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As we approach the end of 2010, it is time for each of us to review what we have accomplished during the last 12 months so we can better prepare and focus on what we need to do in 2011.

First and foremost, the back page of this issue is a sobering statement of the sacrifices made by our teammates since 9/11. Along with 37 SEALs and support personnel killed in action, another 12 died during training and nearly 130 team members have been wounded in this fight. For many, their lives and the lives of their families have been changed forever. As you celebrate this holiday season, remember our fallen teammates and their families who have lost so much. Finally, keep our warriors forward and their loved ones here at home in your thoughts and prayers.

As I review this past year’s efforts, your dedication and patriotism is unmistakable. We continue to move forward to win our nation’s current fights and prevent future terrorist attacks, to posture ourselves for the next ridgeline and to take care of our people and our families. Well done to all.

Our Force of nearly 9,000 (active duty and reserve operators; combat support, combat service support personnel and civilians) accomplished a great deal during 2010. Here are just some highlights you may not be aware of:

On the operational front, our personnel deployed to and operated in more than 40 countries, bringing unique NSW capabilities to the joint/combined/interagency fight around the globe.

Anchor teams have become a reality at many locations - growing and maturing them will continue to be a significant part of our deployments, ensuring long-term persistent engagement not only with our partner forces but with the combined, interagency team and, most importantly, against our enemies.

Senior enlisted and officer leaders forward in critical positions on key battle staffs are having a huge impact. Our ability to continually adapt, setting in motion people, structures and strategies that will help us in the long-term is being enthusiastically recognized daily by joint leadership.

As I look ahead to 2011:

One of the most critical tasks will be the establishment of our NSW-led Special Operations Task Force in Afghanistan. We must maintain a sense of urgency about our mission there and do whatever it takes to ensure success.

We will continue a strong push to develop language skills, regional expertise and more training in foreign internal defense and building partnership capacity.

We are establishing a new Echelon 3 command (NSWG 10) to man, train, equip, deploy and sustain NSW's robust and growing intelligence capabilities to better support our war fighters.

We have revised our undersea mobility strategy, enabling us to acquire a family of lower-cost submersibles and host shelter modifications to better meet our undersea capability requirements in the years ahead.

I am committed to providing you with the very best training and equipment to help minimize risk to the Force and ensure mission success. We must also be able to evolve and sustain our future Force. We are, YOU are, doing this well; the SEALs and SWCC who graduate from the NSW Center, are the best trained SEALs and SWCC ever to graduate basic training. In addition, we are graduating more of them than ever before. Our TRADETs continue to evolve with the changing battlefield and our equipment continues to improve as well, ensuring that the warriors we send forward are the most highly skilled and prepared forces the world has ever seen.

Lastly, I can promise the Force that I remain committed to addressing passionately the issues that we face today and will face tomorrow; issues like deployment length, implementation of NSWG 10, maturing of our anchor teams and detachments, growth of our SEALs, SWCC and CS/CSS personnel and our undersea and surface strategies.

Our team of military personnel, civilians and families provide this nation with an unmatched SOF capability. Thank you all for your dedication and the outstanding support you provide to NSW and our great Nation. The greatest thing about being on the NSW Team, is that every day when I go to work, I am surrounded by patriots – heroes. I cannot even start to tell all of you how proud I am of you and all that you do. Thank you. Have a wonderful holiday, and a happy, healthy and productive New Year!

Rear Adm. Edward Winters
very graduating SEAL Qualification Training class sends new SEALs to the teams, where they reinforce the ranks of battle-hardened operators. They are the 25-35 percent of successful candidates who pass the rigorous crucible of BUD/S and SQT. To illustrate the point, the average seven-man boat crew of aspiring candidates that stands under a rubber boat during the first days of BUD/S shrinks to two graduates on the grinder a year later.

NSW’s goal is to find the right candidates who can complete the high standard of training, earn their trident, and in turn, contribute on the battlefield. What attributes does the right candidate typically have that his peers do not? A few are athleticism, problem solving skills, adaptability, ambition, resiliency, composure and persistence.

You’d think finding enough qualified candidates would be easy considering there are about 1.6 million men in America between 18-24 years old, but when it comes to candidates, the bottom line is quality, not quantity.

So how does NSW find 250 capable young men per year who will not only succeed at BUD/S, but also become successful SEAL operators? After studying the issue, the NSW Recruiting Directorate – also known as the SEAL and SWCC Scout Team – has developed relationships with people who have significant influence on high-potential young men from diverse backgrounds.

“Coaches, teachers and superintendents can take our messages about mental toughness and physical determination to students of a wide variety of backgrounds and help identify tomorrow’s high-potential candidates,” said Capt. Adam Curtis, director of the SEAL and SWCC Scout Team.

Last month, the Scout Team hosted two influential groups at the Naval Special Warfare Center: 180 school superintendents from around the United States and 37 Southern California high school coaches. The Scout Team gave them a presentation on mental toughness, showed them elements of BUD/S training and displayed some of the weapons SEALs use.

Bob Rohrbach, SEAL and SWCC Scout Team operations director, said the coaches and educators get a unique exposure to the SEAL mindset and never-quit attitude, which they pass along to benefit their student athletes.

“We want to instill the same mental toughness, focus, dedication, tenacity and goal setting that you guys are doing here in our kids across the country,” said Gwynn Cross, director for the Suburban School Superintendents group.

Mike Stephensen, San Diego’s St. Augustine High School athletic director, agreed. “Getting some of your guys’ influence on our kids is something we are looking for.”

Establishing relationships with coaches and educators supports NSW’s ongoing effort to expose high-potential students and athletic teams to the SEAL experience. Chief Special Warfare Operator Rob Stella, civilian outreach coordinator for the SEAL and SWCC Scout Team, said when high-potential candidates or the people who influence them have a first-hand experience with real SEALs, it often debunks commonly held myths about the special warfare community.

“We want people to know that becoming a SEAL is attainable,” said Stella. “There’s no better way than to meet them and show them what we do. Ultimately, the high potential candidates will decide for themselves that they want a career with NSW.”
Recently, members of the NPS RSEP traveled to WARCOM to teach a team of SEALs about the societies, politics and regional security concerns they will encounter while deployed to the Middle East and South Asia. “These SEALs are going to the front lines,” said retired Rear Adm. Stephen Loeffler, RSEP director. “No matter where in the world they are going, from South America to the Middle East and everywhere in between, they need to be educated about regional issues and cultures.”

Two RSEP-led seminars held June 21-22 and July 27-28, focused on the regional and cultural sensitivities SEALs should recognize, so they can effectively interact with the people they encounter overseas. “This program is about training SEALs to better understand the culture and geopolitical situation on the ground, so they are wiser warriors who better understand the reasons they are in these areas,” said Brad Voigt, the deputy director of the Naval Special Warfare Professional Military Education, and RSEP seminar coordinator.

SEALs have unique missions that range from reconnaissance and personnel recovery to international security assistance and counter-narcotics operations. These tasks frequently bring SEAL teams in direct contact with local populations, where cultural and political knowledge of a region can enhance communications and achieve mission objectives. “As we deploy across the globe and interact with different people, it’s important to understand local concerns and what locals value,” said Voigt. “Their regional geopolitical views may be drastically different than ours, but there is almost always common ground and basic beliefs that coincide with ours. Knowing what those differences and commonalities are helps build relationships and foster trust. That’s the whole purpose of engagement - relationships and trust.”

“The SEALs had a lot of questions about the relative perspectives of different countries toward the United States,” said Tristan Mabry, a NPS professor who participated in the July RSEP seminar. “These are important questions with no easy answers since contemporary conventional wisdom has a habit of shifting quickly. For example, in the 1990s Indonesia was an liberal autocracy. Today the world’s largest Muslim country is a lively democracy. The significance of that shift takes time to absorb, and it takes more than a PowerPoint brief to understand how and why it matters for our country, for the Navy and for the SEALs on the job.”

RSEP has historically focused on lectures and briefs for fleet commands and strike groups, but the NPS program has also conducted seminars for special operations forces and Naval Expeditionary Combat Command units. Loeffler and Voigt hope the recent seminar in San Diego will be the start of an ongoing relationship between RSEP and the NSW community. “We have a close relationship with the Defense Analysis and National Security Affairs department at NPS. The RSEP is a natural extension of that relationship. We can ask for specific education to give our forces a better understanding of the region to which they are deploying. RSEP then provides the experts, many of whom have spent large portions of their lives immersed in the areas to which we deploy,” said Voigt.

The faculty members who conducted this RSEP with Loeffler work for the NPS National Security Affairs department and are specialists in the Middle East and South Asia. RSEP is a key NPS outreach program for Navy and Marine Corps forces.
Lt. Gen. David P. Fridovich, deputy commander of U.S. Special Operations Command (USSOCOM), granted approval to Naval Special Warfare Command Nov. 29 to create a new Echelon III command – Naval Special Warfare Group 10 (NSWG 10) – to be based in Little Creek, Va., and stood up in May of 2011. This new command will exercise operational and administrative control of Support Activities (SUPPACT) 1 and 2, and the Mission Support Center (MSC) in CONUS and be responsible for manning, training, educating, equipping, organizing and deploying its forces and capabilities.

