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SUPER DOG Coast Guard K9 Ani plays with her handler at Jones Beach State Park, N.Y., during the Four-Leaf Air Show, May 25, 2025. Photo by U.S. Coast Guard Petty Officer 2nd Class Sydney Phoenix

DOD Brain Health Initiative helps protect service members

by C. Todd Lopez, DoD News

The Defense Department's Warfighter Brain Health Initiative aims to identify changes in cognitive performance to provide an opportunity for interventions to restore deficits and enhance cognition or "thinking skills."

DOD's Cognitive Monitoring Program is charged with evaluating service members' cognition — how they acquire and process information — and monitoring how it changes throughout their careers. The program uses a computer-based assessment tool that evaluates 10 cognitive domains related to memory, attention, focus and judgment. The evaluation also includes a questionnaire about mood, sleep, post-traumatic stress disorder and traumatic brain injury symptoms.

The goal is to evaluate service members early in their careers to establish a cognitive baseline, with follow-up evaluations scheduled every five years, or more frequently, to enable proactive monitoring, facilitate accurate comparisons in case of injury, and support timely clinical interventions to optimize health, readiness and performance.

In June 2024, DOD started conducting cognitive assessments on every new service member during initial military training. To establish baselines for those already serving, DOD has begun conducting cognitive assessments for high-risk service

members. They will be completed by the end of September 2025. The total force is projected to have a cognitive baseline assessment completed by the end of fiscal year 2027.

Monitoring brain health is essential for service members, as exposure to blast overpressure can lead to brain injuries that impair critical cognitive and motor functions — including speed, dexterity, reasoning and decision-making — ultimately impacting operational effectiveness and long-term well-being.

"A lot of our human performance work is trying to help warfighters be faster and more lethal — more ready," said Kathy Lee, director of WBHI. "And that can be enhanced by having a faster reaction time or cognitively processing in a faster way, through repetition, sets and reps."

Lee said establishing a cognitive baseline for all service members and then evaluating them regularly can help catch changes early on. The assessment can also identify changes in cognition that may be unrelated to blast or even brain injury, allowing medical professionals to help service members address issues before they affect their warfighting ability.

"We really need to capture the baseline for each individual, and our concept for monitoring is that over the course of that service member's career, we're

see **Health, page 2**

USS TRIPOLI FORWARD DEPLOYS TO JAPAN

SAN DIEGO - America-class amphibious assault ship USS *Tripoli* (LHA 7) departed Naval Base San Diego late last month to forward deploy to Sasebo, Japan, as part of a scheduled rotation of forces in the Pacific.

Tripoli will replace amphibious assault ship USS *America* (LHA 6), which will depart Sasebo and move to San Diego.

"The *Tripoli* is ready to defend U.S. interests abroad and strengthen our long-standing partnership with Japan," said Capt. Eddie Park, commanding officer of *Tripoli*. "I am extremely proud to lead this hard-working and motivated team of Sailors and Marines overseas to support security, stability and prosperity in this vital region."

The forward presence of *Tripoli* supports the United States' commitment to the defense of Japan, enhances the national security of the U.S. and improves its ability to protect strategic interests. The security environment in the Indo-Pacific requires the most capable ships to enable rapid response times for mari-

time and joint forces.

"The U.S. has a vital relationship with Japan, and their hospitality and professionalism are unmatched," said *Tripoli*'s executive officer, Capt. Patrick Sullivan, whose previous assignment was deputy commander of Naval Surface Group Western Pacific in Sasebo. "I'm honored and excited to return as the XO of such a highly capable warship to honor our nation's security commitment to Japan."

San Diego has been *Tripoli*'s homeport since September 2020.

"This crew has been diligently preparing to forward deploy since last year," said Park.



USS *Tripoli*, shown here transiting San Diego Bay, May 19, on the way to its new homeport. U.S. Navy photo by MC1 Sara L. Eshleman

SecNav orders testing on dogs, cats stopped

Secretary of the Navy John Phelan recently issued a directive for the Navy to halt all testing on dogs and cats. Phelan terminated all Department of the Navy testing on cats and dogs, "saving taxpayer dollars and ending these inhumane studies," according to White Coat Waste, a bipartisan nonprofit organization and government watchdog. "This is long overdue," Phelan said in a posted video. "In addition to this termination, I'm directing the surgeon general of the Navy to conduct a comprehensive review of all medical research programs to ensure they align with ethical guidelines, scientific necessity, and our core values of integrity and readiness." Animal rights advocacy groups urged DoD to conduct a agency-wide audit aimed at rooting out waste, fraud and abuse in cruel and outdated animal experimentation.

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A Sailor with aircraft carrier *Harry S. Truman* gets an emotional welcome following an eight-month deployment. U.S. Navy photo by MC1 Justin E. Yarborough

USS *Truman* conducted largest airstrike in Navy history, official says

In a May 27 report in *Navy Times*, the Navy's Carrier Air Wing 1 engaged in the largest maritime strike in Navy aviation history in terms of bomb tonnage earlier this year, a defense official confirmed.

On Feb. 1, aircraft carrier *Harry S. Truman* launched 27 F/A-18 Super Hornets as part of a coordinated airstrike against Islamic State operatives in Somalia in collaboration with the federal government of Somalia, a defense official with knowledge of the strike said. The official spoke on the condition of anonymity to discuss the matter.

