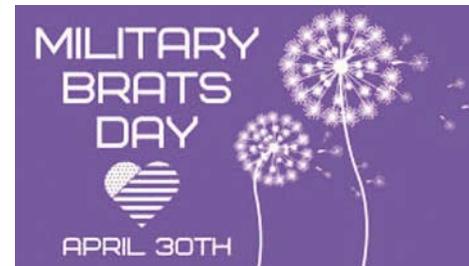


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NEW BOSS Rear Adm. Todd Whalen renders honors during the Carrier Strike Group (CSG) 3 change of command ceremony aboard *Abraham Lincoln* aircraft carrier. U.S. Navy photo by MCSN Nathaly Cruz

AIRCRAFT CARRIER CARL VINSON ARRIVES IN MIDEAST, LAUNCHES AIR STRIKES AGAINST HOUTHJI REBELS

by Times of San Diego staff and wire reports

San Diego-based USS *Carl Vinson* has arrived in Mideast waters and is launching air strikes on Houthi rebels ahead of the next round of talks between Iran and the United States over Tehran's rapidly

advancing nuclear program.

Satellite photos taken April 14 by the European Union's Copernicus program shows the nuclear-powered aircraft carrier operating northeast of Socotra, an island off Yemen that sits near the mouth of the Gulf of Aden.

Vinson is accompanied by guided-missile cruiser USS *Princeton* and guided-missile destroyer USS *Sterett*, both from San Diego, and guided missile destroyer USS *William P. Lawrence* from Pearl Harbor.

The Navy ordered *Vinson* to the Mideast to back up *Harry S. Truman* aircraft carrier, which has been launching airstrikes against the Houthis since the American campaign started March 15. Footage released by the Navy showed the *Vinson* preparing ordnance and launching F-35 and F/A-18 fighter jets in recent days.

In a related story this week, U.S. Patriot missile defense systems were recently moved from Asia to the Middle East amid ongoing fighting with Houthi rebels in Yemen and threats from their backers in Iran, the leader

of Indo-Pacific Command told lawmakers this week.

Speaking before the Senate Armed Services Committee on April 10, Adm. Samuel Paparo said the Army had transferred a Patriot battalion from INDOPACOM to the Central Command area of operations as the military builds up its defenses in the region.

Tensions have been escalating since the U.S. launched a fresh barrage of airstrikes against the Houthis last month, with President Donald Trump vowing to keep up the pressure until the militants halt attacks on commercial shipping in the Red Sea.

Trump also has threatened to go after their backers in Iran if the maritime attacks don't stop.



An F-35C Lightning II prepares to launch off USS *Carl Vinson* in the Middle East on April 10. U.S. Navy photo by Petty Officer 2nd Class Isaiah Goessl

Navy rejects plan to move electronic attack jets from NAS Whidbey Island to California

by Gary Warner, Stars and Stripes

SEATTLE - The Navy has rejected a proposal to move its Growler electronic attack squadrons from Naval Air Station Whidbey Island to a base in Southern California, saying the move would cost \$800 million and mean abandoning decades of building and expertise accumulated at their base on Puget Sound in Washington.

"Naval Air Facility El Centro is not a reasonable alternative," said Lt. Cmdr. James Smith, the operations officer at NAS Whidbey Island.

The Navy's position was announced at three public meetings held recently on Whidbey Island to solicit local feedback on the analysis that it must submit to U.S. District Court Judge Richard Jones in Seattle by May 1.

The analysis was required after some residents and community groups had sued the Navy over its 2019 decision to increase the number of Growler jets at Whidbey Island from 82 to 118.

The Growler controversy is the latest friction between some members in the local community and the Navy over flight operations at the Whidbey Island base.

Since the 1960s, the Navy's aircraft at Whidbey Island has changed from propeller-driven planes and flying boats to long-range, turbo-prop reconnaissance aircraft such as the P-3 Orion to jets such as the A-6 Intruder and its electronic warfare variant, the EA-6 Prowler.

Organized opposition to jet noise began in 1980 with Whidbey Island Sound Environment, or WISE, protesting the noise of the Prowler jets.

The air station's focus now is training for the Growler's unique role — attacking enemy radar and anti-aircraft missile installations to clear the way for attack squadrons to hit a location's main targets. The flight training includes terrain-hugging, low-level flying and touch-and-go takeoffs and landings at an auxiliary airfield on the island with the dimensions of an aircraft carrier deck.

Critics of the Navy's training contend the service has increased the amount of noise, pollution and other impacts on island residents and those living in different locations around northern Puget Sound.

Terra Huey, who lives on Whidbey Island, is a leader of the Sound Defense Alliance. The group serves as an umbrella organization for groups with about 3,000 affiliates on Whidbey Island and several surrounding counties.

"I went to the Navy's meeting in Oak Harbor and it felt most like an open house to give the Navy's information instead of having a discussion," Huey said. "The draft analysis is what they are going to go to the court with."

Continue reading at <https://www.stripes.com/branches/navy/2025-04-11/whidbey-island-navy-growlers-noise-complaints-17444916.html>.

Coast Guard finalizes permanent relief of Sector San Diego commander

SAN DIEGO - The Coast Guard permanently relieved the commander of Coast Guard Sector San Diego April 8 after temporarily relieving the commander on October 24, 2024. Rear Adm. Joseph Buzzella, commander, District Eleven, temporarily relieved Capt. James Spitzer following an investigation leading to a loss of confidence due to failures in leadership, judgement, and integrity. Buzzella's recommendation for the permanent relief was reviewed by Vice Adm. Andrew Tionson, commander, Pacific Area and approved by Coast Guard Headquarters. Sector San Diego is fully operational and focused on securing maritime border and approaches. The Coast Guard has surged assets and tripled the number of deployed forces — to include cutters, aircraft, and tactical teams — along the U.S. Southern border and maritime approaches.

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Museum educates public on military, civil aviation

by David Vergun, DOD News

The Pima Air and Space Museum in Tucson, Arizona, strives to provide the public with a greater knowledge of military and civilian aircraft, said John Bezosky, director of restoration and industrial programs at the museum.

“We’re here to preserve and show the history of aviation, and we hope young people who visit have an interest sparked in military or civil aviation,” he said, noting the museum hosts school group visits and has camps for children and young people throughout the year.

Some will likely pursue a career as pilots, mechanics or maintainers, said Bezosky.



Each year, approximately 180,000 people visit the mu-

seum, which has indoor and outdoor displays of 400 aircraft on about 115 acres, he said.

Most aircraft are on loan from the National Naval Aviation Museum, the National Museum of the Marine Corps, the National Museum of the U.S. Air Force or the U.S. Army Aviation Museum. The terms of the loans require each aircraft to be properly displayed and in good condition.

For the outdoor displays, the dry climate is perfect for preservation. Also, the desert ground is hard enough to support aircraft weight, Bezosky said.

An Army UH-1C Huey that served in South Vietnam in 1966 is on display at the Pima Air and Space Museum in Tucson, Ariz. One of the best-known American helicopters in the world, the Huey, was made famous by its use in Vietnam. Many versions remain in both military and civil service today. DoD photo by David Vergun

The vehicle museum hangar, containing dozens of historical military tanks and a wide range of vehicles, should open soon, he said.

