of Air Force's equivalents of partner nations. The result was an invaluable opportunity to rub shoulders with and learn from senior leaders of 17 foreign nations. One such leader was Belgian Air Component Regimental Sergeant Major Luc Van Ryzeghem. He was so impressed with the visit, he proposed to his CSAF equivalent, Belgian Air Component Commander, General Claude Van de Voorde, a reciprocal visit for all United States Air Forces in Europe Command Chiefs, and it was soon a reality.

RSM Van Ryzeghem led the way as nine USAFE Command Chiefs and a dozen Belgian RSMs crisscrossed Belgium during a three-day immersion of Belgian Air Component facilities highlighting the methodologies and capabilities of the tiny nation's air-focused professionals. But don't let size mislead you. Belgium's military is a formidable force in its own right. A



generously contributing nation, many of us have worked side-by-side with our Belgian partners in The Balkans, Iraq, Afghanistan, and many other locations.

Our host's hospitality was second to none; the food unforgettable. While in Montgomery, Ala., our guests' culinary highlight was perhaps the Blooming Onion at the Outback Steakhouse, however, throughout our Belgian visit, we were treated to countless forms of exquisite Belgian cuisine including mussels, chocolate and beer.

Highlights of the visit included a greeting by the Air Component Commander and tours of Belgium's Air Traffic Control Training Center, F-16 flight simulator, and the Saffraanberg

Read more on "Partnership" on page 6

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  
Commander, 65th Air Base Wing

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

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All photographs are Air Force photographs unless otherwise indicated.

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# Award-winning Dental Clinic

## Putting smiles on “faces” at Lajes, impacting mission

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

From red or swollen gums to acute tooth pain, tender or bleeding gums, the Dental team here at Lajes is ready to take on any challenge that could be harmful to Lajes members' oral health.

In the same manner a virus or spam could infect a computer, a dental issue, when not treated, could affect a unit's mission -- but not on the Lajes Dental Clinic's watch.

The 65th Medical Operations Squadron's Dental Clinic team is always on standby to keep the Air Force's mission at Lajes in motion by providing adequate care for Lajes Airmen as they continue to stay fit-to-fight and support the four-mission priorities.

"We have a robust team that ensures that everyone's needs are met by having daily-sick call hours. We help to ensure that Airmen that are in need of their annual appointment are seen first to ensure we are "Fit to Fight," said Tech. Sgt. Anita Presley, non-commissioned-officer in charge of Dental lab. "Lajes, at the moment, has the best fit-to fight (warriors), 99.7 percent dentally qualified Airmen throughout United States Air Forces in Europe and the U.S. Air Force. Lajes Dental Clinic is one of the best overall and has won USAFE "Small Dental Clinic of the Year" awards two years in a row."

The unit takes care of about 200 active-duty, dependant and civilian patients a month and helps save more than \$80,000 to \$90,000 per month in costs that could have been incurred to members and their families from outside care.

Not until you spend a day with the Lajes Dental Clinic will you discover that the outstanding members in the award-wining unit do more than just teeth cleaning and checking for a "keratocystic odontogenic tumor" or Jaw cysts, which are commonly located on the third molar.

With sparkling bright smiles, the members at the front desk of the clinic, consisting of Airmen and Portuguese civilians, first assist patients with their paperwork and help to ensure that the dentist and their assistants are notified of members' arrival.

After ensuring members are ready to be processed, they are checked for vitals and prepared by dental assistants before seeing the doctors. The dental assistants' duties also involve taking X-rays and being in charge of the instrument processing center.



(Left) Capt. Michael Bingham and Airman 1st Class Dale Brown, 65th Medical Operations Squadron, work on a patient at the Lajes Dental Clinic. Captain Bingham is a dentist while Airman Brown is a dental technician at the clinic. (Photo by Staff Sgt. Olufemi Owolabi)

Apart from having some of the best dentists and dental technicians, the unit has Airmen that are also trained to assist as logisticians, administrators, and equipment and building custodians.

"Assistance of the dentists is done by enlisted members," said Staff Sgt. Wayne Burke, non-commissioned officer for logistics at the dental clinic. "They help set up the room for the dentists so that when they come into the room they can focus on the mission. They also help to document what happens during the (dental) visits."

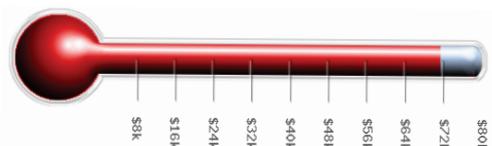
With an array of instruments like amalgam carrier, convention tips, and other state-of-the-art equipment, the Airmen of the Dental Clinic help give Team Lajes a "bright smile" that keeps the team dentally fit for today's fight and future challenges and contingencies.

