

ARMED FORCES DISPATCH

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SIXTY-THIRD YEAR NO. 22
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MISSILE REENTRY These recently cleared photos of the reentry of an unarmed Minuteman III ICBM, sent by the team at the U.S. Army Space and Missile Defense Command (SMDC) Ronald Reagan Ballistic Missile Defense Test Site demonstrate the accuracy of the unarmed ICBM test launch earlier this month in the Marshall Islands. Each test launch reiterates the safe, secure, and effective capability of the land-based leg of the U.S. nuclear triad. U.S. Army photo by Ryan Sharp

Carriers *Dwight D. Eisenhower*, *Carl Vinson* deploy; *Ike* to join carrier *Ford* in Eastern Med

U.S. NAVAL INSTITUTE - Two U.S. Navy aircraft carriers deployed in mid-October, with four carrier strike groups currently deployed across the globe.

USS *Dwight D. Eisenhower* (CVN-69) left Norfolk Naval Station Oct. 14, according to ship spotters. *Ike*'s deployment will take the CSG to the Eastern Mediterranean Sea to join USS *Gerald R. Ford* (CVN-78) and its strike group, according to a Pentagon statement.

"The *Eisenhower* CSG will join the USS *Gerald R. Ford* Carrier Strike Group," reads a statement from Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin.

"The increases to U.S. force posture signal the United States' ironclad commitment to Israel's security and our resolve to deter any state or non-state actor seeking to escalate this war."

Meanwhile, USS *Carl Vinson* (CVN-70) quietly left Naval Air Station North Island Oct. 12 for a deployment to the Indo-Pacific, a Navy official confirmed to *USNI News* Oct. 13.

While the Navy disclosed the *Eisenhower* CSG's scheduled deployment several days before its departure, the service did not announce *Vinson*'s deployment. U.S. 3rd Fleet provided a statement confirming *Vinson* was underway but didn't disclose the carrier's deployment status.

USS *Carl Vinson* is currently underway conducting routine operations in the U.S. 3rd Fleet area of operations.

"U.S. 3rd Fleet works together with our allies and partners to advance freedom of navigation, the rule of law, and other principles that underpin security for the Indo-Pacific region," 3rd Fleet said in a statement.

Cruiser USS *Princeton* and destroyers USS *Hopper*, USS *Kidd*, USS *Sterett* and USS *William P. Lawrence* make up the *Carl Vinson* Carrier Strike Group.

HOSPITAL SHIP MERCY BEGINS ANNUAL PACIFIC PARTNERSHIP TOUR OF ISLAND NATIONS

by Alex Wilson
 Stars and Stripes

A Navy hospital ship steamed out of San Diego Bay Oct. 12 and began making its way across

the Pacific, where it plans to stop at island nations as part of an annual disaster preparedness mission. USNS *Mercy* leads Pacific Partnership 2024. Equipped

with 1,000 hospital beds and a crew of 800 civilian and military personnel, including doctors and dentists, the ship will host symposiums and training events throughout the region, the Navy said in a news release.

Mercy plans stops in the Marshall Islands, Solomon Islands, Palau and Micronesia during the multi-month mission, which aims to improve "disaster response preparedness, resiliency and capacity" and strengthen international relationships, according to the release.

"This mission reflects the continued commitment to the region and dedication to disaster-response-readiness from the U.S., our partners and allies, and the host nations," said Capt. Brian Quin, the mission commander.

In August 2022, the Solomon Islands government welcomed

Mercy on its Pacific Partnership tour, but the same day denied entry to the U.S. Coast Guard cutter *Oliver Henry* and British patrol vessel HMS *Spey*.

The U.S. at the time suspected the Solomons' warming ties with China lay behind the denial.

The Navy and Coast Guard stepped up outreach efforts to Pacific island nations partly to offset China's campaign to extend its influence in the region.

This year, the 2024 mission overlaps the 2023 visits, which kicked off in August in Phu Yen, Vietnam, according to a Pacific Partnership press release. The overlap is a first in the mission's 18-year history, according to Ensign Madison Kwok, spokeswoman for Pacific Partnership.

Follow along with PP23 on <https://www.facebook.com/pacificpartnership/>.



The Pacific Partnership 2023 Combined Band interacts with Wewak International School students after performing a concert during a host nation outreach engagement Oct. 16. U.S. Navy photo by Lt. Cmdr. Michael Yenni

Navy offering up to \$100K in EOD officer retention bonuses

The Navy is offering big bucks to some explosive ordnance disposal officers - if they remain in the service for a few more years. The *Navy Times* reports that under a new policy, the Navy is now breaking up its incentives into two-year increments, while also offering larger amounts of cash to those who agree to four more years of service up front, according to a message to the fleet issued Oct. 13. Under the new EOD bonus system, eligible lieutenants can sign a four-year contract to score a \$72,000 bonus, or agree to \$12,500 annually for two more years of service. Those who sign on for another two years after that can receive another two-year incentive, totaling \$50,000 over four years.

Fleet Science Center debuts 'Color in a New Light'

SAN DIEGO - Color in a New Light is a captivating journey exploring the science of color, light we can see, light we can't see and darkness. The Fleet Science Center's newest exhibition opens Oct. 21. Created with local scientists, Color in a New Light offers a deeper dive into what we might take for granted about how we perceive light and color. For instance, how black is black? What is invisible light? What is the difference between light and color? This exhibition lets visitors investigate these questions and observe their own perceptions to draw conclusions about both the seen and the unseen. And they'll have a lot of fun along the way - walk-in kaleidoscope, a monochrome room with sodium bulbs, an anti-gravity mirror, prisms, lenses, super-black paint and so much more. See you there!

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Operators lift a 155 mm projectile containing VX nerve agent to place it in a tray for destruction at the Blue Grass Chemical Agent-Destruction Pilot Plant, Ky., May 5, 2021. DoD photo by James Campbell

David Vergun
DOD News

On July 7, disposal experts destroyed the last remaining M55 rocket filled with deadly sarin nerve agent at a storage facility in Kentucky. With the disposal, the Defense Department completed the safe elimination of all declared chemical agents amassed between World War I and the late 1960s. The U.S. stockpile once consisted of about 30,600 tons of chemical warfare agents.

Deborah G. Rosenblum, assistant secretary of defense for nuclear, chemical and biological defense programs, spoke Oct. 11 in Richmond, Ky., where she addressed political leaders and workers from the state's Blue Grass Army Depot, where the last chemical agents were destroyed.

"With this milestone, the United States reinforces its

commitment to achieving a world free of chemical weapons," Rosenblum said.

The milestone ushered the U.S. into compliance with the Chemical Weapons Convention, a treaty prohibiting the production and use of chemical weapons and their destruction. The U.S. ratified the treaty in 1997, joining a coalition that now includes nearly 200 countries.

In January 2020, the main plant at Blue Grass began operations using neutralization to destroy chemical agent in projectiles and rockets. The work also consisted of using an explosive destruction technology and a static detonation chamber to destroy projectiles filled with solidified mustard agent, she said.

The Bechtel-Parsons Blue Grass team designed, built,

tested and operated the facility, she said, noting that the DOD agency responsible for safe destruction - Program Executive Office, Assembled Chemical Weapons Alternatives - also had a role in the work.

