

ARMED FORCES DISPATCH



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Serving active duty and retired military personnel, veterans and civil service employees

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us
work**

Marine Corps Capt. Sawyer Jacobs, left, a series commander, and Sgt. Luis Dionicio, a drill instructor, demonstrate the rope climb portion of the "tough one" obstacle during the confidence course at Marine Corps Recruit Depot San Diego, Dec. 27, 2022. US Marine Corps photo by Cpl. Julian Elliott-Drouin

For the first time, active-duty female Soldier becomes Abrams master gunner

STARS AND STRIPES - The first female active-duty Soldier has graduated from the The M1A2 Abrams Master Gunner Course at Ft. Benning, Ga.

Sgt. Cinthia Ramirez, assigned to Avenger Company, 1st Battalion, 12th Cavalry Regiment, 1st Cavalry Division, completed the roughly two-month course in December on her second try, according to a news release.

"Getting into Master Gunner school was so hard, but that just made me even more determined to get in," Ramirez said in the release. "Everyone kept telling me how hard it was, and I wanted to see for myself just how hard it was - and they weren't wrong. I just want people to realize that just because you were never the best Soldier or you've been in trouble - you can change and turn things around. The mistakes I made as a private will not define who I am as an NCO and a leader."

Ramirez, now 23, joined the Army at 18 and served as a driver, loader and gunner at Fort Hood. She also served in South Korea in 2019, according to *Military Times*.

The master gunner advises commanders and is a part of the planning, development, execution and evaluation of all combat and gunnery-related training, according to the release.

Ramirez is the latest Soldier to achieve a first for women as the Army works toward gender integration in combat arms. Florida Guardsman Staff Sgt. Jessica Ray became the first female Avenger master gunner in 2011, and in 2020 Staff Sgt. Tiana Trent became the first Black female in that role. Sgt. Shawna Tipton was the first female to graduate from Bradley Master Gunner School in 2020.

NSW forces wrap up SOF engagement with Indian Navy Marine commandos

GOA, India - Naval Special Warfare forces deployed to U.S. Special Operations Command Pacific concluded a joint combined training exercise with the Indian Navy Marine Commando Force on Dec. 22. The three-week exchange built upon the two forces' collective maritime capabilities and long-standing relationship. "We're committed to operationalizing the U.S.-India partnership through enhanced information sharing, regional security cooperation, integrated deterrence and cooperation in new domains," said the senior team leader of the U.S. Naval Special Warfare unit. "This exercise provides us the opportunity of a common understanding of a shared working environment at sea through practical hands-on scenarios as a combined team."

Tricare fee increases for 2023 revealed

Some military families will see a rise in their health care costs this month, even as they're stretching their dollars to cover higher prices for food, fuel and other necessities. Generally, if you've been paying out-of-pocket for Tricare in 2022, you'll pay extra in 2023. According to a report in *Military Times*, active duty families in Tricare Select don't pay annual enrollment fees, but they will see small co-payment increases, generally by a few dollars, for most services starting Jan. 1. Some will also see increases in their annual deductible, meaning they will have to spend more out of pocket before Tricare starts to pay. There are also planned increases in co-payments and annual enrollment fees for retirees, their families and others, according to fee schedules just released by the Defense Health Agency. Active duty service members and their families in Tricare Prime (including U.S. Family Health Plan) don't pay annual enrollment fees, annual deductibles or out-of-pocket costs for covered services. *See your primary provider for more details.*

Pay raise, security programs highlight defense budget

by Jim Garamone
DOD News

President Joe Biden has signed the Fiscal 2023 National Defense Authorization Act into law allotting \$816.7 billion to the Defense Department.

The act means a 4.6 percent pay raise for military and civilian members of the department, and includes \$45 billion more than originally requested to counter the effects of inflation and to accelerate implementation of the National Defense Strategy.

The act also authorizes \$30.3 billion for national security programs in the Department of Energy and the Defense Nuclear Facilities Safety Board and \$378 million for other defense-related activities.

Although inflation has been dropping, the act authorizes \$12.6 billion for inflation im-

pacts on purchases. It also funds \$3.8 billion more to account for inflation in military construction. It is a testament to the size of the agency that the act authorizes \$2.5 billion for inflation impacts on DOD fuel purchases.

One of the more contentious items in the act is requiring the defense secretary to rescind the mandate that members of the armed forces be vaccinated against COVID-19. "The department will fully comply with the law," DOD officials said. "DOD remains committed to the health and safety of the force and to ensuring we are ready to execute our mission at all times."

Secretary of Defense Lloyd J. Austin III ordered the mandate on August 24, 2021. The COVID-19 vaccinations have been successful. Some 98 percent of active duty service members and

96 percent of the total force have been vaccinated. Since April, only two service members have died from COVID-19.

Austin argued that the mandate is necessary to protect military readiness, and he has been clear in his support for maintaining it. Still, Congress has spoken and the department will fully comply with the NDAA, officials said.

On the personnel side, the act authorizes additional funding to address the effects of inflation on compensation. It also puts in place language allowing more service members to qualify for the basic needs allowance by increasing the eligibility threshold and allowance size from 130 percent of the federal poverty line to 150 percent. The act authorizes the defense secretary to increase this benefit to 200 percent of the poverty line when appropriate.

The act increases bonuses and special pay for service members in qualifying career fields. The act also looks to give recruiters a tool to revive and extend temporary authority for targeted recruitment incentives.

DOD officials have said that roughly one-third of spouses must obtain new professional licenses every time they move to a new state. The act expands the scope of financial reimbursement related to spouse relicensing and business costs arising from a permanent change of station.

The act also calls for a pilot program to reimburse military families for certain child care costs related to a permanent change of station.

There are several changes in the act regarding housing. The act extends the authority to adjust

see NDAA, page 4

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Career Advice

Army, Marines plagued by turnover problem in cyber fields, GAO finds.

See page 5

Base Movie Schedule

I Wanna Dance With Somebody, Violent Night, Strange World, Devotion, Avatar: The Way of Water

See page 10

New boots, winter parka, badges among several Navy uniform changes

by Doug G. Ware, Stars and Stripes

WASHINGTON — The Navy on Dec. 20 announced several updates to uniform policies that include a new utility boot, a cold-weather parka and a different badge for certain security officers.

The Navy detailed seven uniform changes that have been implemented and five that are underway or in development.

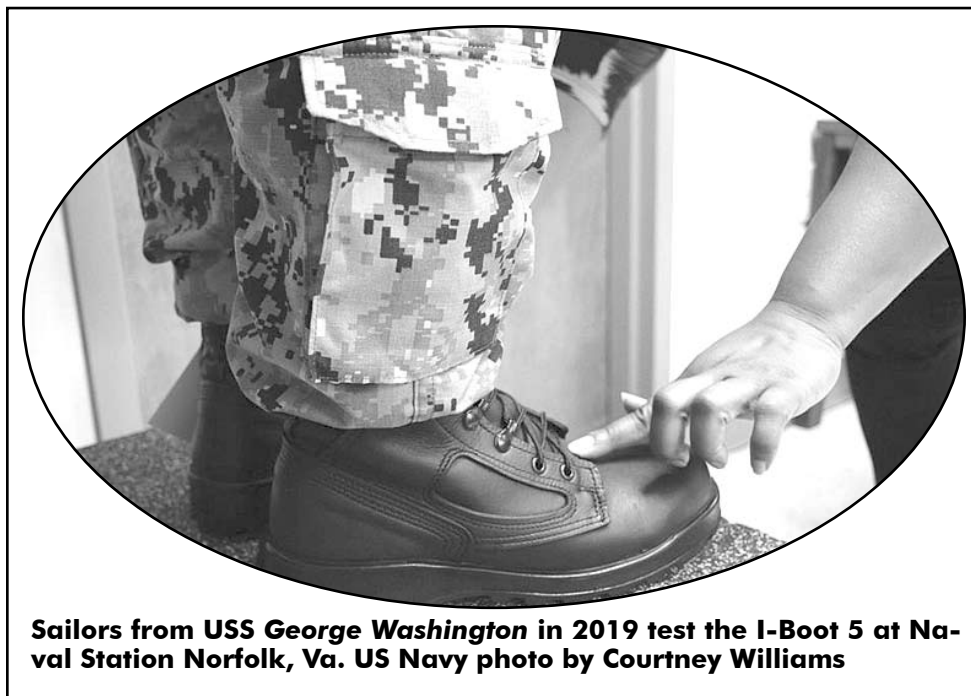
Vice Adm. Richard Cheese-man, chief of naval personnel, said the policy changes are intended to “reduce out-of-pocket expenses,” simplify sea bag requirements, and specify design changes to uniform components and breast insignia.

Officials said the new footwear — the I-Boot 5 — is the Navy’s “latest in working uniform footwear” that became operational a few weeks ago. The I-5 will be available in Navy uniform shops as soon as January, service officials said.

“The I-Boot 5 is a lightweight constructed safety boot, black or brown with full inner lining, steel toed, and smooth outer leather,” the Navy said. “The I-Boot 5 is suitable for wear in multiple Navy environments and weather conditions afloat, airborne, and ashore.”

