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SIXTY-THIRD YEAR NO. 42

MARCH 23, 2024



ON THE GO | Athletes with the Marine Corps and Ukraine Teams compete in the wheelchair rugby competition during the 2024 Air Force and Marine Corps Trials on Nellis Air Force Base, Nevada, March 11, 2024. The annual event offers the wounded, ill or injured Marines, sailors and veterans an opportunity to further the rehabilitation of their mind, body and spirit through competition and camaraderie. U.S. Marine Corps photo by Lance Cpl. Ethan Miller

NORAD COMMANDER: INCURSIONS BY UNMANNED AIRCRAFT SYSTEMS ON SOUTHERN BORDER LIKELY EXCEED 1,000 A MONTH

by Matthew Olay
DOD News

There are likely more than 1,000 incursions by unmanned aircraft systems along the U.S.-Mexico border each month, said the U.S. Northern Command's top general during testimony March 14 at a Senate Armed

Services Committee posture hearing.

"I don't know the actual number — I don't think anybody does — but it's in the thousands," said Air Force Gen. Gregory M. Guillot in response to one senator's query.

When asked about the period of time that it takes to reach that number of incursions, Guillot responded, "I would say in probably over a month. We... probably have over 1,000 a month."

Though the exact number of UAS incursions along the border remains unknown, Guillot, who took over as commander of Northcom and the North American Aerospace Defense Command on Feb. 5, said he learned the approximate number recently while talking to officials with U.S. Customs and Border Protection and the Department of Justice.

"The number of incursions was something that was alarming to me as I took command last month," Guillot said.

When asked if such incursions present a defense threat to the homeland, Guillot said he hasn't seen any of the incursions "manifest in a threat to the level of national defense," but he said he does "see the potential only growing."

In recent years, members of Congress have shown a growing, bipartisan concern about dangerous UAS activity, including activity linked to drug and human traffickers who have used UAS technology to facilitate their illegal operations.

<https://www.defense.gov/News/News-Stories/Article/Article/3707785/norad-commander-incursions-by-unmanned-aircraft-systems-on-southern-border-like/>



A 3D-printed unmanned aircraft system flies above Camp Lejeune, N.C., August 27, 2017. U.S. Marine Corps photo by Cpl. John Hamilton

Senate passes VA funding bill that strengthens gun rights for veterans

By Svetlana Shkolnikova, Stars and Stripes

WASHINGTON - The Senate passed a long-delayed, full-year spending bill for the Department of Veterans Affairs on March 8 that strengthens gun rights for certain veterans and averts a partial government shutdown.

Senators voted 75-22 to support the legislation, which is part of a \$460 billion spending package that funds VA programs and military construction as well as five other government agencies through the end of the fiscal year on Sept. 30.

A partial government shutdown was set to take effect at midnight if Congress failed to pass the measure. The Republican-led House approved the package on March 6.

"To folks who worry that divided government means nothing ever gets done, this bipartisan package says otherwise: it helps parents and veterans and firefighters and farmers and school cafeterias and more," said Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer, D-N.Y.

The VA bill was fought over for months as the House and Senate clashed over divisive conservative policies and cuts the House had inserted into its version of the legislation last year.

Most of the controversial riders, such as prohibitions on abortions for veterans and gender-affirming care for transgender veterans, were stripped from the final bill. But a gun rights provision championed by Republicans, as well as some moderate Democrats in the Senate, stayed.

The measure would stop the VA from reporting to a federal gun background check system when veterans are found mentally incapable of managing their financial affairs. Opponents of the decades-old policy argued it infringed on veterans' rights to firearms and relied on an overly broad definition of incompetence.

<https://www.stripes.com/theaters/us/2024-03-08/senate-veterans-affairs-budget-shutdown-13257003.html>

Italy jump by women of 173rd Airborne is brigade's first all-female airborne operation

AVIANO, Italy - More than 100 female paratroopers from six battalions of the Army's 173rd Airborne Brigade stationed in Germany and Italy joined up at Aviano Air Base for an airborne operation made up entirely of women. Soldiers leaped from two Air Force C-130 cargo planes flying near the northeastern town of Vajont. Their silver, mushroom-shaped parachutes all deployed, giving the Soldiers a hazy view of the Dolomite Mountains as they descended upon the green fields of Drop Zone Juliet.

Navy fires sub commander of USS Ohio

STARS AND STRIPES - The commanding officer of an Ohio-class, guided-missile submarine was fired March 11, the Navy said. Capt. Kurt Balagna, the commander of the gold crew of USS *Ohio*, was relieved of duty by Rear Adm. Nicholas Tilbrook, commander of Submarine Group 9, Silverdale, Wash. The blue-gold model is a concept in which two crews alternate aboard U.S. submarines - one crew takes the boat on patrol and the other typically remains at its homeport. The Navy didn't provide additional details beyond the typical "due to a loss of confidence" statement. Under federal privacy law, military officials are not required to disclose the reasons for removing or reassigning personnel. Military officials often cite "a loss of confidence" when commanders are removed from their posts without providing any specifics that led to the decision.

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Top 5

- Navy delays next-generation submarine start to early 2040s
- Services were slow to process COVID vaccine exemptions, watchdog finds
- VA sets new goal of housing 41,000 veterans this year
- Senators warn more visas are urgently needed for Afghans who aided US
- Costs, wait times up for military families after pharmacy cyberattack

Army

- Lawmaker presses Army to explore permanent armor presence in Europe
- Army orders another \$0.75 billion worth of Armored Multi-Purpose Vehicles
- New free transit network opens at Fort Cavazos
- Soldier turns himself in at embassy after being AWOL in Italy

Navy

- Seabees prep for chilly conditions for upcoming Norway deployment
- Navy's ambitious new effort aims to give Sailors understanding of 'what right looks like'
- AUKUS critics jump on Virginia-class sub budget plan, but Canberra sanguine
- Navy expands tests and procedures used in assessing complaints about Hawaii tap water
- Joint Task Force – Red Hill finishes residual fuel removal, to stand down end of March

Marine Corps

- Marine receives rare heroism award for saving victim shot 23 times (see story, page 4)
- Tell us, Marines: How did the barracks inspections go?
- Two commanders in Marine Corps' West Coast infantry school fired on same day

Air Force

- Researchers find 'extraordinary' levels of forever chemicals in wildlife near Holloman Air Force Base
- France tapped as new Air Force commander in Middle East
- Rocket Cargo is go! Air Force's experimental resupply program moves closer to the launch pad
- Air Force plans \$400 million upgrade to airfield on tiny Pacific island of Yap
- How do you change a tire on a B-52 bomber? ing active-duty service members, according to Pentagon investigators.

Veterans

- VA-sponsored psychedelics studies get green light in FY24 budget

Military Culture & History

- Witches be crazy: How one WWII ship led to the UK's last witch trial
- 'Civil War' first reactions from premiere: "Scary as Hell cautionary tale"

Cyber, Space & Unmanned

- Anduril attack drone deemed 'accurate and effective' in Dugway trials

Special Ops builds on strengths as it charts future

by Jim Garamone
DOD News

The strengths of the U.S. special operations community have always been agility, adaptability and innovation its service members demonstrated as they approached a mission. Special ops leaders are working to continue this process as the Defense Department drives forward, Army Command Sgt. Maj. Shane W. Shorter said.