"They've exemplified a one team, one mission mentality, from the workforce to the regulators, the stakeholders, the local leaders, community, federal, state and defense leaders. It's taken all of us to get across the line, and we've done it," she said.

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General highlights China's military advantages, disadvantages



by David Vergun
DOD News

There are three things that the Chinese military has that the U.S. military, allies and partners in the region do not have, said Army Gen. Charles A. Flynn, commander of U.S. Army Pacific.

“They have interior lines,” he said. He noted that they’re just 100 miles from Taiwan, and they have anti-access, area-denial means to keep opposing forces at a distance—such as missiles, aircraft and ships, as well as cyber and space capabilities.

“The second thing they have is mass,” he said, meaning they have a very large military force.

“The third thing they have is magazine depth,” he said, which would include large quantities of stand-off munitions.

Flynn spoke Oct. 10 on a panel about land power in the Indo-Pacific region at the Association of the U.S. Army Annual Meeting & Exposition in Washington.

The goal of U.S. forces along with allies in the region is to take time and space away from China to deny them key terrain “and to keep our physical presence forward with hard power to deter a war from happening,” he said.

“The goal is no war. We already have a war in Europe. We have another war that just started this past week in the Middle East. We do not need another war in Asia. That is the land powers’ contribution to the joint force to prevent that from happening,” Flynn said.

The anti-access, area-denial arsenal that the Chinese military possesses “is primarily designed to defeat our air power and maritime power. And, secondarily, it’s designed to degrade, deny and disrupt our space and cyber capabilities. It’s not, however, designed to find, fix and finish

distributed, mobile, fixed, semi-fixed, reloadable, lethal and non-lethal land power,” he said.

“We present a dilemma to them that they did not design into the A2/AD arsenal that they built. And this has proven out in war game after war game after war game,” he said, referring to anti-access, area-denial.

The general went on to speak about the importance of the U.S. and allied military presence in the region to deter Chinese aggression.

While air and sea power are crucial, land power is, as well, he said. Flynn added that militaries in the region are composed of anywhere from 65 percent to 80 percent ground forces.

“Land power and the armies in the Indo Pacific are an abso-

Soldiers from 2nd Brigade Infantry Combat Team, 25th Infantry Division participate in Exercise Super Garuda Shield 2023 at 5th Marine Training Center in East Java, Indonesia, Sept. 6, 2023. U.S. Army photo by Spc. Wyatt Moore

lute central part of defending [nations’] national sovereignty and protecting their territorial integrity,” he said.

Flynn highlighted steps the U.S., allies and partners are taking to deter China’s aggression, including increased bilateral and multilateral training exercises, the U.S. Army’s new training center in the region, and nations beefing up their defense spending and working together on improving interoperability.

OSI takes aim at laser pointers, aircraft safety

by Thomas Brading, OSI Public Affairs

QUANTICO, Va. - As the Office of Special Investigations safeguards the Department of the Air Force, they’re confronting a surge in incidents involving laser pointers, which pose significant threats to Air Force aircraft, especially at night.

These seemingly harmless beams, often used for classroom presentations or amusing a house cat, can also disrupt flight operations and create challenges for pilots.

“We refer to these as lazing incidents. It’s crucial for the public to understand that aiming a laser pointer at an aircraft is not only dangerous but a felony,” said an official from the OSI Center.

Officials added the importance of real-time reporting and response by all agencies and law enforcement, both stateside and overseas, as a key strategy in addressing these incidents.

In addition, individuals may incur fines up to \$250,000 and face imprisonment for up to five years.

Additionally, the Federal Aviation Administration has the authority to impose civil penalties, with fines escalating to \$11,000 per violation and \$30,800 for multiple incidents.

Officials said the necessity of ensuring smooth information lanes, emphasizing that efficient communication between pilots, command posts, OSI and local law enforcement is crucial for rapid responses to incidents.

“The challenge is not just in reporting the incident. What makes it actionable is the pilot’s ability to specify, with a degree of certainty, a geo-coordinate from which the laser originated,” officials said.

The effect of a laser beam on pilots is like a camera flash in a pitch-black car at night, resulting in sudden disorientation and temporary blindness. This risk is worse during critical phases of flight, potentially leading to the loss of aircraft and crew, thereby imperiling lives on the ground.

“These are not harmless pranks. There’s a risk of causing permanent visual impairment. From the public’s standpoint, misusing lasers can severely impact a person’s ability to see and function,” said an OSI Center official.



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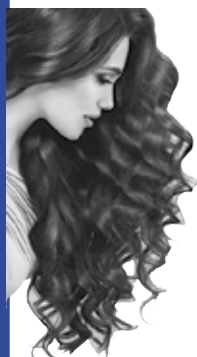
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NATO defense ministers deal with range of alliance issues

by Jim Garamone

DOD News

While the situation in Ukraine and the Middle East dominated, NATO defense ministers dealt with a range of issues during their defense ministerial in Brussels Oct. 12.

The ministers discussed progress made in strengthening deterrence in the region and the various NATO missions and operations, Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg said during a news conference following the meeting at NATO headquarters.

Secretary of Defense Lloyd J. Austin III attended the meeting and chaired a meeting of the Ukraine Defense Contact Group immediately prior to the NATO ministerial.

Stoltenberg said Israeli Defense Minister Yoav Gallant briefed the ministers on the horrific terrorist attacks by Hamas against Israel, and Israel's ongoing response.

"The allies strongly condemned Hamas' indefensible attacks on civilians, and called for the immediate release of all hostages," the secretary general said. "Israel has the right to defend itself. And as the conflict unfolds, the protection of civil-

ians is essential. No nation or organization hostile to Israel should seek to take advantage of the situation, or to escalate the conflict."

The NATO ministers also addressed alliance missions and operations, including in the Western Balkans and in Iraq. "In response to recent tensions in Kosovo, NATO has deployed hundreds of additional reserve forces to our [Kosovo Force] operation in recent weeks," he said.

The KFOR is conducting more patrols in the northern part of Kosovo. "These are prudent steps to ensure KFOR has the forces it needs to fulfil its U.N. mandate impartially," Stoltenberg said.

He said leaders in Serbia and Kosovo must behave responsibly, refrain from destabilizing actions and re-engage in the European Union-sponsored dialogue. "This is the only way to lasting peace in Kosovo," he said.

In Iraq, the NATO mission is expanding support to Iraqi security institutions, to help prevent the return of the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria. "Terrorism remains the most direct asymmetric threat to the alliance," he said.

To combat this, Stoltenberg announced that Assistant Secretary General Tom Goffus will serve as special coordinator for counterterrorism. "He will ensure that NATO's response to terrorism remains strong, effective and coherent," Stoltenberg said.

Defense ministers also discussed moves to strengthen alliance defenses announced during the NATO Summit in Vilnius, Lithuania last summer. NATO leaders agreed on the most robust defense plans since the end of the Cold War, the secretary general said. "We are now taking the next steps: This means assigning the necessary forces, developing new capabilities and adjusting our command and control structures," he said.