Capt. Brian Hendrickson, lead planner for the NSWG 10 effort, described the catalyst for and resourcing of the new command this way, “This is really the logical next step for what we started in 2006 and 2007 with the establishment of the Support Activities. Since 2007, both SUPPACTs have experienced dramatic resourcing growth, both in size (billets) and the number of capabilities within them.

Manpower at the SUPPACTs has grown more than 400 percent since fiscal year 2007 and is on track to reach 600 billets at each command by fiscal year 2015. The original Find, Fix, Exploit and Analyze (F2EA) capabilities in the cross functional troops have been augmented over the years to include small unmanned aircraft systems (e.g. Scan Eagle and Viking systems), multi-purpose canines and a variety of sensor, processing and communications systems.

“We are also adding new engagement capabilities -- effects planning and assessment teams, anchor teams, and population engagement [female, cultural and functional (medical and civil affairs)] teams.” Ultimately, the complexity and scope of it all is difficult to manage at the Echelon IV level, according to Hendrickson.

Only a small fraction of the NSWG 10 claimancy will be SEALs or SWCCs. The majority will come from the Navy’s Information Dominance Corps, the Naval aviation community and a number of other communities (medical, Seabee, Foreign Area Officer, legal, etc.). The particular mix of capabilities and communities results in a set of unique cultural, service coordination, resourcing, training and career development challenges, different from those of the other NSW Groups, Hendrickson said.

“It is very tough to standardize new and distinct capabilities when each command housing them has a different Immediate Superior in Command (ISIC).

“That’s why Rear Adm. (Edward) Winters decided to create NSWG 10 -- to serve as a common ISIC for both Support Activities,” Hendrickson said. “Additionally, he is transferring operational control of the MSC from WARCOM to NSWG 10 to build it into a more robust reachback platform that expands on the analysis, production, information and communications support it currently provides to Squadrons.

When NSWG 10 reaches initial operating capability next year, it will be 40 percent of the size of other NSW groups. The billets required to stand up the new command are largely being pulled from growth that was already targeted for the SUPPACTs. At final operating capability (currently targeted for fiscal year 2020), it will be nearly equivalent to the other groups.

According to Hendrickson, NSW Squadrons can expect an enhanced level of capability and capacity as a result of the creation of the new command.

“The SUPPACT cross functional troops are the organizational structures designed to integrate with the Squadrons and provide them with specialized F2EA capabilities. That is not going to change. As a matter of fact, we are growing the capacity of the cross functional troops.”

Three key strategic assumptions driving the portfolio of capabilities planned for NSWG 10 are: (a) success in the emerging battlefield requires a more comprehensive partnership with non-military (governmental and non-governmental) organizations, (b) persistent engagement will be a key enabler to those partnerships and (c) the global commons and entry and exit points to them (particularly the maritime and cyber domains) will be key terrain in the emerging fight.

“The establishment of Group 10 is really about two things,” Hendrickson said, “Addressing the lessons learned posed by SUPPACT growth over the last couple of years, and ensuring the continued maturation and professionalization of new tools, capabilities and partnerships to ensure we maximize our relevancy in today’s fight and tomorrow’s projected environment.”

Ms. Patricia O’Connor
partnering with allied nation forces is necessary, and military exercises like FOAL EAGLE, a multination training exercise held annually in the Republic of Korea, has provided NSW with greater depth of knowledge in our planning and operational readiness for more than 40 years.

In 1972, Lt. Thomas Norris completed an unprecedented ground rescue of two downed pilots deep within heavily controlled enemy territory in Quang Tri Province. Norris led a five-man patrol through 2,000 meters of heavily controlled enemy territory, located one of the downed pilots at daybreak, and returned to the Forward Operating Base (FOB). Norris traveled throughout that night and found the injured pilot at dawn and successfully made it back to the FOB. But he wasn’t alone. By his side was Nguyen Van Kiet, a member of the South Vietnamese Navy. Together, they completed the dangerous mission, and without each other, it would have failed. Norris went on to receive the Medal of Honor for his actions that day and Kiet was awarded the Navy Cross, one of only two South Vietnamese service members to receive one for their actions during the Vietnam War.

Their success proved that international partnerships work and that has never been more true than in today’s battlespace.

Similarly, our personnel are training Afghan national forces on room clearing and helping Iraqi policemen set up security for their villages. After assisting in the training of the Afghan National Army, the United States has begun to turn over areas of operations to them.

This Ethos issue highlights two of our multinational training exercises – PANAMAX and Jackal Stone. They aren’t the only ones by far, but they are important. We also have an article on NAVSCIATTS and how its new boats are improving partner-nation training. Joint Special Operations Task Force-Trans Sahara reports its efforts to provide top-notch training to Malian Forces. Several articles in this issue highlight our ongoing efforts to develop relationships with our partners around the globe - so when it’s time to secure the village, we won’t be alone.
Naval Special Warfare Unit 2 trains with Allied and partner nations during Jackal Stone 10 SOF exercise

Jackal Stone 10, an annual multinational special operations forces military exercise, was hosted in both Poland and Lithuania Sept. 13-27. Its successful completion marks the third consecutive year of the capstone training event for U.S. Special Operations Command Europe (SOCEUR).

Naval Special Warfare Unit 2 (NSWU 2), the maritime component of SOCEUR, successfully completed its participation in Jackal Stone by leading one of three special operations task groups (SOTG) which was composed of SEALs, SWCCs, Lithuanian special operations forces and Polish Formoza.

The primary objective of the exercise was to enhance capabilities and interoperability at the operational command and control level among participating forces (Croatia, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Romania, Ukraine and the United States).

NSWU 2 personnel provided the framework for the maritime SOTG in Klaipeda, Lithuania and was supported by some old friends.

“We saw many of the same [allied] faces we worked with during Jackal Stone 2009 and already had a foundation from which to build upon,” said Capt. Kent A. Paro, NSWU 2’s commanding officer. “Jackal Stone 10 enabled us to capitalize on our previous experiences, gather new lessons learned and better prepare participants to stand-up and operate within a fully-combined SOTG.”

The task of seamlessly bringing all maritime forces together involved much more than just participation in the exercise. Maintaining working relationships throughout the year was also important and the high operational tempo that is always maintained by NSWU 2 proved critical.

“Prior to the exercise, NSWU 2 conducted numerous training engagements with both Lithuanian and Polish special operations forces to exchange tactics, techniques and procedures at the tactical and operational levels. This allowed us to begin Jackal Stone 10 at a higher level; both in our staff actions and in the field,” said Paro. “Our prior efforts during those training engagements, as well as during ongoing operations downrange, significantly contributed to our success here.”

Throughout the exercise, Unit 2 personnel ensured that all operational planning was a “Combined” vice “U.S.-led” effort. One of the exercise goals, in fact, was to prepare allied and partner nations to lead forces at both the SOTG and Combined Joint Special Operations Task Force (CJSOTF) levels.

“From staff updates to mission leads, nothing was driven completely by U.S. desires or leaders,” added Paro. “We were a combined SOTG and our Lithuanian and Polish partners felt it and appreciated the environment within the SOTG.”

Paro said that for the first time ever, SOCEUR exercised a counter-insurgency (COIN) scenario, as well as a ground-level or “bottom-
“From staff updates to mission leads, nothing was driven completely by U.S. desires or leaders. We were a combined SOTG and our Lithuanian and Polish partners felt it and appreciated the environment within the SOTG.”

- Capt. Kent A. Paro
commanding officer, NSWU 2

Clockwise from top left: Members of the Lithuanian, Polish, and U.S. special operation forces use rigid-hulled inflatable boats to conduct visit, board, search, and seizure training in Klaipeda, Lithuania. Polish Special Operation Forces form a defensive perimeter. A Polish naval special operation forces diver prepares to perform underwater dive training. Special Operations Forces conduct fast rope training from a U.S. MH-60 helicopter.

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Clockwise from top left: Members of the Lithuanian, Polish, and U.S. special operation forces use rigid-hulled inflatable boats to conduct visit, board, search, and seizure training in Klaipeda, Lithuania. Polish Special Operation Forces form a defensive perimeter. A Polish naval special operation forces diver prepares to perform underwater dive training. Special Operations Forces conduct fast rope training from a U.S. MH-60 helicopter.
Navy SEALs and SWCCs trained closely with 25 SOF personnel from four South American partner nations Aug. 16-30. The training was part of the U.S. Southern Command (SOUTHCOM) sponsored exercise series, PANAMAX 2010.

The partner nations included Brazil’s Grupamento de Mergulhadores de Combate (GRUMEC), Colombia’s Batallon de Fuerzas Especiales de Infanteria de Marina (BFEIM), Peru’s Fuerza de Operaciones Especiales (FOE), Panama’s National Sea and Air Service (SEAN) and National Police of Panama (PNP).