Carrier Strike Group 3 changes command

PACIFIC OCEAN - Rear Adm. Adan Cruz was relieved by Rear Adm. Todd Whalen as commander, Carrier Strike Group (CSG) 3, during a change of command ceremony held aboard aircraft carrier Abraham Lincoln April 10.

Cruz served as commander of CSG 3 from May 2024 to April 2025. During his tenure, he led more than 7,000 Sailors and Marines across four major commands, 12 ships and nine embarked Air Wing squadrons consisting of over 70 aircraft. He successfully led *Lincoln*'s carrier group through deployment workups and a 2024 combat deployment to U.S. Fifth and U.S. Seventh Fleet area of operations.

“Deploying with the Sailors and Marines of Carrier Strike Group 3 has been the honor of a lifetime,” said Cruz. “Their professionalism and dedication to duty resulted in an incredibly successful combat deployment. Every Sailor and Marine in the strike group excelled under pressure and accomplished all missions called to do by our nation.”

“I will miss leading the most capable carrier strike group in the Navy, but I know they will continue to excel under Rear Adm. Whalen’s leadership.”

Under Cruz’s leadership, ABCECSG deployed as the most capable strike group with new technologies including the Next-Generation jammer, one

of the most advanced guided missile destroyer USS Frank E. Petersen Jr., as the certified integrated air and missile defense commander, and the most advanced air wing in the fleet.

Additional highlights of the deployment include the first combat strikes using the F-35C Lightning II platform, assigned to the Marine squadron VMFA 314 against Iranian-backed Houthi weapons storage facilities in Yemen, and two multi large deck exercises with the Italian navy’s Cavour Carrier Strike Group. Lastly, in November 2024, ABCECSG was the first carrier strike group to visit Port Klang, Malaysia in over 12 years.

Prior to taking command of CSG 3, Whalen served as the Navy’s 72nd President of the Board of Inspection and Survey.

“I’m honored to relieve Rear Adm. Cruz. His steadfast leadership was critical to the Abraham Lincoln Carrier Strike Group’s success during their 2024 combat deployment,” said Whalen.

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Top general says North Korea continuing weapons development, becoming more isolated



Army Gen. Xavier T. Brunson, commander of U.S. Forces Korea, testifies during a U.S. Senate Armed Services Committee posture hearing in Washington, April 10. Courtesy photo

by Matthew Olay, DOD News

During a Senate Armed Services Committee posture hearing April 10 in Washington, U.S. Forces Korea's commander testified that North Korea is continuing to develop its weapons program while growing more isolated.

Army Gen. Xavier T. Brunson told the committee that, in 2024, North Korea launched 47 ballistic missiles while focusing on advancing its cruise missile and hypersonic glide vehicle research and development programs.

"In the coming year, we ex-

pect [North Korea] to further develop hypersonic and multiple, independently targetable reentry vehicle capabilities to complete [their government's] goals," Brunson testified.

He also said North Korea is continuing to build its nuclear weapons program and that the country boasts a 1.3-million-man military force that is being equipped, modernized and augmented by Russia.

Many of those munitions and troops have been exported to Russia over the past year and a half, which demonstrates North Korea's ability to provide

external support to other countries while advancing domestic capabilities at home, Brunson added.

He said North Korea also poses an increasingly sophisticated cyberthreat and recently stole approximately \$1.5 billion in cryptocurrency.

Additionally, Brunson said North Korean leader Kim Jong Un's leadership has shifted from a focus on the reunification of the Korean Peninsula to declaring a position of sovereignty.

"This change is evidenced by the hardening of [North Korea's] southern border, the rejection of reunification discussions, and the destruction of unification monuments and buildings," he said.

When asked whether everyday North Koreans are cognizant of the oppression by the current regime under Kim, Brunson said that — based on recent observances in Ukraine — he doesn't believe so.

"I would fully answer that by looking at the forces [North Korea] sent to Ukraine. ... [They are] absolutely, dyed-in-the-wool ideologues who are tied to

— and believe in — that regime that exists there," Brunson said, adding he doesn't believe most North Koreans are aware of the situation due to the government's strict control on outside communications.

Brunson said that it would be unwise to reduce the U.S. military presence on the Korean

African Lion 25

Largest U.S.-led military exercise in Africa kicks off across four nations

by Phillip Regina

VICENZA, Italy - African Lion 25, U.S. Africa Command's premier annual exercise, officially kicked off April 14 here with activities in Ghana, Senegal, and Morocco beginning in May. With more than 10,000 troops from over 40 nations - including seven NATO allies - this year's iteration will be the largest in the exercise's history.

Led by the U.S. Army Southern European Task Force, Africa (SETAF-AF), AL25 enhances interoperability, strengthens readiness, and builds strategic partnerships through realistic, multi-domain training.

Exercises span land, air, maritime, space, and cyber domains, supporting the shared goal of increased security and stability on the continent.

Peninsula in the face of North Korea continuing to develop its conventional and nuclear weapons programs.

Reducing the force would be problematic, Brunson told lawmakers, noting that what U.S. Forces Korea provides "is the potential to impose cost in the

"African Lion 25 is AFRI-COM's largest multinational, combined joint exercise in Africa. It demonstrates the capabilities of the total force by building strategic readiness and interoperability with our African partners and allies to deploy, fight, and win in a complex multi-domain environment," said Maj. Gen. Andrew C. Gainey, commanding general, SETAF-AF.

Core events include field training exercises, airborne and amphibious operations, special operations forces, HIMARS rapid insertion, humanitarian civic assistance, and medical readiness engagements. New capabilities being tested include integrated cyber defense training and next-generation systems such as the Army's Next Generation Squad Weapon.

East Sea to Russia, the potential to impose cost in the West Sea to China, and to continue to deter against North Korea as it currently stands."

He said his focus is now on the capabilities necessary to prepare for, deter and then prevail in conflict, should it occur.

African Lion 25 will take place across Morocco, Tunisia, Ghana, and Senegal. Participating nations include:

In Morocco: Cameroon, Cape Verde, Djibouti, France, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea-Bissau, Hungary, Israel, Kenya, Morocco, Netherlands, Nigeria, Portugal, United Kingdom and the United States.

In Tunisia: Egypt, Ghana, Kenya, Libya, Nigeria, Spain, Tunisia and the United States.

In Ghana: Benin, Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana, Liberia, Senegal, Togo and the United States.

In Senegal: Côte d'Ivoire, Mauritania, Netherlands, Senegal and the United States.

African Lion began in 2004 and has evolved into the U.S. military's most significant exercise on the continent. This year's events reinforce the U.S. commitment to enduring partnerships and demonstrate our ability to respond to crises and deter threats by promoting peace through strength.

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Hegseth announces additional \$5.1 billion in DOD spending cuts

by **Matthew Olay**, DOD News
Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth signed a memorandum April 10 announcing the cutting of \$5.1 billion in wasteful Defense Department contracts.

“That’s with a ‘B’; \$5.1 billion in DOD contracts for ancillary things like consulting and other nonessential services,” Hegseth said while recording a video of the announcement from his office.

The memo lists some of the cuts, including \$1.8 billion in consulting contracts the Defense Health Agency awarded to various private sector firms, a \$1.4 billion enterprise cloud IT services contract awarded to a software reseller, and a \$500 million Navy contract for business process consulting.