Since Russia invaded Ukraine, Russian President Vladimir Putin has rattled the nuclear saber. "Russia's war on Ukraine is a reminder of the important role NATO's nuclear weapons play in deterring aggression," Stoltenberg said. "Next week, NATO will hold its annual nuclear exercise, Steadfast Noon. This is a routine training event that happens every October."

The exercise will take place over Italy, Croatia and the Medi-

terranean Sea. "Our exercise will help to ensure the credibility, effectiveness and security of our nuclear deterrent," he said. "It sends a clear message that NATO will protect and defend all allies."

The ministers also discussed damage to critical undersea infrastructure in the Baltic Sea. A gas pipeline and a communications cable connecting NATO allies, Finland and Estonia were damaged Oct. 10. The allies will work with Finland and Estonia to establish the facts behind the incident. "If this is proven to be a deliberate attack on critical infrastructure, it would be a serious incident, and it would be met by a united and determined response," Stoltenberg said.

Finally, the secretary general raised the need to move forward on the ratification of Swedish membership in the alliance.

"I'm glad that the Turkish defense minister confirmed that Turkey stands by the agreement from Vilnius to finalize Swedish accession," he said. "I now expect that the Turkish government will submit the accession protocol to the Grand National Assembly and work with the assembly to ensure speedy ratification."

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IWTC San Diego increases intelligence knowledge of foreign officers in IMIC

SAN DIEGO – Seven officers from three different partner nations participated in the International Maritime Intelligence Course (IMIC) at Information Warfare Training Command (IWTC) San Diego late last month.

This fall's IMIC graduates spanned the officer ranks representing militaries and coast guards of Colombia, Indonesia, and Malta. Students learned from a variety of subject matter experts across the U.S. Navy's information warfare community facilitated lessons on topics such as intelligence preparation of the operational environment, analytical methods, intelligence sources, with a geopolitical capstone event at the end.

"The entire class was very involved in the training process, asking a lot of thought provoking questions," said Lt. Katie Jensen, IMIC instructor. "Many of the students were able to bring their own past experiences and relate it to the curriculum, increasing both the students' and staffs' understanding of current maritime practices."

The three-week course convenes twice a year, hosting intelligence and operations officers from around the world. In addition to the curriculum, participants visit several areas in Southern California as part of the Field Studies Program, including guided tours of San Diego, the Cabrillo National Monument, and Los Angeles.



International Maritime Intelligence Course students, with lead instructor Lt. John Morrissey, pose for a class photo at Information Warfare Training Command San Diego. U.S. Navy photo

"IMIC is integral to our strategic initiative of fostering key relationships with partner nations to promote a free and open

maritime domain through mutual cooperation," stated Cmdr. Greg Gabriel, IWTC San Diego Commanding Officer. "Both the students and instructors benefit greatly from the shared perspectives, worldwide operational experiences, and innovative ideas."

IWTC San Diego, as part of the Center for Information Warfare Training (CIWT), provides a continuum of training to Navy and joint service personnel that prepares them to conduct information warfare across the full spectrum of military operations.

With four schoolhouse commands, a detachment, and training sites throughout the United States and Japan, CIWT trains approximately 26,000 students every year, delivering trained information warfare professionals to the Navy and joint services.

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Sub honoring 'father of nuclear Navy' activated

by Lt.j.g. Wallis Lawrence

The Navy commissioned fast-attack Virginia-class submarine USS *Hyman G. Rickover* (SSN 795) in a traditional ceremony held Oct. 14, at Naval Submarine Base New London in Groton, Conn.

Darleen Greenert, *Rickover's* sponsor, Navy veteran, and wife of former Chief of Naval Operations Jonathan Greenert, highlighted the sacrifice of military families during her remarks and remembered the late Eleonore Rickover, the namesake admiral's wife and sponsor of SSN 709.

"How lucky am I be to be standing by these wonderful, amazing submariners," Greenert said to the audience before making one request. "Take my submarine sailors in your hearts and keep them in your prayers - however you pray - and help them be strong because we know they are brave."

The ceremony culminated a years-long process for commissioning the USS *Rickover*, the second submarine to commemorate Adm. Hyman G. Rickover - often referred to as the father of the nuclear Navy. The first Hyman G. Rickover (SSN 709), commissioned in Groton on July 21, 1984, and deployed 12 times until its decommissioning in December 2007.

Greenert gave the crew the traditional order to "man our ship and bring her to life," after which *Rickover's* Sailors responded "aye aye ma'am" before ceremonially running aboard the submarine.

Rickover's commanding officer Cmdr. Matthew Beach called the event a "momentous occasion" during his speech.

"The commissioning of [this] ship is dedicated to a leader who reshaped our sea service through an unrelenting 63 years of service," Beach said of Adm. Rickover's legacy. "In front of you today on board this ship, the proud sailors of the next generation - Hyman G.

Rickover - stand ready to continue this legacy of excellence guiding our ship into harm's way and defending the values that we hold dear."

Secretary of the Navy Carlos Del Toro praised the crew and the shipbuilders during his speech calling the commissioning a "true milestone for our fleet."

<https://www.navalnews.com/naval-news/2023/10/>



GROUP SALUTE Airmen salute during the national anthem during the 2023 Scott Air Force Base Air Force Ball at Busch Stadium in St. Louis, Missouri, Sept. 23, 2023. U.S. Air Force photo by Airman 1st Class De'Quan Simmons



STRENGTH IN SILHOUETTE A Soldier swings across an obstacle course during training in San Antonio, Sept. 15, 2023. U.S. Army photo by Spc. Noelani Revina



WATCHFUL EYES Air Force Maj. Katelyn Dunahoe, 60th Aeromedical Evacuation Squadron flight nurse, observes Egyptian service members applying tourniquets during exercise Bright Star 23 at AlMaza Air Force Base, Egypt, Sept. 5, 2023. U.S. Air Force photo by Senior Airman Jacob Cabanero



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FROM THE SERVICES



Army

- Army lead-based paint audit leads to scrutiny from Congress
- Fort Liberty private housing lawsuit inches toward settlement

inches toward settlement

- Former JBLM sergeant accused of trying to give secrets to China will face charges in Seattle

Navy

- USS Lake Erie CO relieved of command (see story, page 11)
- Former Navy officer wins appeal of sex crimes conviction on claim of racial bias in jury selection
- USS Ronald Reagan arrives in South Korea
- Stocked with eyeglasses and excitement, hospital ship Mercy begins Pacific partnership deployment
- Top Marine outlines priorities for next four years
- Expect live fire noise from Camp Pendleton as international exercise gets underway
- Red Devils arrive in Japan as complement to Marine Corps' F-35B stealth fighters

Air Force

- Incidents of laser points aimed at aircraft have spiked, and it has the Air Force concerned (see story, page 3)
- SDA director says he's willing to be the 'bad cop' to challenge Pentagon bureaucracy
- Lack of fervor for Patriot Express results in end to rotator flights at RAF Mildenhall
- A-10 Warthogs arrive, more U.S. forces coming amid Israel-Gaza fighting
- The greatest partnership. Wright Patt marks 96th anniversary of Wright Field dedication

Coast Guard

- Coast Guard art on display at Mobile museum through December

Veterans

- Vets more likely than civilians to own home, experience homelessness
- Veterans Day is on Saturday this year. Do fed employees get a day off?