Sixteen aircraft dropped 124,000 pounds of ordnance on targets in less than two minutes.

"The joint airstrikes targeted senior ISIS-Somalia leadership in a series of cave complexes approximately 50 miles southeast of Bosaso," U.S. Africa Command said in a Feb. 11 statement. The command's current assessment is that approximately 14 ISIS-Somalia operatives were killed and no civilians were harmed." *Truman* recently returned to Norfolk, Va., after the eight month deployment.

<https://www.navytimes.com/news/your-navy/2025/05/27/uss-truman-conducted-largest-airstrike-in-navy-history-official-says/>

Health continued from page 1

going to be reassessing them to try and identify if they have a cognitive change for any reason," said Army Col. Jama VanHorne-Sealy, director of the Army's Occupational Health Directorate. She noted that a change in cognition may be caused by injury, but it could also result from other things, such as sleep deprivation or stress at home.



Marines fire a M224A1 mortar system during a training event at Camp Guernsey Joint Training Center, Wyo., April 9, 2025. Photo by U.S. Army Staff Sgt. Cesar Rivas

"This is going to give us the opportunity to identify cognitive change early and hopefully intervene so that we can get that individual back to their baseline and maintain their readiness for the Department of Defense consistently throughout their career," VanHorne-Sealy said.

Lee added that these tests do more than just serve a purpose later on. They can be used immediately because when a service member completes an assessment, the results can be measured against others in their peer group.

"When you take your first baseline, you are compared by gender and by a four-year age group in military norms ... so you can also pop out, if you will, of a norm

when you take that assessment," she said. "It'll also flag it and say, something looks off ... that it's not in alignment with the norms now. A retake or clinical evaluation

and long-term well-being.

The department is working to identify and track all at-risk populations affected by blast overpressure while prioritizing those at the highest risk. Rather than focusing on occupational specialties, the department is focused on assessing specific job tasks and actual exposure levels to accurately determine risk and inform targeted mitigation efforts. This data-driven approach ensures that risk management actions are based on measurable exposure, allowing for more precise protection strategies across all personnel who may be affected.

DOD developed the Blast Overpressure Reference and Information Guide as a key resource for establishing practical and feasible stand-off distances for service members operating priority weapons systems. By synthesizing data on the effects of blast overpressure, the guide provides evidence-based recommendations to mitigate risks associated with exposure to pressure waves from explosive weapons.

These stand-off distances help protect personnel while ensuring operational effectiveness, particularly for those in high-risk environments where repeated exposure may pose long-term brain health concerns. By leveraging this guide, military leaders can make informed decisions that balance mission requirements with protective measures, enhancing force readiness and safeguarding service members from the adverse effects of blast overpressure.

Additionally, the department is prioritizing the use of simulators to reduce blast exposure, recognizing their effectiveness in minimizing risks while maintaining combat readiness. By incorporating advanced training technologies, service members can refine their skills without repeated exposure to blast overpressure. The Marine Corps and the Ranger Regiment have already implemented these strategies, leveraging simulators to enhance training while reducing potential brain health impacts. This approach underscores the department's commitment to protecting personnel while sustaining operational effectiveness.

VanHorne-Sealy said redesigning weapons systems is another way to reduce or prevent exposures. "The special operations community actually redesigned a tool that will reshape that breaching blast wave away from the breachers themselves," she said. "So, we're trying to identify and engineering solutions to reduce that blast overpressure in any environment, not just the training environment."

Lee said the goal is for service members to avoid unnecessary blast exposures in order to keep them at peak performance, adding that cognitive monitoring is not just about assessments. Instead, it ensures that service members can process information, visually scan faster and make expedient decisions more quickly. All of that falls under the umbrella of the Warfighter Brain Health Initiative, with the goal of optimizing brain health on and off the battlefield.

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Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth delivers remarks at the 22nd Shangri-La Dialogue in Singapore, May 30, 2025. DoD photo by Petty Officer 1st Class Alexander Kubitza

Hegseth outlines U.S. vision for Indo-Pacific, addresses China threat

by Matthew Olay, DoD News

While delivering plenary remarks at a Singaporean security summit May 30, Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth outlined to numerous Asian ally countries DOD's vision for the Indo-Pacific region, while also addressing the strategic threat posed by China.

Speaking at the International Institute for Strategic Studies Shangri-La Dialogue, Hegseth began his remarks by underscoring the Defense Department's priorities of achieving peace through strength by focusing on restoring the warrior ethos, rebuilding the military and reestablishing deterrence.

The secretary then used the topic of deterrence — noting, specifically, that our allies around the world are beginning to invest more in their self-defense — to segue into speaking about the Indo-Pacific region.

“As our allies share the burden, we can increase our focus on the Indo-Pacific: our priority theater,” Hegseth said.

Stating the futures of the U.S. and its Indo-Pacific allies are “bound

together,” Hegseth said the security and prosperity of Americans are linked to the security and prosperity of U.S. ally countries' citizens.

“We share your vision of peace and stability, of prosperity and security and we are here to stay,” he said.

The future vision for the Indo-Pacific in one “grounded in common sense and national interests,” Hegseth said where the U.S. and its allies work together while respecting their mutual self-interests and engaging on the basis of sovereignty and commerce, as opposed to war.

The secretary pointed out, as President Donald J. Trump continues to lead European allies to step up in their self-defense, the U.S. can then focus more resources on the Indo-Pacific region.