The I-Boot 4 will continue to be acceptable for as long as they are up to standard, officials noted.

The I-5 has been in development for four years and the Navy



Sailors from USS George Washington in 2019 test the I-Boot 5 at Naval Station Norfolk, Va. US Navy photo by Courtney Williams

said it’s an improvement over the I-Boot 4, which often picked up debris in the sole’s tread pattern and posed a risk of foreign object damage.

Other uniform changes announced Dec. 20 affect the Navy’s black cold-weather parka, physical training fitness suit, dinner dress blue and white jacket, belted white skirt, and earrings for women.

Sailors can now wear the black parka with their camouflaged Type III uniform in a nonoperational setting. The new alternate PT uniform fitness suit comes without reflective piping.

As for earrings, female officers and enlisted personnel can wear silver, white and yellow gold, white pearl and colorless diamond earrings with all uniforms.

The Navy also detailed a change that will impact sailors with the Naval Security Force. They now will be issued a different identification badge and a new qualification insignia.

“The Navy is phasing out the four-digit, alpha-numeric serial number on Navy Security Force identification badges,” the service said. “Effective immediately, a new badge will be issued.

“It is identical to the original, except where the serial number was at the base of the badge

now has a black engraved star instead.”

Some of the uniform changes underway or under review include an improved black fleecelined jacket, design changes for the maternity service dress blue coat, two over blouse concepts for women, and a new size standardization process.

“Size standardization is a collaborative effort,” the Navy said. “The overall goal of this initiative is to improve the fit/design of male and female uniforms to accommodate the current population and reduce the requirement or need for other-than-standard hemming alterations. The current effort is focused on female slacks, skirts, and shirts and blouses.”

Last month, the Marine Corps announced relaxed rules that allow women in the service to wear ponytails, braids and twists in their hair. Female Marines can have one unsecured half ponytail or as many as two unsecured half braids, according to the new regulations.

NATIONAL MILITARY PHOTO GALLERY

Air Force



ALI SALEM AIR BASE, Kuwait (Jan. 2, 2023) - From right, Senior Airman Matthew Burkey, 386th Expeditionary Security Forces Squadron military working dog handler, supervises as military working dog Faby, takes down Army Pfc. Donta Lindee, a mortuary affairs specialist, during a demonstration for joint and coalition partners. US Air Force photo by Staff Sgt. Dalton Williams

Army



MASON CITY, Iowa (Nov. 5, 2022) - Sgt. 1st Class Gayla Laackman, a motor transport operator assigned to the 1133rd Transportation Company, hugs her family before deploying overseas. Approximately 160 Soldiers deployed to Poland in support of Operation European Assure, Deter, and Reinforce. US Army National Guard photo by Sgt. Rachel I. White

Navy



MEMPHIS, Tenn. (Dec. 28, 2022) - Cmdr. Lacey Popson gives the oath of enlistment to future Sailors during the AutoZone Liberty Bowl. US Navy photo Petty Officer 2nd Class Tyler Priestley

Not-so-serious resolutions for 2023

- ◆ Flamingo a friend’s yard for their birthday or an anniversary.
- ◆ Write your own Instagram captions.
- ◆ Stop drinking your morning coffee AFTER you brush your teeth.
- ◆ Celebrate Hallmark’s Countdown to Christmas, in July!
- ◆ Exercise...your right to Taco Tuesday!
- ◆ Stop blaming your farts on the dog.
- ◆ Wine down the day with a glass of vino...oh, wait, you’ve already perfected that resolution.
- ◆ Be on a first name basis with your regular Door Dasher.
- ◆ Perfect your favorite celebrity impression.
- ◆ Spend a night ending each and every sip of your drink with an enthusiastic, “Ahhhhh, baby!”
- ◆ See how many times you can watch your favorite series back to back, in one year, without getting bored of it.

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Defense department increases child care fees to maintain quality child care for military families

The Defense Department implemented annual changes to the Child Development Program Fee Policy and restructured total family income categories which determine child care fees. The policy change includes fee increases necessary to ensure the department's ability to find and keep skilled child care staff and to continue providing quality care for military children.

The DOD recognizes that in order to find and retain skilled staff and continue providing quality child care for military families, changes to the policy that guide child care fees are necessary to enhance recruitment and retention efforts.

"Most families will see a change in child care fees, but we also know our families understand the importance of ensuring the DOD is able to attract the best employees from local labor markets," said Stacey Young, director of the Office of Military Family Readiness Policy.

The DOD Child Development Program Fee Policy prescribes uniform fee regulations for mili-

tary child development centers based on total family income. DOD policy requires a minimum of 50 percent appropriated fund



support for child development programs with revenue generated by parent fees providing the remaining 50 percent of operating revenue. Child care costs are shared between the DOD and families. Child care fees are evaluated each year.

Child Development Program Fee Policy changes for 2022-2023 include:

- ◆ The number of income categories will increase from 13 to 14, providing a more equitable division of fees based on total family income.

- ◆ The hourly care rate will increase from \$7 to \$8 per hour.

◆ Military departments will increase the community provider fee assistance rate cap from \$1,500 per child, per month

to \$1,700 per child, per month to ensure child care subsidies for military-certified family child care providers are consistent with the community provider fee

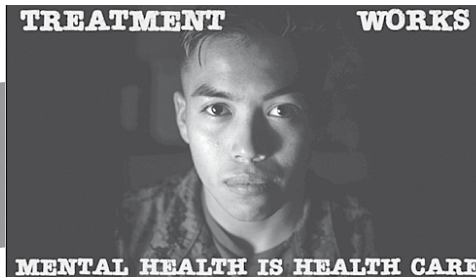
assistance rate cap.

These child care fee policy changes will help enable DOD to recruit and retain the best child development staff possible and continue to provide quality child devel-

opment services to military families.

Parents can reach out to their child development centers or school-age care programs to learn how these fee changes will impact individual households.

DoD remains steadfast in its mission to provide a range of options to meet military families' child care needs. The DOD is working to tackle the child care challenges with new strategies and programs. "These child care fee changes will ensure military parents can continue to be mission-ready knowing their children are safe, nurtured and receiving quality child development services," said Heidi Welch, director of Children, Youth and Families for the Office of Military Family Readiness Programs.



Army

- ◆ Army military justice reform unfolds, Congress monitoring
- ◆ Houston post office to be renamed to honor Army Spc. Vanessa Guillén
- ◆ The unsolved killing of a Fort Bragg Soldier has led to an effort to reform Army investigations

hNavy

- ◆ New in 2023: The fate of Fat Leonard
- ◆ Navy calls in ATF investigators to probe blaze aboard destroyer docked in Florida
- ◆ New in 2023: Navy to launch Senior Enlisted Marketplace

Marine Corps

- ◆ New in 2023: Small boats for Marine Reserve experimentation
- ◆ New in 2023: A woman-led Marine Corps Silent Drill Platoon

Air Force

- ◆ Civilian contractor sentenced in DUI crash that killed Keesler Air Force Base airman
- ◆ New in 2023: Welcoming new airframes to the fleet
- ◆ New in 2023: Air Force tries for a better year of recruiting

Space Force

- ◆ Dozens of Space Force Guardians finish basic, graduate

Coast Guard

- ◆ Coast Guard searching for 4 people after helicopter crashes into Gulf of Mexico off Louisiana coast

National Guard

- ◆ How airmen overcame -77 degree weather, frostnip to fix a C-130 in Antarctica

Your Military

- ◆ DoD civilians in Japan must find medical care off-base

Defense Industry

- ◆ Lockheed doubles Joint Air-to-Ground missile range in flight test

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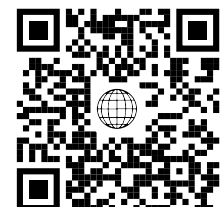
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Women's health equity is a real focus for DOD, Mullen says

by Janet A. Aker,
Military Health System

Health equality for women in service and women beneficiaries is and will remain a top priority for the DoD, Acting Assistant Secretary of Defense for Health Affairs Seileen Mullen made clear during a recent podcast.

Talking to the Army Wife Network, Mullen said women have unique needs, including reproductive care and gender-specific care issues, because they differ from men in cardiovascular health, mental health, and musculoskeletal injuries, among other medical issues.

"We've made that a real focus and part of my portfolio and my issue," Mullen said.

Women are the fastest growing percentage of the armed services at about 18 percent of the total, and women make up 4.7 million DOD beneficiaries, she pointed out.

Mullen discussed the DOD's recent focus on contraceptive and reproductive care during the podcast. She spoke about the recent directive requiring walk-in contraceptive services. "That is very critical because you either want to plan your family or plan your deployment," Mullen said.

On Sept. 27, the Defense Health Agency issued the requirement that military hospitals and clinics offer full-scope, walk-in contraceptive services.

By January 2023, DHA hospitals and clinics will specify the location and hours of operation for walk-in services, providing same-day access with no appointment or referral needed.

A 2020 RAND study that was published in 2022, informed much of the increased focus on women's health, Mullen said. That study—the first on military women's health in 30 years—highlighted the need for women's health services "which are becoming some of the top clinical service delivery lines in the MHS," she said.

She also pointed to the DOD's memo on ensuring access to reproductive health published on Oct. 20.