Former chief petty officer sentenced for stealing, selling personal data from Sailors

by Jennifer H. Svan
Stars and Stripes

A former Navy chief petty officer is going to prison for using his job at Yokosuka Naval Base in Japan to steal and sell \$160,000 worth of personal information belonging to thousands of people, the Justice Department said.

Marquis Hooper, 32, of Selma, Calif., was sentenced Oct. 16 in federal court in Fresno to five years and five months. He and his wife, Natasha Chalk, pleaded guilty in March to conspiracy to commit wire fraud.

Hooper also pleaded guilty to wire fraud and aggravated identity theft. Chalk is scheduled to be

sentenced next month, the Justice Department said. The maximum prison term for the conspiracy conviction alone is 20 years.

The two obtained information by accessing a private database and selling it in exchange for Bitcoin on the dark web, according to prosecutors.

The couple's criminal plot began in August 2018, about two months before Hooper's 10-year military career ended, according to court documents.

At the time, he was stationed in Japan as an IT manager. Chalk

was a naval reservist at Naval Air Station Lemoore.

Hooper opened an online account with a company that runs a database containing personal information for millions of people.

The company, which wasn't identified in court documents, restricts access to the database to businesses and government agencies with a proven and lawful need for the information.

Hooper falsely told the company he was representing 7th Fleet and needed access to perform background checks on Navy personnel,

according to court filings.

Hooper then added Chalk's name to the account, and they retrieved information of more than 9,000 people's information, which they sold to third parties for \$160,000, the Justice Department said.

Some buyers of the information used it to commit further crimes, the Justice Department said. Someone tried to withdraw money from a bank account in Arizona using a fake California driver's license with information bought from Hooper and Chalk. A bank teller declined the transaction, according to court documents.

Refer to <https://www.stripes.com/theaters/us/2023-10-17/former-sailor-jailed-bitcoin-fraud-11733917.html>.



Ships Underway
Total Battle Force
291 (USN 232, USNS 59)
Deployed
104 (USN 72, USNS 32)
Underway
73 (48 Deployed, 25 Local)
Ships Deployed by Fleet
2nd Fleet - 5
3rd Fleet - 5
4th Fleet - 1
5th Fleet - 13
6th Fleet - 21
7th Fleet - 59
Total - 104

Where are our ships at sea

These are approximate positions of the Navy's deployed carrier strike groups & amphibious ready groups throughout the world as of Oct. 16, 2023, 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>.

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Did you do the VA's Buddy Check? If you missed it, do it now!

WASHINGTON — Earlier this month, the Department of Veterans Affairs announced the first annual National Buddy Check Week. During the week — which took place between Oct. 16 and Oct. 20 — VA encouraged Veterans to talk to 10 of their fellow Veterans and check in with them.

The goal of this effort is to build peer-to-peer connections,

improve mental health, and increase access to VA resources. Veteran family members, caregivers, and survivors are also encouraged to participate.

All of the resources that participants need can be found on VA's National Buddy Check Week website, including the Buddy Check Week Pledge, a tool to help find buddies, and peer wellness training. The train-

ing helps Veterans recognize if their buddy needs additional assistance and, if so, understand how to help.

"No one can replace the bonds between Veterans who served together," said Deputy Secretary of Veterans Affairs Tanya Bradsher. "Through National Buddy Check Week, we're encouraging all Veterans to reach out to their buddies, even if they

haven't talked for a while. And if a Veteran needs help, please refer them to VA. Don't let a buddy miss out on the resources they've earned."

All Veterans and their families can help connect Veterans to resources by sharing:

- 1-800-MyVA411 is always

the right number to call for questions or assistance.

- The Veterans Crisis Line is available 24/7. Dial 988 then Press 1, Chat Online, or Text 838255.

- Print and share the VA Welcome Kit to learn more about what VA offers and how to get

started.

Visit VA's National Buddy Check Week website to learn more about the pledge, training, outreach kit, and other easy ways to get involved.

<https://www.va.gov/initiatives/national-buddy-check-week-talk-to-10-veterans/>

VA reduces premium rates for Veterans' Mortgage Life Insurance

WASHINGTON — This month, the Department of Veterans Affairs reduced premiums for most Veterans and Service members insured under the Veterans' Mortgage Life Insurance program.

Through the VMLI program, eligible Veterans and Service members with severe disabilities can purchase up to \$200,000 in mortgage life insurance. This coverage means that if a policyholder passes away, the amount of their coverage will be used to pay down their mortgage — helping to ensure that their loved ones won't be responsible for that cost.

Starting Oct. 1, most VMLI

policyholders saw a reduction between 6% and 36% of their premiums, depending on their age. VA is using an updated actuarial table and interest rates adopted by the insurance industry to decrease VMLI premium rates. Veterans will see the reduced rates on their next billing cycle, starting in November, as payment of each VMLI premium is for the prior month.

"This coverage will now be more affordable for many of our nation's heroes, making it easier for them to protect their homes — and their loved ones — even if they pass away," said VA Under Secretary for Benefits Joshua Jacobs. "This is a great step forward that will mean

peace of mind for many of the Veterans we serve."

While a small group of VMLI policyholders will not see a decrease in premiums under the new actuarial table, VA locked in their current premiums so they will not increase.

More than 2,200 Veterans and Service members are currently insured by VMLI. Veterans and Service members may be eligible for VMLI if they meet all these requirements:

Learn more about VMLI (<https://www.va.gov/life-insurance/options-eligibility/vml/>) and VA's other life insurance options (<https://www.va.gov/life-insurance/>).



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NAVWAR supports local cybersecurity infrastructure as top cyber employer in the region

by Lily Chen
NAVWAR

The San Diego Cyber Center for Excellence mobilizes businesses, academia and government to grow the regional cyber economy and create a more secure digital community for all.

Alongside the San Diego Regional Economic Development Corporation (EDC), they released a cybersecurity economic impact study report titled “Cybersecurity is Everyone’s Business: San Diego’s Cyber Cluster” at an event hosted at Qualcomm in San Diego earlier this month.

The fifth update since 2014, the report quantifies the economic impact of the region’s cybersecurity cluster and explores the firms, technology, and talent working to help thwart cyber risk across San Diego and beyond. It also marks the 10-year anniversary of the founding of the CCOE.

Currently, cybersecurity work contributes 26,000 jobs and \$4 billion to the regional economy annually, which is the equivalent to 24 Comic-Cons. Most local

firms engaged in cybersecurity work are small businesses, with



two-thirds of them working directly or indirectly with DoD.

According to the report, NAVWAR is the top cyber employer in the San Diego region, with a total of 5,255 military and civilian personnel, including 3,432 dedicated to cybersecurity. Its cyber workforce alone has a total regional economic impact of \$1.1 billion, which is just over a quarter of the total impact of the cybersecurity cluster on the region.

At the impact study release event, Mark Compton, command information security officer at NAVWAR, spoke on a panel with other cyber experts from healthcare, academia and indus-

try. Moderated by Brent McCarty, president of ESET North America and the CCOE Foundation, Compton was invited to share the government perspective on the rapidly growing cybersecurity industry.