“This enables all of us to benefit from the peace and stability that comes with a lasting and strong American presence here in the Indo-Pacific,” Hegseth said.

“These benefits, they only multiply when our allies and partners are

also strong,” he added.

Regarding American influence in the region, Hegseth said the U.S. isn't interested in the approach to foreign policy of the past.

“We are not here to pressure other countries to embrace and adopt our politics or ideology; we are not here to preach to you about climate change or cultural issues; [and] we are not here to impose our will on you. We are all sovereign nations,” Hegseth said, adding the U.S. seeks to work with its allies in areas where mutual interests align for peace and prosperity.

“On this sure foundation of mutual interests and common sense, we will build and strengthen our defense partnerships to preserve peace and increase prosperity,” he said.

Pivoting to the threat China poses to the region, Hegseth made clear the U.S. is not actively seeking conflict.

“We do not seek conflict with communist China ... But we will

not be pushed out of this critical region and we will not let our allies and partners be subordinated and intimidated” he said.

Noting China is “credibly preparing to use military force to alter the balance of power in the Indo-Pacific,” Hegseth said any attempt by China to conquer neighboring Taiwan would result in “devastating consequences” not just for the Indo-Pacific, but the entire world.

“There's no reason to sugarcoat it: the threat China poses is real, and it could be imminent,” Hegseth said adding while nobody truly knows what China might ultimately do, the U.S. and its allies must none the less be ready with “urgency and vigilance.”

While once again reiterating the U.S. seeks peace as opposed to war, Hegseth said the U.S. must also be prepared for armed conflict.

<https://www.defense.gov/News/News-Stories/Article/Article/4202504/>



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USNS Comfort departs Norfolk in support of Continuing Promise 2025

by LaShawn Sykes, USN Military Sealift Command

NORFOLK, Va. – The Navy Mercy-class hospital ship USNS *Comfort* (T-AH 20) departed here May 30 to begin its summer deployment to the U.S. Southern Command area of operation in support of U.S. Naval Forces Southern Command/U.S.4th Fleet's Continuing Promise 2025.

After several months of detailed planning, *Comfort* is on-track to conduct mission visits to Grenada, Panama, Colombia, Ecuador, Costa Rica, and the Dominican Republic.

"Continuing Promise has been conducted since 2007, with a mission to forge enduring partnerships by providing medical and humanitarian aid, thereby creating a lasting reputation for goodwill throughout the region," said Capt. Ryan Kendall, commodore, Destroyer Squadron 40, and mission commander of Continuing Promise.

The focus during each mission stop will be working alongside partner nation medical personnel to provide direct patient care and technical expertise in community clinics to improve medical readiness, strengthen partnerships, and enhance the combined capabilities of the U.S. Navy and partner nations to respond to public health disasters and humanitarian crises.

The Continuing Promise team also includes an Army veterinary element from the 248th Medical Detachment (Veterinary Service Support), which will collaborate with host nation colleagues to provide direct public health education and animal care at local veterinary organizations in-country. U.S. Navy Seabees from Navy Mobile Construction Battalion 11 will assist in host nation led community engineering projects.

U.S. Navy experts will host seminars and training exercises with host nation civilian officials and military professionals covering disaster preparedness and response. These exchanges aim to support host nation facilities, improve readiness, and empower local and national officials with the knowledge and experience to act with confidence during emergencies.

The U.S. Fleet Forces Band, "Uncharted Waters," will also support the Continuing Promise mission. The band will embark on USNS *Comfort* to conduct classes at community schools, collaborate with military and civilian musical organizations in partner nations, and entertain local communities with concerts at each mission stop. This cultural exchange aims to strengthen community ties and foster goodwill.

Capt. Stephen P. Arles, commander of *Comfort*, expressed excitement about working with the band and professional medical team. He added, "This is *Comfort's* eighth deployment supporting Continuing Promise. The team is eager to collaborate with partner nations, exchange knowledge, and aid those in need, strengthening the legacy of the Continuing Promise mission."

<https://www.navy.mil/Press-Office/News-Stories/display-news/Article/4202872/usns-comfort-departs-norfolk-in-support-of-continuing-promise-2025/>

First time ever Navy F-35Cs operate at Iwo To

by 1st Class Brian Reynolds, Commander Naval Forces Japan
IWO TO, Japan - Aircrew from the Navy's only forward deployed air wing completed another qualification milestone with Field Carrier Landing Practices (FCLPs) here from May 19-31.

FCLP is a required flight training for pilot qualification and proficiency that precedes aircraft carrier landing operations, ensuring warfighting readiness in support of regional security and stability in the U.S. Indo-Pacific region.

"[This is the training] that is required for Air Wing 5 air crews to get ready to go to sea," said Capt. William Fallon, assistant chief of staff for Commander, U.S. Naval Forces Japan/Navy Region Japan. "[There is a great] amount of effort in the practice and the professionalism that goes into learning how to do this. Carrier environment is very challenging to work in—whether it's daytime or nighttime.

"A large carrier suddenly feels very small when you do it, so it's incumbent on us to practice realistically as we found right here, which is the benefit of Iwo To. It's very dark at night, so it feels similar to our carrier environment."