"We keep the bite in the fight," Sergeant Burke said. "Without us here, it would be very rough because people would have to travel all the way to Germany (to get adequate dental care)."

## Thanksgiving SUM Social

The First Sergeant Council is sponsoring a Thanksgiving SUM Social, the pre-game to the big turkey dinner. The event will take place Thursday, Nov. 25, from 11 a.m. - 2 p.m. at the Airman Ministry Center. All single and unaccompanied Airmen are encouraged to attend. Additionally, supervisors and leadership are also encouraged to come by and hang out. This social is not intended to take the place of the traditional Turkey Day festivities; instead it is just a pre-game to ensure no one misses the opportunity to spend the day with friends. At the social, there will be a list of families who are opening up their houses to join in their Thanksgiving festivities, so if you're looking for something to do on Thanksgiving, then check out this list. The First Sergeant's Council is also welcoming food donations from Team Lajes to support this event. Please consider any of the following and don't be limited by it: Meats (Turkey, ham, etc), Cold salads (pasta, potato, etc), Deserts (any). If you would like to donate an item or if you have an empty seat at your family table, please contact your first sergeant or contact Master Sgt. Lewis at 535-1222.

## Combined Federal Campaign progress thermometer



This thermometer is current as of Nov. 15. The Lajes Combined Federal Campaign is still in progress. The current contribution is \$70,595.88. The 65th Air Base Wing's goal is \$80K. The last day to contribute is Dec. 4. Contact Tech. Sgt. Jeffrey Crawn at 535-3427.



# WING EVENTS CALENDAR

Edited for public release

## NOV 19- Dec 2

### Feature

FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY
19 Teen Club Glow in the Dark Dance (CAC) 6 p.m.  Bowling for Turkeys starts (Bowling Alley).	20 <b>Flea Market (Youth Center)</b>	21	22	23	24	25 <b>Thanksgiving Holiday</b>  SUM Social (Airman Ministry Center) 11 a.m.-2 p.m.
26 <b>Family Day</b>	27 Organic Market Tour (Fontinas) Meet at Commissary Parking Lot at 9 a.m.	28	29	30 Winter Olympics-Week 4 (Indoor Soccer)  Promotion Ceremony (TORC)	1 Letter from Santa starts  Tree Lighting Ceremony 5:45 p.m. (Beira Mar gate)	2 Teen Town Hall Meeting (LYP) 4-11 p.m.

## LAJES AIRMEN OF THE WEEK



**Name:** Kenneth D. Messick  
**Rank:** Senior Airman  
**Unit:** 729 AMS  
**Hometown:** Summerville, S.C.  
**Duty Title:** Air Transportation Craftsman  
**Accomplishments:** Airman Messick has distinguished himself as a top-notch Airman in our organization. He consistently displays knowl-

edge and wisdom way ahead of his years while performing duties both on and off the job. He has taken on many additional duties that would be more fitting of an NCO and has put out flawless results. Kenneth is our "go-to" guy when we have a job that needs to be done or have a question that needs to be answered. He is always first to volunteer to come in and take care of a mission even when it may be during his off time.



**Name:** Jamie Sousa  
**Rank:** Civ  
**Unit:** 729 AMS  
**Hometown:** Porto Martins, Terceira Island, Azores  
**Duty Title:** Passenger Service Representative  
**Accomplishments:** Jamie Sousa has distinguished himself as an irreplaceable asset to our organization. Over the years Jamie has worked countless hours on revolving

shifts to ensure an outstanding mission success rate as he over seas the movement of thousands of passengers on numerous AMC airlift missions that transit Lajes. Mr. Sousa's versatility has made him the Swiss army Knife of the passenger service world. He is very knowledgeable in all aspects of the field and never fails to get the job done no matter the circumstance.

## Lajes hosts first 'Storm the Beach, Charge the Hill' run

**By Staff Sgt. Kristine Dreyer**  
65th Force Support Squadron

Students from the Lajes Airman Leadership School Class 11-A led the first Storm the Beach, Charge the Hill Run Nov. 10 in honor of Veterans Day.

A group of more than 50 people joined the



class during the 2.2-mile beach run, which was followed by a 1-mile uphill trek to the St. Mary Statue in Praia Da Vitoria.

"When we were told at the beginning of class that we were going to run to the top of the hill, I was very intimidated by the idea," said Senior Airman Kara Starr, 65th Operations Support Squadron. "But with all the ALS PT sessions along with the support of the leadership who ran and my classmates, it turned out to be more achievable than I thought. After completing this run, my PT test will seem much easier."