“We’re fortunate to have a healthy ecosystem here in San Diego for technical development and to see the commercial cybersecurity market grow the way it has,” he said. “As one of the major cyber presences in the area, we need to continue working with our industry partners to ensure we have the latest and greatest to support the warfighter so we can fight tonight and win tomorrow.”

To address concerns like hiring talent to match the growing demand of cybersecurity professionals, the CCOE has partnered with the San Diego Workforce Partnership, City of San Diego, San Diego Regional EDC, NAVWAR and others on a regional cyber talent pipeline

called CyberHire. The CyberHire team works with participants to navigate their job readiness roadmap to ensure they are ready for employment in information technology or cybersecurity and cover costs for certifications.

By partnering with regional cyber employers, the CyberHire program ensure participants have a pipeline for interviewing and offer paid work experiences to help them gain industry-relevant experience.

“The world-wide demand growth for expertise in cybersecurity alone points to the imperative to address the ever-evolving nature of cybersecurity as both a threat and a defense,” said Compton. “Technological advances in the commercial world are bleeding into the military along with their cybersecurity challenges and opportunities. We need to continue to foster technical exchange of ideas and continually leverage that talent and experience by creating opportunities for this talent to move from commercial, into defense industrial base, into the government, and back again.”

Singapore Armed Forces, 13th MEU begin Valiant Mark '23

CAMP PENDLETON - The Singapore Armed Forces and the 13th Marine Expeditionary Unit conducted Valiant Mark 23 Oct. 7-21. VM23 is a bilateral exercise between the SAF and U.S. Marine Corps designed to maintain and strengthen partnerships and enhance overall interoperability. Through these routine exercises, the U.S. fosters a more seamless and collaborative working relationship with Singapore partners. “Earlier this year, the 13th MEU was deployed to the Western Pacific and worked closely with the SAF in Singapore. During Valiant Mark 2023, we picked up where we left off, continued our bilateral training, and created everlasting personal and professional bonds,” said Col. Stuart Glenn, commanding officer, 13th MEU.

China Lake delivers 2nd earthquake recovery project

CHINA LAKE - Naval Facilities Engineering Systems Command Officer in Charge of Construction China Lake officially delivered the Academic Training Center, the second of 29 projects, as part of the \$2.7 billion Earthquake Recovery Program aboard Naval Air Weapons Station China Lake recently. In August 2021, the project broke ground and the demolition of the aged and earthquake damaged NAVAIR Training Center, commenced.

OICC China Lake provides engineering, acquisition, and execution oversight for military construction and repair projects caused by the devastating damage from the 6.4 and 7.1 magnitude earthquakes that occurred on July 4 and 5, 2019.

USS Essex completes dry docking availability

SAN DIEGO - Amphibious assault ship *Essex* undocked from the Pride of California Dry Dock last month. *Essex* underwent a 12-month maintenance period to upgrade and refurbish many key systems aboard. “While no Sailor prefers to be in the dry dock over salty breezes at sea, it is apparent that the crew here has used their time well,” said Rear Adm. Randall Peck, commander of Expeditionary Strike Group 3. “The ship is looking fantastic and I’m excited to see this crew get back to sea in the near term.” The ship undocked following a change of command ceremony where Capt. Wayne Liebold relieved Capt. Aaron Taylor as the ship’s skipper.

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College president speaks at symposium



'Education is a critical path to meet tomorrow's needs,' says Randi Cosentino

by Senior Chief Petty Officer Alexander Gamble
SAN DIEGO - U.S. Naval Community College's President Randi Cosentino spoke at the Chief Learning Officer Symposium on Oct. 16.

The 19th annual CLO Symposium provides an opportunity for leaders in learning and development to share their perspectives, approaches and lessons on learning environments and their impact on organizations and the career journeys of employees.

During the "Innovate to Elevate: Mastering the Future of Workforce Excellence" panel, she spoke on how innovative learning methodologies, emerging technologies and forward-thinking leadership can reshape the workforce into an agile and future-ready powerhouse.

"It was a pleasure to participate in the CLO symposium and discuss the impact that organizations can have when they invest in targeted educational opportunities for their employees," said Cosentino. "Whether in the government, military, or in the

private sector, we are all facing a changing work landscape and education is a critical path to meet tomorrow's needs."

USNCC innovates the way it provides naval-relevant education to its workforce in a way that supports a globally-deployed force. In a recent internal

demographic credential that has taken general education courses such as philosophy and history and navalized them.

"For example, we take a business school approach to naval history," said Russ Evans, dean of naval studies at USNCC. "This means that we look at

military studies, organizational leadership, nuclear engineering technology, cybersecurity, aviation maintenance technology, uncrewed systems, maritime logistics, and data analytics, with more naval-relevant degree programs planned over the next two years.

Each of these degree programs are open to active duty enlisted Sailors from the Navy, Marine Corps, and Coast Guard.

"Education is a critical path to help meet tomorrow's workforce challenges as well as to prepare employees for a lifetime of career success," said Cosentino.

The U.S. Naval Community College is the official community college for the Navy, Marine Corps, and Coast Guard.

To get more information about the USNCC, go to www.usncc.edu. Click on the student interest form link to learn how to be a part of the USNCC.



During the "Innovate to Elevate: Mastering the Future of Workforce Excellence" panel, U.S. Naval Community College's President Randi Cosentino spoke on how innovative learning methodologies, emerging technologies and forward-thinking leadership can reshape the workforce into an agile and future-ready powerhouse.

survey, 82 percent of students perceived that the Naval Studies Certificate, the core of every degree program offered at the school, was relevant to their naval service, and 79 percent perceived that the skills they learned in the program was relevant to their service as an enlisted member. These were from the perspectives of Sailors, Marines, and Coast Guardsmen based on eight terms between the spring of 2022 and the fall of 2023.

The Naval Studies Certificate is a five-course, 15-credit aca-

historical battles and historical figures through the case study approach and see how we can apply those principles to today's naval service."

This Naval Studies Certificate is built into each of the 60-credit-average associate degree programs at USNCC. These include degree programs in



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Navy fires skipper of San Diego-based cruiser

by Alex Wilson
Stars and Stripes

The Navy has removed the commander of guided-missile cruiser USS *Lake Erie* for unspecified performance issues.

Capt. Danielle DeFant was relieved by Rear Adm. Christopher Alexander, commander of Carrier Strike Group 9, “due to a loss of confidence in her ability to command,” Naval Surface Force said Oct 12 in a news release.

“Navy commanding officers are held to high standards of personal and professional conduct,” the release said. “They are expected to uphold the highest standards of responsibility, reliability and leadership, and the Navy holds them accountable when they fall short of those standards.”

The U.S. military regularly uses “loss of confidence” as a catch-all term when publicly announcing a commander’s removal, but the precise circumstances are rarely disclosed due in part to federal privacy laws.

She is at least the eighth Navy officer relieved this year

for “loss of confidence.”

Naval Surface Force spokesman Cmdr. Arlo Abrahamson said only that DeFant’s removal “was related to the



Capt. Danielle DeFant was relieved of command of cruiser USS *Lake Erie*, Oct. 12. U.S. Navy photo

performance of duties while serving” as the *Lake Erie*’s skipper.

“The relief of Capt. DeFant will not impact the ship’s readiness,” he told *Stars and Stripes* by e-mail Oct. 13.