“We need this money to spend on better health care for our warfighters and their families, instead of \$500 an hour

business process consultant,” Hegseth said. “That’s a lot of consulting.”

He also mentioned cutting a \$500 million contract awarded to the Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency for IT help desk services that are “completely duplicative” of services that the Defense Information Systems Agency already provides.

Additionally, Hegseth said the department is cutting 11 contracts related to diversity, equity and inclusion, climate change, the department’s response to the COVID-19 pandemic and related nonessential activities across DOD.

“We are committed to rooting out DEI — root and branch

— throughout this department ... [And] I’m going to keep looking,” Hegseth said.

He also announced cuts on the academic front, saying that DOD would be pausing over \$500 million in funding to a pair of universities that “tolerate antisemitism and support divisive DEI programs.” This is in addition to the \$70 million already cut in funding at three other colleges in the past weeks.

Today’s announcement follows Hegseth’s initial March 20, 2025, announcement that the department would be cutting \$580 million in programs, contracts and grants.

“If you’re keeping score at home, today’s cuts bring our running total to nearly \$6

billion in wasteful spending over the first six weeks of the Department of Government Efficiency effort here at the Defense Department,” Hegseth said, adding that DOGE’s job is to find wasteful spending at DOD so that the funds can be driven back into the department’s warfighting capabilities.

Hegseth first announced that DOGE would be working within DOD during a recorded, on-camera address he made Feb. 20, 2025, regarding cutting excess and refocusing the department’s budget.

The secretary wound down today’s message by thanking DOGE and the people who unpacked and revealed the latest round of savings.

“We’re excited to make these cuts on behalf of you, the taxpayer and the warfighters here at the department,” he said.



Top 5

- DOD issues guidance to advance civilian workforce overhaul
- U.S. Forces Korea commander defends troop levels amid talk of cuts
- Military child care centers see varying effects from personnel actions
- Handheld counter-drone devices headed to deploying Marine units
- Hundreds of students at military base schools walk out to protest Trump administration’s anti-diversity policies
- Army**
- Leg day: Army cuts down on number of paid paratroopers
- Army enlists 3 active duty Soldiers ousted for refusing COVID-19 vaccine, corrects other numbers
- Army secretary gets good view of service’s Ukrainian-aided drone advances during Germany visit
- Navy**
- Defiant drone ship gets closer to months-long DARPA at sea demonstration
- Guided missile frigate BRP Miguel Malvar joins Philippine Navy
- First Constellation frigate only 10% complete, design still being finalized
- Personnel Chief anticipates drop in at-sea gaps as Navy meets recruiting goals
- Space Force**
- Contracts for SSC’s next iteration of MEO missile tracking satellites delayed
- Space Force chief: ‘Golden Dome’ is a missile shield built in pieces, not a single system
- Space Force takes ownership of first Meadowlands satellite jammer
- Space Force’s intelligence ‘marketplace’ gets funds to expand
- Space Force commander in Greenland sent out email breaking with Vance after his visit
- Coast Guard**
- Coast Guard permanently relieves commander of sector San Diego
- Your Military**
- The gold star Star Mom who rallied America after losing 5 sons during World War II
- Military Culture & History**
- ‘Warfare’ brings realistic carnage of Iraq War to the big screen
- 50 years later, Vietnam’s battlefields draw retrospective veterans and other tourists
- From duct tape to penicillin, GPS to superglue: Thank the DOD
- ‘We have great friends’: Germans and American soldiers honor WWII dead in Grafenwoehr

Caine sworn in as chairman of Joint Chiefs of Staff

Air Force Gen. Dan “Razin” Caine was sworn in as the chairman of the Joint Chiefs this week, making Caine the first career officer from the National Guard to rise to the level of the nation’s top uniformed position

Caine, 56, was nominated shortly after President Donald Trump removed former chairman Gen. C.Q. Brown in February. He was confirmed by the Senate in a 62 to 25 vote on April 11 in a rare show of bipartisanship that saw more than a dozen Democrats support the nomination.

A 1990 graduate of the Virginia Military Institute, Caine served in the Air National Guard as an F-16 pilot who flew combat air patrols over Washington, D.C., after the attacks on Sept. 11, 2001.

Caine was part of an interna-

tional effort to find Iraqi Scud ballistic missiles after the invasion of Iraq in 2003 and served again in Iraq in 2008 and 2016. He also served as the CIA’s associate director for military affairs and retired from active duty service last year before his nomination. Caine also had a career in the private sector.

Caine was retired from the military at the time of his nomi-

Ceremony near Korean DMZ honors 1968 truck ambush victims

CAMP BONIFAS, South Korea - Soldiers, veterans, and dignitaries gathered on April 14 in Patriot Hall here to commemorate the 57th anniversary of the 1968 truck ambush, a deadly attack by North Korean forces that claimed the lives of four United Nations Command soldiers during a routine resupply mission in the Korean Demilitarized Zone (DMZ).

nation, the Senate held a vote to instate him as an active-duty major general before confirming him as Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, a position that automatically bestows the rank of four-star general. Under Title 10 of the U.S. Code, the Joint Chiefs Chair is required to have previously been a four-star service chief or combatant commander. However, the president can waive the requirement under

a “national interest” clause in the law.

During his confirmation hearing earlier this month before the Senate Armed Services Committee, Caine vowed to be apolitical in his role. “I think it starts with being a good example from the top and making sure that we are nonpartisan and apolitical and speaking the truth to power every day,” he said.

which involved small arms fire, automatic weapons, and grenades.

“We gather today not only to honor the memory of our fallen comrades but to reaffirm our commitment to peace and vigilance along the DMZ,” said Lt. Col. Daniel B. Blankenhorn, commander of the United Nations Command Joint Security Battalion.

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Career and Education

Top enlisted Space Force, Air Force leaders testify to Congress on military member quality of life

WASHINGTON - Chief Master Sgt. of the Space Force John Bentivegna and Chief Master Sgt. of the Air Force David Flosi testified before the House Committee on Appropriations, Military Construction, Veterans Affairs and Related Agencies Subcommittee, addressing concerns about military quality of life and the impact of budgetary constraints on readiness April 8.

The hearing focused on challenges faced by service members, including housing affordability, access to childcare, spouse employment and the increasing need for investment in personnel and divesting excess infrastructure.

Senior enlisted leaders from both the Air Force and Space Force emphasized the ongoing need to ensure service members are adequately supported while facing the ever-evolving demands of modern warfare.

Flosi kicked off the discussion by emphasizing the importance of quality of life as a key element in maintaining a highly capable, lethal and ready force.

"While there's always work

to be done on this important subject, make no mistake, your Air Force is the most lethal and ready flying force in the world," Flosi stated. "I humbly represent more than 670,000 Total Force Airmen who remain ready to deliver airpower, anytime, anywhere."

He highlighted the critical need for ongoing investments in dormitory upgrades, the need for access to quality and affordable healthcare, childcare options and compensation adjustments for non-commissioned officers.

"Our Airmen have been busy — busy repelling complex Iranian drone and missile attacks against our allies, disrupting and defeating Houthi attacks on international shipping and providing humanitarian assistance to victims of natural disasters at home and abroad," Flosi said. "We cannot afford for our Airmen to be distracted by inadequate housing, lack of access to healthcare and childcare or other quality-of-life issues."