The exercise, which featured defense forces from 18 nations throughout the Americas, not only focused on the security of the Panama Canal and Central American region, but also emphasized interoperability of a multinational combined/joint task force.

NSW’s role during PANAMAX was to stand up a special operations task unit and conduct exercises that simulate responses to real-world events while operating in a joint warfare environment.

“Each nation has a strategic interest in protecting the Panama Canal,” said the NSW Detachment South officer in charge (OIC). “This exercise gives a comprehensive view of the abilities of each of our partner nations and allows us to engage in very productive training at both the tactical and operational level.”

The NSW personnel and partner forces worked closely in multiple scenarios, which required an established proficiency from each operator to incorporate a multitude of special tactics, including properly patrolling in urban environments, inserting and extracting by way of helicopter, and boarding vessels at sea.

“This exercise also gave the NSW personnel the unique opportunity to gain experience conducting Foreign Internal Defense training, which is a real skill that will be applicable in many theaters and is difficult to replicate without working with partner nations in this capacity,” said the NSW Detachment South OIC.

According to a lieutenant from Peru’s FOE, this exercise presents a unique opportunity for multiple special operations forces to get together and communicate tactically and accomplish a common goal.

“Each nation has a strategic interest in protecting the Panama Canal,” said the FOE lieutenant. “It has been a wonderful opportunity for each of us to work with the Navy SEALs, who we know are a highly skilled force, and to work to instill these same attributes in our troops.”

“This is a great platform for our men to work with highly professional forces and increase our proficiency at all levels,” said the FOE lieutenant. “It has been a wonderful opportunity for each of us to work with the Navy SEALs, who we know are a highly skilled force, and to work to instill these same attributes in our troops.”

With professional growth, friendships and bonds between the participating forces are enhanced.

“It is great to get all of these nations together to complete this type of training,” said a lieutenant from Colombia’s special operations forces. “We not only gain in proficiency by working with each other, but we also build a camaraderie with each other, which is just as important in many cases.”

MC2 Joseph M. Clark
NSWG 2 Public Affairs
Tucked away just inside the southwest Mississippi border lies John C. Stennis Space Center. Although the base is known as NASA’s rocket propulsion testing ground, it has become much more. In 1999, Naval Small Craft Instruction and Technical Training School (NAVSCIATTS) was established and has since used the area as an international training locale where more than 75 countries have participated in training exercises.

While striving to provide international military students with the best and most challenging patrol craft training possible, NAVSCIATTS took delivery of four, 25-foot Security Force Assistance Combat Craft Small (SFA-CCS) from NSW Group 4 Nov. 3.

Group 4 spearheaded the purchase of the SFA-CCS for its subordinate commands: NAVSCIATTS, Special Boat Teams (SBT) 12 and 20. Each are scheduled to receive SFA-CCS under an agreement between USSOCOM, NAVSEA Combatant Craft Program Management Office, and WARCOM.

The new craft are expected to expand Group 4’s capacity to train international students in small craft skills and improve U.S. and partner nation maritime force interoperability worldwide, according to Cmdr. Bill Mahoney, NAVSCIATTS commanding officer.

“Group 4 chose the SFA-CCS specifically to match the craft purchased by partner nations via the Foreign Military Sales (FMS) program and to improve Group 4’s training with partner nation forces both in the United States at NAVSCIATTS, as well as through deployed SBT detachments,” said Mahoney.

The SFA-CCS enables synergy between NAVSCIATTS, SBTs and partner nation forces through NSW Maritime SFA initiatives, according to Mahoney.

“The individualized and basic operational skills the students learn at NAVSCIATTS will increase coastal and over-the-horizon capabilities of partner nation forces and substantively improve their operational and procedural proficiency for more advanced interoperability with SBTs during deployed joint combined exercise training and combined littoral and coastal operations,” he said.

The new SFA-CCS also provide interim capacity for a new Patrol Craft Officer Coastal (PCO-C) course in direct support of both NSW and Theater Special Operations Command (TSOC) SFA engagement initiatives worldwide.

“This strategy bridges Title 22 CONUS training with Title 10 global engagement, as each builds partner capacity that enhances partner nation coastal maritime ability and of equal importance, improves interoperability with U.S. forces,” Mahoney said.

The new PCO-C will pilot at NAVSCIATTS in January 2011 to include 16 partner nation students from U.S. African Command (AFRICOM), U.S. Pacific Command (PACOM) and U.S. Southern Command (SOUTHCOM) areas of responsibility (AOR).

According to Mahoney, pairing the newly purchased SFA-CCS with the innovative PCO-C course will support SOUTHCOM Enduring Friendship and other TSOC maritime initiatives in U.S. Central Command, AFRICOM and PACOM AOR. The international students will return to their respective countries with a significantly improved capability and capacity to conduct underway operations, while technicians will receive maintenance and repair fundamentals to ensure sustainment.

“The defender class safe boats were an excellent choice for the new PCO-C course,” said Chief Special Boat Operator Joey Istre, NAVSCIATTS training chief. “Many partner nation countries already have these boats in their inventory. The training they receive here will be exactly what they need in order to operate their own military craft.”

Based on input from partner nations, as the U.S. shifts away from direct coastal and over-the-horizon capabilities and adopts a more indirect approach, global demand for small craft training is expected to continue to grow.

“Continually and exponentially increasing FMS to partner nations to build their maritime capacity will require commensurate increases in operational and maintenance training as well as synchronization of funding and authorities to optimize U.S. government support to enhance our mutual maritime security worldwide,” Mahoney said.

NAVSCIATTS Public Affairs
The lead SEAL advisor drove up to the group of vehicles parked in the middle of the road. The two suspected terrorists in the target car were actually SEAL team members playing the role of suspected terrorists.

“Vous avez bien fait, mes amis (You have done well, my friends),” the SEAL advisor told the Malian team in French.

At the request of the host nation, the SEALs have designed training scenarios to develop and enhance the counter-terrorism capacities of the Malian special operations teams. This type of training better enables and equips them to secure the vast territory of this west African nation, which has the land mass about twice the size of the state of Texas.

“This Malian unit has made great progress with the training we’ve provided during these past few weeks,” said the SEAL team advisor. “Building upon previous counter-terrorism training provided by other NSW teams to this Malian special operations unit, we’ve reached a threshold where they are well on the path to becoming a premier counter-terrorism unit, capable of addressing the myriad of threats facing this country and region.”

The SEAL advisor explained that previous training focused on developing critical counter-terrorism skills including mission planning, mounted and dismounted patrols as well as reacting to an ambush.

“This time, we’ve notched up the training so that the Malian team can better apply these skills during increasingly challenging scenarios,” he added.

The “real-world” scenarios this Mali unit would have to face are daunting in view of the trans-national threats posed by criminal organizations, trafficking cartels and violent extreme organizations (VEOs) such as Al Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb...
As with all military training engagements, the U.S. SOF team also benefits from the experience and partnerships established during training. “In addition to increasing partner nation counter-terrorism capacity, the TSCTP provides an excellent opportunity for U.S. SOF units to improve proficiencies in their collective tasks as well as serving as a catalyst for language skill development, regional expertise and cultural indoctrination,” said the SEAL commanding officer. "To truly counter the gains made by violent extremist organizations in the Trans-Sahara region, I intend to build a long-lasting relationship with the Malians to increase their capacity to target these organizations within their borders.”

The asymmetrical warfare waged by VEOs in the Trans-Sahara region necessitates an unconventional response. Ensuring that the type of forces employed to carry out these missions are properly trained is the first step. The SEALs’ elite selection process, intense training, unique small team dynamics, and extensive combat experiences make them the ideal teams to help train and mentor such units.

“While small-unit combined training engagements on the African continent have been a traditional mission for U.S. special operation forces for the past 25 years, since 2005 U.S. SOF have conducted these tactical engagements in support of the U.S. State Department and United States Agency International Development’s (USAID) Trans-Saharan Counter-Terrorism Partnership (TSCTP),” said U.S. Army Col. Kurt Crytzer, former commander of Special Operations Command Africa’s Joint Special Operations Task Force-Trans Sahara. “The TSCTP is an integrated, multi-agency initiative and authority. Through TSCTP, the Department of Defense trains, equips, assists and advises Partner Nations.”

OEF (Trans-Sahara) is the military component of TSCTP. It promotes military interoperability, builds and strengthens inter-regional cooperation in the Trans-Sahara region, and is the over-arching authority for the conduct of small-unit military training engagements.

“We accomplish this endeavor by equipping and providing critical skills necessary to combat terrorist organizations and their ideologies,” said Crytzer. “TSCTP is capacity-development.”

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Speaking through an interpreter, a Malian corporal remarked about the partnership established between the SEALs and the new unit. The soldier began with a reference to a saying in Africa that translates to “You cannot know a man from a distance.”

“We learned so much from both this and the last training,” the corporal said. “The SEALs have helped us to become the unit we are today. Now that the SEALs have returned, I am more confident in myself and in my team. Relationships are very important to us and the return of the SEALs shows us that America believes in us.”