Shorter, the senior enlisted leader of U.S. Special Operations Command, sees special operators playing key roles across the military spectrum and using new domains, new technologies and new processes to do their crucial jobs better.

Shorter accompanied Army Gen. Bryan Fenton, the Socom commander, to meet with Congressional leaders. Fenton will testify before the House Armed Services Committee on March 13.



A Air Force airman with the 26th Special Tactics Squadron rappels off a building during technical rescue casualty evacuation training during Justified Accord 2024 in Kenya Feb. 29, 2024. U.S. Army photo by Sgt. 1st Class Leron Richards

He said many people are still unclear about the role special operations forces play in the National Defense Strategy. They do not understand what role these "quiet professionals" have in great power competition.

"I think there [are] still folks that just relate SOF to counterterrorism," Shorter said. The prominent role that Army Special Forces, Navy SEALs, Marine reconnaissance units, Army Rangers and more had in combat against terrorists in the years after the attacks on the U.S. after September 11, 2001, has skewed perceptions of the capabilities of these operators, the senior enlisted leader said.

"SOF was formed long before the global war on terror and long before 9-11," he said. "Great power competition is in our roots from the [Office of Strategic Services] in World War II."

Special operators played cru-

cial roles in counterinsurgency during the Vietnam War, but operators were also in Europe during the Cold War, filling gaps in that great power confrontation that conventional forces couldn't fill.

Today, the National Defense Strategy calls China the pacing challenge for the department, with Russia an "acute threat." Special operators are working throughout the Indo-Pacific, building partners' military capabilities and working with allies to deter aggression.

In Europe, special operators worked with the Ukrainian military years before the Russian invasion. Shorter said the first teams worked with the Ukrainian military in the 1990s. The pace of training, obviously, picked up following Russia's first invasion in 2014 when Russian President Vladimir Putin illegally annexed Crimea.

In addition to teaching Ukrai-

nian forces about new technologies, new tactics and new procedures, special forces personnel worked with the Ukrainians to develop an empowered NCO corps in their military, an effort that was instrumental in stopping the Russian forces when they first moved into the nation in 2022, Shorter said.

Today, there are no boots on the ground in Ukraine, but special operators maintain contact with their Ukrainian friends and advise them remotely. "It's not ideal," Shorter said. "But it's been working."

The work with partners in the Indo-Pacific and Europe go back decades, Shorter said, and that demonstrates the first special operations truth: "Humans are more important than hardware and things."

The relationships that special operators develop over these years pay dividends for all countries involved. But this takes

time. "You can't mass produce SOF in times of crisis," the command sergeant major said. "It takes time to develop these skill sets."

He said it is harder to build special operations forces today than in the past because "of the plethora of wide-ranging roles that technology plays."

Shorter sees technology playing a key role, but not the key role for SOCOM. "It's always going to come down to a special operator talking to a partner," he said. "The special operator has to know the culture, the language, the likes and dislikes and more. It's going to be relationships."

In short, people will always make the difference in SOCOM, he said. "In SOCOM, we don't think one more platform or thing is going to win the war," he said. "I think that creative thinking humans with the ability to interact with our partners and allies will make the difference."

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Marine receives rare heroism award for saving victim shot 23 times

by Irene Loewenson

Marine Corps Times

When Marine Sgt. Amed Issa heard gunshots while at a bar in Honolulu with his friend, he at first assumed they were fireworks. After all, it was Jan. 6, 2023, only a few days after New Year's.

Then Issa saw two men with guns just outside. He dashed toward them.

His actions that night would save the life of a man who had been shot 23 times, according to the victim — and, a little more than a year later, would earn him the Marine Corps' top award for noncombat heroism.

Issa, now 25, decided to become a Marine when he was 18, he said in an interview with Marine Corps Times. He turned down a full ride to Ohio State University because it didn't feel right to him to pursue the privilege of college without first serving overseas.

Issa enlisted in the Marine Corps because it was the hardest branch and he hoped its like-minded individuals would push him to be a better person. He became an infantryman because the job is core to the service's mission, he said.

In January 2023, Issa was serving with the infantry unit 3rd Battalion, 3rd Marines, at Marine Corps Base Hawaii.

The night of the shooting, he and a fellow Marine had wrapped up dinner at Olive Garden and walked into a bar in the Waikiki neighborhood of Honolulu in search of a bathroom. They had been there for only a few minutes when the gunfire started.

When Issa saw the gunmen, he initially thought they were trying to enter the bar. He rushed toward the pair, pushing a few people behind a table to cover them as he went.



Sgt. Amed Issa was in a bar in Honolulu on Jan. 6, 2023, when he heard gunshots, ran toward the gunfire and provided life-saving aid to a wounded man. Photo courtesy of Sgt. Amed Issa

Then he realized the shooters were targeting someone on the sidewalk.

"I just felt like I was on a range," Issa said. "I don't know if it was one of those blocks that I had from being in the Marine Corps infantry, but at the time I didn't feel like there was any danger associated with shooting, but I did feel like there was danger for the victim."

The two gunmen escaped, but one of them sporadically was shooting back at the victim as he ran away, Issa recalled. In those moments, the Marine exposed himself to the fire to attend to the victim.

Issa relied on the casualty care

simulations he had run through in training. He took off the victim's shirt and checked him for bullet wounds, of which there were several.

Meanwhile, Issa felt a warm sensation on his knees, which were applying pressure near the victim's crotch to cut off the femoral artery. It was blood.

Realizing that the victim's legs needed attention, Issa removed the flannel shirt from his own body and fashioned a makeshift tourniquet for the right leg. He got someone to bring him a fork to tighten the tourniquet.

When two police officers arrived, Issa received from them a pair of real tourniquets that he used on the victim's legs.

The victim was awake but not responding, and Issa and his friend talked to him to keep him conscious. Issa said he would later learn the man had been shot 23 times.

When the paramedics arrived, Issa recounted the aid he had provided and told them where the major gunshots were. The paramedics put the victim in an ambulance.

Issa said he also told the police what he could about the gunmen.

Read at <https://www.marinecorpstimes.com/news/your-marine-corps/2024/03/14/marine-receives-rare-heroism-award-for-saving-victim-shot-23-times/>.

Armed Forces Dispatch
published by Western States Weeklies, Inc.
2604 B-280 El Camino Real, Carlsbad, CA 92008
619-280-2985 • E-mail: editor@navydispatch.com
Editor.....Scott Sutherland

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ART GALLERY



FRIENDS IN FLIGHT | Two Air Force MC-130J Commando II aircraft fly in formation prior to conducting static line jump training with Greek special forces during exercise Trojan Footprint over Greece, March 8, 2024. The exercise is a demonstration of allies and partner nations' ability to work together. U.S. Air Force photo by Tech. Sgt. Westin Warburton



GRAZING IN THE GRASS | Sheep stop grazing to look at a cameraman at RAF Croughton, England, March 8, 2024. These sheep were owned and cared for by Robert Adams, a farmer who leases out land on Croughton as part of a mutually beneficial arrangement. U.S. Air Force photo by Senior Airman Jason W. Cochran



Dato' Anis Rizana Binti Mohd Zainudin, the director general of Royal Malaysian Customs, watches several customs boats transit near U.S. Coast Guard Cutter Bertholf while the cutter was moored in Port Klang, Malaysia, March 2, 2024. This was the first time a U.S. Coast Guard vessel has moored in Port Klang. U.S. Coast Guard photo by Petty Officer Steve Strohmaier

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Military Sealift Command Pacific hosts students in support of Navy Recruiting campaign

by Sarah Cannon

Military Sealift Command Pacific

Military Sealift Command hospital ship USNS *Mercy* (T-AH 19) played host to 30 students from Coronado High School at Naval Station North Island recently.