Flosi also emphasized the need for divesting excess infrastructure to maximize resources for critical areas. He pointed out

while the Air Force has reduced its fighter squadrons and personnel over the past three decades, much of its infrastructure remains unnecessary and costly.

"Over the last 30 years, the Air Force has reduced 60 percent of its fighter squadrons and 40 percent of its end strength, but only 15 percent of our installations. Today, roughly 30 percent of Air Force infrastructure exceeds what is needed. These facilities continue to draw funding and manpower but offer little to no value to the mission or Airmen," Flosi stated. "I learned no matter how much work we do to improve quality of life, we will not get our desired effect as an Air Force if we don't focus on excess infrastructure."

He further stressed the funds saved from divesting infrastructure could be reinvested into taking care of Airmen.

"We've done the analysis, and while it is expensive to demolish, we know it's about a 10 to one return on investment," Flosi said. "Over time, it's a really good use of taxpayer dollars to get rid of excess infrastructure and consolidate and focus our resources on the infrastructure we really need to take care of our

Airmen, especially in the early stages in their careers."

Flosi's testimony underscored the continued focus on prioritizing the overall readiness of the Air Force, ensuring Airmen have access to the best possible support systems so they can remain focused on mission success.

Bentivegna emphasized the growing importance of the space domain in an increasingly complex global security environment.

He highlighted the critical role Guardians play, stating, "Our Guardians stand as the invisible front line, ensuring our nation's continued access to, and freedom to operate in, space."

He noted the Space Force's contributions to national security despite representing only 3% of the defense budget, citing examples such as providing missile warning data during an Iranian missile attack and tracking over 47,800 orbiting objects.

"As our Space Force Truths state, the U.S. Space Force's capabilities are critical to the Joint Force and the American way of life," Bentivegna said.

Bentivegna underscored the need for investment in the "human weapon system," advocating for quality-of-life programs that "Elevate the Journey" for Guardians.

He expressed support to working on the recommendations from the 14th Quadrennial Review of Military Compensation, including updating basic allowance of housing methodology and improving Cost of Living Allowance calculations. He also expressed faith that the recommended Quality-of-Life Review would provide the required data to improve access to childcare, healthcare and spouse employment opportunities.

"Service members do not choose to stay in uniform because it's easy," Bentivegna stated. "They do so because it's challenging but they understand the rewards of service are priceless. Quality of life investments ... will attract and retain the talent the nation demands."

He further stressed the importance of "Quality-of-Service" investments, such as world-class training and development, to "Cultivate the Warfighter."

"To meet the Joint Force's

evolving needs and to stay ahead of strategic rivals, our ability to develop the force-for Guardians by Guardians-must also mature," Bentivegna said.

"As the capacity for us to scout, train and educate space-minded warfighters beyond our current end strength increases, we will require appropriations and infrastructure investments. These initiatives will help Create the Future of Spacepower and build a more lethal force for generations to come."

He concluded by emphasizing three key takeaways: the Space Force's critical role despite its small budgetary footprint; that the service's ability to evolve as necessary has been hindered operating under continuing resolutions for 51 percent of its existence; and the imperative for significant investment in the force's growth and development.

The committee members expressed bipartisan support for addressing the quality-of-life concerns raised by both senior enlisted leaders and acknowledged the need for further discussion and action in the coming weeks as Congress works on the annual defense budget.



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Increase in small boat activity around Naval Base Ventura County, local harbors

by Lt.j.g. Drew Verbis
Naval Base Ventura County
PORT HUENEME - Residents of Ventura County may notice increased activity of small unmanned boats in and around local harbors from April through August, 2025.



Authorized personnel will control the unmanned vessels remotely as they depart from and return to Naval Base Ventura County (NBVC) and the Ventura and Channel Islands harbors.

The Navy has taken precautions to minimize disruptions to recreational activities, wildlife and commercial traffic. There will be no use of ammunition, underwater sound devices or nets, and no increase in noise is expected.

The Navy will continue to

work closely with the Coast Guard, Port Authority and local government to ensure that the safety and security of the community remains a top priority.

NBVC is a major shore warfighting platform, providing sustained ready forces to deploy, fight and win. The base is composed of three operating facilities: Point Mugu, Port Hueneeme and San Nicolas Island. It is home of the Pacific Seabees, West Coast E-2D Hawkeyes, three warfare centers and 110 tenant commands.

USS Russell color guard performs for San Diego Wave Fútbol Club

by Petty Officer 1st Class
Brittanie Llorens
USS Russell (DDG 59)

SAN DIEGO - On April 12, the color guard of Arleigh Burke-class destroyer USS Russell (DDG 59) marched onto the Snapdragon Stadium to parade the colors before a match between San Diego Wave Fútbol Club (Wave FC) and Kansas City Current (KC).

This tradition stems from protecting regimental colors in infantry battle but remains a ceremonial duty honoring the past and present service of military members.

Russell's color guard is made up of four Sailors: Operations Specialist Seaman Corbin Ledet (right rifle), Operations Specialist Seaman Thomas Baker

(American flag), Cryptologic Technician Maintenance 3rd Class Nicholas Linarducci (U.S. Navy flag), and Operations Specialist Seaman Jason Jaramillo (left rifle). Although this was their first performance before a sporting event, they regularly perform for change of command and retirement ceremonies.

Baker, the color guard commander from Tampa, Fla., began performing alongside Navy Junior Reserve Officer Training Corps (NJROTC) cadets from Spoto High School in 2019. The teamwork and camaraderie he shared with his fellow cadets was something he wanted to recreate with his shipmates aboard Russell.

"Parading the colors helps preserve military traditions, instills pride in participants, and inspires patriotism by reminding people of the sacrifices made by service members. Overall, it embodies the values of respect, unity, and tradition," said Baker

Wave FC has hosted military bands and color guards before. Most recently, an Air Force color guard performed during their annual military appreciation night. The community relations coordinator for Wave FC, Tiffany Tomlin, described the significance of hosting military color guards.

"By inviting the color guard to present the colors at our home match, we not only showcase the strength, discipline, and tradition of our military, but also create a moment of gratitude among our fans," she said.



USS Russell (DDG 59) color guard performs at San Diego Wave Fútbol Club match. U.S. Navy photo by STG2 Jaylen Kim.

Sacramento assumes command of Navy Recruiting Reserve Command Southwest

by Ensign Adelola Tinubu, Reserve Talent Acquisition Group Southwest
SAN DIEGO - The Navy Recruiting Reserve Command (NRR), Reserve Talent Acquisition Group Southwest (RTAG SW), held an assumption of command ceremony at the Naval Base San Diego Chapel on April 4. Cmdr. Benjamin A. Sacramento Jr., a native of San Francisco, assumed command as the inaugural commanding officer of RTAG Southwest. He accepted command from Capt. Todd Winn, commodore of NRR. The event marked a historic milestone in Navy Reserve recruiting.

On Oct. 23, 2023, the Chief of Naval Operations authorized the establishment of five Reserve Talent Acquisition Groups (RTAGs). The April 4 ceremony officially activated the fifth and final RTAG. RTAGs are designed to foster a culture that informs, influences, and hires the highest-quality candidates from America's diverse talent pool into the Navy Reserve. The goal of this initiative is to assure mission success and provide an opportunity for Sailors to thrive in both military and civilian life.