In that memo, Secretary of Defense Lloyd J. Austin III directs the military to "conduct a comprehensive contraception education campaign to enhance service members' awareness of the resources available to them and their families, including emergency contraception."

"That education campaign will also highlight the fact that the Department of Defense has eliminated TRICARE co-pays for medical contraceptive services, including intrauterine devices," the memo states.

Refer to <https://health.mil/News/Articles/2022/12/27/Womens-Health-Equity-is-a-Real-Focus-for-DOD-Mullen-Says>.

NDAAs

continued from page 1

the basic allowance for housing in high-cost areas. It encourages DOD to coordinate efforts to address housing shortages. The act also makes the assistant secretary of defense for energy, installations and environment the department's chief housing officer.

There were no surprises on active duty end strength with the Army set at 452,000; the Navy at 354,000; the Air Force at 325,344; the Marine Corps set at 177,000 and the Space Force at 8,600.

Other aspects of the act include the authorization of special duty pay for members based on cold weather climate conditions in which their duties are performed. The act also starts a program to reimburse Alaska-based service members for the cost of airfare to travel to their homes of record.

The NDAAs authorize \$32.6 billion for Navy shipbuilding, an increase of \$4.7 billion. This will fund 11 battle force ships including three Arleigh Burke-class destroyers; two Virginia-class submarines; two expeditionary fast transports; one Constellation-class frigate; one San Antonio-class amphibious ship; one John Lewis-class oiler and one Navajo-class towing, salvage and rescue ship.

The act also calls for the Navy to build a third Arleigh Burke-class destroyer and allocates \$2.2 billion to the effort.

The act funds eight F-18E/F aircraft, 16 F-35C aircraft, 15 F-35B jets and 12 CH-53K helicopters. The legislation also authorizes two more V-22 Osprey aircraft, seven E-2D Hawkeye aircraft and five KC-130J tanker aircraft. The act funds several unmanned aerial platforms including the Triton and Stingray systems.

The act authorizes the full fiscal year 2023 budget request for the European Deterrence Initiative and extends and modifies the Ukraine Security Assistance Initiative. It authorizes \$800 million in fiscal year 2023, an increase of \$500 million above the initial budget request.

More importantly, the act expresses the sense of Congress that the United States' commitment to NATO is ironclad, and emphasizes the importance of maintaining a

unified response to Russia's unjust war in Ukraine and other shared security challenges, according to a release on the Senate Armed Services Committee website. The Senate release also stressed that the U.S. must continue to assist Ukraine in its fight against the unjust and unprovoked attack by Russia.

To that end, the act calls for an assessment of the required U.S. force posture and resourcing needed to implement the National Defense Strategy in Europe and uphold U.S. commitments to NATO.

Across the globe, the act extends the Pacific Deterrence Initiative through the fiscal year and identifies approximately \$11.5 billion of investments in support of initiative objectives.

The U.S. military works alongside allies, partners and friends, and the act provides an increase of \$198.5 million for partner capacity building through the International Security Cooperation Programs account within the Defense Security Cooperation Agency.

The NDAAs also call for an independent assessment of DOD efforts to train, advise, assist and equip the military forces of Somalia, and authorizes an increase of \$10 million to support U.S. Africa Command's efforts to diversify the locations of its multilateral military exercises on the African continent.

The legislation extends the authority to assist Iraq to counter the Islamic State and provides monies to train Syrian allies against the terror group.

The act looks to provide long-term aid to Ukraine especially in waiving restrictions related to contracts for munitions to support Ukraine or to increase DOD's stocks of critical munitions. It also provides multi-year procurement authority for certain munitions.

The act authorizes DOD to establish a Center for Security Studies in Irregular Warfare to serve as a central mechanism for developing irregular warfare knowledge. The center will be open to allies and partners.

Finally, the act fully funds the U.S. Special Operations Command's budget including approximately \$250 million for unfunded requirements identified by the Socom commander.



These are approximate positions of the Navy's deployed carrier strike groups & amphibious ready groups throughout the world as of Dec. 29, 2022, based on Navy and public data. You can access this and other information through the U.S. Naval Institute's portal at <https://news.usni.org/topstories>.

Ships Underway
Total Battle Force: 293
 (USS 238, USNS 55)
Deployed ships: 102
 (USS 68, USNS 33)
Underway: 40
 (37 Deployed, 3 Local)
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We thank you for your service!

Career and Education

Army, Marines plagued by turnover problem in cyber fields, GAO finds

by John Vandiver
Stars and Stripes

More stringent service obligations are needed to ensure that Army and Marine cyber specialists don't bolt for big private-sector paydays immediately after receiving high-priced training at taxpayer expense, according to a government watchdog agency.

While the Navy and Air Force have instituted three-year service obligations to protect their investment, the Corps and the Army are falling short, the Government Accountability Office said in a report this month.

The report comes amid struggles to keep crucial cyber units fully manned, even as cyberwarfare and network protection have become a top priority for a Defense Department whose tech-savvy adversaries include China and Russia.

"DOD faces increasing competition from the private sector looking to recruit top cyber talent," the GAO said.

The Army and Marine Corps have the added challenge of trying to retain specialists without giving them clear-cut service obligations.

The Marines struggled the most with staffing gaps. That's the difference between the number of personnel authorized and the number of personnel staffed.

While most Navy, Army and Air Force cyber career fields were staffed at 80 percent or higher, four of the six such career fields in the Marine Corps were below 80 percent of authorized levels in fiscal year 2021.

The Marines also are the only branch without any service obligations after cyber training, which is often over a year long and costs the military hundreds of thousands of dollars per person.

Marine Corps officials told the GAO that the service's cyber office has requested authority to institute a 54-month active-duty service



Marine Corps Cpl. Dakota Filyaw, left, and Cpl. Gabriel Mowry, right, cyberspace warfare operators assigned to the 8th Communication Battalion, work on computers at Camp Nett in Niantic, Conn., June 16, 2022. The Marine Corps is the only branch without any service obligations after cyber training, which is often over a year long and costs the military hundreds of thousands of dollars per person. US Marine Corps photo by Matthew Lucibello

The officials said they are working to revise regulations to clearly define a 36-month service obligation for certain training.

The services have taken other steps to try to mitigate the turnover problem, such as retention bonuses, which tallied \$160 million in all between 2017 and 2021.

"However, officials have acknowledged that while the military services offer retention bonuses and special pays, they continue to experience challenges retaining qualified cyber personnel," the GAO said.

obligation requirement for personnel in these areas.

However, a Marine official told the GAO that there had been no indication whether the request would be approved and implemented.

Meanwhile, Army Cyber Command officials said that because of bureaucratic confusion, personnel offices lacked relevant information needed to calculate and implement service obligations for various Army cyber courses.

"As a result, officials stated that it is a challenge to hold personnel to general service obligations when they attend (critical cyber) training," the GAO said.

Army Cyber Command officials said some officers who attended a yearlong course costing hundreds of thousands of dollars left the military soon after completing certification, the GAO said.

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Logistics center prepares National Science Foundation vessel for Antarctic mission

by **Tristan Pavlik**
NAVSUP FLC San Diego

For the second year, Naval Supply Systems Command Fleet Logistics Center San Diego has completed its support of the National Science Foundation-managed U.S. Antarctic Program.

Two Military Sealift Command-chartered container ships - Motor Vessel *Ocean Giant* and Motor Vessel *Gladiator* - received logistics and packing support in Naval Base Ventura County from NAVSUP FLC San Diego's packaging department. It marked the beginning of the annual resupply mission, Operation Deep Freeze, to McMurdo Station, Antarctica.



McMurdo Station in Antarctica, in 2021. Courtesy photo

"Our years of experience packaging, along with our wood working processes for extreme weather conditions, helped make us the ideal facility to prepare the NSF materials for their transportation to Antarctica,"

said Roberto Medina, NBVC, site director, NAVSUP FLC San Diego.

NAVSUP FLC San Diego employees generally work the entire calendar year supporting

this project; however, preparation for the winter missions begins in July. The team at NBVC has spent the last six months executing the preparation of materials. A major focus for this voyage has included materials for a Vehicle Equipment and Operations Center, lodging materials, and scientific research equipment.

Using the onsite woodshop, the wood working team assembled and constructed crates and wooden and fiberglass boxes of all dimensions, all while adhering to packaging requirements. In total, they created and prepared 44 crates, 77 pallets and 180 flat racks. Each of these is specially designed for either

commercial air, commercial surface, or break bulk vessel transportation.

The packing team handled the preservation, packaging, packing, marking, and labeling of materials, along with ensuring proper certification for hazardous shipments. In total, the team prepared more than 108,874

"As our organization has close proximity to the Port of Hueneme, one of California's 10 deep water ports, NSF has leveraged the port along with our logistical services to prepare the vessels for their mission."

- Lt. Sheena Hernandez, operations officer, NAVSUP FLC San Diego

individual pieces for transportation. The Port of Hueneme Harbor District was responsible for loading the equipment onto the vessel itself.

To prepare for the on-load, an additional eight seasonal contractors consisting of 'Packers, Blockers and Bracers' are hired to support the increased workload.