The routine training is required for all pilots of fixed-wing aircraft assigned to Nimitz-class aircraft carrier USS *George Washington* (CVN 73). The types of aircraft that participate in FCLP are F-35C Lightning IIs, F/A-18E/F Super Hornets, EA-18G Growlers, and E-2D Hawkeyes.

FCLPs also provided valuable training to Air Wing 5's landing signal officers (LSO). LSOs, or "paddles" are naval aviators specifically trained to guide and ensure the safe recovery of aircraft aboard aircraft carriers.

"Today, specifically, the paddles are training on the manually oper-

ated visual landing aid system (MOVLAS)," said Lt. Cmdr. Tory West, an LSO attached to CVW-5. "The pilots have to respond to the MOVLAS system differently, so if the ship is moving differently, the pilots can adjust and land safely."

Although Iwo To offers an invaluable training opportunity for fixed-wing pilots and aircrew, it does come with its challenges. Iwo To is not suitable as a permanent FCLP site due to difficulty in maintaining its remote facilities and lack of optional airfields for use during inclement weather or other situations. The U.S. Government reserves the right to conduct FCLP at the alternate mainland facilities when required.

"One of the challenges of operating out of Iwo To is we don't have the ability to divert an aircraft somewhere else, if there is an emergency; if there is bad weather, or something happens in the air," Fallon said.

"So if there's a problem, we don't have any other place to land. If there is an issue on the field where as if we had an area to conduct FCLPs much closer to land, it would provide much bigger safety margins for us to operate and train."



RIFLES UP Marines assigned to the Marine Corps Silent Drill Platoon perform a double inspection sequence at the Cracker Barrel 400 at Nashville Superspeedway in Tennessee, June 1, 2025, during Marine Week Nashville 2025. The week celebrates the Marine Corps 250th birthday. U.S. Marine Corps photo by Lance Cpl. Judith Ann Lazaro

Secretary of Defense makes Navy flag officer announcement

Secretary of Defense Pete Hegseth announced June 3 that the president has nominated Navy Vice Adm. Frank M. Bradley for appointment to the grade of admiral, with assignment as commander, U.S. Special Operations Command, MacDill Air Force Base, Fla.

Bradley is currently serving as commander, Joint Special Operations Command/commander, Joint Special Operations Command Forward, U.S. Special Operations Command, Fort Bragg, N.C.



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DOD plans to reduce discretionary PCS budget by half over next 5 years

by C. Todd Lopez, DOD News

In a memorandum published Wednesday, the Defense Department directed the military departments to look at how their services could reduce their discretionary permanent change of station move budgets as a way to increase geographic stability to families, increase department efficiency and reduce costs for the department.

Earlier this month, a survey of military spouses cited PCS moves as one of the biggest reasons for dissatisfaction with military life.

“We understand how disruptive PCS moves can be,” said Tim Dill, who is performing the duties of the deputy undersecretary of defense for personnel and readiness. “There are many aspects to that challenge and that disruption. One of the biggest ones is military spouses’ employment — when they often have the need to find a new job at their gaining location and sometimes, they end up underemployed at that location.”

Following a PCS move, Dill said, families also need to find new homes, new schools for their children and rebuild a life.

“They’re displaced from the community of support that they’ve developed over the years in their previous duty station,” he said. “All of those concerns can be effectively addressed by examining when the department does not need to move a service member and their family to accomplish the mission.”

The department gave the military departments about four months to conduct a review of how they might go about reduc-



Photo courtesy of U.S. Army Recruiting Command

ing their PCS budgets, and how they also would modify career pathways for service members for whom some PCS moves are part of career development.

“The memo directs the military departments to spend 120 days reviewing their PCS budgets and to consider how they would pursue future reductions to those budgets and develop holistic and comprehensive implementation plans for those proposed changes,” Dill said.

THE MEMORANDUM ASKS MILITARY DEPARTMENTS TO PROPOSE A PLAN FOR REDUCING THEIR DISCRETIONARY PCS BUDGETS BY AS MUCH AS 50 PERCENT BY FISCAL YEAR 2030, BASED ON THEIR FISCAL YEAR 2026 BUDGET, DILL SAID. THIS MEANS SERVICE MEMBERS COULD BE ASKED TO MOVE FAR LESS OFTEN.

“There [are] certain functions where in order to continue on your career track, you must go obtain certain accreditation or additional training ... something that corresponds with your increase in rank,” Dill said, offering scenarios that might

qualify as a mandatory PCS like a career change that would require a move to a different duty station.

In other cases, he said, there are critical missions that must be fully manned, and moving a service member to fill a role there would also be mandatory.

But other moves might not need to happen, Dill said.

“We estimate that about 80% of [military department] PCS moves are in a discretionary category, and 20% are mandatory,” he said. “What we’re directing the [military] departments to do is purely to examine potential reductions in things that would be defined as discretionary. So, if they see as mandatory for mission need, we’re not even asking them to come back with a plan to reduce it. We want them to continue that course of action and do the mandatory moves.”

A big part of the direction from the secretary, Dill said, is that while reducing PCS moves and associated costs, the military departments must maintain mission readiness.

“[We] have issued direction to the departments to come back with plans for how they think they could best achieve those reductions while ensuring that they continue to prioritize the mission and the development of service members,” Dill said.

Considerations there, Dill said, include how moves, if they happen, can be done more efficiently and also how to provide service members with career-broadening and leadership opportunities that do not require PCS.