Typically this run is completed by each ALS class toward the end of their time at ALS as a culmination of the ALS fitness sessions, but during this class, Master Sgt. Daniel Lewis, 65th Communications Squadron first sergeant noticed that the 11-A class run was scheduled the day before Veterans Day. With this in mind, he brought the idea to the ALS commandant to incorporate a Veterans Day tribute during the run.

"Since we decided to link the run and Veterans Day together, we named it in honor of Normandy and other historical battles and also asked each participant to wear either a red, white or blue shirt to the run," said Master Sgt. Carlo Gutierrez, Lajes ALS commandant.

As the sea of red, white and blue runners took the hill in honor of those who have served with and before them, Sergeant Gutierrez hopes this leaves each student with something more than just a grueling workout.

"I started the run a few classes ago to show the students what they can accomplish if they put forth the effort," said Sergeant Gutierrez. "The run is challenging but through team work and motivation, the students learn that they can do anything. My hope is that as new leaders in their squadrons they will incorporate this sense of esprit de corps into their squadron's PT program improving their squadron's morale along with their squadron's PT scores."

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



Five EA-18G "Growlers" transit at Lajes Field to refuel Nov. 11, 2010. The EA-18s are airborne electronic attack aircraft which operate from either an aircraft carrier or from land bases. They are a replacement for the United States Navy EA-6B Prowlers, which are approaching the end of operational life. During the Growlers' short stop at Lajes for the first time, transient alert Airmen here provided support for the aircrew. (Photo by Guido Melo)

More than 120 students of the Lajes' Department of Defense Elementary and High School listen as Col. Eric Axelbank briefs during the Leadership Mentor Training held at the school Nov. 12. (Photo by Guido Melo)



A KC-135 touches down here while accompanying five EA-18G "Growlers" that refueled at Lajes Field, Azores, Nov. 11. (Photo by Guido Melo)



Master Sgt. Nikki Drago, 65th Security Forces Squadron, passes the ball while members of his team stand by to send it over the net during a blind volleyball game as part of the Winter Olympic Games on-going at Lajes Field, Azores. The security forces team took first place and the gold medal after defeating the 65th CES team in the championship game Nov. 12. (Photo by Staff Sgt. Olufemi Owolabi)



Airman 1st Class Terrence Ollis, 65th Security Forces Squadron, participates in a cornhole toss while Master Sgt. Nikki Drago officiates as part of the games put together for the Top III Dorm Bash Nov. 12, 2010. (Photo by Guido Melo)



## Mark your calendar



**LRS TURKEY TROT:** LRS will be hosting a Turkey Trot at the SDDC Port in Praia da Vitoria Wednesday, Nov. 24 at 7 a.m. All individuals interested in running are welcome to join. There will be a 5K and 10K run- the 10K starts at 7:15 a.m. while the 5K starts around 7:35 a.m. Show-time is 7 a.m. LRS will give awards to the 1st, 2nd and 3rd place winners in both the male/female category and 5K/10K

categories. There will also be a separate contest for the best "Thanksgiving" costume.

**COMMISSARY OPENS THANKSGIVING:** The Lajes Field Commissary will be open Thanksgiving Day, Nov. 25, from 9 a.m. – 5 p.m. for your convenience. The Commissary will also be open Monday, Nov. 22.

**COLA SURVEY:** This is the last week for TEAM LAJES to weigh in on how the per diem committee computes our cost of living amount. It is imperative that EVERY military member complete this survey by this Friday, Nov. 19. We only get this opportunity every 3 years or so, so this is our chance to make a change that will radiate out to TEAM LAJES AIRMEN for years to come. The URL is <https://www.defensetravel.dod.mil/oscola/lps/portugal/>. For any question please contact MSgt Patricia Brooks at 535-5174.

**WING PROMOTION CEREMONY:** The next wing promotion ceremony is Tuesday, Nov. 30 at 3 p.m. in the TORC Ballroom. If you have any questions, contact TSgt Dyjuan Washington at 535-1492.

**TAX VOLUNTEERS:** The 65 ABW/JA office is looking for highly motivated individuals to be unit Tax Representatives. We are asking for two people per unit. These individuals will be responsible for tax preparation in their respective unit. Volunteers are asked to get approval from their respective chain of command and to contact Tech. Sgt. Cohen or Master Sgt. Wade at 535-3546.

**AIR FORCE CLIMATE SURVEY:** The 2010 Air Force Climate Survey is still in progress and is scheduled to end Nov. 28, 2010. Members are encouraged to complete the survey when it is emailed to them. Contact the 65 FSS Manpower and Organization office at 535-1016 if you have any questions.