The students, made up of members of the schools Navy Junior Reserve Officer Training Corps (NJROTC), the Health Occupation Student Association Club (HOSA), and students taking Sports Medicine and Biomedical Innovation courses, were given a brief by area Navy recruiters on scholarship opportunities and Navy careers, followed by a tour of the ship by *Mercy*'s Medical Treatment team.

Capt. Micah Murphy, commander, Military Sealift Command Pacific also attended, taking time to engage with the students, sharing his personal experiences as an officer who received his undergraduate degree through a Reserve Officer Training Corps scholarship, and answering questions from the students.

"What a phenomenal experience and, literally, a once in a lifetime opportunity for all of

us. I talked with a few students after, and they had huge smiles on their faces when talking about what they enjoyed," said Kristen Caputo, Coronado High School Career Technical Education Director. "From a career perspective, I was struck by how many careers this one-hour tour touched upon and the expertise and skill that goes into making a ship work. The conversation about the placement of the CAT scan machine would be valuable for almost every discipline."

In addition to the Coronado High School tour, Murphy recently hosted 10 Maritime school cadets who are spending their "Sea Year" on fleet replenishment oilers USNS *Pecos* (T-AO 197) and USNS *Guadalupe* (T-AO 200) in the Pacific area of responsibility. Calling it "Coffee with the Commodore," the cadets were able to sit down and informally discuss future opportunities with MSC and to

share observations with senior leadership.

Both events are part of MSCPAC's continued support of the Navy's "Every Sailor is a Recruiter" campaign and MSC's accelerated recruitment drive. The Navy is increasing pathways of opportunity for all qualified individuals who choose to serve using outreach and engagement opportunities to increase awareness about the Navy, its people, and its mission. The program works to connect Navy recruiters with qualified future Sailors who desire to join the Navy and are motivated to serve in defense of the nation.

MSCPAC and *Mercy* are under the operational control of MSC who directs and supports operations for approximately 140 civilian-crewed ships that replenish Navy ships at sea, conduct specialized missions, reposition combat cargo at sea

around the world, perform a variety of support services, and move military equipment and supplies to deployed U.S. forces. Celebrating its 75th anniversary

in 2024, MSC exists to support the joint warfighter across the full spectrum of military operations, with a workforce that includes approximately 6,000

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EXPLORING APPLICATIONS OF ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE FOR MARITIME SECURITY, DEFENSE

by Ashley Nekou

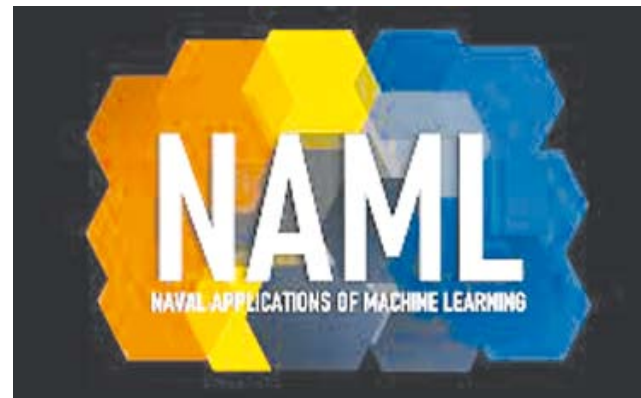
"Fighting smart. That is the key to what we want to do. The Marine Corps is very good at fighting. If you look at how we've fought for the last 50 years, compared to where we could be in the future, not to say we fought dumb but we can certainly fight smarter." - Marine Corps Lt. Col. Jack Long

SAN DIEGO — Naval Information Warfare Center Pacific recently hosted a group of senior military leaders and artificial intelligence experts on Naval Applications of Machine Learning to explore the transformative potential of AI and machine learning.

Presenters highlighted the impact these technologies are having and will continue to have on the future of maritime security and defense and provided a platform for collaboration among the 600 attendees.

Marine Corps Lt. Col. Jack Long, acting Navy chief AI officer at the Office of Naval Research, provided a preview of the Marine Corps' AI Strategy, still in its draft stage.

"We're very much focused on maneuver warfare, rapidly seizing the initiative, breaking apart the enemy's coherence and



beating them through that," said Long. "Fighting smart is how you do that. We need to make decisions faster than they can and put them in a position they're unable to react to... if we are not leveraging these tools, we're not going to be able to do that."

"We want to recognize that and make it central to how we think about information, how we think about intelligence and decision making for our senior leaders all the way down to our most junior leaders."

As the Navy/Marine Corps team continues to adapt to evolving threats and operational environments, AI/ML is expected to play an increasingly important role in enhancing capabilities, improving decision making processes, and ensuring mission success in the 21st century maritime domain.

General officer announcement: Glynn

Secretary of Defense Lloyd J. Austin III announced March 18 that the president has made the nomination for Marine Corps Lt. Gen. James F. Glynn for appointment to lieutenant general, with assignment as commander, Marine Corps Forces Pacific; and commanding general, Fleet Marine Forces Pacific. Glynn is currently serving as the deputy commandant for Manpower and Reserve Affairs, Quantico, Va.

NIWC Pacific established NAML in 2016 as a showcase for ML research at its labs, and very quickly grew to include partners

"NAML has almost tripled in size from when we started the program," said Katie Rainey, a NIWC Pacific scientist and one of the founding organizers of the event. Rainey has personally seen the benefits of this event, identifying projects that have been generated based on the communication that takes place at this forum.

from other Navy warfare centers and defense organizations.

NIWC Pacific now partners with the San Diego chapter of AFCEA International San Diego, and NAML serves as a forum for government, industry, and academia to share their work and learn about technical developments in the defense space.

"NAML has almost tripled in size from when we started the

program," said Katie Rainey, a NIWC Pacific scientist and one of the founding organizers of the event. Rainey has personally seen the benefits of this event, identifying projects that have been generated based on the communication that takes place at this forum.

NIWC Pacific organizes the technical agenda at NAML, which included around 150 technical talks and 60 posters at the unclassified and classified levels. Themes that emerged from the agenda included advances in developing AI for low-data and low-power environments, and ways to ensure that AI systems are robust and reliable in safety-critical settings.

Events such as the NAML workshop are a key part of collecting the best minds from across the defense community to solicit war-winning solutions for the fleet, according to Rainey. Through events, tech talks and strategic partnerships, NIWC Pacific is using innovations in machine learning and artificial intelligence to keep the Navy on the cutting edge of information warfare.