Lake Erie, homeported in San Diego, completed a nearly two-year maintenance period in September 2022. The ship is assigned to Carrier Strike Group 9 around aircraft carrier USS *Theodore Roosevelt*.

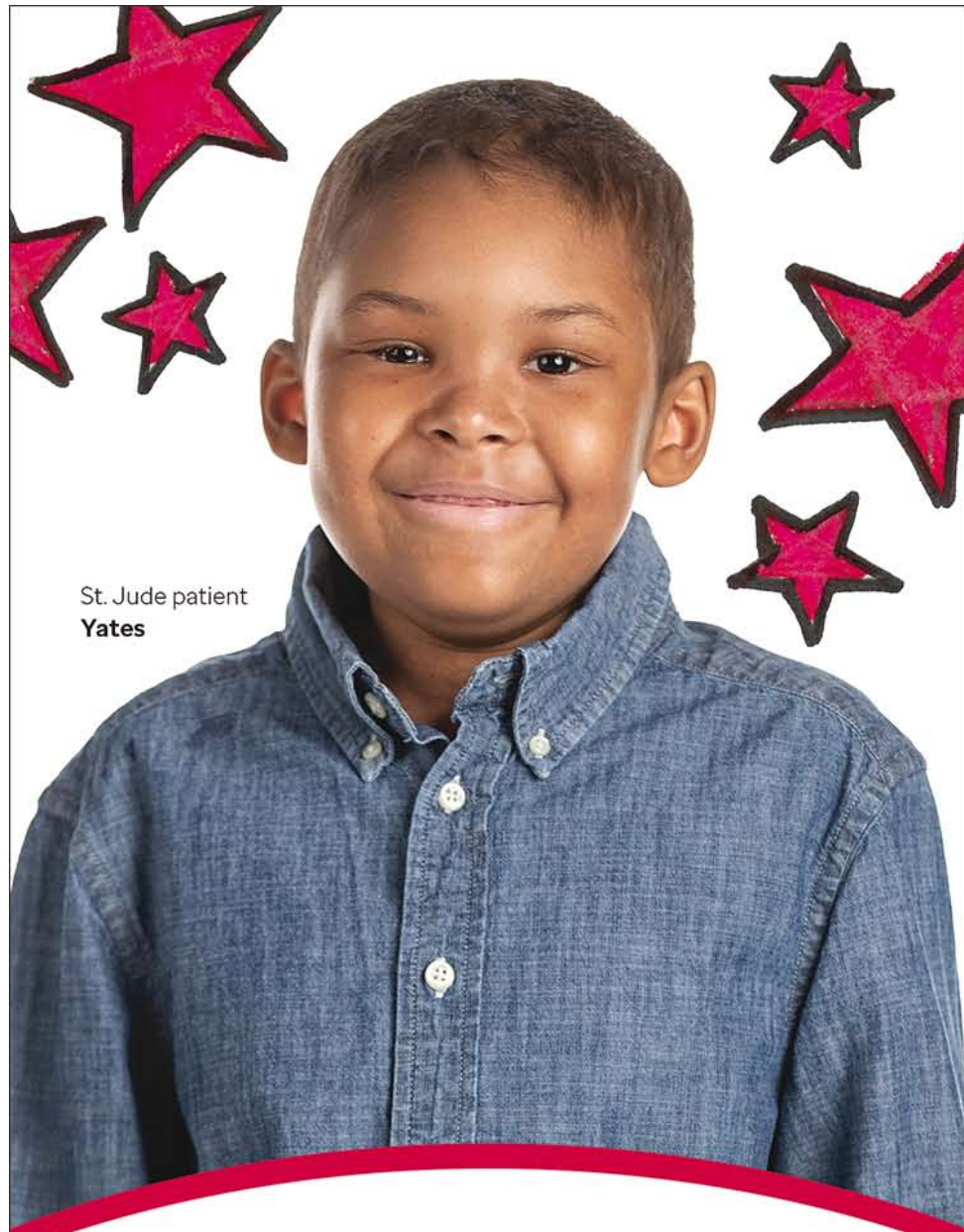
DeFant is being transferred to an unspecified position within Naval Surface Force, according to the news release.

Capt. Brandon Burkett, who commanded cruiser *Mobile Bay*, will fill in as *Lake Erie*’s skipper until a permanent replacement is chosen. *Mobile Bay* was decommissioned Aug. 10 after more than three decades of service.

The 30-year-old *Lake Erie* may be retired in 2025, according to the Navy’s proposed shipbuilding plan for fiscal year 2024.

DeFant, of Oceanside, enlisted in the Navy in 1991. She holds a bachelor’s degree in political science from Old Dominion University; as an enlisted sailor, she served aboard submarine tender USS *Hunley* and destroyer tender USS *Shenandoah*.

She was commissioned in 1999 through the Officer Candidate School in Pensacola, Fla. Since then, she has served in several roles, including as the executive officer and commander of guided-missile destroyer USS *Paul Hamilton*.

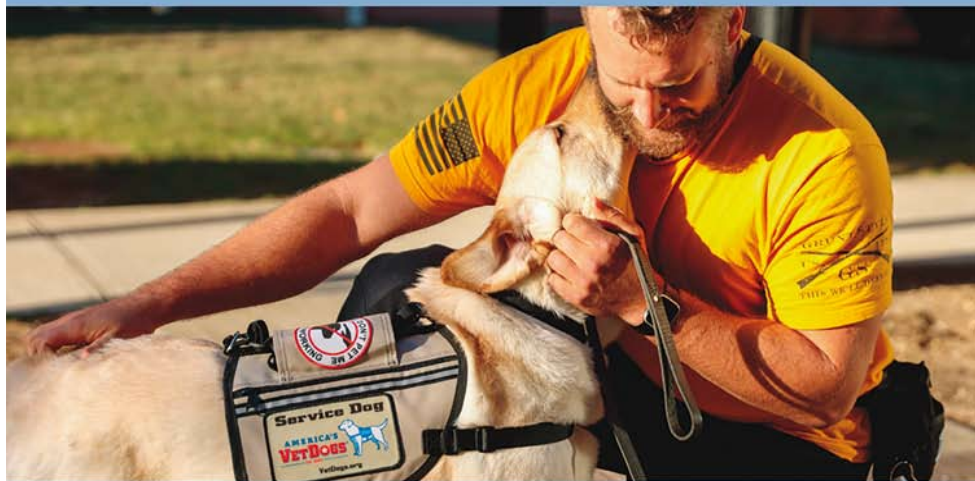


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MCRD SAN DIEGO (Oct. 10, 2023) - Marine Corps recruits with Fox Company, 3rd Recruit Training Battalion, prepare to execute a counter to the rear chokes during a Marine Corps Martial Arts Program training event here

U.S. Marine Corps photo by Lance Cpl. Janell B. Alvarez

Choked up



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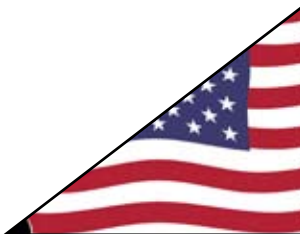
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RESCUE OPS. An airman releases a basket of gear to be hoisted onto an aircraft, not pictured, during a simulated rescue operation off the coast of California, Sept. 13, 2023. U.S. Air Force photo



BALBOA PARK (Oct. 13, 2023) Naval Medical Center San Diego Sailors get fit with a morning run celebrating the Navy's 248th Birthday. U.S. Navy photo from <https://www.facebook.com/NMCSDB/>

--- COMBINED FEDERAL CAMPAIGN ---

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Before we committed ourselves to each other until death, Francis and I were pretty much clueless. We had no idea what kind of husband or wife we might turn out to be. As long as we were in love, we thought, nothing else mattered.