Right now, the department has directed the military departments to develop plans for their services to reduce their PCS budgets by half. But Dill said there will be ongoing discussions about what kind of cuts are appropriate for each military department.

“On top of being efficient from a fiscal perspective, the other goal of this policy, as a people-driven policy, is to ensure that this works well for service members and their families,” he said. “So that is one of our primary goals in the policy, to ensure it works well.”

Dill also said the DOD understands there needs to be discussions on how proposed cuts could negatively impact service members, their families and mission readiness. And when those concerns are expressed, the department will listen and adjust.

“We haven’t directed that any specific course of action must be implemented,” Dill said. “We look forward to having that conversation and figuring out how we can do this best.”

many assumptions about air and space power will need to change and evolve.

Continue reading on c DoD’s Newspaper, <https://www.defense.gov/News/News-Stories/Article/Article/4200888/>.

Pacific Fleet announces FY ‘24 Sailors of the Year: Velikic and Hopkins

by Chief Petty Officer Sean Weir

HONOLULU – Commander, Pacific Fleet, announced the FY 2024 Sailors of the Year late last month at the Ala Moana Hotel here.

HM1 Andrew Velikic was selected as the Sea SOY, and AM1 Joseph Hopkins was selected as the Shore SOY.

Adm. Steve Koehler, PACFLT commander, noted that “one of the main reasons I remain in the Navy is the opportunity to work with and be around our motivated Sailors. All of our SOY finalists embody Navy core values and set the Pacific Fleet standard of professionalism with their words and actions and these leaders daily make our Navy better.”

U.S. Pacific Fleet Master Chief Don Davis and board members shared their experience and encouragement with nominees. Many elements of the week centered around Adm. Koehler’s

Fleet Orders of Professionalism, Combat Readiness, Safety, Stewardship, and Teamwork.

“These Sailors are a true reflection of the Pacific Fleet’s excellence,” Davis said. “Their dedication was unmistakable, both in the way they carried themselves during the board and in their impressive packages submitted by their commands. This experience offered just a glimpse into the depth of their professionalism and commitment to service. Their stories are inspiring, and their leadership reaches far beyond their individual commands. They are leaders our Navy can be proud of. I am confident that they will continue to rise to every challenge placed before them.”

Velikic, representing 1st Medical Battalion, 1st Marine Logistics Group, and Hopkins, representing Strike Fighter Squadron (VFA) 125, will be meritoriously promoted to chief petty officer as part of their selection as the Sea and Shore Sailors of the Year.



The USS Midway Museum is currently recruiting for docents, air craft restoration, ship restoration and safety volunteers. These assignments are a regular commitment of at least 6 months.

Visit this page of our website to watch fun videos about our different teams and participants: <https://www.midway.org/give-join/volunteers/volunteer-opportunities/>

Air Force secretary tells academy grads Indo-Pacific will be ‘your generation’s fight’

by Matthew Olay

While delivering a commencement speech at the Air Force Academy, Air Force Secretary Troy E. Meink told the graduating cadets the U.S. Indo-Pacific region will be the primary focus of military conflict in the coming years.

“For the past 25 years, we have been focused on low-intensity conflict in the Middle East, but no longer,” Meink told some 900 soon-to-be commissioned officers, adding the focus has now shifted to defending the homeland and deterring China in the Indo-Pacom.

“The Indo-Pacific will be your generation’s fight, and you will deliver the most lethal force that this nation has ever [seen] — or we will not succeed,” Meink said.

Noting the Air Force is par-

ticipating in “the largest exercise since the Cold War” in the Indo-Pacom next month, Meink said the perceived threat in that region is “unlike anything we’ve ever faced,” and it is unlike the Cold War of the late 20th

century, the relatively peaceful 1990s and the Global War on Terror of the 2000s.

“Today’s competition with China is wide-ranging and it is unpredictable; there will be no sanctuaries,” Meink said, adding

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NSW ENHANCES DRUG TESTING TO PROTECT PERSONNEL, MAINTAIN ELITE READINESS

from Naval Special Warfare Command

SAN DIEGO - Ensuring the health and well-being of its personnel is critical to maintaining Naval Special Warfare's (NSW) position as the nation's premier maritime special operations force. Unauthorized use of performance-enhancing drugs (PEDs) during training and operations poses a serious threat, potentially leading to injury, death, and long-term health problems.

The death of a SEAL candidate during Basic Underwater Demolition/SEAL (BUD/S) training in 2022 prompted investigations and policy changes, including the implementation of random urinalysis testing for unauthorized PEDs across NSW.

This testing is designed to improve warfighting readiness by reducing the risks associated with PED misuse while ensuring legitimate medical conditions are addressed by qualified NSW medical staff.

Protecting the well-being of NSW operators and support personnel is paramount, and this testing program underscores that obligation.

Capt. James Mucciarone, NSW's force medical officer, said, "Preventing unauthorized performance enhancing drug use is fundamentally about

everyone in the NSW community. It also allows for better candidate selection and provides medical staff with greater visibility into Sailors' health, prescriptions,

health optimization. To date, over 20,000 urinalysis samples have been tested for more than 150 prohibited substances, providing valuable insights to medical personnel and serving as a deterrent against drug misuse.

"This isn't just about following rules; it's about taking care of our people. NSW's PEDs testing program shows our strong commitment to the health, safety, lethality, and warfighter readiness of everyone in the NSW community," said Ken Warburton, deputy chief of staff, Naval Special Warfare Command.