Prior to assuming command of RTAG Southwest, Cmdr. Sacramento served as Commander, Task Force 34 OSO/Reserve Program Director and Theater Undersea Warfare Planner in Pearl Harbor, Hawaii. He was later elevated to Type Commander Reserve Program Director for the Pacific Submarine Force. From 2015 to 2017, he served as commanding officer of Navy Operational Support Center Youngstown, Ohio.



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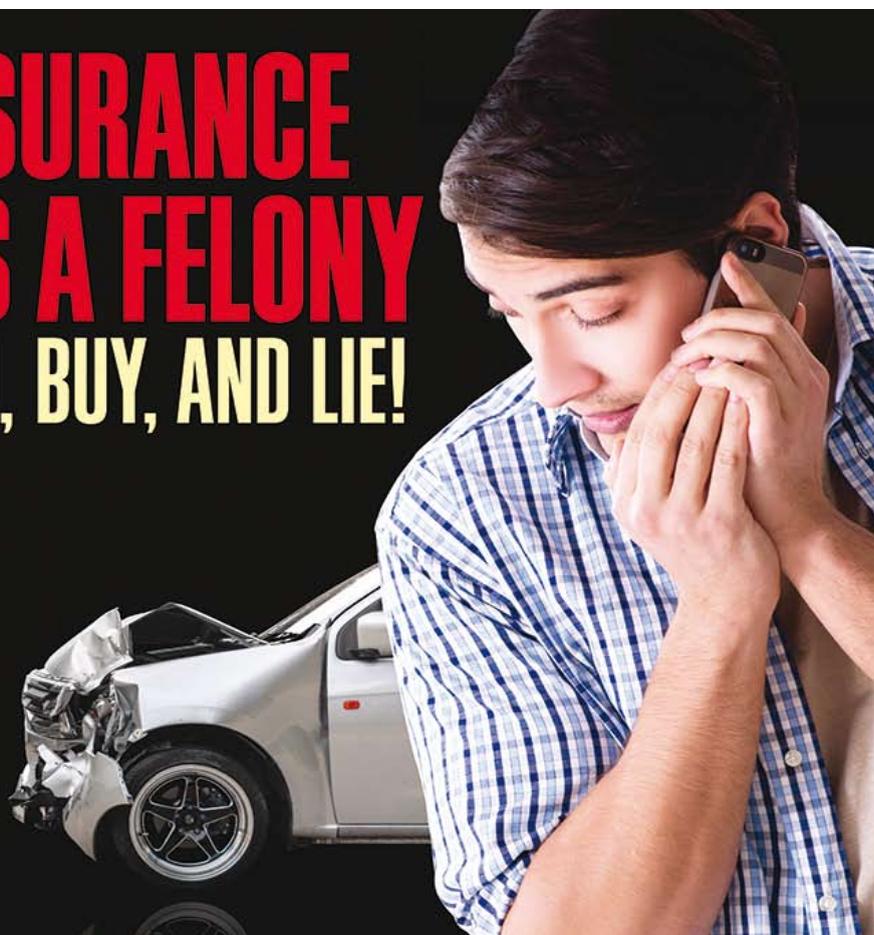
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Fleet Readiness Center Southwest wins CNO Aviation Safety Award

by Janina Lamoglia

Fleet Readiness Center Southwest

NAVAL AIR STATION NORTH ISLAND – Fleet Readiness Center Southwest (FRCSW) has been recognized with the Chief of Naval Operations (CNO) Aviation Safety Award for its exceptional commitment to safety, risk management, and operational excellence. This achievement highlights the command's dedication to fostering a culture of safety that ensures both personnel and aircraft are mission-ready.

“It is an honor to command an organization that not only sets the benchmark in cost, schedule and performance but that also validates its vigorous production effort and fleet sustainment support via absolute teamwork achieving the highest safety and quality standards.”

Capt. Luis Rivera, FRCSW CO

FRCSW, one of the largest and most successful aviation Maintenance, Repair, and Overhaul (MRO) facilities in the Department of Defense, supports a work-



Fleet Readiness Center Southwest's safety team gathers on the test line at Naval Air Station North Island to celebrate the command's selection for the Chief of Naval Operations Aviation Safety Award. Photo by Christopher D Nette

force of over 2,700 personnel across multiple locations. The command's approach to safety is deeply embedded in its operations, aligning with the Navy's High-Velocity Learning (HVL) principles—continuously identifying risks, developing mitigation strategies, and proactively sharing lessons learned.

“This award exemplifies the hard work and dedication of our entire safety team and work-

force,” said Christopher Gibson, FRCSW branch manager for safety and occupational health. “Safety is not just a department—it's a shared responsibility across every level of our organization.”

Lt. Jesta Jackson, serving as the command's ground safety officer, plays a critical role in overseeing aviation-related safety programs, particularly in the high-risk environment of

returning aircraft to operational status. Her work has helped reinforce safety protocols at the depot, ensuring smooth coordination between maintenance personnel and aircrew.

“Our goal is to build a workplace where risk management isn't just a checklist—it's second nature,” said Jackson. “The safety culture here is built on open dialogue, empowerment, and continuous improvement.”

Over the past year, FRCSW has implemented several key initiatives that contributed to this recognition:

Hazard Identification and Mitigation: The command enhanced its reporting systems, encouraging personnel to proactively identify safety concerns.

Medical Surveillance and Hearing Conservation: The

team improved compliance in medical surveillance programs by assigning a dedicated point of contact, streamlining scheduling, and increasing participation in mobile audiometric testing.

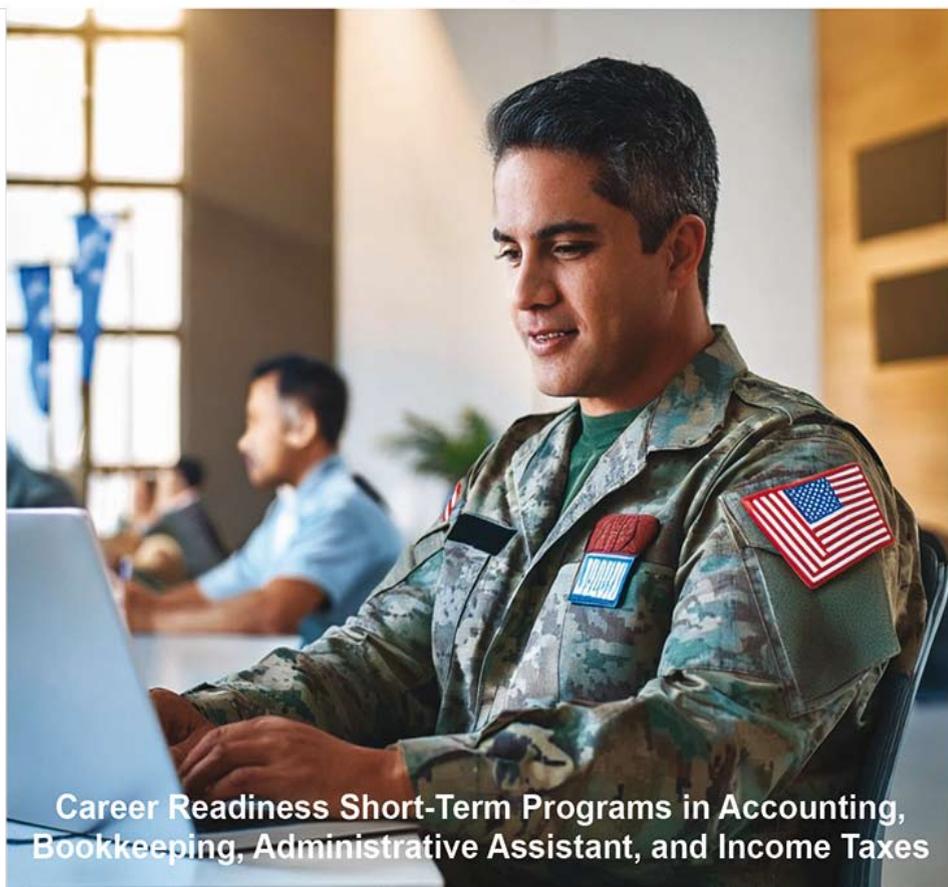
Enhanced Training and Communication: Safety briefings, human factors analysis, and lessons learned from fleet mishaps were integrated into aircrew meetings and Aviation Safety Councils.