As a part of NAVWAR, NIWC Pacific's mission is to conduct research, development, engineering, and support of integrated command, control, communications, computers, intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance, cyber, and space systems across all warfighting domains, and to rapidly prototype, conduct test and evaluation, and provide acquisition, installation, and in-service engineering support.



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PHOTO GALLERY



ON THE MOVE
A member of the Blue Angels, the Navy's flight demonstration squadron, participates in winter training at Naval Air Facility El Centro, Calif., Feb. 24, 2024. U.S. Navy photo by Navy Petty Officer 2nd Class Crayton Agnew

ICY EXERCISE
An Air Force C-130 Hercules flies over a group of Navy SEALs, Norwegian naval special operations commandos and attack submarine USS Hampton during Exercise Arctic Edge in the Arctic Ocean, March 9, 2024. U.S. Navy photo by Chief Petty Officer Jeff Atherton



BONDING AT THE MUSEUM
Marine Corps Cpl. Ian Sheeley, a generator mechanic with 1st Marine Logistics Group, poses for photos during a tour at the Marine Corps Mechanized Museum at Camp Pendleton March 12, 2024. U.S. Marine Corps photo by Lance Cpl. Mhecaela J. Watts

ON BOARD PRACTICE
Logistics Specialist 2nd Class Cody Evans stows a hose at a fire main station aboard amphibious assault ship USS Makin Island, March 13, 2024. Makin Island is homeported in San Diego. U.S. Navy photo by MC2 Kendra Helmbrecht



2 commanders of the Marines' West Coast infantry school fired

STARS AND STRIPES - The Marine Corps fired two commanders at its West Coast infantry school, the service announced March 14.

Col. Seth MacCutcheon, commander of the School of Infantry-West, and Maj. Nicolas Engle, commander of Reconnaissance Training Company, were both relieved on March 8 by Brig. Gen. Farrell Sullivan, a Marine spokesperson said in a statement.

"[The commanding general of Marine Corps Training Command] is committed to ensuring leaders at all levels fulfill their duties to deliver the most highly qualified Marines to the operating forces safely and efficiently," said Maj. Joshua Pena, a spokesman for Marine Corps Training Command, which oversees the school. "No additional information is available at this time."

Under federal privacy law, military officials are not required to disclose the reasons for removing or reassigning personnel. Military officials often cite "a loss of confidence" when commanders are removed from their posts without providing any specifics that led to the decision.

Both units are based out of Camp Pendleton, but these firings follow other leaders in charge of training programs in the Marine Corps being relieved of duty.

MacCutcheon in July removed Sgt. Maj. Steven Burkett, who had been the top noncommissioned officer at the School of Infantry-West for a little more than a year.

Lt. Col. Michael Masters, who had been the executive officer at Parris Island's Recruit Training Regiment, was removed in Sep-

tember after being arrested on battery and child cruelty charges in Florida.

Masters was the third high-ranking leader at Parris Island removed from his position. Col. Bradley Ward, who had commanded the recruit regiment since July 2021, and his senior enlisted leader Sgt. Maj. Fabian Casillas were fired July 5 "for a loss of trust and confidence," the Corps said at that time.

The School of Infantry-West is one of two schools where new Marines must go for the second stage of initial military education after they finish recruit training. The School of Infantry-East is located at Camp Lejeune, N.C. Recruits from areas east of the Mississippi River are usually sent to the North Carolina school while those from west of the river attend the California school.



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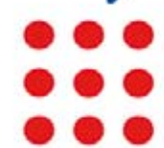
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NAVWAR application modernizes Naval shipyard hiring process

by Lily Chen
NAVWAR

The Naval Information Warfare Systems Command (NAVWAR) Office of the Command Information Officer has developed a new application, Segment Eight Applicant Tracker, or SEAT, designed to improve the civilian hiring process at all four Navy shipyards.

SEAT is a model-driven application that consolidates all data in one secure location to increase visibility and communication between all parties and is hosted in the OneNAVWAR Digital Innovation Nexus environment.

The idea of developing an application to support the shipyards originated in Program Executive Office Digital and then was passed onto NAVWAR to execute. The project started with a site visit to the Puget Sound shipyard in Washington in 2023, where people from OCIO met with representatives from all four shipyards to review existing systems and ascertain needs and priorities to drive the development of the new application. The shipyards noted an ongoing issue during the hiring process where Segment Eight of external hiring was taking much too long to onboard employees, leading prospective hires to drop out.

As a result, shipyards were struggling to meet their hiring quotas, leaving them inadequately staffed. This was impacting their ability to repair ships and submarines, resulting in the vessels remaining in maintenance for longer than necessary.

Segment Eight is part of the government job hiring process, where applicants are required to pass a series of contingencies, like a physical exam, drug test and more, before they are permitted to onboard. Each shipyard must coordinate and schedule

each appointment that the applicant requires, which can lead to numerous delays and missed communications.

By using SEAT, data and coordination required to complete applicant processing will be consolidated and integrated into one secure application, with tasks easily tracked to see which have been completed and which still need to be. The goal is to reduce this part of the hiring process to 10 days.

Within SEAT, the applicants' data is securely stored in Microsoft Dataverse with business units allowing for the segmentation of data so users cannot see any personally identifiable information outside of their designated BU. There is also a centralized email communication system that sends automatic email notifications and tracks emails, including both sent and received messages. SEAT allows HR and the hiring command to track hiring metrics and consolidate other hiring materials, like job descriptions and individuals' cover letters and resumes, into one convenient location that can be easily accessed.

"The SEAT team at NAVWAR has done an excellent job of meeting the shipyards' needs with this new application," said NAVWAR Commander Rear Adm. Doug Small. "As SEAT is implemented this year, I hope we continue to see the positive effect that digitalization will have on readiness and enabling the fleet as a whole."

The four shipyards across the nation - Kittery, Maine; Pearl Harbor, Hawaii; Portsmouth, Va.; and Puget Sound, Wash. - are under the jurisdiction of Naval Sea Systems Command and Fleet Forces Command and are a vital component for the maintenance of all Naval vessels.

Future USS John F. Kennedy kicks off topside catapult testing

HUNTINGTON INGALLS INDUSTRY - The Navy and shipbuilder HII have begun launching 80,000-pound car-like structures off future aircraft carrier John F. Kennedy to test the ship's catapult system. (HII)

Topside testing of the Electromagnetic Aircraft Launch System has begun aboard the Navy's second Ford-class aircraft carrier, the future John F. Kennedy.

The new Electromagnetic Aircraft Launch System, known as EMALS, is one of more than 20 new technologies installed aboard the Ford-class of carrier. The system propels aircraft from the flight deck and significantly reduces manning needs compared to the steam-powered catapult systems on Nimitz-class carriers.

Newport News Shipyard is now conducting so-called "dead load" testing, where it hurls "large, wheeled, car-like structures of graduated weights up to 80,000 pounds" off the bow of the carrier and into the James River, according to American shipbuilder HII. The exercise aims to use dead loads that are similar in weight to actual aircraft.