By Max R. Blumenfeld

Joint Special Operations Task Force-Trans Sahara Public Affairs

“Building upon previous counter-terrorism training provided by other NSW teams to this Malian special operations unit, we’ve reached a threshold where they are well on the path of becoming a premier counter-terrorism unit, capable of addressing the myriad of threats facing this country and region.”
“Blow through, blow through!”

A Current History: Riverine Task Unit 2
A 2006 Combined Arms Kinetic Engagement

It was supposed to be a turnover operation from Riverine Task Unit 2 to Task Unit 3; a familiarization of the Euphrates River from Habbaniyah to Ramadi. The insurgency in Iraq was at its peak. Conventional units were pushing Al Qaeda members from Ramadi proper to the uncontrolled and ungoverned rural areas along the Euphrates River where they cached weapons, ordnance and kept a low profile.
We patrolled west along the river to recon an area reported to be a hive of insurgent activity. We reduced our patrol speed from 44 knots to 8 knots three kilometers from the target to lower our noise signature and soak the place with our marine forward-looking infrared. Tanto, our joint tactical air controller (JTAC), reported that we had no communication with our fires platform -- a section of F-16s. We could hear them, but they couldn’t hear us. Crypto had rolled the night before and he speculated they probably didn’t have the update. We continued a low-speed patrol approaching the area of interest. The next moment, an explosion from the riverbank rocked the command and control boat (number two in the patrol) 50 meters from its port side. A wave of heat, followed by fragmentation, mud and smoke consumed the special operations riverine craft. AK-47 fire followed the detonation, stitching the water in front of the lead boat. “Contact left!” was shouted from front to back of the patrol as all the port side guns addressed the contact.

The troop chief came across the net saying, “Blow through, blow through,” indicating to the patrol officers of each boat to lay on the throttle, put down some lead and get out of the cone of fire. I looked back to tell Tanto to get some fires online but he was gone. A piece of frag hit him in the shoulder and flat-backed the 225-pound Native American. The aft .50 cal gunner, also our corpsman, had also been hit and slammed under the starboard side gunwale. We broke contact and sent back a situation report to the joint operations center (JOC) in Al Asad that we had been hit by a command-detonated improvised explosive device (IED) and had two wounded with non-life threatening injuries. Our blow through kept us on a patrol heading west.

Tanto was sitting on the engine transom, holding his blood-soaked shoulder, silently reeling from the pain. To get back home, we had to turn around and go back through the contact area, where the potential for another ambush loomed. The confidence of the troop was shaken from the enemy getting the drop on us, and we needed to shift the momentum back in our favor. A preemptive strike was our best option to mitigate the risk of being ambushed again. “Tanto, I need you buddy. It’s time.” The hard Marine F-18 weapons systems officer stood up, “I’m in and ready to kill them all,” he said.

We turned the patrol around. The JOC cycled us a new section of F-16s; we had good communications and four 500-pound bombs at our disposal. Across the net, I said to my troop chief, “This will be a combined arms kinetic engagement. The birds will release their payload just prior to the boats hitting the pipe and going hot. The north and south banks get hammered.” He confirmed the order and pushed out instructions to the patrol officers and gunners.

We came on step. The first two 500-pound bombs rocked the earth and lit the sky. The third hit while we were 200 meters outside the contact area as mud rained and all 20 heavy weapons stations of the four boats came online simultaneously. Three-foot torches exuded from the mini-gun barrels delivering 3,000 rounds a minute. The channel ignited with brush fires. 50 caliber gunners changed out ammo cans with fury. Pump houses along the banks, often used by insurgents to hide and cache weapons, crumbled like cookies. From the air, the F-16 pilots later described the scene as four fire-breathing dragons coming out of Hell. The last bomb hit out of range behind us just as the troop chief called “check fire” and we pushed 44 knots back to base to medically evacuate the wounded. A total of 18,000 rounds and four 500-pound bombs were expended within approximately two minutes of fire suppression.

An accurate battle damage assessment of the enemy could not be obtained because no coalition troops were present in the area to follow up afterward. John “Doc” Cowgar was treated and released back to active duty the next day. Two nights later, Gen. Stanley McChrystal flew in to present Doc with the first SWCC Purple Heart. He gave a speech about the Purple Heart being the first distinguishing device authorized by Gen. George Washington for meritorious action. Tanto was immediately evacuated to Balad after the operation and had his Purple Heart pinned on George Washington for meritorious action. Tanto was immediately evacuated to Balad after the operation and had his Purple Heart pinned on while lying at attention in his hospital bed; later he was flown to Germany for extensive surgery and rehab.

Riverine Task Unit 2 executed 41 riverine missions in 90 days. Surveillance/reconnaissance, direct action and insertion/extraction of joint SOF: Naval Special Warfare’s brown water days reminiscent of Vietnam were back on, this time in a new theater and in a new era.

Lt. William Fiack
former RTU 2 commander

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The hard Marine F-18 weapons systems officer stood up, ‘I’m in and ready to kill them all.’
The bleachers were filled to the brim with veterans and their families. Scouts and Raiders from World War II, Underwater Demolition Team members from Korea and Vietnam, and SEALs from past to present conflicts; frogmen of every stripe sat in awe as a squad of SEALs from SEAL Team 18 fast-roped in from helicopters to remove hostiles from the area.

Yes, it was only a demonstration and the hostiles were role-players, but the crowd cheered as if the operators had just stepped off the battlefield.
Thousands of people showed up to honor the history and heritage of Naval Special Warfare at the National Navy UDT-SEAL Museum’s Veterans Day Ceremony and Muster XXV held Nov. 6-7 in Fort Pierce, Fla.

Events open to the public during the two-day celebration included a 5K race, an auction, a live capabilities demonstration and the ceremony.

Retired SEAL Capt. Michael R. Howard, executive director of the museum, began the ceremony by recognizing frogmen in attendance from every era of NSW, beginning with World War II Scouts and Raiders through the present-day SEALs.

“This is a celebration of Veterans Day, first and foremost,” said Howard. “I feel privileged to be part of the team that created a memorial worthy of the great men it represents.”

Fort Pierce was established as the training site for frogmen in 1943 by Lt. Draper Kaufman, who is considered the father of Naval combat demolition.

“All SEALs, one way or another, can trace their lineage to Draper Kaufman and the training he established here,” said Olson.

The banner event of the weekend was a capabilities demonstration conducted by SEALs from SEAL Team 18, showcasing the specialized training and skills of NSW operators in the 21st century.

The SEALs demonstrated a fast-rope insertion from a hovering helicopter and performed a simulated fire-fight with role-players.

On Sunday, NSW members and their families gathered at the beach just outside of the museum to honor 82 Navy frogmen, active duty and retired, who have passed since last year.

At sunrise, Capt. Robert Bedingfield, retired Navy chaplain, who currently serves as the museum’s chaplain, read the names of all the 82 frogmen and led the attendees in prayer. A detail of SEAL swimmers then delivered the ashes of 10 of the fallen to their final resting place at sea in accordance with their wishes.

Following the Muster, the museum board of directors hosted a dedication ceremony for the new UDT-SEAL memorial located on the grounds of the museum. The two-year memorial project features a wall emblazoned with the names of all 252 frogmen who have died in the line of duty since WWII and a bronze statue of a UDT diver.

“Never has the country asked so much from so few, for so long,” said Olson. “This memorial recognizes the human cost of extraordinary service.”

The friends and family in attendance read a dedication litany in unison as storm clouds formed overhead creating a fitting ambiance.

“We shall never forget, never,” they said.
During the past two years, the number of people using Internet-based capabilities, including social media, user-generated content, social software, web-based e-mail and discussion forums has grown exponentially. While social networking (e.g., YouTube, Facebook, MySpace, Twitter, Google apps) allows us to communicate with friends and family and can reconnect us with old classmates, co-workers or shipmates, it can also increase the amount of personal information that is available to the world. Although we want you to keep in touch with your families and enhance your personal lives through social media, we need you to protect our Force, yourself and your loved ones against increased security risks.

Poor OPSEC and security can have a serious impact on our commands and NSW as a whole. By piecing together information provided on different websites, criminals can use information to, among other things, impersonate Sailors, steal passwords, or gather intelligence about us, our equipment or our missions. Be judicious about what details you post electronically and help ensure your friends and families are careful as well.

Everything you say and do online, even in a personal capacity, reflects upon yourself, your service and NSW.

Here are three best practices for you to think about:

**Consider Operational Security.**
- When communicating via any public channel, you have a personal responsibility to ensure that no information, photographs, video or references are posted online that might give our adversaries an advantage or put military members or families in jeopardy.

**Take Action. Review Your Privacy Settings.**
- Don’t simply accept default settings on social media sites.
- Facebook’s current privacy settings can be viewed and used from a non-government computer at: http://www.slideshare.net/USNavySocialMedia/recommended-facebook-privacy-settings-august-2010.
- Only accept friend requests from people you know directly.
- Choose a complex and unique password for each of your accounts.