Supporting the F-35 and F-16 expansion, and reduction in injury rates, were also implemented.

In FY24, FRCSW saw a 60 percent reduction in days away (restricted or transferred) injuries and a 53 percent decrease in total case incident rate, a direct result of improved risk mitigation strategies and leadership engagement.

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LOCAL MILITARY IMAGES



MARCH AIR RESERVE BASE (April 11, 2025) Air show goes walk toward a C-130 Hercules during the Southern California Air Show here. The Southern California Air Show showcased airframes from the Army, Navy, Marine Corp. and Air Force as well as several civilian aviation airframes in a family-friendly environment. U.S. Air Force photo by Giancarlo Casem



BOLT BUDDIES Sailors remove a bolt during maintenance on an F/A-18E Super Hornet in the hangar bay of Nimitz aircraft carrier in the Pacific Ocean, April 2, 2025. U.S. Navy Petty Officer 2nd Class Hannah Kantner

Camp Pendleton's HEIST for wildfire readiness, interagency cooperation

by Sgt. Patrick King
Camp Pendleton

CAMP PENDLETON - As California continues to face an increasing risk of wildfires, experts here have taken proactive measures to reestablish and improve wildfire mitigation and response capabilities through its Heavy Equipment Interagency Safety Training (HEIST) program held in late March and early April.

The program, with its annual initiative beginning in 2016, has grown into a collaboration between military and civilian firefighting units. This collaboration provides hands-on training while reinforcing wildfire defenses for the base and surrounding communities, with a strong focus on community safety.

Every year, Camp Pendleton experiences approximately 200 wildfire ignitions that consume an average of 15,000 acres due to live-fire training exercises. To combat this risk, the base maintains over 165 miles of strategically placed fire breaks to prevent fires from spreading beyond the installation.

The responsibility for clearing and maintaining these fire breaks falls on the Facilities Maintenance Department Heavy Equipment, which begins annual operations in May and works through August.

Nine years ago, FMDHE initiated the HEIST program, which, based on its pre-existing firebreak maintenance backlog, inherently meets the training needs of the rest of the state's heavy equipment operators who specialize in "pushing dirt." So, they leveraged the firebreaks' rugged terrain against constraining environmental state laws affecting the operator's training regimen to provide a premier training ground for firefighters and heavy equipment operators while simultaneously improving the base's fire prevention infrastructure.

"The partnerships we build through programs like HEIST are essential," said Brig. Gen. Nick I. Brown, commanding general of Marine Corps Installations West, Camp Pendleton. "By working together, we not only strengthen our own capabilities but also reinforce the safety and security of our neighbors."

"Each year, HEIST operates in a two-week cycle, with train-

ing conducted as if responding to an actual wildfire incident with night drills to simulate real-world fire conditions and requires operators to construct fire lines using only their equipment lights.

"This isn't just about clearing fire breaks. It's about making sure our personnel are ready for the real thing," said Chris Hubmer, Camp Pendleton fire



Los Angeles City firefighters, shown here during a Heavy Equipment Interagency Safety Training program Camp Pendleton April 2. U.S. Marine Corps photo by Sgt. Patrick King

chief. "When a wildfire strikes, these operators need to know how to respond swiftly and effectively."

The program has continued to grow over the past nine years and has testified to its success through the increasing need for such initiatives. Furthermore, the program's expanding reach and impact has historically stretched

from not only California-based fire agencies but Northern Nevada units as well. It has drawn between 60 to 80 personnel and up to 30 pieces of heavy equipment per session. Meanwhile, this year's session included units from L.A., Sacramento Metro, San Bernardino County, and Kings County.

"The ability to train here, in a controlled but realistic environment, prepares our firefighters for the complex wildfire scenarios they'll face in the field," Brown said. "This is a prime example of how military installations can contribute to national preparedness."

As the region anticipates the growing wildfire threat, Camp Pendleton's HEIST program beacons as a model for interagency cooperation and proactive fire prevention. This not only ensures fortified high-risk areas ahead of fire season but also fosters relationships between military and civilian first response teams, ultimately strengthening regional wildfire readiness and benefitting both MCB Camp Pendleton and the broader community.

"Wildfire mitigation isn't just a base priority. It's a regional one," said Brown. "By working together, we ensure that both our installations and our communities are better protected."

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WonderCon 2025 was wonderFul!

assistant to the great Jack Kirby, whom he wrote about in his book Kirby, King of Comics. Mark has also written for live-action TV shows, animated TV shows (including various Garfield cartoons) and tons of comic books.”

The four panelists were Kimberly Woods (Archer, X-Men '97), Wally Wingert (Invader Zim, The Garfield Show), Candi Milo (Looney Tunes, Foster's Home for Imaginary Friends) and Daniel Ross (Donald Duck, Mickey Mouse Mixed-Up Adventures). They ended the panel by entertaining us with a table reading of “The Three Bears,” read in a variety of characters' voices and with lots of ad-libbing.

They are all spontaneously funny people. If that wasn't enough to keep us laughing, MC Mark Evanier kept suggesting to Wally Wingert names of well-known personalities for him to impersonate — and he nailed each and every one! Sensing something funny might be coming, I had started to record video. I recorded the whole thing, which I will share with you by uploading it to my “AutoMatters & More” YouTube channel.

I mentioned “merch.” “WonderCon featured 900+ exhibitors in a 412,000—square-foot Exhibit Hall filled with comics, original art, toys and merchandise from many popular artists, publishers and retailers.” It's fun shopping alongside characters in costume. I even spotted an R2 rolling through the merch aisles.

With all that walking you are going to get hungry. Many food trucks lined both sides of the promenade in front of the convention center. Those included the German Yum Truck, where I've eaten two years in a row.

People in amazing costumes are everywhere, from related characters who coordinate with each other and gather outside for large group

photographs, to individuals and small groups who are quite willing to stop and pose for photos.

Another highlight of WonderCon is the annual Masquerade — a costume competition where individuals and groups compete on-stage in fan-crafted costumes for trophies, generous cash prizes and other awards, and are judged by professional costume designers.

This year Ashley Eckstein was the ever-so-entertaining mistress of ceremonies. Ashley is the founder of the Her Universe fashion and lifestyle brand, and is the voice of Ahsoka Tano for Star Wars: The Clone Wars, Star Wars: Rebels, Star Wars: Forces of Destiny and more. She really got into the spirit of the Masquerade, encouraging the audience to do likewise. They responded with enthusiastic shout-outs.

