

TW-1 says goodbye to Taylor

By Penny Randall

Editor

A new commodore took the helm of Training Air Wing One on Aug. 2, following an official change of command ceremony in the hangar on board Naval Air Station Meridian.

Capt. David Lobdell relieves Capt. Keith Taylor, who served as commodore of Training Air Wing One since Sept. 18, 2009.

"I was thrilled when I found out I was coming to Meridian," Lobdell said. "Capt. Taylor has done a phenomenal job running TW-1, and I'm grateful to him for handing over such a smooth running organization. I appreciate this opportunity to serve my country and train the finest aviators in the world."

The guest speaker for the event was Rear Admiral William Sizemore, Chief of Naval Air Training.

During Capt. Taylor's tour, Training Air Wing One flew more than 70,000 flight hours, meeting all production goals, while reducing student aviator time-to-train from 61 to an unprecedented 48 weeks.

Capt. Taylor also initiated a comprehensive review of Chief of Naval Air Training's strategic vision, spearheading an innovative effort to identify training cost efficiencies by "downloading" training from higher cost-per-flight-hour platforms to lower cost platforms, with a projected savings of \$400 million across the Future Years Defense Program.

Working in concert with Naval Strike Air Warfare Center and the fleet, he authored a joint Tactical Standing Operating Procedure for the Strike Training Wings, bringing the training squadrons in line with fleet standing operations and enabling a seamless transition from Training Command to the Fleet Replacement Squadron.

Capt. Taylor's vast tactical experience was the driving force behind a comprehensive Air Combat Maneuvering syllabus rewrite, bringing the outdated training from 1970's tactics into the 21st century.

"When I took command of TW-1, I had three goals – mission, safety and self," Taylor told the audience. "Mission - to train the best aviators; safety - to keep everyone and everything at Training Air Wing One returning to work each day in a safe condition; and self - to take care of each and every person who works at TW-1. They have all been met in spades. This has been the most rewarding tour for Carrie and me. We have loved Meridian's 'Southern Charm' and will never forget

our time here."

Captain Taylor's next assignment will be Deputy Commander, Naval Strike and Air Warfare Center, NAS Fallon, Nev.

Capt. Lobdell comes to us from Commander Naval Forces Europe / Naval Forces Africa / Sixth Fleet, where he served as the Strike Operations Officer and spearheaded the Ballistic Missile Defense capability in that theater.

Capt. Lobdell graduated from the U.S. Merchant Marine Academy with a Bachelor of Science degree in Marine Engineering and a Coast Guard Third Assistant Engineer License.

He flew in the training command at NAS Corpus Christi and NAS Kingsville, Texas, and earned his wings in July 1990. He then transferred to NAS Miramar, Calif., for fleet replacement training in the F-14A Tomcat with VF-124.

Upon completion of training, Capt. Lobdell reported to VF-111 with CVW-15 aboard the USS Kitty Hawk (CV-63) in October 1991. During his tour with the "Sundowners" he participated in a repositioning cruise around the Horn and two Western Pacific deployments.

In January 1995, Capt. Lobdell transferred to Holloman AFB, N.M., and reported to the 8th Fighter Squadron. Flying the F-117A, he completed numerous deployments to Ahmed Al Jaber Air Base, Kuwait. In April 1998, he went to NAS Oceana with VF-41 and CVW-8 aboard USS Theodore Roosevelt and USS Enterprise.

In December 2001 Capt. Lobdell transferred to Canberra, Australia where he attended the Australian Command and Staff College and earned JPME 1 credit and a Master's Degree in Defense and Strategic Studies from the University of Canberra in December 2002 as well as a Certificate in Maritime Studies from the University of Wollongong. After completing Joint Forces Staff College, he went to Headquarters, U.S. European Command in Stuttgart, Germany in April 2003.

In January 2006 Capt. Lobdell reported for refresher training at VFA-125 in NAS Lemoore, Calif., with follow-on orders to VFA-25 "Fist of the Fleet" as executive officer. He reported to VFA-25 as executive officer in April 2006 and took command of the Fist of the Fleet in August 2007. He led VFA-25 through an aggressive work-up cycle culminating in a Western Pacific deployment in 2008 supporting Operation Enduring Freedom.

Captain Lobdell has accumulated more than 4100 flight hours and 870 carrier landings.