Francis grew up as the son of a neurologist in the affluent DC suburb of Chevy Chase, Maryland. At weekend cocktail parties and crew regattas, his parents chatted with their friends over canapés about politics, world events, and their children's prep schools. They drank bottled water before it was trendy and bought their food from overpriced grocery stores. They kept things like capers and pate in their refrigerators, and they drove imported cars.

I was brought up in a town with only one high school, where we thought everyone in the world had two days off for hunting season. To the people of my Western Pennsylvania town, Chevy Chase was a comedian on "Saturday Night Live," and it was perfectly normal to get your water from a well and your meat from the woods. Our refrigerators contained bricks of Velveeta, cans of Hershey's syrup, and in the spring, trout with the heads still on. My parents' vehicles were pre-owned, and other than one Volkswagen Beetle, none were imported.

Francis grew up believing that all women throw sophisticated dinner parties at the drop of a hat, while being charming and looking fabulous in

the latest styles from Lord & Taylor. He didn't realize that he'd made a lifetime commitment to someone who shops at TJ Maxx and whose idea of a party is opening a bag of Fritos and watching a Steelers game. My poor husband has had to redefine "woman" to include those who, like me, would prefer a hot poker in the

The Meat & Potatoes of Life



by
Lisa
Smith
Molinari

eye to the obligatory social events of a Navy wife.

Similarly, I've had to adjust my definition of "man" to include those who don't own anything fluorescent orange. I've had to come to terms with the fact that although Francis was in the Navy, he's afraid of tools, guns, and knives, and shudders at the mere thought of hooking a worm, much less eating a fish with the head still on it.

I'll admit—I've felt somewhat guilty that I've never fulfilled Francis's expectations of what his wife might be. I've often wished I were more sophisticated, formal, and fancy.

I've seen self-consciousness in his eyes, too, like the time I had to

assemble the barbecue grill because he couldn't understand the instructions, or the time I snorkeled on a beach vacation for four hours alone while he sipped mojitos and read an Oprah Book Club selection under an umbrella.

If we'd known back then what we know now, would we have eternally promised ourselves to each other before the altar of Graystone Presbyterian Church 30 years ago?

Without a doubt, I say "Yes."

We met while I was sitting on my family's vacation cottage deck, shucking corn. "Lisa, this is Francis," my Navy pilot brother said. "He was our intel guy in VAQ-139 out in Whidby Island." Three nights later, Francis made me laugh at dinner. A spark was lit. We danced to Guns and Roses' "Knocking on Heaven's Door" which was strangely romantic, then walked to the beach to look at the stars.

When we started dating, the only thing we knew for certain was that neither of us were perfect, but we offered each other something that had been missing in our lives. Unconditional love and approval — intangibles that are psychological, ethereal, yet powerful enough to transcend unknown personality quirks and personal histories.

Besides, along the way, I discovered that Francis is fiercely loyal, his love for our family is deep and sincere, and even though he sometimes leaves his underwear on the floor and I contemplate escaping to Mexico to sell coconuts on the beach, he'll always make me laugh.

Solar Eclipse viewing party at the Fleet Science Center

Solar eclipses are rare, magnificent celestial events. Thanks to the Fleet Science Center in Balboa Park, on Oct. 14, 2023 we observed an annular eclipse at a community-wide, free, eclipse viewing party.

According to NASA, in an annular solar eclipse the moon passes between the Sun and Earth while it is close to or at its farthest point from Earth until it appears within the sun, creating a 'ring of fire' effect. In San Diego, we saw a partial annular eclipse.

At 8AM the sky was completely overcast. That was fortunate for those of us who, like me, forgot to bring protective eclipse filters for our cameras, because we were able to take some clouds-filtered photos of the early part of the eclipse. Pointing cameras at the sun can quickly damage the image sensors. The extremely bright, damaging rays of the sun were significantly filtered by the clouds.

The Fleet organized a great eclipse viewing party, with engaging demonstrations by astronomers and eclipse experts. Adults and children alike could build their own solar eclipse viewers, with materials and expertise provided by the Fleet.

Soon the cloud-cover broke. Since looking into the sun, even very briefly, can do irreparable damage to the eyes, eclipse viewing glasses were distributed.

People with cellphone cameras — myself included — improvised by placing a heavily filtered lens from our eclipse viewing glasses in front of our cellphone lens, but that small filter was not nearly large enough to completely block the harmful rays of the sun from the large lens that was attached to my full-frame Canon R3 mirrorless camera, so I was resigned to only use it to take photos of the exhibits and of people watching the eclipse — until I met Professor Burgasser, PhD from the UC San Diego Department of Physics, Center for Astrophysics and Space Sciences, who was there to answer people's questions.

He had set up two telescopes. One was a purpose-built, relatively inexpensive telescope that was strictly for viewing eclipses. It had a built-in eclipse filter.

The other was a larger telescope, through which he focused the image of the eclipse back onto a large piece of paper. The image of the eclipse was excellent and it was

completely safe to view. Some people even took selfies of the eclipse in this way, projecting the eclipse on their hand for a very special memory.

Professor Burgasser had also brought along a special, large filter to go over the front of his large telescope, but since he was not using that telescope to look directly at the eclipse, he did not need to use this filter. Instead, he let me and others use it. We held it in place, completely and safely covering our camera's large lenses. It worked!

His filter was extremely dark, so initially I could not see anything through the viewfinder of my camera. Since the sun was a relatively small dot in the sky above, I needed to position my camera in such a way that it was pointing at the sun. That is where my eclipse viewing glasses came in. I put them on and looked through them while I aligned my camera to point towards the sun, with my 24-240mm lens fully zoomed-in.

Then, through trial and error, I figured out what camera and lens settings to use. Since the sun was very far away, appearing as a small dot in the very large frame, my slightest movement could blur the image. To compensate for that, I used a fairly high shutter speed. I used an appropriate aperture to make the resulting image bright enough, but without overexposing it.

Interestingly, the resultant images taken with my iPhone through a lens of my eclipse viewing glasses were very warm in color, whereas the images shot with my professional camera through the large filter appeared to be black & white.

Afterwards, kids crafted a sun and moon spinner at The Fleet's Studio X, to create their own annular solar eclipse effect.

For upcoming events at The Fleet, visit <https://www.fleetscience.org> and <https://balboapark.org>.

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MAYO CLINIC HEALTH Q&A

Food to reduce bloating

DEAR MAYO CLINIC: My doctor recommended that I add more fruits and vegetables to my diet. I have slowly increased my intake over the past two months, but lately I have begun to experience increased gas and bloating. Are there certain foods to avoid to limit abdominal distress? How can I embrace a more healthful diet but banish the discomfort?