**Protect Personal Information.**
- Stress to others, family and friends, the importance of protecting their personal information, and if necessary, help them to secure it.
- No matter how well you safeguard yourself online, you are still at risk.
Getting out? Think Reserves

For many, leaving the Navy is not an easy decision. For NSW operators, it’s arguably one of the hardest decisions they’ll ever make. Their “never quit” attitude goes hand-in-hand with their saying, “Once a team guy, always a team guy.” Although some operators stay on active duty until retirement, while others do get out, some have found the best of both worlds by joining the NSW Reserves.

There are many common misconceptions about the Navy Reserve and, specifically, NSW’s reserve force. The perception of reservists being “Weekend Warriors” is an old one. They are sometimes thought of as less combat-capable and are given more administrative tasks than their active duty counterparts ... all of which are simply not true. NSW Reserve forces are now being equally trained and equipped and taking on missions and tasks in support of geographic combatant commanders globally.
The Naval Reserve has contributed much to NSW’s war fighting efforts. According to Capt. Edward Gallrein, NSW Group 11 commodore, more than 50 percent of the intelligence provided to NSW has come from the Reserves; not just Group 11, SEAL Team 17 and SEAL Team 18.

“Being a Reserve SEAL is not BS, it’s not a joke,” said Special Warfare Operator 1st Class Will Bushelle, SEAL Team 17 point man. “We do a lot of training. We complete full work-up cycles and deploy as fully capable units. I strongly encourage active guys to consider going into the reserves if they are thinking of leaving active duty.”

“We provide operational support to NSW day in and day out, which is not something that is typical of the Navy Reserve,” said Gallrein. “Our people go far and above the normal requirements of the Navy Reserve. SEALs, SWCC, and combat service support train to the same qualifications, skills and standards of their active counterpart and they deploy right alongside them.”

Although there are many reasons for joining the Reserves, the benefits are definitely something to consider.

According to the Naval Reserve website, pay and allowances are determined by the same pay scale used by active duty Navy personnel. As a Reservist, service members earn four days of base pay for two days of training one weekend a month. For example, an E-5 with four years of service would make more than $300 a month by completing one drill weekend. In addition, Reservists receive full pay and allowances for meals and housing during their two-week annual training and for any period in an extended active duty status. Retirement pay eligibility begins at the age of 60.

Medical, life insurance and education benefits are other perks provided to Navy reservists, all of which are important things to consider when leaving the military.

For many, leaving active duty is a hard decision. Many members love the Navy and love their jobs, but make the tough choice for one reason or another. Going to school, spending more time with family or pursuing another career are just a few.

“I joined the reserves because, I know it may sound cheesy, but I really enjoy serving,” said Bushelle. “I didn’t leave the teams because I was tired of being in the service. For me, it was part of the plan when I joined the Navy. I wanted to serve, finish one enlistment and earn some money for college. It was a really hard decision for me to leave the teams, but it was part of my original plan and I decided to stick with it. I knew if I didn’t, I would never go back to school.”

Special Warfare Operator 1st Class Mike Nobles, SEAL Team 17 leading petty officer, made the tough decision to leave active duty 14 years ago.

“In 2002, I had a newborn in the house and I left active duty so I could spend more time with my family,” Nobles said. “I was gone so many days for training. That’s just part of being a SEAL.”

Camaraderie and friendships forged within the NSW community is one of the biggest reasons why many who leave active duty join the Reserves.

“One thing that I’ve realized is I’ve never found the caliber of people that I enjoy being around more than team guys,” said Bushelle. “When you get out of the Navy, more times than not, you end up missing your brothers. I’ve never talked to a single team guy that has not felt that.”

Becoming a NSW Reservist has many benefits and can offer Sailors the flexibility not normally available while serving on active duty.

“I love being in the reserves because it’s the best of both worlds,” said Bushelle. “I get to be with my family and have a regular nine to five job, but I still get to do deployments and training. It’s also good because just when you get tired of your regular job or feel like you need a break from the Navy, you get one.”

Once every six years, a NSW Reserve operator is required to become active for one year. During that year, the Team will complete one work-up cycle and one deployment. During the five-year dwell time, operators are required to drill one weekend a month and complete their two week active training. The operators’ deployment cycles are provided well in advance.
so the service member can make arrangements for and be prepared to go active.

“There is a known rotation now,” said Nobles. “You know you are going to get good training. You know you’re going to deploy and you know all that is going to happen well in advance. The five years of dwell time gives you plenty of time to maintain your qualifications, plan for your family, job and anything else in your life.”

“My company has been very supportive of my recalls,” said Bushelle. “The Service Member’s Protection Act covers all your bases. I don’t know anyone who has had significant problems, but there is always sacrifice.”

The National Committee for Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve also acts on behalf of reservists. Its mission is to foster solid working relationships between employers and the Reserve components of the military.

Many operators are faced with other challenges such as location. Bushelle, a resident of Nevada, travels to San Diego to drill. In the past, he would drive to San Diego once a month, but now, NSW offers flex drilling, which enables an operator to drill four to six days in a row and not have to drill for a few months.

“It’s really the time that counts and it makes it a little more flexible for us,” Bushelle said.

“For Sailors on a normal dwell status, we don’t make everyone come in on a drill weekend,” said Gallrein. “That’s something that is done by the legacy reserve force. Our personnel come in when they need to. We are very unorthodox and we treat every person like a unique, individual weapon system. They are that important to us. I keep three books in my office, ‘Message to Garcia’, ‘Who Moved My Cheese’ and ‘Raving Fans.’ I’ve told my staff that we have to make our reservists raving fans.”

Aside from drill weekends, Reserve operators receive support from active components when it comes to maintaining qualifications.

“At any time, we can connect with any SEAL training that is happening,” said Nobles. “For instance, one time after work, I found out that TRADET (Training Detachment) was doing a night dive. I knew I needed to get that signed off of my JQR, so I was able to go over there, with no notice, and get that done.”

Perfecting the structure of the NSW Reserve community has taken some time, but many feel that the structural changes made while standing up Group 11 and its subordinate units were undoubtedly the right decisions.

“When I first joined the reserves in 2002, each SEAL team had a reserve unit,” said Nobles. “At that time, it was hard to get training, because the only way to get it, was for an active duty guy to volunteer his time to set up the training. Setting up the training is pretty intensive, especially considering guys would have to come in on the weekend to help us out when they have so few days off throughout the year. Now we have a huge structure to support us in ST17, ST18 and Group 11.

“The way we are doing things now is definitely the way to go,” said Bushelle. “Before, as in individual augment, you didn’t get as much training with the team. In a lot of cases, you used to get thrown in during the middle of the work-up or right before the deployment. One of the times I went, I literally met the guys two to three weeks before we deployed and then did a full combat tour.”

Bushelle explained that the team he is training with now is the same group of guys with whom he will deploy. That will give them time to mesh and become more familiar with the way they collectively operate.

The Reserve and active teams have a few differences in their training cycles. Prior to deployment, the reserve unit level training is significantly reduced compared to active units. Although the training time is condensed, very little training is actually missed.

Bushelle explained that by eliminating down time like weekends or a gear week, they have been able to successfully consolidate training time. “We have all done platoons. There are no new guys. There is a lot you don’t have to worry about that you would have to consider if you had new guys,” he said.

While being part of the Navy Reserves can be a juggling act at times, thousands of Sailors continue to serve day to day, year to year.

“There are very few people who I can remember who have left the Reserves prior to retirement,” said Bushelle. “To me, that is a pretty good litmus test of how the reserves are going and how much the guys enjoy it.”

For more information on the Navy Reserve, visit the website at www.navymarinecorps.com.
Runners who try it, love it. The equipment is flexible, mesh and resembles a ballet slipper on steroids. Some claim it strengthens muscles and improves running times and balance.

The fitness trend that has Navy and Naval Special Warfare (NSW) fitness fanatics buzzing is barefoot running and the “shoes” that go with it.

The concept is simple: Get back to running the way man did before the shoe. No support, no cushion, just the muscles that propel the body and the way the terrain impacts them.

Barefoot running is not a new concept. It has been known in the running community since 1960 when Ethiopian Abebe Bikila won the Olympic marathon running barefoot. The practice was made more popular with the publishing of “Born to Run” written by athlete and runner Christopher McDougall. The book focuses on members of the Tarahumara Indian tribe in Mexico who run long distances sans traditional running footwear.

The latest craze of ditching traditional footwear for minimalistic shoe designs now available resulted from someone’s idea to design shoes to protect the foot while still getting the benefits of running barefoot.

Part of the frenzy has been fueled by an argument that modern-day running shoes have not done anything to prevent injuries, while barefoot enthusiasts claim that running barefoot helps prevent injuries and improves running times. This argument has created a buzz among running circles and has runners around the world weighing the pros and cons of running with shoes versus running barefoot.

Sports podiatrist and biomechanist, Dr. Kevin Kirby recently commented on barefoot running in an interview with Runner’s World magazine. Kirby, a runner of 40 years, explained that the action of running causes injuries.

“It’s the act of running that causes injuries – the hard surfaces, hitting the ground with two to three times your body weight,” Kirby wrote. “Those forces are going to cause injuries whether shoes are involved or not.”