"The first dead-load launch off the flight deck is a historic moment for [pre-commissioning unit] John F. Kennedy, and a testament to the power of great teamwork between our JFK crew, HII team, and NAVAIR engineers," Capt. Colin Day, commanding officer of the carrier, said in an HII news release.

"I'm particularly proud of our Air Department and the hard-working Aviation Boatswain Mates who worked tirelessly alongside the engineering and testing teams to get us to this critical moment," Day said.



Aaron Colton tours local military bases, spreads the word about Wings for Life

Join Red Bull athlete Aaron Colton while he tours San Diego around local military bases and spreads the word about Red Bull's Wings for Life Charity March 21-24.

Join forces to raise awareness for Red Bull's Wings for Life charity and upcoming charity run on May 5. At the Wings for Life World Run on May 5, everyone starts at the same time, worldwide. Professional athletes, fun runners and total beginners are all in it together against the Catcher Car.

The moving finish line, the Catcher Car begins its pursuit 30 minutes after the start, passing runners and wheelchair users one after the other until the race is over. The best bit? 100 percent of all entry fees and donations goes directly to spinal cord research to find a cure for spinal cord injury.

San Diego appearances of Aaron Colton's tour:

Friday, March 22 - 12 p.m. & 5 p.m. - MCAS Miramar

Saturday, March 23, 11 a.m. & 4 p.m. - Naval Base San Diego

Sunday, March 24, 11 a.m. & 4 p.m. - Camp Pendleton

"In this moment - while you're reading this - somebody has injured their spinal cord and will be paralyzed," said Emily Blood, Red Bull spokesperson. "No feeling in their legs, maybe no feeling in their arms or hands either. Immobile. Red Bull wants to help. As a charity foundation, Wings for Life supports cutting-edge research worldwide. Our goal: to find a cure for spinal cord injury.

Interested in coming out to see Aaron Colton and learn more about the Wing for Life World Run? Contact Emily Blood at emily.blood@redbull.com. or (310) 745-2627. For more information, visit: <https://www.wingsforlifeworldrun.com/en>.

AMPHIB
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AWARD

USS Essex
wins Self-Sufficiency Award

by Ensign Fiona Kurland
USS Essex

SAN DIEGO - Amphibious assault ship USS Essex (LHD 2) was recently awarded the Amphib Quarterly Self-Sufficiency Award, recognizing the Engineering Department and calibration laboratory during a docking selected restricted availability.

Essex was graded for its ability to execute major milestones under difficult circumstances. Essex pressurized the firemain system ahead of undocking and maintained continuous calibration lab operations as Expeditionary Strike Group 3 (ESG-3) field calibration activity.

During a DSRA, a ship is placed in dry dock to conduct re-

pairs and maintenance. Throughout the dry dock, many systems are shut down such as plumbing, air conditioning, and firemain. The firemain system distributes seawater to key firefighting systems aboard and is essential to enhancing fire safety. Throughout the DRSA, firemain was supplied from the wing walls of the dry dock, commonly known as a temporary service, and was successfully pressurized throughout the ship prior to exiting the dry dock.

On Navy vessels, Sailors are the first responders and installed firefighting systems are relied upon for damage control. ...

Continue reading at <https://www.dvidshub.net/news/466540/uss-essex-wins-self-sufficiency-award>.

The Meat & Potatoes of Life



by
Lisa
Smith
Molinari

It was one of those rare moments when both of our daughters were home. Anna, 26, was visiting from New York City, and Lilly, 23, was between shifts at the hospital where she worked. While they buzzed around our kitchen making themselves breakfast, I sat at the island, happily tapping at my laptop, pretending our nest had never been empty.

“Dangit, the bananas are spotty already,” Lilly grumbled. “Didn’t we just buy these?”

“You know, you can put bananas in the refrigerator once they are ripe. The skins might turn brown, but the fruit inside will stop ripening and be preserved a lot longer,” I said, looking over my glasses.

“I never knew that,” Lilly said, her eyes drifting off as if her mind had suddenly been blown, “wow...” After a few moments of staring into space, seemingly contemplating her existence in the universe, Lilly snapped back into the moment and continued, “Momsplains are actually helpful. When Dad mansplains, he just gives us information we already know.”

“Facts,” Anna piped up from her seat at our kitchen island, taking another bite of her avocado and scrambled eggs.

Momsplaining mansplaining

“Mom, you tell us useful stuff like, ‘You’ve gotta separate your darks from your lights, so your laundry colors won’t run.’ But I could be walking down a street with Dad, and if a woman walked by that was eight months pregnant, he’d look at me and say, ‘Hey Lil, that lady’s gonna have a baby,’” Lilly said.

“It’s so annoying,” Anna added.

“Why do dads do it?” Lilly posed the question rhetorically, rolling her eyes then taking a long drag on her smoothie straw.

“Drives me crazy,” I said, “especially when we’re watching TV. He says stuff like, ‘See Hon, that guy’s an undercover detective,’ and I’m like, ‘Really? Do you think I’m a complete idiot?’”

“Yes!” Lilly pointed a finger at me in agreement. “And when he comes home from the grocery, he takes food out of the bag, and tells me what it is, like, ‘See Lil, this is a cucumber,’” she said while comically imitating her father.

We all laughed, but a serious question remained. Why does my husband explain such obvious things to the women in our family? Does he simply like hearing himself elucidate? Or, is the reason more offensive? Does he think that women are less intelligent than men?

The first known use of the term “mansplain” was in 2008 comments on a blog post, although the practice has arguably been around for centuries. In 2018, the term was added to the Oxford English Dictionary, and defined as “Of a man: to explain

(something) needlessly, overbearingly, or condescendingly, esp. (typically when addressing a woman) in a manner thought to reveal a patronizing or chauvinistic attitude.” In a 2022 study on mansplaining, one scientist proposed a broader definition: “[P]roviding an unsolicited or unwelcome, condescending or persistent, explanation to someone, either questioning their knowledge or assuming they did not know, regardless of the veracity of the explanation. The mansplainer is most typically a man and the recipient is most typically not a man.”

Today mansplaining is recognized as a common phenomena, yet there is still disagreement over why men do it. Some think men have no gender bias or condescending intent, but rather, they hold themselves out as a confident authority, as evidenced by the fact that men in academics site their own work 70 percent more than women academics in do. Others posit that mansplaining is essentially a microaggression in the context of gender equality. They argue that mansplaining can have serious consequences, especially in the workplace, such as undermined confidence, job dissatisfaction, “gendered incivility” and low productivity.

That morning at breakfast, my daughters never figured out why their dad mansplains. I’d like to believe that my husband knows that his wife and daughters are very intelligent, observant and practical. Yet, at the same time, he thrives on the notion that he’s the commander of our family, the one who must bestow his wide breadth of knowledge and experience on his underlings.

Who knows? Maybe we should ask him. Then, he’ll really have some ‘splaining to do.

Da Vinci exhibit & ‘Cities of the Future’ in IMAX at California Science Center

Leonardo da Vinci had an incredible mind. This exhibition of his innovative machines and art features 30 stunning, large, wooden models of Da Vinci’s inventions, along with hands-on exhibits and graphic reproductions of da Vinci’s iconic artwork. This travelling exhibition was developed by Leonardo3 Museum of Milan (Italy), in collaboration with Running Subway Productions.