At intermission time, while the judges deliberated, two groups who have for years been entertaining at WonderCon and San Diego Comic-Con, returned with new routines. The Corps Dance Crew is a high-energy, high-flying group of dancers. Their dance routine this time had a “Dungeons & Dragons” theme. After the Corps Dance Crew, the Saber Guild took to the stage with a new “Star Wars”-inspired show.

Next up is San Diego Comic-Con, July 24-27, 2025, plus preview night. Visit <https://www.comic-con.org/cc/> for the latest information.

To explore a wide variety of content dating back to 2002, with the most photos and the latest text, visit “AutoMatters & More” at <https://automatters.net>. Search by title or topic in the Search Bar in the middle of the Home Page, or click on the blue ‘years’ boxes and browse.

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Don't mind the gap

A million years ago, I was a litigation attorney with a bright professional future and significant earning potential. That was before I married a Navy man and began moving to U.S. states and foreign countries where my law licenses weren't worth the paper on which they were printed.

Despite these challenges, I maintained hope that one day, I'd rekindle my law career. However, military family life marched on, and it wasn't until our youngest entered high school after our ninth move that I drafted a new resume.

That day, I dropped the kids at school then grabbed the only available table at Starbucks -- beside the restrooms. When I had something important to do, I couldn't start until I spent a requisite amount of time dawdling. So, I removed crumpled gum wrappers from my purse, checked email, and people-watched. Although I'd typically procrastinate longer, after ten minutes I decided that people-watching beside the toilets wasn't entertaining and therefore, not worth the effort.

I opened a blank document, sighed dramatically, and thought, “The kids are old enough now. It's time to find a paying job.”

“RESUME [return]... Lisa Smith Molinari,” I keyed onto the top of the page. I picked up steam, quickly tapping out my address, phone number and email, adding aesthetically pleasing fonts, underlining and bold. After a few thumps on the return key, I typed “EDUCATION” and enjoyed a trip down memory lane to the ivy-tangled architecture of Miami of Ohio, and the endless racks of thick casebooks at Thomas Cooley Law School in Michigan.

I added “law review” and “cum laude,” feeling a surge of confidence.

But, no sooner did I type “WORK EXPERIENCE” when my hands began to tremble. “It's just the caf-

feine,” I thought, and strained to recall the details of my last paying job.

“Hmm ... was it 1995? When I worked for that law firm in California while Francis was assigned to the Naval Postgraduate School? I can't put a job from two decades ago on my resume ... I'll

The Meat & Potatoes of Life



by
Lisa
Smith
Molinari

be a laughing stock!” I realized that, since marrying my Navy husband in 1993, I had no paid “work” experience except a few short-lived legal jobs between military moves. Recognizing that my Skinny Vanilla Latte had nothing to do with my shaking hands, I pressed on, trying my best to make 25 years as a stay-at-home military mom read like a thriving professional career.

As I filled my resume gap with various volunteer gigs I'd had through the years, I tsked. How is a milspouse supposed to convince an employer that she is capable of a challenging job because managing an active duty military family IS her “work experience”?

Despite the bonbons-and-soap-operas stereotype for stay-at-home-parents, any milspouse who has successfully managed a full household through stateside and overseas moves, lengthy deployments and various TDYs, broken hot water heaters, clogged gutters, HHG dam-

age claims, Scout meetings, soccer tournaments, EFMP paperwork, orthodontist appointments and parent-teacher conferences -- is most-definitely worthy of gainful employment.

I resisted the urge to add the cutesy moniker “Domestic Engineer” in hopes that potential employers would respect me for putting my own career aside to help my husband serve his country. Instead, under the heading “REMARKS” I wrote, “Despite gaps in my job history, I have always exemplified hard work and dedication, whether as a lawyer, writer, volunteer, mother or military spouse,” pounding the period button with a self-righteous poke.

A few years later, I gave up my job search because each promising lead had ended in final-round rejections due to “lack of work experience.” Instead, I cofounded a military nonprofit, Orion Military Scholarships, and created my own dream job helping military children find stable educational experiences.

Frankly, I'd grown tired of “milspaining” the impact that active duty Navy life had on my career to civilian employers who would never understand what I knew — that military life requires higher-level competence, determination, selflessness, work ethic, and executive problem-solving skills.

Employers, when considering a military spouse, don't mind the gap. Being frequently moved to new locations, managing complex circumstances, and shepherding a family through constant unknowns gives milspouses the gritty “must-do-can-do-will-do” mentality that you'd do well to appreciate.

Veterans News

Congressional hearing addresses Veterans Affairs claims backlog

A recent congressional hearing spotlighted the ongoing Veterans Affairs (VA) claims backlog, revealing both progress and persistent challenges in delivering timely disability compensation to veterans.

Kenneth Smith, assistant deputy under secretary for field operations, reported that the National Work Queue holds 918,000 pending claims, a 6 percent reduction from last year, with the VA on track to process over 2.5 million claims in fiscal year 2025. However, inefficiencies like over-development - where unnecessary exams or record requests delay decisions - continue to frustrate veterans. Over-development stems from inadequate training and inconsistent guidance, leading to wasted time and resources, including \$1.4 million spent on unneeded exams from April to September 2023, as noted by the VA's Office of Inspector General.

The hearing emphasized the human cost of delays, particu-

larly for vets with terminal illnesses who face prolonged waits for critical benefits. Smith said that missing an unnecessary exam can trigger automatic claim denials, exacerbating financial and emotional strain for veterans and their families. The VA's Overdevelopment Reduction Task Force, which completed its work in July 2024, made over 50 manual updates to streamline guidance and enhanced the Exam Scheduling Assistant, cutting exam errors by 7 percent this year. Plans to integrate this tool into the Veterans Benefits Management System (VBMS) by 2026 and deploy AI for real-time error checks aim to further reduce avoidable deferrals, where claims are repeatedly delayed by processor mistakes.

James Schwarz, president of AFGE Local 2823, offered a frontline perspective, advocating for keeping claims within a single regional office to avoid repeated errors across the NWQ. Schwarz argued this would al-

low processors to learn from mistakes and improve efficiency, criticizing the current system where claims bounce between offices, leading to months or years of delays. He also highlighted training gaps, noting that new employees lack hands-on experience with VA tools and terminology, and urged better PACT Act training to address evolving claim requirements. Smith countered that the VA has revamped training, including interactive modules launched in June 2024 and a quality stand-down in March to focus on exam-ordering protocols.

Technology emerged as a key solution - AI-driven pilots to help processors make correct decisions upfront, reducing deferrals. The VA is developing predictive analytics to prioritize claims by urgency and complexity, ensuring skilled staff handle complex cases. A pilot study underway notifies all processors of over-development errors on a single claim, addressing concerns that only the most recent

processor is currently informed. The upgrades, slated for 2026, aim to enhance first-touch efficiency and reduce the backlog.