DoD provides support to the NSF since its creation in the 1950s. From 2010 to 2021, the Defense Logistics Agency was responsible for preparing the cargo. December 2022 marks the second voyage NAVSUP FLC San Diego has participated

in, since the function was transferred back to the Navy.

Each on-load of the vessels took ten days, and will provide a majority of the supplies needed to sustain a year of operations at McMurdo Station, Antarctica.

According to Military Sealift Command Pacific, Operation Deep Freeze (ODF) is a joint service, on-going Defense Support to Civilian Authorities activity in support of the National Science Foundation (NSF), lead agency for the United States Antarctic Program.

Mission support consists of active duty, Guard and Reserve personnel from the Air Force, Navy, Army, and Coast Guard, as well as DoD civilians and attached non-DOD civilians.

ODF operates from two primary locations situated at Christchurch, New Zealand and McMurdo Station, Antarctica. 2022 marks the 67th anniversary of the establishment of McMurdo station and its resupply mission which began in 1955. An MSC-chartered cargo ship and tanker have made the challenging voyage to Antarctica every year since the station and its resupply mission were established in 1955.

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Port Hueneme warfare center mentors Girl Scouts for cybersecurity jobs

by Patrick Maio

Girl Scouts want to broaden the skills practiced in their programs, and thanks in part to Naval Surface Warfare Center, Port Hueneme Division (NSWC PHD) engineers, they can add cybersecurity to their career aspirations.

At least a dozen graduates from California State University -San Bernardino's Cybersecurity Center who are now NSWC PHD employees recently mentored girls and young women to stimulate interest and competency in cyber-related careers.

NSWC PHD's junior profes-

sionals led mentoring workshops for about 100 Girl Scouts who participated in a Cal State San Bernardino's GenCyber week to provide mentoring for sixth through 12th grade Girl Scouts searching for a cybersecurity career and a university to land for an education. The Girl Scouts

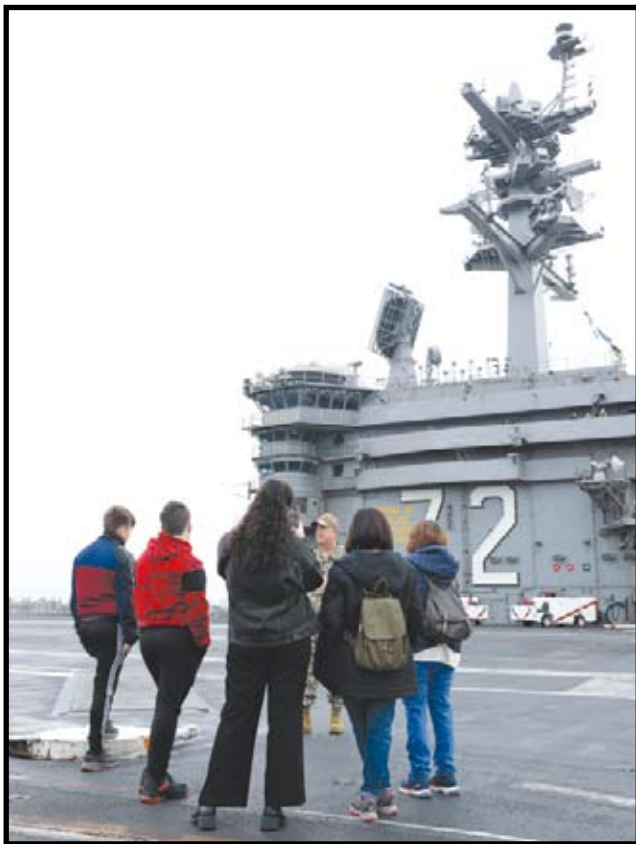
belonged to troops based everywhere from Victorville to Temecula.

Four engineers with NSWC PHD taught two mentoring workshops on one of the five days of activities held during GenCyber week. Other activities during the week included flying

drones, teaching the fundamentals of cybersecurity and climbing ropes and rocks.

The engineers discussed everything from the starting pay for computer engineers to internship opportunities at the command when they begin attending college.

The four engineers also said the cornerstone of their work is test and evaluation. This work involves boarding ships, participating in fleet missile firings and test events, and overseeing radar surveillance, hypersonics and directed energy projects.



SAN DIEGO (Dec. 30, 2022) - Vice Adm. Michael E. Boyle, commander of 3rd Fleet, gives his family a tour on the flight deck of aircraft carrier *USS Abraham Lincoln* (CVN 72). *Abraham Lincoln* is currently moored at Naval Air Station North Island. US Navy photo by MCSN Karli Wilkerson

INDONESIA (Dec. 14, 2022) - Marine Corps Sgt. John Wendt, a scout sniper assistant team-leader 13th Marine Expeditionary Unit, builds a fire during Cooperation Afloat Readiness and Training/Marine Exercise Indonesia 2022. CARAT/MAREX Indonesia promotes regional security cooperation, maintain and strengthen maritime partnerships, and enhance maritime interoperability. US Marine Corps photo



CAMP PENDLETON (Dec. 8, 2022) - Marine Corps Sgt. Avery Luengo, left, a martial arts instructor trainer, and Marine Cpl. Alexis Flippo, an imagery analysis specialist, with I Marine Expeditionary Force Information Group, conduct weapon-free sparring during martial arts instructor course physical training session here. US Marine Corps photo



PHILIPPINE SEA (Dec. 27, 2022) - Flight deck crew from aircraft carrier *USS Nimitz* monitor the launch of an F/A-18E Super Hornet from VFA 146. *Nimitz* is in 7th fleet conducting operations. US Navy photo by MC2 David Rowe

CELEBES SEA (Dec. 9, 2022) - Sailors stow hoses during a general quarters drill aboard amphibious assault ship *USS Makin Island*. Damage control drills are used both in port and underway to ensure that Sailors have the proper training to combat any casualty that may arise.



US Navy photo by MC2 Nadia Lund

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Social Security Matters

by the Association of Mature American Citizens

Ask Rusty – Can I get survivor benefits while still working?

Dear Rusty: I lost my wife several years ago and I qualified for Social Security Spousal benefits. Unfortunately, because of my income, I have not been able to take advantage of this benefit. I am currently 64 and still working. I believe I have until the age of 70 to receive this. Is there any way to claim any of this before I start taking my Social Security in a couple of years? Signed: Working Widower



Dear Working Widower: Your entitlement to surviving spouse benefits from your wife actually never expires so, you can wait until you stop working full time, or until you reach your full retirement age (FRA), to claim your benefit as a widower.

Social Security's "earnings test" lasts until you reach your full retirement age which, for you, is 66 years and 8 months. That is the age at which your earnings from working will no longer affect your Social Security benefit. So, you can simply defer claiming your survivor benefit until you reach your FRA, or until you stop working full time and won't exceed the annual earnings limit (the earnings limit changes yearly; for 2023 it is \$21,240). But there is no way to avoid the earnings test if you're collecting SS benefits of any kind before you reach your full retirement age. If you collect your surviving spouse benefit early and exceed the earnings limit, SS will take away benefits equal to \$1 for every \$2 you are over the limit (half of what you exceed the limit by), and if your work earnings are high enough it can temporarily disqualify you from receiving SS benefits. The penalty for exceeding the earnings limit is also less severe in the year you reach your FRA.

You might take some comfort in knowing, anyway, that taking your survivor benefit before your FRA would mean it would be reduced (by 4.75 percent for each full year early) but waiting until you reach your FRA to claim it would mean you'll get 100 percent of the survivor benefit you're entitled to (the same amount your wife was entitled to when she died). And you can claim your survivor benefit (only) first and collect that, while allowing your personal SS retirement amount to continue to grow, up to age 70 if you wish. You should strive to maximize whichever benefit will be highest – your own, or your survivor benefit – and collect that benefit for the rest of your life. If you choose to claim your survivor benefit at your FRA and switch to your own higher amount at 70, your personal SS retirement benefit at 70 will be almost 27 percent more than it will be at your full retirement age. That would be a good way to avoid the earnings test, maximize both benefits, and secure the highest possible Social Security benefit for as long as you live.

Whether waiting until 70 to claim your own SS retirement benefit makes sense depends on whether it will be higher at age 70 than your survivor benefit at your FRA, and on your life expectancy. Average life expectancy for a man your current age is about 84 and you would break even moneywise at about age 81 if you wait until age 70 to claim your own SS retirement benefit. So, you'd get the most in cumulative lifetime benefits by waiting until your FRA to claim your survivor benefit and - if it will be higher - waiting until you're 70 to claim your own SS retirement benefit. The choice is yours to make but longevity is the key, so you should carefully assess your potential life expectancy, including your family history, your current health, and your lifestyle to help you decide:

This article is intended for information purposes only and does not represent legal or financial guidance. It presents the opinions and interpretations of the AMAC Foundation's staff, trained and accredited by the National Social Security Association. NSSA and the AMAC Foundation and its staff are not affiliated with or endorsed by the Social Security Administration.