### AFPC UPCOMING WEBINARS:

Dec. 9 - Navigating the vMPF to Submit a Retirement Application  
Call FSS at 535-1075 for more information.

**CHARITY ANGEL TREE:** The Lajes Chapel 's Charity Angel Tree continues until Dec. 6 at the BX and Chapel. Interested members can choose an angel at the BX or Chapel, purchase the gift and return the bagged gift. For more details, contact the chapel at 535-4211.

**FACILITIES EXCELLENCE:** The Civil Engineer Squadron is proud to present the Fall 2010 Housing Facilities Excellence program. Beira Mar and Nascor do Sol residents are encouraged to stop by the Housing Self-Help store in building T-521 on Nov. 25 or 26 from 8:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m. to pick up items to help beautify your house. Please call the Housing Maintenance section at 535-6251 if you have any questions.

**WICO:** The Women, Infants and Children Overseas program helps ensure your child's nutritional needs are met. Contact the Lajes WIC Overseas office and give your child the healthy start they deserve. Contact the Lajes WICO office at 535-1440.

### "C-40" from page 1

"We communicate to the pilot of the aircraft by marshaling them to their appropriate parking area and tell the pilot to engage the motors to start, tell them the tires are clear and the chocks are removed and I direct the pilot in what direction for him to go," said Senior Airman Chance Kimpton, 65th OSS Transient Alert crew chief.

"Our support to DVs differs from other aircraft because we park them in different areas and more TA members will provide assistance," said Airman Kimpton.

"For the C-40s, only a fire bottle and two sets of chocks were required- it was just a gas-and-go. We also provided follow-me service when the aircraft landed and then directed them to their parking spot," he added.

The 65th Air Base Wing and Lajes Field is the U.S. Air Force's pre-imminent, en-route, expeditionary-focused, combat support organization for aircraft and crew members traveling across the Atlantic.

## Phrase of the Week A LESSON IN PORTUGUESE



**ENGLISH:** Where is the bathroom?

**PORTUGUESE:** Onde fica a casa de banho?

**PRONUNCIATION:** Un-day fica ah ka-sa dey ban-ho?

## At the Movies



**7 p.m. Friday** - The Town (R)  
**7 p.m. Saturday** - You Again (PG)  
**4 p.m. Sunday** - You Again (PG)  
**7 p.m. Sunday** - The Town (R)

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

### "Thanksgiving" from page 2

alone—it's a time of togetherness.

By now, perhaps you have already been invited to a friend, co-worker, or supervisor's home for Thanksgiving dinner. If not, many commanders, chiefs and other leaders are opening their homes to guests as well. If you don't already have a place to go, contact your First Sergeant. He or she will match you to a great home-cooked meal.

Now, let's bring the history of Thanksgiving closer to our home—here in the Azores. Christopher Columbus, on his return journey following his landing in the New World, made his first stop on the Azorean island of Santa Maria. There, he paused and celebrated mass in the Anjos Chapel before reaching mainland Europe in Lisbon. The truth is, thanks-giving is universal, but perhaps no other nation has institutionalized and celebrated the concept quite as passionately as ours. Thanksgiving—not only an American tradition; it's the "Lajes way!"

### "Partnership from page 2

Royal NCO School. We also viewed a live helicopter demonstration by the 40th Search and Rescue Squadron and a small arms training presentation. We briefly met with U.S. Air Force members working in partnership with Belgians at Kleine Brogel Air Base. To round out the visit, we enjoyed a walking tour of the Atlantic Wall Museum—a historic World War II coastal invasion point on Belgian's north-west border. The visit culminated with our participation in the annual Toast to the King formal dinner.

You may have noticed that there has been no mention of the Belgian Air Force, as it does not exist. Mission need and fiscal restraints have led the Belgian military to reorganize to an Air Component which encompasses all facets and resources of the air mission. So now is the change that former Army members now assigned to the Air Component still wear their traditional Army uniforms.

Belgium's current recruiting tool—a draft—will likely be rescinded within two years. Their Air Component's robust professional military training program very clearly and systematically maps out career paths. From entry into the service at approximately 18, the military professional can expect to retire at 56 years of age.

Like our own Air Force, Belgium faces some of the same challenges we do—budget cuts, reduction in force, recruitment and training. By all accounts, leadership has clear solutions, and the force has a bright future.

At the conclusion of our three-day visit, we had forged new friendships and cultivated a far greater appreciation for our Belgian partners. The leadership of Belgian Air Component Commander, General Claude Van de Voorde and Regimental Sergeant Major Luc Van Ryzeghem personify our own Service's desire to strengthen capabilities by effectively building partnership capacity.