"We want our personnel operating at their very best, upholding the high standards we're known for, and we need to be clear: using unauthorized PEDs is both illegal and dangerous."



preserving the health, safety, and integrity of our teammates."

and potential impacts on training and operations.

The Force-Wide testing protocol is a proactive measure to demonstrate an unwavering commitment to the well-being and operational readiness of ev-

Since March 2023, NSW has aggressively educated its personnel on the rationale, policies, and procedures for PED testing, and provided resources for safe

Additional DoD units deploy to the Southern Border

from U.S. Northern Command Public Affairs

PETERSON SPACE FORCE BASE, Colo. - Approximately 1,115 service members were approved to deploy to the Southern Border late last month in support of U.S. Northern Command to provide enhanced sustainment, engineering, medical, and operational capabilities as part of the Department of Defense's continued whole-of-government approach to gain full operational control of the southern border.

Approved elements included approximately 65 Joint Individual Augmentees from the Army, Marine Corps, Navy, and Air Force will augment Joint Task Force-Southern Border headquarters and approximately 250 Soldiers from an Expeditionary Sustainment Command will coordinate logistics and manage sustainment requirements across the area of operations.

USNORTHCOM is DoD's operational lead for the employment of U.S. military forces to carry out President Trump's Executive Orders on protecting the territorial integrity of the United States. Joint Task Force-Southern Border operates under U.S. Northern Command to provide Department of Defense support to the Department of Homeland Security. The joint task force conducts integrated, multi-domain operations in coordination with federal, state, and local partners to detect, monitor, and deter unlawful activity throughout the southern border. For more information, visit northcom.mil/BorderSecurity.

First Augmented Reality Maintenance Systems operational on 5 ships

by Brian Varela

Sailors are a ship's first line of defense against system failures. But when the issue requires a subject matter expert, repairs have often had to wait until a technician could travel to the ship.

Enter ARMS, short for the Augmented Reality Maintenance System. ARMS enables sailors and Naval Surface Warfare Center, Port Hueneme Division (NSWC PHD) SMEs to instantly address system failures and eliminate the need for costly travel — and it's now installed aboard five Navy ships.

NSWC PHD's Augmented Reality Maintenance System (ARMS) team recently outfitted five ships in less than a week with the unique and fully operational remote viewing instruments.

The group installed the technology on destroyers USS *Curtis Wilbur*, USS *Lenah Sutcliffe Higbee*, USS *Gridley*, USS *Fitzgerald* and USS *Nimitz* aircraft carrier with support from Naval Air Systems Command (NAVAIR) and Naval Information Warfare Systems Command (NAVWAR). NSWC PHD electronics engineer Matthew Cole and computer scientist Nick Bernstein led the effort between March 22 and 26.

"Sailors are by trade operators and maintainers of their warships," said NSWC PHD Commanding Officer Capt. Tony Holmes. "It's never a matter of if, but when, systems aboard a ship will require some sort of troubleshooting and/or corrective maintenance to keep them operating. If outside help is required to resolve an issue, and that issue can be resolved by over-the-shoulder assistance via ARMS, that is a good thing."

This remote assistance not only empowers Sailors to fix problems quickly and keep their systems operating, he explained, it also saves time and money by averting the need for an SME to fly out to the ship for on board technical assistance.

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Maritime Expeditionary Security Group One changes command

by Lt.j.g. Erin McCullagh

Maritime Expeditionary Security Group One

IMPERIAL BEACH - Maritime Expeditionary Security Group (MESG) 1 welcomed its newest leader during a change-of-command ceremony at Naval Outlying Landing Field here May 30.

Capt. Jedediah Kloppel relieved Capt. Edward Bertucci in front of friends, family members, and MESG-1 personnel as part of a ceremony at the group's headquarters. Bertucci took command of MESG-1 in February 2024.

Under his leadership at MESG-1, Bertucci has overseen 26 units of action, deploying Sailors to Djibouti, United Arab Emirates, Guam, South Korea, Panama and Guam. Prioritizing readiness throughout his tenure, he continued the integration of the three sea services throughout the training and assessment process of MESG-1 units. Bertucci was the first commodore within Naval Expeditionary Combat Command (NECC) in years to have all eligible squadrons earn both the Blue 'H' and Green 'H' unit awards at the same time, lauding the units' medical and health readiness.

"MESG-1 is an amazing staff, powered by a group of amazing Sailors and Civilians," said Bertucci. "We man, train, equip, and support dozens of units of action, with over 2000 active and reserve component Sailors – all focused on protecting our most valuable naval assets. I am honored to have been a part of this organization."

Bertucci will be serving as commanding officer of the University of Wisconsin's Naval Reserve Officers Training Corps.

Kloppel was MESG-1's deputy commodore. He spoke to the guests and MESG-1 crew during his first address as commodore about the importance of their worldwide mission.

"I feel so lucky to be member of this command with such incredible people that make coming to work every day enjoyable," said Kloppel. "I'm excited for the opportunity to command a team with such grit and determination to get the job done and meet the demands asked of them while ensuring we support our units of action with everything they need to train, certify and deploy, active duty and reserve Sailors, Coast Guard and Marines, to be the pointing end of the spear and conduct operations all across the globe."