While studies have not concluded whether or not shoes are the problem, Logistic Support Unit 1 Physical Therapist, Lt. Sarah Thomas advocates a slow introduction to barefoot and minimalistic running.

“The biggest thing I stress to my patients who engage in barefoot running is moderation and variation,” she said. “At an early age, we are not trained as barefoot runners; we are trained with shoes. We are used to walking the way we do and running the way we do. So, a heel striker that starts to train as a barefoot runner ends up with a lot of associated injuries that are really related to doing something too fast too soon.”
The opposite can be true as well. One can injure him or herself easily with poor training habits. Lt. Joshua Thompson, special projects and facilities engineer at Naval Special Warfare Command, underwent knee surgery for an injury caused by simple over usage and poor training habits.

According to Thompson, his knee injury was a result of poor training habits and pushing his body too far. Thompson also found that how he was running was causing pain as well. Heel striking, a running technique where one plants one’s heel and rolls up to the toe, may also be to blame. Thompson, like more than 75 percent of Americans, ran this way. This causes the leg to experience a collision like force up to three times one’s body weight about 1,000 times during a mile run. This force sends a shock wave from the foot to the hip that over time can result in injury.

While recovering, Thompson had to relearn everything he had known about how to run.

“I had to train myself to run properly,” said Thompson. “I had to start paying attention to my foot strike, where my foot was tracking; the position of your foot as it reaches the ground.”

The claim that barefoot running improves strength, balance and run times is still being studied, but it is not stopping many NSW personnel from buying the popular shoes.

Thompson, now back to running, is an active user of minimalistic shoes. Heeding Thomas’s advice, he started slowly and has noticed results.

“The first couple of days I didn’t run in the shoes, but I walked everywhere in them,” said Thompson. “After wearing them I noticed a lot of muscle fatigue soreness and my feet were aching, but I attribute that to using muscles in the foot and calf that haven’t been used for a while. After running in them for a couple of months, I noticed a big difference. I love these shoes. I can run for longer and I’ve actually gotten faster.”

These types of shoes along with running barefoot force a runner to change one’s running technique. The new technique runners adjust to is what is known as forefoot running where one runs on the mid section of the foot instead of the heel. “You have to run on your forefoot, so it’s very different,” said Chief Special Warfare Operator Scott Atherton, a current user of the minimalistic footwear. “You actually have to pay attention to how you’re landing. As soon as you stop thinking about it, you start to land on your heels and immediately you can feel it because there is no padding. It’s just a piece of rubber under your foot, so you have to be careful.”

Until more conclusive research is done, the Navy’s official stance is cautionary. Sailors can wear these types of shoes during physical training, but not during the Navy physical fitness assessment. This caution, however, does not stop operators like Atherton who are interested in the promise of less injuries and better run times.

“If it’s true that barefoot running means less than my body weight hitting the ground as opposed to three times my body weight, I’m all for it,” said Atherton.
One of the most critical outposts for American forces in eastern Afghanistan is Forward Operating Base Lagman in Zabul Province. On Nov. 13, base officials dedicated a building there in honor of Special Operator 3rd Class Denis C. Miranda who was killed in action in September.

Miranda and 11 others were inserting into a village in Ayatalah via a UH-60 Black Hawk when their aircraft crashed on final approach. Miranda, three NSW teammates and five other personnel died in the crash. Three others were injured.

After only two months since the tragic incident, the forward surgical team at Lagman chose to name its trauma center after Miranda.

According to Lt. Cmdr. Craig Knott, the medical officer for the Naval Special Warfare task unit, the trauma center was named after Miranda for two primary reasons.

“After the helo crash, it just seemed to make sense that the facility be named after Denis,” said Knott. “The fact that he was a member of a SEAL Team that operated close to this trauma center and also that he was a prior hospital corpsman. Naming this facility in his honor seemed like the right thing to do.”

During the ceremony, teammates and colleagues took turns telling stories of Miranda, defining his character as a person and as a talented special operator.

“Denis was always a guy you could go to for advice,” said one of his teammates. “He would always give you a straight answer even if it wasn’t what you wanted to hear. He was also humble enough to take advice. I think it is fitting that a medical clinic bears his name. I know he would appreciate the gesture, just as his family, loved ones, and everyone here does.”

NSW leadership echoed the words of Miranda’s teammates.

“In the special warfare community, Denis will be a battle scar on our legacy that we will wear very proudly,” said Navy Capt. Timothy Szymanski, NSW Group 2 commanding officer. “Those who knew Denis know he lived by our sacred oath. This is a very fitting tribute that I am very, very proud of.”

The dedication not only honored the sacrifice of Miranda; it also allowed the opportunity to recognize the service and dedication of all service members operating in Afghanistan.

“We are all standing side by side with our Coalition partners, we are all standing side by side with Afghan National Security Forces trying to make a difference for the people of this country,” said Szymanski. “That’s what Denis was doing here in Afghanistan and that’s how we’ll remember him.”

Although the Miranda family was not in attendance, it is reported that they beamed with pride upon hearing the news.

“As a family of first generation immigrants, Denis has brought honor to our name,” said Miranda’s brother Kevin. “Our family is very humbled and grateful to all of those who have helped our family and especially grateful for this gesture.”

Miranda’s ashes were recently flown to their homeland of Argentina accompanied by his father Christian, his mother Patricia, his two brothers Kevin and Alan, and Denis’ fiancée Hospital Corpsman 2nd Class Lacy Cromwell. There, his Argentinean relatives will pay their respects to Miranda for the last time before his remains are brought back to the United States.
In the early morning, high atop Mt. Soledad, overlooking the Pacific Ocean and all of San Diego, the sun broke through the clouds and shined upon a giant cross. The highlighted monument stood tall above the tiered marble plaques that honor the memories and sacrifices of living and deceased military personnel. As the wind unfurled the American flag, the family and friends of Master-at-Arms 2nd Class (SEAL) Michael A. Monsoor gathered together at Mt. Soledad Veterans Memorial for a ceremony to honor his life and dedication to his country.

Monsoor, a member of West Coast-based SEAL Team 3, bravely gave his life to save his teammates when he threw himself on a grenade protecting them from the blast during counter-terrorism operations in Ramadi, Iraq Sept. 29, 2006. Monsoor was posthumously awarded the Medal of Honor for his valiant and selfless actions by President George W. Bush March 31, 2008.

During the ceremony, Monsoor’s mother Sally was presented the memorial plaque by her son’s troop commander, Lt. Cmdr. John “Jocko” Willink, and Bruce Bailey, the Mt. Soledad Memorial Association president.

While the pain is still raw for Sally, she said she is full of gratitude. “I just appreciate everything—everything that the whole country has done, like saving us through letters and e-mails and memorials to Michael,” she said. “I can’t thank them enough for doing what they’ve done for Mike.”

Willink spoke at the ceremony on behalf of his SEAL Team 3 teammates and recalled the moment he received word about Monsoor’s injuries. “His [the reporting watchstander] voice trembled slightly, and he told me that Mikey was hurt very, very badly,” Willink said. “He told me that he didn’t think Mikey was going to make it.”

“I believe that a handful of courageous men or woman, with strong will and character, the right training, the right experience, and the right knowledge can change the course of history,” said Rear Adm. Edward Winters, commander, Naval Special Warfare Command. “Maybe more important than that, they can preserve the course of history.”

“Let there be no doubt, Mike was born for combat. He loved it,” said Willink. “Having been raised by such an incredible and closely knit family meant that he brought the highest values to the battlefield with him. He was courageous to the point of being almost fearless. He was respectful to his comrades-in-arms, to the local innocent citizens of Iraq, and even to his enemy, whom he never underestimated. He was a natural leader.”

Willink also said, “This tribute here, high on the summit of this mountaintop, is very fitting. It means that Mike is once again elevated above us on the high ground, standing his over-watch, defending and protecting us all. We will never forget the sacrifice he made for his teammates, for his fellow servicemen, for our country and for God.”

As the early afternoon sun warmed up the marble plaques of the fallen, a group of T-34 trainer aircraft flew overhead executing a ‘missing man’ formation. As the aircraft approached, his family members watched and cried. The formation served as a symbol that the memory of Master-at-Arms 2nd Class (SEAL) Michael Monsoor will never be forgotten.

Monsoor graduated BUD/S training with Class 250 on Sept. 2, 2004, as one of its top performers. After BUD/S, he completed advanced SEAL training courses including parachute training at the Basic Airborne School in Fort Benning, Ga., cold weather combat training in Kodiak, Alaska, and six-months of SEAL Qualification Training in Coronado, Calif. He graduated in March 2005. The following month, his rating changed from Quartermaster to Master-at-Arms, and he was assigned to Delta Platoon, SEAL Team 3.

Monsoor was described as a “quiet professional” and a “fun-loving guy” by those who knew him. He was buried at Fort Rosecrans National Cemetery in San Diego, Oct. 12, 2006.