Marines use a Stinger Field Handling Trainer to practice tracking targets during Steel Knight 23 on San Clemente Island Dec. 6. US Marine Corps photo by Cpl. Joshua Brittenham

Marine Air Control Group 38 refines warfighting capabilities

MARINE CORPS AIR STATION MIRAMAR - Marines and Sailors with Marine Air Control Group (MACG) 38 refined tactics for future maritime conflicts in the Indo-Pacific region during Exercise Steel Knight 2023. With units positioned across California and Arizona, MACG-38 tested components of Aviation Command and Control (AC2) in conjunction with 3rd Marine Aircraft Wing's (MAW) "Hub, Spoke and Node" model in preparation for the next fight.

Acting as the "Hub," MACG-38 established a Tactical Air Command Center (TACC) aboard Camp Pendleton. With the TACC fully operational, MACG-38, in conjunction with 3rd MAW key leaders, facilitated command and control of air assets throughout the battlespace.

Concurrently, MACG-38 set up a "Spoke" at the Strategic Expeditionary Landing Field (SELF) at the Marine Corps Air Ground Combat Center located in 29 Palms, Ca in order to facilitate Marine Aircraft Group (MAG) 16's Assault Support requirements for Steel Knight 23. From the SELF, Marines from MACG-38 were able to establish Forward Arming and Refueling Points (FARP) in conjunction with MV-22B Ospreys and CH-53E Super Stallions from MAG-16. From these remote locations, MACG-38 Marines were able to support the refueling of both MAG-16 aircraft and tactical air platforms including the F-35B Lightning II from MAG-13.

Off the coast of San Diego on San Clemente Island, MACG-38 also imbedded a platoon of Marines from 3d Low Altitude Air Defense (LAAD) Battalion with the 11th Marine Regiment in order to earn certification for the upcoming Marine Rotational Force-Darwin (MRF-D) deployment to Australia. While on San Clemente Island, LAAD Marines provided critical support for a large-scale Air Assault. During the exercise, LAAD gunners executed over a dozen live-fire shoots and earned their certification for MRF-D.

Steel Knight 23 also saw the establishment of organic Air Control Companies within 3rd MAW. In order to experiment with and force generate Multifunction Air Operations Centers (MAOC) without impact to global force management tasking, MACG-38 transferred personnel and equipment from MACS-1 Air Defense Company Bravo to MASS-3 (REIN) in order to reorganize Marine Air Support Squadron (MASS) 3 into three Air Control Companies and a Headquarters Company. Under this new construct, MASS-3 was both able to support all I Marine Expeditionary Force (MEF) and 3rd MAW C2 functionalities and requirements over a broader spectrum by capturing MAOC personnel and equipment requirements, techniques, tactics, and procedures (TTPs), and training requirements. This initiative led to the Initial Operational Capability (IOC) of MASS-3 (REIN) Air Control Companies as well as the MAOC force generation event supporting 1st Marine Regiment's MRF-D deployment.

As warfighting proves to be ever changing, 3rd MAW continues to implement concepts from Force Design 2030 through adversarial-minded war gaming and combat-driven exercises.

Jill on Money



by Jill Schlesinger

I recently highlighted the best interviews that I conducted with creators in 2022 (Dan Pink, Annie Duke, Spencer Jakab and Abigail Disney).

This week I'm highlighting the wonks, who broke through the chatter and helped explain economic and market trends occurring in real time.

Guy Berger

As the economy reopened after the worst of the pandemic, something very weird happened to the U.S. labor market. All of the sudden, workers of all types were reconsidering their options. As analysts breathlessly recited the stats (the Job Openings and Labor Turnover Survey or "JOLTs" was ready for a closeup!), the term "Great Resignation" took hold.

Early in 2022, I spoke with LinkedIn principal economist, Guy Berger, who posited that millions of Americans were not quitting forever. Rather, they were finding new roles in different industries. He dubbed the trend "The Great Reshuffle."

As soon as Berger laid out his case, I started hearing from people about the changes that he had described. Americans of all ages and all earning levels were rethinking their relationships with work. Some sought more consistent or fewer hours, others opted for lower levels of stress and quite a few used the pandemic as the springboard to start their own ventures. In addition to transitions among prime work age (25-54), Berger also correctly predicted that the pre-COVID trend of Baby Boomer retirement would accelerate.

James Mackintosh

Long before (OK, months in this case) politicians made Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) investing a wedge issue, James Mackintosh penned a stinging series in the Wall Street Journal, which exposed the flaws of ESG investing.

Retire smart

While reports from large firms and the consultants that support them (both of whom often were trying to market and sell ESG funds) touted higher returns and lower downside risk, Mackintosh pointed out that in many instances, time horizon matters. Just think of it this way: If you owned oil and gas companies from 2015-2019, returns were terrible, but amid the surge in commodity prices, these same companies saw profits (and their stock prices) soar.

This is not to say that Mackintosh thinks that environmental, social, and governance issues are not worthwhile, but his larger concern is that ESG investing "distracts everyone from the work that really needs to be done." He adds: "Rather than vainly try to direct the flow of money to the right causes, it is simpler and far more effective to tax or regulate the things we as a society agree are bad and subsidize the things we think are good."

Kathy Jones

As the bond market started to tank, I turned to one of the great explainers, Kathy Jones, the chief Fixed Income strategist at the Schwab Center for Financial Research.

Even when I spoke to her in May, Jones underscored that 2022 was likely to be an awful year for bond investors because the pandemic inflationary spike had prompted the Federal Reserve to raise interest rates. Jones explained that as interest rates rise, existing bonds lose some of their value because their yields become less attractive than those offered by new bonds. So, to entice an investor into buying your existing bond, you would need to sell it for less than you paid.

Even though 2022 would likely be the worst year on record for bonds, Jones saw a bright spot: 2022 would also be a watershed year for those who had bemoaned low income producing investment opportunities for the past several years. The steep rise in yields would be a salve in the future for those who were either purchasing new bonds or reinvesting into bond funds at lower levels.

January's list of monthlong observances: Hot tea, blood donor, music therapy

Nat'l Meat Month
Nat'l Soup Month
Be Kind To Food Servers Month
Nat'l Hot Tea Month
Nat'l Oatmeal Month
Nat'l Sunday Supper Month
Nat'l Blood Donor Month
Nat'l Thank You Month
California Dried Plum Digestive
Nat'l Hobby Month
Bread Machine Baking

Nat'l Slavery and Human Trafficking Prevention
Nat'l Fiber Focus Month
Cervical Health Awareness
Teen Driving Awareness
Nat'l Prune Breakfast
Nat'l Braille Literacy Month
Children Impacted by a Parent's Cancer Month
LEARNUARY
Nat'l Retail Bakers Month
Nat'l Birth Defects Prevention
Celebration of Life Month

Nat'l Slow Cooking Month
Nat'l CBD Month
Receding Gums Awareness
Nat'l Wheat Bread Month
California Restaurant Month
Adopt A Rescued Bird Month
Nat'l Clean Up Your Computer
Nat'l Get Organized (GO)
Nat'l Mentoring Month
Nat'l Women's Empowerment
Thyroid Disease Awareness
Apple and Apricot Month
Nat'l Artichoke and Asparagus

Tubers and Dried Fruit
Nat'l Stalking Awareness Month
Get a Balanced Life Month
Music Therapy Social Media
Advocacy Month
Nat'l Radon Action Month
#AlzheimerAwarenessMonth
Book Blitz Month
Clap 4 Health Month
Divorce Month
Int'l Teaser Month
Int'l Change Your Stars!
Int'l Child-Centered Divorce

Int'l Creativity Month
Int'l New Year's Resolution
Month for Businesses
Int'l Quality of Life Month
Int'l Wayfinding Month
Int'l Wealth Mentality Month
Learn to Ski and Snowboard
Nat'l Bath Safety Month
Nat'l Be On Purpose Month
Int'l Codependency Awareness
Nat'l Eye Care Month
Nat'l Financial Wellness
Nat'l Glaucoma Awareness

Nat'l Healthy Weight Awareness
Nat'l Human Resource
Nat'l Mail Order Gardening Month
Nat'l Personal Self-Defense
Awareness Month
Nat'l Personal Trainer
Awareness Month
Nat'l Polka Music Month
Nat'l Poverty in America
Awareness Month
Nat'l Skating Month
Nat'l Staying Healthy Month
Nat'l Train Your Dog Month

Bill to speed veteran survivor benefits becomes law

by Kevin Landrigan

WASHINGTON - A new bipartisan law should speed up payments to hard-to-find survivors of recently deceased veterans, according to U.S. Rep. Chris Pappas, D- N.H., who co-authored the measure.

President Joe Biden signed the Faster Payments to Veterans' Survivors Act last Tuesday before heading off for a New Year's holiday vacation with his family to St. Croix.

When a veteran passes away,

the surviving spouse or child are eligible to receive certain benefits, such as life insurance proceeds.

The U.S. Veterans Administration often struggles to identify, locate and pay these families or beneficiaries in a timely fashion.

The legislation cuts in half the time that the VA has to make the payment of life insurance benefits to survivors.

The current limit is two years for a primary beneficiary and

four years for those who become alternate beneficiaries if the primary person cannot be located.

"By ensuring that family members and spouses have the resources and support that they need, we continue to honor and pay tribute to those who have sacrificed for our country," Pappas said in a statement.