Osprey maintenance cycle time reduced by 24% at NAS North Island

by Michael A Furlano

Fleet Readiness Center Southwest

Fleet Readiness Center Southwest's (FRCSW) mission is to maintain the operational readiness of advanced aircraft like the CMV-22 Osprey. The command provides crucial support to the men and women of the Navy and Marine Corps allowing them to deliver the lethality necessary to defeat any foe.

Recently, the FRC Props team achieved a significant milestone by reducing the Planned Maintenance Interval (PMI) cycle for the CMV-22 from 264 days to under 200 days - a reduction of more than 24 percent. The accelerated maintenance timeline directly supports naval aviation readiness goals, ensuring the military have the reliable aircraft they require for success on the battlefield.

The Osprey is a complex tiltrotor aircraft combining the vertical takeoff and landing capabilities of a helicopter with the speed and range of a fixed wing plane. Its PMI cycle involves extensive inspection, repair, testing and refurbishment of critical systems including engines, rotors, avionics and airframe components.

The team managers laid out all phases/processes/etc. required and worked directly with the artisans performing the work to develop a new way to sequence events. Through this workflow analysis and process optimization effort, the FRCSW team identified and eliminated inefficiencies in multiple maintenance phases, setting the stage to achieve this milestone.

The analysis enabled the team to significantly shorten the PMI cycle without sacrificing the high standards required for safety and quality.

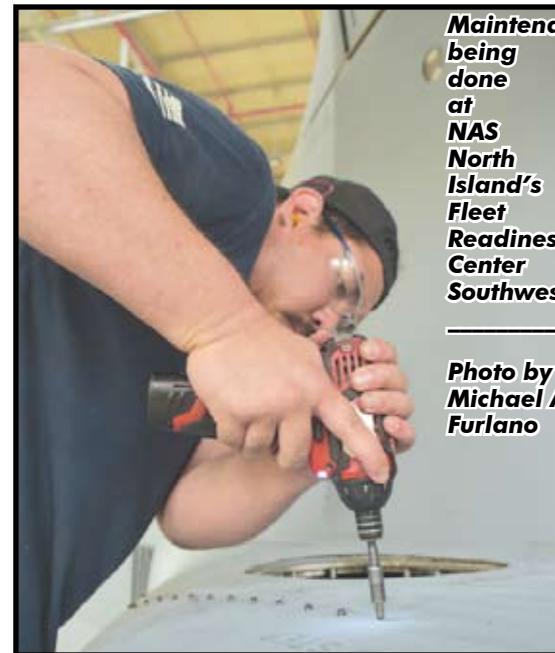
A key factor in the accelerated PMI cycle was working with outside entities to ensure any delays outside the commands purview would not prevent the team from reaching their goal.

The FRCSW team worked closely with external partners thus by proactively managing the entire repair cycle and improving communication throughout, the team avoided delays that had previously extended maintenance time-lines.

Reducing the CMV-22 PMI cycle from 264 to 200 days translates directly into more aircraft available for training, deployment and operational readiness. The CMV-22 plays a vital role in carrier onboard delivery and logistics support, making its availability essential for sustained naval operations.

This achievement reflects FRCSW's commitment to providing the Navy and Marine Corps with the mission capable aircraft they need. By accelerating maintenance cycles, the team ensures that sailors and marines have reliable, ready-to-fly tools to successfully execute their mission and maintain strategic advantage.

FRCSW will continue to innovate and refine maintenance processes for the CMV-22 and other fleet assets. The goal remains clear: to sustain and improve aircraft readiness so that naval aviation forces can remain agile, effective and prepared for the challenges of today and tomorrow.



Maintenance being done at NAS North Island's Fleet Readiness Center Southwest.

Photo by Michael A. Furlano

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Exercise Wavefront tests Sector San Diego readiness for complex threats

from U.S. Coast Guard District 11

SAN DIEGO - More than 50 Coast Guard personnel recently participated in a two-day, full-scale exercise designed to test Sector San Diego's readiness for complex threats to life and property in San Diego Bay.

The exercise, code-named "Wavefront," marked the culmination of months of planning by the Emergency Management Force Readiness Office, led by Lt. j.g. Sheryl Brock, emergency management specialist.

Twelve separate teams, distinguished by color-coded vests, gathered in the Sector San Diego helicopter hangar awaiting initial instructions. Once the initial "inject" was received,

THE EXERCISE, CODE-NAMED WAVEFRONT

teams moved swiftly to their designated tables to coordinate with other departments on response actions. Coaches circulated to provide guidance, while a team of evaluators observed and scored activities based on compliance with established expectations.

The scenario began with the inbound motor vessel Green Lake requiring a fixed security zone at the 10th Avenue Marine Terminal. What started as a routine operation quickly escalated into a series of simulated threats and distractions.

First, an unauthorized individual breached the terminal and was apprehended. Shortly after, a land-based peace protest began, coinciding with the arrival of a large cruise ship requesting an escort into the bay. Next, two personal watercraft were observed transiting at high speed from Tijuana. Finally, a group of 15 kayakers formed a blockade that delayed the safe passage of the motor vessel, Liberty, which had just completed a military outload.

The rapid succession of events kept response teams focused on risk assessment and adaptive decision-making throughout the exercise.

Even mock press briefings were held, led by Cmdr. Ellen Motoi, who served as incident commander for the drill.