Monsoor was the second SEAL to be awarded the Medal of Honor since 9/11 for his courageous actions in the line of duty, and one of 37 NSW SEALs and combat support Sailors who have died in support of Operations Iraqi and Enduring Freedom.
Titanium Tridents

90% FLESH +
10% METAL = 100% SEAL

Picture yourself swimming, running or jumping without both of your legs, or firing a weapon without all of your fingers. It’s hard to imagine, but for two active-duty SEALs it is a reality. Both operators may have lost parts of themselves physically, but they haven’t lost the will or determination to continue doing what they love to do — fight for their country.

Top: Brian Hughes cuts the SEAL’s molding. Bottom: from left, Brian Hughes, Robert DeRohan, Matt Griebel, and the SO1 wait for the impression of the SEAL’s leg to dry.
Both SEALs are currently taking part in a program sponsored by the SEAL Warrior Fund and Quality of Life Plus (QL+). The goal of these groups is to create new prosthetic limbs and hands for active-duty SEALs. The project combines biomedical engineering with mechanical engineering, creating state-of-the-art, multi-purpose biomechanical prosthetic limbs.

“We believe the gains made on these men will easily provide a new insight on the development and maintenance of prosthetics for many SEALs to come,” said Mark Donald, military and veteran liaison for QL+.

One of the program participants is an East Coast-based Special Warfare Operator 1st Class (SO1) and the other is a West Coast-based Chief Special Warfare Operator (SOC). Both men were specifically chosen for the program because of their determination to stay on active duty.

For SO1, his story began when he lost the function of his leg to an improvised explosive device (IED) during a July 2007 counter-terrorism mission in Iraq. Although badly injured, he refused to succumb to his injuries and did not want his SEAL career to end.

SOC’s story is similar, although his injury was more different. He was injured in a training accident at Camp Pendleton, Calif. in mid-December 2004 when a training charge was detonated in his hands by another platoon member. He lost his left hand down to the wrist and his right hand had multiple fractures and burns. In addition, he lost the tip of his right thumb.

“He was hospitalized for six days, but had started rehabilitation within eight-weeks,” said Erika the SOC’s wife. “He went through about three months of intensive rehabilitation, before he went on his first workup in the spring 2005,” she said. “He deployed in the fall that same year.”

Throughout the deployment, SOC experienced a lot of pain in his hand, according to Erika. He also felt that he had to work harder and needed to make many adjustments to his daily routine, she said.

After a period of adaptation, SOC learned to master his injury.

“Now, his fellow team members forget that he is even missing part of his hand because of how well he is doing,” his wife said.

SOC came out to Cal Poly for a fitting for his new prosthetic and to check out the lab in June of this year. He was having trouble performing certain tasks with his current prosthetic such as; picking up a magazine case, gaining a firm grasp on a flashlight and holding a gunstock.

“I have wanted to be a SEAL ever since I can remember and I refused to let this end my career. I battled to stay active,” said SO1. “I was also told by the doctors that I would not be able to walk for a year and a half; in nine-months, not only was I walking, I was also running.”

SO1 won his fight to stay active, but is still faced with the challenges of his prior injury.

Currently, SO1 needs to carry two separate prosthetic legs with him while he is operating. He uses one for day-to-day use and land operations and a separate prosthetic for operations involving swimming.

“The prosthetic I use for swimming works well, but having one that could do both swimming and running would be great. On a positive note, when you are in the field, the most important thing is to keep your feet dry and I only have to worry about one,” said SO1. “Plus, socks go a lot further.”

SO1 will soon only need one prosthetic that will do both thanks to work done by Quality of Life+. Both SEALs were introduced to the program when they met Donald.

“Mark asked me if I wanted some cool stuff made for my leg and I said sure,” said SO1.

While visiting California Polytechnic State University (Cal Poly), SO1 had a fiberglass mold made of his leg.

“We did this because it will give us a good design (of shape and size of his leg). We also did this because of his schedule. Creating a mold will help us ensure that when we attach the mechanisms to the leg, it fits properly,” said Brian Hughes, a masters student in biomedical engineering and QL+ team member.

SOC’s story is similar, although his injury was quite different. He was injured in a training accident at Camp Pendleton, Calif. in mid-December 2004 when a training charge was detonated in his hands by another platoon member. He lost his left hand down to the wrist and his right hand had multiple fractures and burns. In addition, he lost the tip of his right thumb.

“He was hospitalized for six days, but had started rehabilitation within eight-weeks,” said Erika the SOC’s wife. “He went through about three months of intensive rehabilitation, before he went on his

“On a positive note, when you are in the field, the most important thing is to keep your feet dry and I only have to worry about one. “Plus, socks go a lot further.”

- East Coast Navy SEAL
The SEAL community is justifiably proud of its Ethos. It describes high ideals and provides a beacon of values to guide SEALs through the challenges we face as a nation at war. I fear, however, that some SEALs may not be getting regular exposure to the Ethos and without that regular exposure, some SEALs may instead be falling under the influence of the more seductive ‘SEAL Mythos’ – the myth and the legends that the public has come to believe about who SEALs are, what they do and what they stand for.

The SEAL Ethos describes a quiet professional with impeccable integrity, who is physically and mentally tough, compassionate, proud of his heritage, his training and his teammates; he is a gifted and talented leader, humbly ready to risk all for the benefit of his team, his service and his country. The SEAL Mythos speaks more of bravado than quiet professionalism, a more ‘in-your-face,’ rather than humble servant of our country. It also portrays SEALs as amazing fighters, experts in the full range of commando skills, incredibly strong and fit, who love the fighting, violence and killing of war. The SEAL Mythos describes how SEALs can kill you in a nanosecond with their bare hands (and not think twice about it). When these highly trained and efficient killers are unleashed against the enemy, there just isn’t enough kryptonite to stop them.

Those of us who are, or have been, inside the culture of the SEAL Teams, chuckle at this fantastic portrayal of the superhero of the SEAL Mythos – because our insider knowledge knows the truth. But, we also recognize that the SEAL Mythos has been an important recruiting tool and strong motivator to help young men get through BUD/S training and into the SEAL teams. BUD/S instructors continue to motivate trainees with that vision of their future selves - superhero commandos who can (metaphorically) leap tall buildings in a single bound.

But what about the SEAL Ethos? It depicts a very different character – one who doesn’t need or concern himself with the adulation of an adoring public. The SEAL Ethos describes someone who dedicates himself to the dictates of profession, family and community. ‘A common man, with uncommon desire to succeed … always ready to defend those who are unable to defend themselves … who doesn’t advertise the nature of <his> work, nor seek recognition for <his> actions,’ who must earn his privilege to serve every day. While the SEAL Mythos is about the SEAL as a superhero, the SEAL Ethos is about the SEAL as a humble servant to his profession, his teammates, community and nation.

This is not a new issue. We can go back nearly 3000 years and look at Homer’s “The Iliad” to see the warrior of the SEAL Ethos in Hector, a great warrior, but also a great citizen, husband, father and son – an honorable man who fought for his city and his community. We see the warrior of the SEAL Mythos in Achilles, half-man and half-god (a true ‘superhero’), a great fighter, but a selfish and ego-driven prima donna who fought primarily for personal glory.

I believe there is a moral development process in becoming the SEAL described in the SEAL Ethos. While the trainee and young SEAL may be attracted to the ideal in the SEAL Mythos, the more mature SEAL aspires to live up to the ideal in the SEAL Ethos. We eventually realize that we are not, nor ever will be, superheroes. Most of us who choose to make being a SEAL our ‘life’s work,’ become more humble with time, and are dismissive of the SEAL Mythos. We are most proud of the desired qualities included in the SEAL Ethos.

Psychologists all know that for ideas and ideals to take root, they need to be repeated – again and again. The Marine Corps knows this. In the book “Built to Last: Successful Habits of Visionary Companies” by Jim Collins and Jerry I. Porras, the authors point out that in the best corporations, the values of the organization are repeated in every speech, in every public declaration by all the leaders of the organization. However, in most organizations, vision statements and idealist aspirations are normally framed and placed in a lobby or nice conference room, and are rarely discussed, consulted or reinforced. Is this happening to the SEAL Ethos?

I’m told by young SEALs, that after they graduate from training and report to the teams, they rarely hear the SEAL Ethos again, apart from vague references to it – like to the Declaration of Independence. I believe SEALs need to have the values of the SEAL Ethos explicitly and repeatedly reinforced. I challenge our leaders to use the SEAL Ethos to its full potential to counter balance the powerful ‘siren song’ of the SEAL Mythos.

A challenge to SEAL leaders: An hour with a platoon, task unit or team, examining the nuances, the implications, and responsibility inherent in the SEAL Ethos, will communicate to your men what you value and stand for. Specific values in the SEAL Ethos should be repeatedly referenced in remarks to troops, families and others. Finally, I challenge every SEAL, starting in BUD/S, to memorize the SEAL Ethos.

One final point: Our values and ethos are not what we say, teach in a class or write in a document. Our real values and ethos are reflected in what we do, how we live, what we reward, how we treat each other and how we treat people outside of our immediate circle of family, friends and culture.