The models were built by highly skilled “contemporary artisans according to da Vinci’s exacting specifications.” You’ll see models of inventions as exquisitely simple as a folding ladder to several large flying machines that are suspended from the ceiling and fill a gallery.

Interactive video screen stations reveal digitally restored before-and-after versions of some of da Vinci’s artwork, along with explanations. One example of his art is a wall-sized reproduction of the Last Supper.

“Guests will have the opportunity to test their engineering and building skills, including recreating da Vinci’s famous self-supporting bridge,” and climb aboard and operate his paddle boat.

Leonardo’s incredible inventions were the result of his boundless curiosity and his never-ending efforts to understand how things work, as well as the techniques and skills of carpenters and artisans of his time. He drew thousands of drawings, applying what he learned towards making things better and inventing new things in areas of engineering, architecture, science, to name a few.

Building these complex, incred-

ibly detailed models was particularly challenging. Generally speaking, the models in the exhibition took anywhere from six months to one year to build. For example, the large, working model of a lion took a year to build, and is the second prototype. It is powered by two large springs, the specifications for which were en-

AutoMatters™ & More



by Jan Wagner

gineered over the course of a month through a collaboration with the Politecnico di Milano’s mechanical engineering department.

Other models include da Vinci’s Flying Bicycle, Great Kite, 33-foot Flying Eagle and The Great Organ.

“Cities of the Future” in IMAX 3D: “Cities of the Future” in IMAX 3D makes its West Coast premiere at the California Science Center.

“As our climate changes and our population grows, our cities will need to adapt to meet new challenges, and human ingenuity will drive the solutions,” says director Greg MacGillivray, two-time Academy Award nominee and chairman of MacGillivray Freeman Films. “Starring ‘Paul Lee, a lifelong Angeleno and a renewable energy engineer who worked with Los Angeles Mayor Garcetti’s office on climate policy and clean energy as an Energy Policy

Analyst, seeking solutions for local water, energy, and transportation challenges.” “Cities of the Future” depicts a fascinating, plausible look 50 years into our future, a future where we could live and work in totally sustainable smart cities. In this future “renewable energy is our primary power source, space-based solar power provides solar energy 24 hours a day, everything is recycled, and you travel in individualized pods that run on little or no energy.”

In “Cities of the Future” we see cities around the world where some of this technology is already taking effect today. In Singapore, we see “where a million trees mixed with modern engineering marvels have turned a sweltering island into a sustainable oasis.” LA100 is “a plan launched under Mayor Garcetti to modernize Los Angeles electricity system infrastructure—aiming for a 100 percent renewable energy supply.”

To see the official trailer for “Cities of the Future,” visit: <https://cities-ofthefuturefilm.com>.

The California Science Center is open daily from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. General admission to the permanent galleries is free. For information about purchasing tickets for the special, limited time Leonardo da Vinci exhibit and “Cities of the Future” in IMAX 3D, visit the California Science Center at: <https://californiasciencecenter.org/visit/get-reservations-tickets?date=2024-03-19>.

Be sure to visit the rest of the California Science Center while you are there. For my recent coverage of it, including over 60 photos, go to <https://automatters.net/welcome-to-the-california-science-center/>.

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Veterans News

Senator urges American Legion posts to offer vets a safe place to store their firearms

by Linda F. Hersey
Stars and Stripes

WASHINGTON - Sen. Angus King recently sought support from the American Legion to provide lock-and-key storage at thousands of the organization’s posts across the U.S. for veterans to store their firearms safely.

“Would you consider working with...posts across the country to offer safe storage for firearms for veterans?” King, I-Maine, asked American Legion national commander Daniel Seehafer at a joint hearing of the Senate and House Veterans’ Affairs committees that examined ways to assist veterans at risk of suicide.

Describing American Legion posts as “safe spaces for our veterans,” King said former service members might feel comfortable reaching out to their local American Legion posts — especially in times of duress — to hold and lock up their guns. An American Legion post recently fielded such a request for safe gun storage from a member struggling with mental health problems, Seehafer told the senator.

“[The veteran] reached out and called who he trusted — a fellow legionnaire in his community — and said, ‘It is OK to

take my weapons.’ This is exactly what we are talking about here,” Seehafer said.

Seehafer did not explain how the American Legion post handled the specific request but said, “I’ll be honest. It did raise some eyebrows.” But he also told King and other lawmakers that the American Legion would look forward to working with the committee on the initiative.

There are about 12,000 American Legion posts in cities and towns across the nation, he said.

“The American Legion is a trusted resource and would embrace this idea,” Seehafer said. The posts already have in place regular “buddy checks” that involve legionnaires informally calling and asking one another about their welfare.

Seehafer said stress and depression contribute to suicide risks. He testified a veteran is 50 percent more likely to take his or her own life than a person who has never served in the military. His testimony focused on easing personal hardships and improving the “quality of life” for veterans and active-duty service members.

Those recommendations extend to updating barracks, providing housing assistance and ensuring timely access to mental health care. Seehafer said more than 135,000 veterans have died by suicide since 9/11, which is “more than all the American deaths incurred during the entire Korean War, Vietnam War, Gulf War and the Global War on Terrorism combined.”

FRA president urges Congress on veteran priorities

FLEET RESERVE ASSOCIATION - John Handzuk, National President of the Fleet Reserve Association, recently testified before Congress, addressing key concerns affecting veterans nationwide.

Handzuk emphasized the need for effective implementation of the PACT Act to protect service members from harmful toxins encountered during duty. He also highlighted concerns about the VA’s new electronic health records system, urging prompt resolution to prevent medication-related risks for veterans.

Concurrent receipt legislation, specifically the “Major Richard Star Act,” received strong support from Handzuk, who stressed the injustice of reducing retirees’

Statistics from Veterans Affairs show veterans account for one in five adult firearm suicides. The figures are based on the VA’s 2023 National Veteran Suicide Prevention Annual Report, which was released in December.

King sent a letter in September 2023 to VA Secretary Denis McDonough requesting the VA set aside funding for regional VA

FRA president urges Congress on veteran priorities

pay due to disability.

Addressing fraudulent practices targeting veterans seeking VA benefits, Handzuk advocated for legislative action to prevent exploitation.

Suicide prevention efforts and support for homeless veterans were also highlighted, along with opposition to burial restrictions at Arlington National Cemetery.

In his testimony, Handzuk underscored FRA’s unwavering commitment to advocating for veterans’ rights and well-being, urging Congress to prioritize these critical issues.

Members can watch the full hearing at : bit.ly/4cdJ2aN

offices to provide veterans with gun safety locks and lock boxes to store firearms.

The VA followed up by providing more than 20,000 cable gun locks at regional offices since then, according to Terrence Hayes, VA press secretary.

“Gun locks are distributed at outreach events and are also

available at local VA medical centers,” he said.

Seehafer urged lawmakers to put aside partisan differences to work toward common goals. “Veterans’ issues have traditionally unified Congress because in your hearts we know you love this country and truly wish to serve veterans, just as veterans served America,” he said.