The hearing emphasized the need for collaboration to support VA employees and veterans alike. Ranking Member Mc-

Garvey criticized recent moves to end collective bargaining agreements, arguing that unions boost morale and training, ultimately benefiting veterans. While progress is evident—over a million claims were completed earlier this year, a record—the backlog's persistence demands

sustained action. The VA's commitment to training, technology, and workload management offers hope for faster, fairer decisions, but as Schwarz warned, without addressing systemic flaws like inadequate training and morale, veterans will continue to face unacceptable delays.

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H	S	V	L	P	A	V	L	I	S	T
H	S	V	L	P	A	V	L	I	S	T
H	S	V	L	P	A	V	L	I	S	T

3	6	9	8	1	9	4	7	2
2	8	1	5	7	4	3	9	6
7	4	9	3	6	2	8	1	5
9	7	8	2	5	3	6	4	1
1	5	6	7	4	8	2	3	9
4	3	2	6	9	1	5	8	7
6	9	3	4	2	7	1	5	8
8	7	2	1	3	9	6	4	5
5	4	1	9	8	6	7	2	3

CROSSWORD PUZZLE

Across

- 1 *Ready to set sail, say
- 8 Diplomatic rep.
- 11 Machines with Windows, briefly
- 14 More tired
- 15 Foe of Chiang
- 16 Swing, jazz or rock 'n' roll
- 17 *1950s sitcom co-star
- 19 Early internet company
- 20 Investor's purchase: Abbr.
- 21 Amazement
- 22 German cameras
- 24 Bashful
- 26 *Hester Prynne's mark of shame
- 28 No-no
- 31 Continental coins
- 32 "Inside the NBA" analyst
- 33 Returning GI's diagnosis
- 34 Capitol Hill helper
- 38 Musically monotonous
- 40 Collection of sacred songs
- 42 Geeky type
- 43 19-Across et al.
- 45 Lazy ___: revolving tray
- 46 December mall figure
- 48 Foolish
- 49 *Which side of the debate will you argue?"

- 52 June honoree
- 53 Really bothers
- 54 Fair-hiring inits.
- 56 Wood for bats
- 59 Home security co.
- 60 *Culpable one
- 64 Fairway position
- 65 Bruins legend
- 66 Answered
- 67 Title for Elton
- 68 Once called
- 69 Chess match climax, and what the last word of each answer to a starred clue can have

Down

- 1 Hooping birds
- 2 Not masc. or fem.
- 3 Begin to parallel park, with "in"
- 4 "... ___ quilt"
- 5 Feel crummy
- 6 Race with batons
- 7 Sketched
- 8 Org. with a Health Care Advocacy web page
- 9 Ducks whose males have green heads
- 10 Slow-tempo Spanish dance
- 11 Quiet partner
- 12 Zagreb native
- 13 Taco topper
- 18 Harass
- 23 "Casablanca" heroine
- 24 Stinkers
- 25 Prefix with gram
- 27 Zodiac borders
- 28 Bugs Bunny or Bullwinkle
- 29 Lestat creator Rice
- 30 Bar pint contents
- 33 Sauce with basil
- 35 * ___ miracle!
- 36 College faculty head
- 37 Shore bird
- 39 ___ of iodine: antiseptic
- 41 China's continent
- 44 Group of jurors
- 47 Ferdinand II's realm
- 49 Rings, as a bell
- 50 Bike spokes, geometrically
- 51 Furry aquatic mammal
- 52 Elder statesman
- 55 To be, in Tours
- 56 Puccini piece
- 57 Pipe part
- 58 Stevenson's villainous Mr.
- 61 Wrath
- 62 Scoreboard abbr. for a rainout
- 63 High school subj.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	
14							15				16		
17							18				19		
20					21			22		23			
24	25				26	27							
28	29	30				31							
32						33				34	35	36	37
38						39			40		41		
42						43	44			45			
46	47									48			
49	50	51								52			
53							54	55			56	57	58
59					60	61				62	63		
64					65					66			
67					68					69			

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Midway to host Operation Frequent Wind 50th Anniversary Commemoration

by USS Midway Museum

When North Vietnamese communist forces surrounded Saigon in spring 1975, the remaining Americans and the tens of thousands South Vietnamese who had supported the United States were in jeopardy. Fears of prison, torture and death fueled their anxieties.

With the fall of Saigon imminent, the USS Midway (CV-41), along with a flotilla of U.S. Navy ships steamed to the waters off South Vietnam for the emergency evacuation. On April 29, 1975, Operation Frequent Wind commenced. For those involved, this massive humanitarian effort was nothing less than extraordinary.

For 30 hours, American and South Vietnamese military helicopters converged nonstop on Midway, many low on fuel and without radio communications with the ship.

"I counted as many as 26 helos circling the ship at one time," remembered retired Cmdr. Vern Jumper, Midway's air boss in charge of the ship's flight operations who has also been a museum docent since 2003. "My major concern was that one of them would crash on the deck.



That would have killed lots of people."

When the operation ended, more than 3,000 South Vietnamese refugees were evacuated to Midway.

On April 27, the USS Midway Museum will host a 50th anniversary commemoration ceremony and celebration to honor the crew of Midway and the South Vietnamese refugees who escaped certain doom five decades ago.

"This is a huge milestone,"

said Dr. Pha Le, who escaped from Vietnam with his parents in 1982 and is currently a member of the museum's board of directors. "It is not only important to celebrate the heroism and humanitarian efforts, but also to recognize that Vietnamese refugees have had 50 years to transform themselves into Vietnamese Americans."

The goal for the ceremony is to tell a three-part story.

"In the first part of the story, we wish to tell the story of the USS Midway as an active duty

aircraft carrier," said Pha, who is also the chair of Midway's Diversity, Equity and Inclusion committee. "We will also tell a story of the Republic of South Vietnam. We will then retell the story of Operation Frequent Wind.

The celebration tickets are no longer available but you can watch the event on the USS Midway Museum live stream. Those attending include members of the Vietnamese-American community in Southern California, especially those rescued by Midway, as well as Vietnam War veterans and former crewmembers from the USS Midway who took part in Operation Frequent Wind.

"The Midway has hosted many Operation Frequent Wind events in the past, so naturally, it should observe this significant anniversary," said Stephanie Dinh, a Midway docent volunteer, who was evacuated to Midway with her family during Operation Frequent Wind when she was only 15 years old. "By holding an anniversary ceremony, the Midway is highlighting the contributions of the servicemembers deployed to Vietnam and the lives of the 3,000 Vietnamese refugees rescued by

Join the event virtually

Considered by many to be the 30 most dangerous hours on board the aircraft carrier USS Midway, Operation Frequent Wind was one of the largest rescue missions in U.S. history. Commemorate the 50th anniversary of Operation Frequent Wind and the Fall of the Republic of Vietnam -- a defining moment in history that led to the heroic rescue of thousands of Vietnamese refugees during the fall of Saigon in 1975.

Please join us virtually, and be a part of history from anywhere in the world, via our event live stream as tickets to the event are no longer available. Tune in for a powerful tribute honoring the lasting legacy of those impacted by this historic event. Sunday, April 27, 10am-3pm. Find the links to watch here: <https://www.midway.org/event/50th-anniversary-of-operation-frequent-wind>

Together, we will preserve these powerful legacies, inspire future generations, and celebrate the strength of our shared history.

You will also find interviews and historic videos on the USS Midway museum web site in the Midway's Operation Frequent Wind video library.

Don't miss this historic commemoration as we honor the past, celebrate the present, and inspire the future.

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