As of September 2020, approximately 15,000 individuals remain undisbursed with more than \$155 million in life insurance benefits owed to veteran families. By the VA's own account, that equals about \$10,500 per family.

The measure also requires the agency to better publicize an online tool that now exists to allow families to search for whether they qualify for survivor benefits.

The legislation instructs the agency to report to Congress six months from now on the progress of improving this program.

"I remain committed to fighting to guarantee our veterans and their families get the care, support, and respect they have earned and are owed," said Pappas.

pas, who serves on the House Veteran Affairs Committee.

Pappas and Rep. Nancy Mace, R- South Carolina, introduced the bill the House last July. Senators John Boozman, R-

Arkansas, and Sherrod Brown, D- Ohio, presented an identical version in the Senate.

A coalition of veteran groups had supported this effort including the Veterans of Foreign Wars,

American Legion, Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans of America, Vietnam Veterans of America, Military Officers Association of America, Modern Military Association of America, and Paralyzed Veterans of America.

Medal of Honor Monday: Army SFC Junior Edwards

by Katie Lange
DOD News

Korea was a hard place to be in winter, especially during war and over a holiday, and Army Sgt. 1st Class Junior Dean Edwards knew that. His quick thinking and courage in early 1951 were the linchpin to his platoon holding a critical position during battle. Edwards sacrificed his life for the cause, and his valor earned him the Medal of Honor.

Edwards was born Oct. 7, 1926, in Indianola, Iowa, to Walter and Anna Edwards. He was part of a big family that included four brothers and four sisters.

Edwards attended school but dropped out in the ninth grade to work, according to a 1951 article in the Des Moines Tribune. He was drafted into the Army in 1945, shortly after his 18th birthday. Edwards worked as a cook and was being trained as an infantryman when World War II ended. He was discharged in August 1946, but his family said he didn't have a lot to do when he returned home, so he reenlisted in June 1947.

"He was always laughing and joking," his sister, A.K. Moldenhauer, said in the 1951 Des Moines Tribune article. "I think he got a kick out of the Army. He wrote us a lot and always seemed to see the funny side of things."

By August 1950, Edwards was sent to Korea, where he served as a noncommissioned officer with Company E of the 2nd Battalion, 23rd Infantry Regiment, 2nd Infantry Division.

Sewer improvements, road work at Fort Rosecrans National Cemetery will cause rolling road closures

SAN DIEGO - Fort Rosecrans National Cemetery started work to improve the sewer and roads throughout the cemetery on Jan. 2, which will impact traffic patterns and parking until May 2024.

The year-long improvement project will require sections of the roadway to be closed and traffic rerouted. Cemetery officials expect traffic patterns to change every three weeks and will be clearly marked.

Visitors will have access to burial sections during construction. Interment services and ceremonies at the cemetery will proceed as normal but may have

On Jan. 2, 1951, Edwards and his company were working near Changbong-ni to wipe out an enemy roadblock that had stopped the flow of supplies to South



Army Sgt. 1st Class Junior Dean Edwards, Medal of Honor recipient. Photo courtesy of Congressional Medal of Honor Society

Korean troops. Edwards' platoon had been defending a strategic hill when they were attacked by an enemy machine gun nest set up on adjacent high ground and forced from their position.

Edwards quickly ordered a counterattack.

"As the fire of the enemy still covered the area, some of the men were reluctant to move forward," Maj. Perry A. Sager, Company E's commander, said in his account of the battle. "Edwards personally led four of the men to foxholes that were within 50 yards of the enemy position. During these trips he was fully exposed to the enemy."

Edwards then directed fire on the enemy; however, he quickly

realized that it wouldn't do much since the enemy was hidden in a hole. He also knew he couldn't use mortar fire against them because of their proximity to friendly troops, so Edwards grabbed several grenades and single-handedly charged the hostile nest.

The enemy withdrew but quickly returned when Edwards ran out of grenades. Edwards ran back to replenish his supply, then charged forward again. This time, he managed to land a grenade inside the hole the enemy was in, destroying its weapon and killing its crew.

However, Edwards was forced back yet again when he ran out of grenades a second time. He ran back for more as the enemy replaced its destroyed machine gun with another and resumed fire. When Edwards had collected more grenades, he rushed the hostile emplacement a third time through a vicious hail of fire and again managed to take out the crew and its gun.

Unfortunately, the 24-year-old was seriously wounded during that run and died. However, his courageous sacrifice gave his platoonmates time to regain their strength and take their position back. They wiped out the roadblock, which allowed the South Korean troops who had been cut off to withdraw with a minimum loss of men and equipment.

When Edwards' remains were returned to the U.S., he was buried in the Independent Order of Odd Fellows Cemetery in his hometown.

For giving his life in battle, the young sergeant received the Medal of Honor. His father accepted it from Defense Secretary Robert A. Lovett at a Pentagon ceremony on Jan. 16, 1952. Edwards' mother, a sister and two brothers were also in attendance.

Edwards Hall at the former Fort Des Moines in Iowa and the former Camp Edwards near Kumchon, Korea, were named in his honor.

This article is part of a weekly series called "Medal of Honor Monday," which highlights one of the more than 3,500 MOH recipients who have earned the U.S. military's highest medal for valor.

The heroic military veterans we lost in 2022

(Military Times) In 2022, the U.S. bid farewell to the last surviving World War II Medal of Honor recipient, one of the last surviving Tuskegee Airmen and one of the last surviving Code Talkers.

Vet's memorial statue stolen from Huntington Park, Calif.

(CBS News) Police are asking people living in the area for any security video that might have caught the thief in action. The statue memorializes fallen U.S. Army Sergeant Diego Solorzano.

WWII veteran Cpl. Leon Dixon Sr. passes away at 104

(WAFB) South Louisiana is mourning the loss of an American hero, as World War II veteran Cpl. Leon Dixon, Sr., passed away on Thursday, Dec. 29, his family said.



Finding the way home

Waiting for the McQuaid's Market cashier to check the price of an item, I watched as the familiar faces of local postal workers, construction workers and landscapers came in to grab something for lunch. In the adjoining check out aisle, they chatted casually with the other cashier.

"Hey, [Jack, Betty, Dave] how've you been?" the young cashier said.

"Not bad, how 'bout yourself?" the customers replied.

I was envious.

Five years ago, my husband, Francis, retired from the Navy after 28 years on active duty and many PCS moves. We bought a house in a charming Rhode Island village, intending to finally put down roots and become part of the local community. We met neighbors, attended church, took part in special events, and joined Rotary, American Legion, VFW, Historical Society, Ladies Golf League (me) and Stiff Guy Yoga (Francis).

But, as I waited and watched in our village market that day, I realized that no one in the store knew who I was.

My mind wandered to my childhood hometown 500 miles away.

At age eight, I'd pedal my yellow Schwinn as fast as my stubby legs could propel me, down Chestnut Street in my neighborhood. Just before the S-curve where the street joined North Seventh before continuing right on its way eastward, I'd look for traffic. Seeing no cars, I'd whiz by the stop sign at top speed. Feeling the slope of the hill take over my momentum, I'd lift my hands

from the handlebars and stand on the pedals.

With my arms raised, my knees locked, and my sandy blonde pig tails aloft, I'd fly. I'd traverse the Chestnut Street S-curve with ease, using only the weight of my husky yet compact

The Meat & Potatoes of Life



by Lisa Smith Molinari

frame to lean my yellow Schwinn left then right along the S-curve.

On my way home, I'd often stop at the Stankowitz's maple tree. I'd climbed the tree a thousand times and had memorized the exact gestures needed to lift myself into its branches. I'd place my left hand in the crook where a low bough met the trunk and my right Converse-shoe-ed foot on a knot in the trunk. With one heave, I'd swing myself upward, hooking my legs over the next branch, and using my momentum to shift myself smoothly into a seated position.

From my well-worn perch in the tree, I'd look over the familiar scene of my neighborhood domain. The Butterbaugh house where we'd suck on sour stalks of wild rhubarb. The school bus stop where kids ran amok every morning. The steep part of the sidewalk, where boys would jump the concrete stairs on bikes, skateboards and sleds. The Schok's backyard where we played kick the can. The spooky Victorian house on

North Ninth, where an old lady gave us lots of candy every Halloween.

Later, in my teen years, our family upgraded to a brick ranch on the outskirts of town. Too old for my yellow Schwinn, I'd drive my powder blue Volkswagen Beetle from our house to high school, church, Patti's house, the mall, and my babysitting job. By that time, I knew the streets like the back of my hand, chugging along self-assuredly between familiar streetlights and stop signs.

In that place — my hometown — I was never lost.

Watching the customers in McQuaid's Market, I longed for that sense of groundedness I'd had during childhood, when I knew exactly where I was and was known by others. I wondered, can military retirees like us ever achieve the security that comes with being truly local?

"Hey, aren't you Francis' wife?" the young cashier suddenly interrupted my thoughts. "We met in town over the summer."

"Yes!" I burst out, so happy to be recognized. "I'm Lisa, nice to see you again!"

"I'm Matt, great to see you, too," he said with a smile. We chatted for a minute or two while my cashier bagged my items and handed me a receipt.

On my way out the door, I waved and yelled a bit too enthusiastically, "Bye, Matt!"

