SALUTE TO THE U.S. NAVY A\'UXILIARY AIR STATION

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The occasion of the third anniversary of establishing the U.S. Naval Auxiliary Air Station at New Iberia gives an opportunity to review its growing importance.

This base was dedicated to the task of training young men as aircraft pilots in anti-submarine warfare. But, in addition to the serious training schedules most Navy officers and cadets aboard the station have become a part of the community.

They have participated in the annual Sugar Cane Festival, acting as escorts for the Queen Sugar contestants and helping wherever possible.

To further the education of the youth, and to acquaint the people with the Navy, many school children and youth groups have toured the air station. Also, over 3,000 Boy Scouts have camped over-night aboard the station. Qualified naval personnel assist in the training and indoctrination of these Scouts in such fields as first aid, survival, fire fighting, trail blazing, scout crafts and nature lore. Also the commanding officer, executive officer and the Boy Scout liaison officer are very active in the Evangeline Area Scout council. Twelve men aboard the station and squadron are scoutmasters and assistants.

In a multitude of ways the officers and cadets have proven themselves good citizens of this community.

From a business point of view the Navy base has helped the economy of the area. Over five million dollars a year is spent by the Navy and personnel in this area. The annual personnel payroll averages over four million dollars. This includes check payments by the base disbursing office and allotment checks received by personnel from the allotment center in Cleveland, Ohio. Eighty Nine civilians are employed with an annual payroll of over $500,000.

Supplies and commodities for the air station are normally purchased through the Navy supply system. However, many items must be purchased locally. These purchases average about $120,000 annually. Housekeeping expenses, such as water, gas, electricity and telephone, are purchased locally and average about $115,000 a year. Local food and other purchases average about $65,000.

Many enduring friendships have occurred between members of the community and personnel at the base, and as time goes on these relationships will continue, thereby forming a firm bond of understanding.

We know that we speak for the entire community when we say Happy Third Anniversary to all of you at the U.S. Naval Auxiliary Air Station.