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Bill to protect California military lands passes committee

Sacramento - The Assembly Judiciary Committee passed AB 2306 (Mathis - 2024) on March 19, which would authorize the California Military Department to develop a Statewide policy regarding prohibited foreign actors owning property within 50 miles of a U.S. Military base or California National Guard base. Assemblyman Mathis issued the following statement after the vote:

"Our Military installations train & house our State and Nation's Service Members and should be treated as the sensitive areas they are. Just two years ago, a hostile foreign Government based company bought land just 20 minutes away from a key Air Force Base in North Dakota. There are many other instances where hostile foreign actors have purchased land not too far from critical military installations. Currently, there is no State policy to prevent aggressive foreign actors from acquiring such sensitive lands. AB 2306 will keep nefarious foreign actors from gaining access to some of our most sensitive locations. In our highly evolving technological world, it is paramount that we take the necessary steps to ensure our safety. Today, AB 2306 received unanimous support from the Judiciary Committee and moves to the Committee on Military & Veterans Affairs."

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VEHICLE TEMPERATURE		
Outside Temp (F)	Inside Temp (F)	
	10mins	30mins
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75°	94°	109°
80°	99°	114°
85°	104°	119°
90°	109°	124°
95°	114°	129°



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https://sandiego.navylifefsw.com/ select movies from dropdown menu on left
https://miramar.usmc-mccs.org/dining-entertainment/movies
https://pendleton.usmc-mccs.org/dining-entertainment/theater

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

Saturday - March 23

1pm Ghostbusters: Frozen Empire pg13
3:30 PM Bob Marley: One Love pg13
6pm Ghostbusters: Frozen Empire pg13

Sunday - March 24

1:00 PM Ordinary Angels pg
3:30 PM Land of Bad r

Friday - March 29

6:00 PM Dune: Part Two pg13

Saturday - March 30

1:00 PM Ghostbusters: Frozen Empire
3:30PM Land of Bad r

6:00PM Dune: Part Two pg13

Sunday - March 31

1:00 PM Ordinary Angels pg
3:30 PM Bob Marley: One Love pg13

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

Saturday - March 23

12:50PM Ordinary Angels pg
3:30PM Ghostbusters: Frozen Empire
6:20 PM Ghostbusters: Frozen Empire

Sunday - March 24

1:00 PM Ghostbusters: Frozen Empire
3:40 PM Bob Marley: One Love pg13

Thursday - March 28

5:50 PM Ghostbusters: Frozen Empire
8:20 PM Bob Marley: One Love pg13

Friday - March 29

5:50 PM Dune: Part Two pg13

Saturday - March 30

2:20 PM Dune: Part Two pg13
6:00 PM Dune: Part Two pg13

Bob Hope Theater 577-4143

MCAS Miramar Bldg 2242

Saturday, March 23

3pm - Bob Marley: One Love (PG-13)
6:30pm Ghostbusters: Frozen Empire

Sunday, March 24

12pm - Lisa Frankenstein (PG-13)
3:00 PM - Ordinary Angels (PG)

Sunday, March 24

12pm - Lisa Frankenstein (PG-13)
3pm - Ordinary Angels (PG)

Friday, March 29

6pm - Dune: Part Two (PG-13)

Pendleton Theater and Training Center

Bldg 1330 Mainside (Across from Mainside Center)

Saturday, March 23

1:30pm Lisa Frankenstein (PG13)
4:00pm Land of Bad (R)

Saturday, March 30

1:30pm Ordinary Angels (PG)
4:30pm Bob Marley: One Love (PG13)

Saturday, April 6

1:30pm Dune: Part 2 (PG13)

SOCIAL SECURITY MATTERS

How do survivor benefits work for a married couple?

Dear Rusty: How does Social Security handle the death of one spouse? Say, for example, the husband receives \$2,000 per month in Social Security and his wife receives \$1,000 per month. How is the death of either spouse handled? Signed: Concerned spouse

Dear Concerned: Benefits to a deceased beneficiary stop as soon as Social Security (SS) is notified of the death (notification usually done by the funeral director who handles arrangements). Benefits are not paid for the month of death, only for the preceding month when the beneficiary was alive for the entire month.

A surviving spouse is entitled to the higher of two benefits - their own personally earned SS retirement benefit, or an amount based on the deceased spouse's benefit at death. In the example you cite, and assuming the surviving spouse has reached full retirement age (FRA): if the husband dies first the wife will receive the husband's \$2,000 monthly benefit instead of her previous \$1,000 amount. But if the wife died first, the husband would continue receiving only his \$2,000 monthly amount because that is more than his deceased wife was receiving. Note in either case, the surviving spouse would be entitled to a one-time lump sum "death benefit" of \$255.

The surviving spouse would need to contact Social Security to claim the "death benefit" and - unless the surviving spouse was previously receiving only a spousal benefit - also to claim the higher monthly amount, if eligible. If the surviving spouse was previously receiving only a spousal benefit from the deceased (and not entitled to SS retirement benefits on their own), then Social Security would automatically award their higher survivor amount when notified of the death.

If a surviving spouse has reached full retirement age (somewhere between 66 and 67 depending on year of birth) and is eligible for a survivor benefit, the amount of the survivor benefit will be 100% of the deceased spouse's benefit. But if the survivor claims the benefit before reaching FRA, the amount of the survivor benefit will be reduced (by 4.75% for each full year earlier). The survivor's benefit reaches maximum at the survivor's full retirement age.

If a surviving spouse has not yet reached their FRA, and if they are entitled to (not necessarily collecting) their own Social Security retirement benefit, the surviving spouse has the option to delay claiming the survivor benefit until it reaches maximum at their full retirement age. And if the survivor's personal SS retirement benefit will ever be more than their maximum survivor benefit, the surviving spouse also has the option to claim only the smaller survivor benefit first and allow their personal SS retirement benefit to grow (to maximum at age 70 if desired).

With Social Security there is hardly ever a simple answer to a question but, in the example you use, if both are over their SS full retirement age:

- If the husband dies first, the wife will get 100% of the amount (\$2000) the husband was receiving, instead of the small amount (\$1000) she was previously receiving.
- If the wife dies first, the husband's monthly benefit will remain at \$2000, and he will get no increase in his monthly amount.
- In either case, the surviving spouse will be entitled to a one-time lump sum death benefit of \$255.

Visit our military museums

The Veterans Museum at Balboa Park. The Veterans Museum and Memorial Center is a museum located in historic Balboa Park of San Diego, California. Founded in 1989, it is dedicated to create, maintain, and operate an institution to honor and perpetuate the memories of all men and women who have served in the Armed Forces of the United States of America.