"Bye, Lisa!" he called back.

I took a right on West Street out of the parking lot, feeling confident that I'd find my way home.

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USS Midway Museum is recruiting for docents, air craft restoration, ship restoration and safety volunteers. www.midway.org/give-join/volunteers/

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THINGS TO DO AROUND TOWN

Gem Faire, Fri-Sun, Jan 6-8 10am-5pm. Free-\$7. Del Mar Fairgrounds, 2260 Jimmy Durante Blvd, Del Mar.
Sesame Street Live! Make Your Magic. Fri, Jan 6, 3 & 6pm. \$20-\$80. Sesame Street pals Elmo, Abby Cadabby, Big Bird and more in a magical adventure live on stage. Pecharanga Arena San Diego, 3500 Sports Arena Blvd, San Diego, 92110
View Stars, Fri, Jan 6, 5-8pm. Free. Join members of SD Astronomy Association at ar end of Kumeyaay Lake Campground's Day Use Parking Lot, view nighttime sky through telescopes. There will be a bright full moon so the planets; Mars, Jupiter, and Saturn (sets at 7:47) will steal the show. Rain or cloudy skies cancel event. Sunset 4:59pm. Kumeyaay Lake Campground, Two Father Junipero Serra Trail, Santee.

New Year Full Moon Hike, Fri, Jan 6, 7-10pm. \$5. Hike to the summit of Iron Mountain during the Full Moon! Our Full Moon Hikes are fun for all ages and most hiking levels - plus our hikes are pet approved! Our energetic group always has a memorable time. Register now and we'll provide the Glow Sticks! The hike to the summit (2,696 ft) is 5.9 miles roundtrip on a heavily-trafficked hiking trail. You gain 1,220ft making it a moderate hike w/steep and rocky sections. Meet at the Iron Mountain trailhead and parking lot located at 14847-14909 CA-67, Poway. <https://www.campbum.com/full-moon-hikes/>

Imperial Beach Farmers' Market, Fridays, 2-7pm. Free. Veggies, fruits, arts & crafts, family entertainment. IB Pier Plaza.
Jurassic World: The Exhibition, Ongoing thru Sun, April 16. Family-friendly immersive 20,000-square-foot experience. Westfield Mission Valley Center, 1640 Camino del Rio North, Mission Valley.
Community Model Train Swap Meet, Sat, Jan 7, 7-10:30am. \$3-\$5. Deals on hard-to-find items from vendors around Southern California. San Diego Model Railroad Museum, 1649 El Prado, Balboa Park.
Guided Wild Life Tracking Walk, Sat, Jan 7, 8:30-10:30am. Free. Easy walk suitable for whole family, starts from visitor center. Rain can-

cels. Mission Trails Regional Park, One Father Junipero Serra Trail, San Carlos, 92119. mtrp.org

Guided Nature Walk, Sat, Jan 7, 9:30-11am. Free. Learn about plants, animals, geology, history of Mission Trails Regional Park. Starts at Visitor's Center. Rain cancels. One Father Junipero Serra Trail, San Carlos, 92119. mtrp.org

Astro Camp for kids grades 3-8, Sat, Jan 7, Feb 4, 12:30-5:30pm. Free. Mission to Mars. Must sign up in advance. Mission Valley Library, 2123 Fenton Pkwy. <https://www.thecluelessftc.org/outreach/nasa-astro-camp>

San Diego Monster Jam, Sat, Jan 7, 7pm; Sun, Jan 8, 3pm. \$30-\$210. Snapdragon Stadium, 2101 Stadium Way, Mission Valley.

Escondido Cars & Coffee. Every Sunday Morning, 8-11am. Free. Kit Carson Park, 3333 Bear Valley Parkway, Escondido. Cars, trucks, bikes!
Promenade Market downtown San Diego. 10am, Ongoing Saturdays thru Dec. Free. Enjoy crafts, coffee, and street food including Mexican, woodfired pizza, gyros, smashed avocado toast, kettle corn, waffles and crepes, more. Ruocco Park, 585 Harbor Lane, SD, 92101.

Street Food Market. Sat-Sun, 10-4, ongoing thru Dec. Free. Lane Field Park Market is a street food market showcasing 20+ food vendors, boutique coffee, live music from 12:30-2:30pm. Food includes Vietnamese bao, Thai burgers, wood-fired pizza, waffles & crepes, Mexican, empanadas, sushi and poke, smoothies, hot mini-donuts, more. Lane Field Park, 1009 North Harbor Drive, SD.

Carlsbad Marathon and Kids Marathon, Sun, Jan 15
Martin Luther King Day, Mon, Jan 16
Chinese New Year (Year of the Rabbit) Jan 20-23.

Jurassic Quest, Jan 20-23, Del Mar Fairgrounds www.jurassic-quest.com

Farmers Insurance Open PGA Golf Tournament at Torrey Pines. www.farmersinsuranceopen.com

La Jolla Open Aire Market, Sundays, 9am-1pm, La Jolla Elementary School, 1111 Marine St., on the southwest corner Girard & Center.

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MOVIES AT THE BASES

Movies & times subject to change. * Indicates last showing
Visit navydispatch.com/entertainment_03movies.htm to find your base theatre information

Naval Base Theater - NBSD, 619-556-5568, Bldg. 71 3465 Senn Rd. ★

FREE entry to the first 300 customers (per showing), no outside food, concessions will be available.

Thursday, January 5
5:50pm I Wanna Dance w/Somebody pg13
Friday, January 6
6pm Violent Night r
Saturday, January 7
3:30pm Strange World pg
6pm Violent Night r
Sunday, January 8
12:50pm I Wanna Dance w/Somebody pg13
3:50pm Devotion pg13
Thursday, January 12
6pm Violent Night r
Friday, January 13
1:40pm Avatar: The Way of Water pg13
5:50pm A Man Called Otto pg13



Pendleton Theater and Training Center Bldg 1330 Mainside (Across from Mainside Center) ★

Saturday, January 7
1:30pm The Menu (R)
Saturday, January 14
1:30pm Strange World (PG)
Saturday, January 21
1:30pm I Wanna Dance w/Somebody

Lowry Theater - NASNI, 619-545-8479 Bldg. 650 ★

Outside food and beverage are NOT permitted. Debit/credit cards only.

Friday, January 6
6pm Violent Night r
Saturday, January 7
3pm Devotion pg13
6pm Violent Night r
Sunday, January 8
1pm Strange World pg
3:30pm I Wanna Dance w/Somebody pg13
Friday, January 13
6pm Avatar: The Way of Water pg13

Q-Zone - NAB Bldg. 337 • 619-437-3190 ★

Family Friendly Movies:
Tues, Thur, Sat: 11 am. NDVDs

Friday, January 6
5pm Black Adam pg13
Saturday, January 7
11am Lyle, Lyle, Crocodile pg
Monday, January 9
5pm Barbarian r
Tuesday, January 10
11am The Nut Job pg
5pm Halloween Ends (2022) r
Wednesday, January 11
5pm Valkyrie pg13

Bob Hope Theater 577-4143 MCAS Miramar Bldg 2242 ★

Check <http://www.mccsmiramar.com/theater/>

CROSSWORD PUZZLE

Across

- New England NFLers
- Workforce
- salad
- Cornell who founded Cornell
- Actress Tierney
- Passionate god
- Nerd's moniker
- Unexciting
- Actress Gabor
- Blends
- Destination for the last flight?
- In the cellar
- Detective's moniker
- Speak to
- Michelle who was the youngest female to play in a PGA Tour event
- Bubbles up
- Didn't like leaving
- Ending for marion
- Traitor's moniker
- Gung-ho
- Lawn-trimming tool
- Anti-inflammatory brand
- Sixth sense, initially
- Coming to a point
- Genius' moniker
- Bonny one
- Captain Kirk's "final frontier"
- Young zebras
- "Gross!"
- avail: fruitless
- Old-timer's moniker
- Skunk cabbage feature
- More flimsy, as an excuse
- Ballet move
- Attention getter
- Krispy
- Man, but not woman

Down

- First name in skunks
- Sea of ___: Black Sea arm
- Court calendar entry
- Diego
- Silvery food fish
- Airport waiter
- Dealership lot array
- At risk of being slapped
- A long way
- Rats
- Former New York senator Al D'___
- Word with book or opera
- "Clean Made Easy" vacuum brand
- Pill amounts
- Like Death Valley
- Bodyguard, typically
- Lamb's' moms
- Not many
- Indulge, with "on"
- Sealed tight
- Summer cooler
- Bakery offering
- Presents too aggressively
- Cave in
- Pigged out (on), briefly
- Taunting remark
- Italian noble family
- Take ___: decline to participate
- Enticement
- Prevent, in legalese
- Apple players
- Compact
- Down
- "My concern is ..."
- "You've got the wrong person!"
- Attention getter
- Cry out loud
- "Look ma, no hands!"
- March on Washington monogram
- Prefix with gram

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How Blue Angels and Thunderbirds keep flying 300 days a year

by Janet A. Aker,
MHS Communications

As U.S. Navy Blue Angels and U.S. Air Force Thunderbirds teams fly through the sky at upwards of 700 miles per hour during exhibitions, take daring twists, dips, and turns—there's a team of health care professionals looking out for them on the ground.