Bob Schoultz retired after spending 30 years as a NSW officer. He is currently the director of the Master of Science in Global Leadership School of Business Administration at the University of San Diego.
There are those of us whose idea of the ultimate physical challenge is the 26.2-mile Boston Marathon. And then there is Dean Karnazes. Karnazes has run 226.2 miles nonstop; he has completed the 135-mile Badwater Ultramarathon across Death Valley National Park — considered the world’s toughest footrace — in 130 degree weather; and he is the only person to complete a marathon to the South Pole in running shoes (and probably the only person to eat an entire pizza and a whole cheesecake while running).

Karnazes is an ultramarathoner: a member of a small, elite, hard-core group of extreme athletes who race 50 miles, 100 miles, and longer. They can run 48 hours or more without sleep, barely pausing for food or water or even to use the bathroom. They can scale mountains, in brutally hot or cold weather, pushing their bodies, minds, and spirits well past what seems humanly possible.

“Ultramarathon Man” is Dean Karnazes’s story: the mind-boggling adventures of his nonstop treks through the hell of Death Valley, the incomprehensible frigidity of the South Pole, and the breathtaking beauty of the mountains and canyons of the Sierra Nevada. Karnazes captures the euphoria and out-of-body highs of these adventures.

With an insight and candor rarely seen in sports memoirs, he also reveals how he merges the solitary, manic, self-absorbed life of hard-core ultrarunning with a full-time job, a wife, and two children, and how running has made him who he is today.

TIME magazine named him as one of the “Top 100 Most Influential People in the World.” Men’s Fitness hailed him as the fittest man on the planet. An internationally recognized endurance athlete and bestselling author, Dean Karnazes has pushed his body and mind to inconceivable limits.

Among his many accomplishments, he has run 350 continuous miles, foregoing sleep for three nights. He’s run across Death Valley in 120 degree temperatures, and he’s run a marathon to the South Pole in negative 40 degrees. On ten different occasions, he’s run a 200-mile relay race solo, racing alongside teams of twelve. Dean Karnazes has swum the San Francisco Bay, scaled mountains, bike raced for 24-hours straight, and surfed the gigantic waves off the coast of Hawaii and California. His long list of competitive achievements include winning the world’s toughest footrace, the Badwater Ultramarathon, running 135 miles nonstop across Death Valley during the middle of summer.

50/50: SECRETS I LEARNED RUNNING 50 MARATHONS IN 50 DAYS -- AND HOW YOU TOO CAN ACHIEVE SUPER ENDURANCE!

Dean Karnazes has run 350 continuous miles through three sleepless nights, ordered pizza during long runs, and inspired fans the world over with his adventures. So what does a guy like this do when he wants to face the ultimate test of endurance? He runs 50 marathons in 50 states— in 50 consecutive days.

With little more than a road map and a caravan packed with fellow runners and a dedicated crew, he set off on a tour that took him through a volcanic canyon in Maui in high humidity and 88-degree heat; to an elevation gain of almost 4,000 feet at the Tecumseh Trail Marathon in Bloomington, Indiana; to a severed moose leg found alongside an Anchorage, Alaska trail that compelled him to sprint for safety.

Now in this heart-pounding book, Karnazes reveals how he pulled off this unfathomable feat with a determination that defied all physical limitations. But he also goes beyond the story of the Endurance 50 marathons to share his invaluable secrets and advice for athletes of all levels. These are the tips that kept him going during the 1,310 miles he covered and 160,000 calories he burned while averaging sub-four-hour marathons and often sleeping fewer than four hours each night.

Packed with practical advice and including training regimens, 50/50 will inspire you no matter what your fitness goal is, whether it’s simply walking around the block, running a 10K, or completing yet another Ironman.

Phillip "Moki" Martin, a Hawaii native, graduated from UDTRA Class 35 in 1965 as an enlisted Sailor. He participated in operations during the Vietnam War such as Operation Thunderhead before moving on to be a BUD/S instructor. He is well known in the NSW community for his work establishing and managing the Super Frog and Super SEAL triathlons. In 1982, his career as a SEAL came to a halt when a bicycle accident on the way to work made him a quadriplegic. With medical and family support, he regained independence and limited movement in his arms and legs. He rebuilt his life, graduating college and becoming a successful artist. He continues his support of NSW by instructing "Lessons Learned in Vietnam" for the Strategy and Tactics Department Junior Officer training course at the Naval Special Warfare Center along with being the coordinator for the races he established.

How did you get through the initial shock of your injury and the months that followed?

My injury made me dig back all the way to my training class. I wondered, 'How am I going to deal with this?' You have to remember the things that you loved to do in the past and have that goal of trying to get back to doing those things. I relied a lot on three things when I got injured. One is family; they stuck by me. Another was my good friends in the Teams. The last thing I relied on - a kind of mind over matter thing. Every night I would try to move my legs. I found that it is important to the body to still try to move. The body still tries to make those connections to your limbs and trying to move them helps with recovery.

What advice would you give to other injured SEALs?

First of all, keep your head up all the time. It's tough for guys to recover, especially when they are 22 years old. They think "Now what do I do?" You just have to look around and ask, "What can I do?"

When I was injured, the technology wasn't there. So I thought, "Well I am not going to be able to run around and be a SEAL anymore, what can I do?" I found art and I challenged my disability with it and I enjoy it. I wasn't going to sit around and say, "Why me?" You get over it and find something more to do or another challenge. My basic training with UDT gave me the kind of drive to continue life. It may have been different if I didn't have a wife like mine and my family.

What do you say to an injured SEAL's family?

How are they affected?

When someone has a paralysis, that person is not the only person that goes through the rehab. Everybody around that person goes through it. What will make it worse is if one side or the other starts breaking down. The friends, families and significant others have to stick with it. It's going to be hard. They are going to have to deal with a change in their plans. Life changes, but it doesn't mean life stops. For some, it's easy and for some it's not, but as life moves on, they will move on, too.

Another important thing when talking to a newly injured person is emphasizing that the technology is there as well. I was 40 years old when I was injured and after hearing what the doctors said, I thought, "15 or 20 years ago, they put a man on the moon. Anything is possible."

What are you the most proud of in your NSW career?

I guess that I am the most proud of that instruction that I left in the teams and that impact that I feel I made. More recently, I am very proud of the race that I started while I was in the teams. Super Frog and Super SEAL are going on their 33rd year. It's gone from having 80 or 100 racers to 1,200 or 2,500 racers respectively. And the racers are not just SEALs; they come from all over the world. I think that in the long run, what I will be remembered for the most are those races and the charities of NSW that the race benefits.

Who are some people that have inspired you?

There are a lot of people who still do many things, and their injuries don't stop them -- Steven Hawkins, Bob Kerry, an amputee member of Congress, Chuck Close, who is an artist out of New York who paints with his mouth. All these people still live on and do what they love. Life doesn't stop, it just changes a little.
**OVERVIEW**

The following is a Tactical Decision Exercise – a role playing exercise in which you will be asked to make a combat decision in a limited amount of time. The goal is to improve your tactical decision making, pattern recognition and communication skills. There is no right answer.

In each issue of Ethos, the reader’s position in the patrol will change. However, the specified title does not exclude others from completing the exercise – every leader in the patrol should be familiar with all levels of command. Additionally, the scenarios are intentionally vague so make any assumptions that are essential to complete the exercise. Read the situation as many times as needed before moving on to the requirement.

**SITUATION**

You are a fire team leader in a SEAL platoon deployed off the coast of Monteveda. From the battle group, you conduct operations against the leadership of an international terrorist organization that is using the remote coastal cities as a safe haven from American military pressure in their native country. Your platoon plans an over-the-beach assault on one such leader who is temporarily residing in Navion, a town of 500 people sympathetic to the terrorists’ cause. Your platoon commander’s intent is to capture this terrorist leader in order to develop future targeting of the network.

After departing the battle group via MK-V boats, your platoon transits to the insertion point and clears the beach with maritime and aerial sensors. Your fire team swims to shore, conducts a beach reconnaissance and seizes a high ground position in order to watch over the rest of your platoon’s movement to shore. After the remaining fire teams enter the water, you see the headlights of a vehicle depart Navion and head east on Route Orange toward you. You attempt to radio your platoon commander but are unable to reach him. As the vehicle approaches, you identify it as a pick-up truck with an automatic weapon mounted in the bed. The vehicle stops north east of you and opens fire in your direction. The fire is ineffective but you sense the enemy knows you are in the area because you see the headlights of a similar vehicle depart Navion and race east down Route Olive. You are still unable to reach your platoon commander, but establish good radio communications with the MK-V boats, the Naval surface fires officer aboard the battle group, and the deployed rotary wing detachment on alert. What do you do?

**REQUIREMENT**

In five minutes, write down your orders to your fire team and any actions you would take. Provide the rationale and an overlay of your plan of action.

This Tactical Decision Exercise does not intentionally represent any previous, current, or planned U.S. military operations.

Have an idea for the next TDE? Send your input to tde@navsoc.socom.mil.
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We will never forget