ANSWER: Congratulations on working to embrace a more nutritious diet. Incorporating more fruits and vegetables, which provide valuable fiber, is a step in the right direction to help manage cholesterol, blood pressure, blood sugar and overall weight. However, if you are not used to consuming fiber-rich foods in your diet, you will want to do so slowly to avoid bloating and abdominal pain.

The amount of fiber each person needs is based on age. Generally, men aged 50 and younger should aim for 38 grams of fiber daily, whereas women of this age would target 25 grams daily. As we age, fiber intake recommendations decrease. Men aged 51 and older should aim for 30 grams of fiber daily; women should aim for 21 grams daily.

Also, be mindful that certain foods — and drinks — can trigger excess digestive discomfort. Consider avoiding some common offenders and you can continue on your path to a more nutritious lifestyle.

Fruits with high fructose content

Many people avoid fruit because fruit has sugar, including fructose and sorbitol, which can cause inflammation and gas. But fruit contains fiber, which is important for a healthy diet, and beneficial vitamins and minerals. Avoid fruits that are high in fructose, such as apples, pears and watermelon. Instead, choose bananas, oranges, cantaloupe and darker-hued fruit — such as blackberries, blueberries and strawberries — which contain valuable antioxidants.

Beans and lentils

Though beans and lentils are excellent sources of protein and fiber, these foods also contain complex sugars called oligosaccharides, which cause bloating and gas as they pass through the digestive system. To reduce the amount of sugar, always rinse canned beans and ensure they are thoroughly cooked. Cooking beans until they are very soft helps to decrease gas production.

Alternative, easier-to-digest options that won't cause as much bloating include tofu, tempeh or quinoa.

Cruciferous vegetables

Broccoli, cauliflower, brussels sprouts and cabbage are among the most challenging to digest due to their complex fibers, which tend to ferment in the gut, causing gas and bloating. Alternative nutrient-rich foods that are easier on the gut include dark leafy greens like kale, spinach and Swiss chard.

Onions and garlic

Many allium family varieties, including red and yellow onions and garlic, can be difficult to digest. This is because they contain something called fructan, which can ferment in the gut and cause nausea, bloating, gas and diarrhea. To reduce sensitivity, cook the vegetables well or soak in water for at least 15 minutes if eating them raw. You may also consider using powdered versions — although some people may still have sensitivity. To enhance flavor in your dishes, look to alternatives such as celery, fennel, shallots or chives. You can also add other spices and herbs such as basil, ginger and oregano to add depth to your meals without the fear of digestive issues.

With some adjustments, you can ease the bloating and discomfort you currently experience. Additional tips include:

- Eat smaller meals, more frequently. Instead of eating large meals, eat smaller portions more frequently throughout the day. This approach can help your digestive system process food more efficiently, reducing the chances of bloating.
- Eat slowly. Taking time to chew your food thoroughly can help ensure that food is properly broken down in your mouth, which aids digestion and reduces the strain on your stomach. This also helps you to avoid overeating, which can put unnecessary pressure on your digestive system and cause more bloating.
- Stay hydrated. Ensure you drink enough water daily to support healthy digestion. Being properly hydrated helps move food smoothly through your digestive tract.
- Avoid carbonated beverages. Soda and other carbonated beverages introduce excess air into the digestive system, which leads to more bloating and gas. Instead, drink still or flat water or try peppermint, chamomile or ginger tea after meals, which can help promote digestion and soothe your gut.
- Keep a food journal. As you adjust your diet, consider tracking what you eat and how you feel afterward in a food journal. This practice can help you identify specific trigger foods and let you make further adjustments for your comfort.

Hopefully, by incorporating small changes, you can continue enjoying your new diet without unpleasant side effects. Fiber has many benefits, including improved gut health over time. However, if you find that you still experience bloating, gas or other abdominal discomfort, talk with your primary healthcare specialist. He or she can rule out food allergies or other conditions.

— Dr. Christine Nguyen, Family Medicine, Mayo Clinic, Jacksonville, Florida

ChatGPT plays doctor with 72% success

Ryan Heath, author of *Axios AI+*

As AI capabilities advance in complex medical scenarios that doctors face on a daily basis, the technology remains controversial in medical communities.

The big picture: Doctors are grappling with questions about what counts as an acceptable success rate for AI-supported diagnosis and whether AI's reliability under controlled research conditions will hold up in the real world.

Driving the news: A new study from Mass General Brigham researchers testing ChatGPT's performance on textbook-drawn case studies found the AI bot achieved 72% accuracy in overall clinical decision making, ranging from identifying possible diagnoses to making final diagnoses and care decisions.

Why it matters: AI could ultimately improve both the efficiency and the accuracy of diagnosis as healthcare in the U.S. gets more expensive and complicated as individuals live longer, and the overall population ages.

While America is home to

many of the best physicians and hospitals in the world, in 2021, the U.S. spent around 18% of GDP on health care, nearly twice as much as the average advanced economy.

Details: The Mass General Brigham study is among the first to assess the capacity of large language models across the full scope of clinical care, rather than a single task.

The study "comprehensively assesses decision support via ChatGPT from the very beginning of working with a patient through the entire care scenario" including post-diagnosis care management, the report's co-author Marc Succi, executive director at Mass General Brigham's innovation incubator, told *Axios*.

ChatGPT got the final diagnosis right 77% of the time. But in cases requiring "differential diagnosis" — an understanding of all the possible conditions a given set of symptoms might indicate — the bot's success rate dropped to 60%.

A second study across 171 hospitals in the U.S. and the

Netherlands found that a machine learning model called ELDER-ICU succeeded at identifying the illness severity of older adults admitted to intensive care units, meaning it "can assist clinicians in identification of geriatric ICU patients who need greater or earlier attention."

Be smart: While AI has outperformed medical professionals in some specific tasks, such as cancer detection from medical imaging, many studies of the possible medical uses of AI have yet to translate into real world practice, and some critics argue that AI studies aren't grounded in real clinical needs.

Of note: AI tests in a research setting come with no risk of malpractice lawsuits, unlike humans operating alone or with the assistance of AI in real clinical settings.

What they're saying: Succi, while encouraged by the Mass General Brigham study, told *Axios* there's more work to do to "bridge the gap from a useful machine learning model to actual use in clinical practice."

The value of AI assistance to doctors is clearest "in the early

stages of patient care when little presenting information (is available) and a list of possible diagnoses is needed," Succi said.

"Large language models need to be improved in differential diagnosis before they're ready for prime time," Succi said, adding that researchers should also look at how to apply AI to hospital tasks that do not require final diagnosis, such as emergency room triage.

Succi said that ChatGPT is starting to exhibit the capabilities of a newly graduated doctor. But since there are "no real benchmarks" for success rates among doctors at different levels of seniority, he added, judging whether AI is adding value to a doctor's work will remain complicated.

What's next: To allow ChatGPT or comparable AI models to be deployed in hospitals, Succi said that more benchmark research and regulatory guidance is needed, and diagnostic success rates need to rise to between 80% and 90%.

Axios gets you smarter, faster with news & information that matters. Read <https://www.axios.com/2023/08/29/chatgpt-medical-diagnosis-study>

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