The aviators couldn't do their thrilling and precise maneuvers 300 days a year without relying on flight surgeons to keep them at peak mental, physical, and nutritional levels.

The flight surgeons are so embedded in the daily lives of their demonstration teams that they can catch signs of problems early.

That's important when aviators like the Blue Angels are flying as close as 18 inches apart from one another in precision formations.

"It's a pretty unique level of trust we have," said U.S. Navy Lt. Cmdr. (Dr.) Monica Borza, the Blue Angels flight surgeon.

"I get to know them extremely well. I can recognize if someone's voice is even off one day," Borza said. "That's just how close we are here, and the way it's set up for me to fully know them."

That includes the more than 100 enlisted ground crew who travel with each of the different service teams.

Preventive Care for Aviators
Preventive care has become more prominent for the teams and for the Department of Defense as a whole.

"That's really the razor's edge of what we're doing because we don't have back-up aviators," said U.S. Air Force Capt. (Dr.) Travis Grindstaff, the flight surgeon for the Thunderbirds.

"The biggest part of that shift is finding ways to make sure people are taken care of before the problems are so big that team members are affected by it," Grindstaff said.

For example, some aviators may be only looking to their left, their right, or upwards at all times during the extremely close formations they fly. This creates muscle imbalances in the neck's ability to rotate in the opposite



U.S. Air Force Capt. (Dr.) Travis Grindstaff, the flight surgeon for the Thunderbirds Demonstration Squadron, plots out his best placement of a set of mirrors to signal his aviators the precise flight safety zone over the runway during a recent Nellis Aviation Nation air show at the Thunderbirds' home, Nellis Air Force Base, Nevada.

direction, Grindstaff said.

"Some of the training we've started adding is in trying to get those muscle imbalances corrected, because, over time, that can lead to injury."

"We'll fly in each position and see what are the demands on their body, how they're getting the injuries, how they're getting different imbalances," Grindstaff explained. That information then gets relayed to athletic trainers.

The athletic trainers do measurements of body mobility, balance, and muscle imbalances. Combined with the observations made by the flight surgeons, "we're able to create a training plan and workout routine that can get pilots back to a normal state of health to prevent injuries," Grindstaff said.

The Thunderbirds record flights through the pilot's helmet head-up display where they can hear them breathing and watch for any difficulties as the aviators reach gravitational force levels of seven to nine times the force of gravity (G forces).

The Blue Angels wear devices akin to the smart watches that capture sleep duration and level, heart rate, pulse oxygen levels, and body temperature. "It's just

good knowledge for them to be more in tune with what's going on in their bodies," Borza said. Mental Stresses and Team Responses

"Pilots are professional athletes; they are very good at what they do," Grindstaff said.

"Once the kickoff to the game has started, and the football is kicked off, they're in game mode, and for them, that would be when they get in the jet and turn the jet on," Grindstaff said, adding: "They're able to turn off a lot of the other outside things in their lives that could be affecting them during that flight."

However, the daily grind of travel, flight demonstrations, time zone changes, and lack of quality sleep create mental stresses.

The Thunderbirds provide chaplains once or twice a month for their flight teams to talk to if they wish. The Blue Angels have an embedded mental health professional who visits the squadron weekly.

The Thunderbird flight surgeon more specifically works with the first sergeant, an elite medic who has career experience and specialized training in talking to people about their problems to figure out how to help them,

Grindstaff said.

"The first sergeant is very much a preventative, mental health person who is trained to help people keep their lives in order and in check," Grindstaff said.

"It takes people with the right personalities and the right motivations to do it, because you're basically signing up just to take care of people and their problems in order to help them perform. So, that could be any time of day, any day of the year," Grindstaff explained.

When little issues build "up to the boiling point, that's what really puts people in danger of having an accident or hurting themselves," he added.

Preparing for Flight

Before their performances, the Blue Angels "chair fly" to visualize certain maneuvers, Borza said, like ice skaters do before their programs. "They even say the radio calls that they're going to say," she noted.

On performance days, the teams also do physical warm-ups "to activate the muscles but not fatigue them."

The Blue Angels and Thunderbirds keep a high level of physical and mental strength through an annual comprehensive G-force tolerance improvement program that includes centrifuge training as well as a personal strength exercise program. Opens Health. mil article. For the Blue Angels, these programs focus on the lower body, and cardiovascular capacity, proper daily hydration, nutrition, and sleep habits, Borza explained.

"The main purpose of this program is to maximize G-tolerance through improvement and support aggressive daily maintenance of the physical and mental health of team members," she said.

Every U.S. Navy and U.S. Marine Corps aviator undergoes a mandatory annual comprehensive flight physical exam to "prevent medical, physical or psychological conditions from adversely affecting flight performance, safety or the mission," Borza said.

Proper nutrition and hydration are the "cornerstone of G-tolerance," Borza said, and each team



U.S. Navy Lt. Cmdr. (Dr.) Monica Borza, the flight surgeon for the Blue Angels Flight Demonstration Squadron, conducts ground support operations during a recent air show. Photo: U.S. Navy Blue Angels Public Affairs

member follows an individualized daily calorie intake program to meet their energy requirements, she explained. Proper hydration is just as important, she said, "not only to aid in G-tolerance but also human performance recovery."

The Thunderbirds use home delivery meals they carry with them so they get healthy nutrition throughout the day, Grindstaff said.

Finally, and just as importantly, the flight surgeons are a vital part of the actual air demonstrations.

The Blue Angel flight surgeon is the lead ground safety officer and is trained to read emergency procedures in the event of an aircraft mechanical emergency.

Grindstaff stands on the runways with a series of signal mirrors and light guns so the pilots know exactly where to fly within safety margins of the audience.

"Establishing good rapport with my aviators is critical to the safe completion of the operational mission," Borza said, adding: "It's a high operational tempo. But the good news is everyone's doing the same tempo. So, we're all in it together."

VETERANS ASSOCIATION OF NORTH COUNTY

We are the Veterans Association of North County. VANC is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization created by Veterans for Veterans and active duty service people and their families to help them navigate life during and after service. We serve as a one-stop resource center for all active-duty military, Veterans, and their families. We centralize services from diverse agencies to assist with jobs, education, benefits, health, and wellness. We also support our local community by providing an exceptional space perfect for meetings, banquets, workshops, presentations and more. For more details on events visit <https://www.vanc.me/>

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Tuesday Jan 3, 10, 17, 24 & 31 10-11am Yoga	11am-1pm Buffalo Soldiers
Wednesday January 4 6-7pm American Legion Post 760	11:30am-1:30pm Women Marines
Monday January 9 VANC First Monday Veterans Advisory Committee (Open to the Public)	Sunday January 15 10am-12pm Jewish War Veterans
Tuesday January 10 9:30-11am Military Spouse Association	Monday January 16 VANC CLOSED
Wednesday January 11 1-2:30pm Military Order of Purple Heart	Thursday January 19 6pm-7pm Marine Corps League
Thursday January 12 11am-1pm Gold Star Wives	Saturday January 21 8-4 Hunter Safety Class
6-7pm American G.I. Forum	9-11am Women Veteran Writing Group
Saturday January 14 9-11am Involved Men of Oceanside	11am-1pm San Diego Writers Group
	Wednesday January 25 5-6:30pm Wounded Warrior Project
	Saturday January 28 10am-12pm Military Order of World Wars

CPen's Jan. 20 'Zero Dark Dirty' 6k night obstacle trail run public admission requirements

Assemble for Zero Dark Dirty and test your skills on January 20, at 6pm, at Camp Pendleton's Lake O'Neill! The course offers various night obstacles and the challenge of running at night.

General Public Can Attend

Those without base access must do one of the following:

- Arrange to be sponsored by an authorized base patron to obtain a visitors pass.
- Arrange to be escorted in on race morning by an authorized base patron.
- Sign up for the race, bring your confirmation email (printed or on your phone), Real ID or passport, car insurance, and vehicle registration to the Visitor Center prior to event day to obtain a 1-day pass.
- Visit [https://pendleton.usmc-](https://pendleton.usmc-mccs.org)

[mccs.org](https://pendleton.usmc-mccs.org) and click the event link for full details & pricing.

Other Restrictions

- You will need to pass a background check (at the Visitor Center) to obtain a visitor pass.
 - Those under the age of 18 cannot obtain a visitor pass and must be escorted on base.
 - Those in possession of a visitor pass cannot escort another adult who doesn't have a pass.
- Please do not register for the run unless these requirements have been coordinated.* Patrons who don't make arrangements or obtain a pass to enter Camp Pendleton will be turned away and no refund will be issued.

The Camp Pendleton Visitor Center is located in BLDG 20255T, adjacent to the Main Gate near

I-5 open M-F 7:30am-3:30pm.

Due to the large demand for visitor passes, please obtain your pass as soon as you register to avoid being turned away due to extended waiting times or unforeseen closures. Usually, the best time to come is first thing

ZERO DARK DIRTY
6K NIGHT OBSTACLE RUN

NOW OPEN TO THE PUBLIC!

See website for details

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