Active duty military, Museum Member, Children under 12: Free
Veterans/Seniors: \$4 • Adults: \$5 • Student ID: \$2
2115 Park Blvd, San Diego (Balboa Park) • (619) 239-2300
http://www.veteranmuseum.org/
Hours: Call for current hours (619) 239-2300

MCRD Command Museum & Historical Society. Museum focusing on Marine Corps history from the 19th century to today is also a research library. https://www.mcrdmuseum.org/
Free admission • The Pass and ID Center may issue day passes to visitors who wish to visit the museum and do not possess military ID-call (619) 524-4200 for information on base access.
1600 Hochmuth Ave, San Diego, 92140 • (619) 524-4426
Hours: Mon 8am-3pm, Tue-Fri 8-4; Family day 8-5:45; Sat 10:30-5, • Closed Sunday

Marine Corps Mechanized Museum Camp Pendleton. Managed under the auspices of Camp Pendleton's Museum Division Office, the collection of over 50 vehicles ranges from World War I to the first Gulf War. It includes Patton tanks, armored wheeled and tracked vehicles, trucks, jeeps and amphibious vehicles. When coming aboard Camp Pendleton, please ensure that you have a valid photo ID for every vehicle occupant along with current registration and proof of insurance. https://www.themech.org/
24194 Vandegrift Blvd, Oceanside, CA 92058. (760) 725-5758
Mon-Thur 8am-4pm, Fri 8am-1pm, Closed Saturday & Sunday

USS Midway Museum. The USS Midway Museum is a maritime museum located in downtown San Diego at Navy Pier. The museum consists of the aircraft carrier Midway. The ship houses an extensive collection of aircraft, many of which were built in So Cal. FREE-Children 5 & under, Active Duty military including reservists (w/valid ID). Adult \$34 (ages 13+). Youth \$24 (ages 4-12). Veterans (w/ID) \$24*Must show ID at entrance.

Armed Forces Dispatch • (619) 280-2985

Published by Western States Weeklies, Inc.
2604 B-280 El Camino Real, Carlsbad, CA 92008
E-mail: editor@navydispatch.com

Be a patient safety hero: Anytime, anywhere — always

by Robbie Hammer,
MHS Communications

When it comes to health care delivery in the Military Health System, patient safety is a core focus.

The Defense Health Agency recently highlighted the importance of patient safety with Patient Safety Awareness Week, March 10-16, with the theme “Be A Patient Safety Hero: Anytime, Anywhere—Always.”

“It’s important to take time to focus on patient safety and resilience in our daily practices,” said Heidi King, chief of the Patient Safety Program within the DHA. “We value our patient safety professionals who support health care delivery in all military hospitals and clinics. They ensure patients have a clean environment, properly trained staff, supporting medical equipment, and a process to resolve issues.”

According to King, patient safety means giving every patient the right treatment at the right time for the right reason. All health care professionals maintain the highest level of care to:

- Identify patients correctly
- Prevent infection
- Improve staff communication
- Identify patient safety risks
- Mitigate errors
- Prevent harm
- Use medicines safely
- Use alarms wisely

How does Patient Safety Awareness Week Help?

Military hospitals and clinics across the MHS hosted a variety of events to participate in the campaign.

“Patient Safety Awareness Week was an opportunity to reassess performance and identify improvements needed during this international education and awareness-building campaign,” said King.

For the DHA, it was a week of reinvigorated focus to ensure there are systems in place to recognize its patient safety heroes and continuously improve the way care is delivered. For patients, it was an opportunity to learn about DHA’s actions and strategies for patient safety.

Each military hospital and clinic plans their own events and engage beneficiaries. DHA offers ideas, such as creating videos with patient safety champions, hosting games and webinars, and presenting certificates of appreciation during ceremonies.

Patient Awareness is Vital to Patient Safety

Patients are encouraged to help promote safety by reporting concerns they experience or see with their health care provider or facility leaders, so they can be resolved.

“Since DHA can analyze data

across the Military Health System, they can reliably spot trends, recommend corrective actions, and share communications on issues that require immediate intervention,” said Stephanie Pastewait, deputy chief for the center for data integration within the DHA patient safety office.

It’s important to take time to focus on patient safety and resilience in our daily practices...

Programs Highlight DHAs Commitment to Patient Safety

The DHA offers many resources that may be helpful to patient safety professionals.

The Patient Safety Professional Course is comprised of core content and a comprehensive systematic analysis agenda. The course is conducted three times annually.

“This course is continually updated and is a unique, virtual, adaptive learning experience greatly expanded our ability to reach those who connect daily with our beneficiaries,” said U.S. Air Force Col. Maxine McIntosh, the Patient Safety Professional Course lead.

“Standardization of safe care practices plays a key role in learning organizations,” said King. She noted that MHS partners with

internal and external stakeholders, as well as beneficiaries to share lessons learned, leading practices, and other improvement opportunities for patient safety.

Additional patient programs and resources include:

DOD Patient Safety Culture Survey: The most recent survey collected insights from more than 600 military hospitals and clinics to evaluate patient safety. “The results are used to help drive MHS-wide improvement initiatives, as well as provide information to target more local efforts,” said Cherylann Robinson, lead of the Patient Safety Culture Survey team.

Joint Patient Safety Reporting: Self-reporting is one of the key components in the MHS’s effort to improve care. Patients can report events at all levels of severity and types of medical and dental care.

Patient Safety Champion Recognition Program: The Patient Safety Champion Certificate of Recognition is a peer-to-peer recognition initiative led by the DOD Patient Safety Program.

Ready Reliable Care High Reliability Organization Awards Program: The awards program recognizes initiatives and innovations in the MHS that reflect new knowledge and insights.

Patient Safety Professional Course: This interactive series of classes is designed for new patient safety professionals, who

have been in their role less than one year.

e-Learning Courses: Self-paced online tutorials are available by the Joint Patient Safety Reporting Community and DOD patient safety professionals.

DOD Patient Safety Program Webinars: The webinars series is hosted by the DOD Patient Safety Program.

Patient Safety Learning Center: The center facilitates the dissemination of knowledge and resources to increase awareness and promote communication across and among the patient safety community.

Patient Safety & Quality Academic Collaborative: The patient safety and quality academic collaborative is based at Uniformed Services University made up of a multidisciplinary team aimed at improving clinical practice and health policy within the MHS.

TeamSTEPPS: An evidence-based framework used to optimize team performance. Created as a joint venture between the DOD and our federal partners at the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality, the program has been critical in minimizing preventable harm to our beneficiaries,” said Joe Paulino, Click to closeTeamSTEPPS Team Strategies and Tools to Enhance Performance and Patient Safety (TeamSTEPPS) is an evidence-based teamwork system designed to improve the quality, safety and efficiency of healthcare. TeamSTEPPS consists

of a collection of instructions, materials and tools to help drive a successful teamwork initiative from the initial planning to implementation through to sustainment. The system is designed to improve patient safety using a three-phase approach: Phase I Assessment: Facility determines organizational readiness; Phase II Planning, Training & Implementation: Facility “decides what to do” and “makes it happen;” and Phase III Sustainment: Facility spreads the improvements in teamwork performance, clinical processes and outcomes resulting from the TeamSTEPPS initiative. TeamSTEPPS lead.

Resources available on InsideDHA (CAC users only, available via Inside DHA), include:

Comprehensive Systematic Analysis: Provides insight into patient safety harm events using a systems approach to prevent or reduce future harm. The PSP has developed tools and templates to standardize investigations.

Patient Safety Learning Center: The center is one of many DHA Patient Safety Program initiatives to engage and promote awareness to the MHS team.

King noted that although the DHA celebrates Patient Safety Awareness Week in March, ensuring safe, reliable care for every patient is a priority anytime, anywhere—always.

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