"We have adversaries who would like to take unfriendly action against us, threatening the safety of people and property," said Motoi. "We must be prepared for every contingency and ensure our personnel have the equipment, resources and safety measures they need."

"This is truly a collaborative effort," she added. "No single department or agency can do it all."

By 10 a.m. on the second day, the exercise concluded. Capt. Patrick Dill addressed the participants, coaches and evaluators to express appreciation for their collective efforts. He gave special recognition to Brock for her leadership.

"We are required by policy to exercise 11 different contingency plans of various scopes each year, but the full-scale exercise is the most demanding," said Brock. "We met for months with each department to develop scenarios that would challenge our people—especially those working toward ICS qualifications. Today, everything fell into place, we achieved our key objectives, and I'm very pleased with the results."

Summer-2025

Fri, Jun 20, 2025 – Mon, Sep 22, 2025



Capt. Scott A. Carroll (left) was relieved by Capt. Janice A. Pollard as Assault Craft Unit Five (ACU 5) commander at Camp Pendleton. Courtesy photo

ACU 5 change of command

from Commander, Naval Surface Force

Capt. Scott A. Carroll was relieved by Capt. Janice A. Pollard as Assault Craft Unit Five commanding officer during a change of command ceremony at the ACU 5 compound at Camp Pendleton.

Carroll, a native of Cleveland, served as ACU 5's CO from November 2021 to May 2025, concluding both his tour and military service at the ceremony.

"Too many people to effectively thank here today after such a long tour at ACU 5 and after a 30-year career," said Carroll. "Words are insufficient to express the depth of my gratitude to everyone who helped along the way."

Naval Beach Group One Commodore Capt. Kelly J. Mahaffery presided over the ceremony.

"To the Sailors at ACU 5, your leadership, teamwork, and sacrifice are what make ACU 5 exceptional. As we stand on the threshold of a new era, I have every confidence that the Swift Intruders will rise to the occasion, the legacy that you have built will not only carry forward but continue to evolve and ensure that ACU 5 will be ready at a moment's notice and remain at the cornerstone of amphibious operation," said Mahaffery.

Carroll retired after a distinguished career marked by unwavering dedication, operational excellence, and strategic leadership in service to the Navy. Commissioned in 1995 through the Naval Reserve Officers Training Corps program, he served with distinction across the globe, with deployments throughout the Asia-Pacific region, the Middle East, and Latin America. His legacy is defined by a relentless pursuit of excellence, strategic foresight, and an enduring commitment to the Navy and its mission.

"As I go ashore for the last time, I will forever stand a little taller, I will always remember that I was a Sailor once, and I was a part of the Navy...and the Navy will always be a part of me," said Carroll.

Pollard assumed command following her role as the Assistant Chief of Staff of Training and Assessments at Carrier Strike Group Fifteen.

"I want to thank Capt. Carroll for his 30 years of exemplary naval service," said Pollard. "He left behind a legacy of mentorship, leadership, and unwavering commitment to the Navy, and his impact on ACU 5 and his Sailors is immeasurable. To ACU 5, I am truly honored and excited to be your Commanding Officer. Together, we will meet the challenges ahead and know we will continue to demonstrate what it means to be the best of the best. There's no beach out of reach!"

Pollard, a native of Houston, graduated from San Diego State University in 2001 and was commissioned through NROTC. She holds advanced degrees from the Naval War College and West Texas A&M University.

ACU 5 is one of three Landing Craft, Air Cushion (LCAC) commands in the Navy.



LOS ANGELES (May 26, 2025) Coast Guard Petty Officer Second Class Samuel Monahan, an aviation maintenance technician from Air Station Ventura in California, trains with a boat crew from Sector Los Angeles-Long Beach outside Los Angeles Harbor. Monahan practiced lowering a basket from an MH-60T Jayhawk helicopter onto a 45-foot response boat-medium that was in three-to-four-foot seas. U.S. Coast Guard photo by Petty Officer First Class J.J. Huggins



USS NIMITZ, at sea (May 27, 2025) E/A-18G Growlers from the "Cougars" of Electronic Attack Squadron (VAQ) 139 fly near aircraft carrier USS Nimitz (CVN 68) in the South China Sea. Nimitz is underway in the U.S. 7th Fleet area of operations on a scheduled deployment, demonstrating the U.S. Navy's unwavering commitment to a free and open Indo-Pacific. U.S. Navy photo by MC2 Hannah Kantner



LOS ANGELES (May 26, 2025) San Diego-based USS Harpers Ferry prepares to depart Los Angeles at the conclusion of Fleet Week. Los Angeles Fleet Week is a sea service celebration that allows residents to witness today's maritime capabilities firsthand. U.S. Marine Corps photo by Lance Cpl. Avery Wayland

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The Meat & Potatoes of Life



by
Lisa
Smith
Molinari

When I was a kid, anyone over thirty was “old.”

This week, I turned 59, so I guess by my own standards, I’m downright ancient. Fifty-nine isn’t much older than 58, but according to the “round up” rule my teachers taught me at East Pike Elementary, for all intents and purposes, I’m actually 60. Yikkes.

I’ve never been particularly stressed about aging, but reaching 59 (well, 60) has presented me with a troubling dilemma.

Somewhere in the latter half of one’s life is a fine line. A threshold, if you will, across which, there is no turning back. A precipice from which one inadvertently steps off into that vast chasm known as “Old Age.”

Have you ever been at a stop light, and glanced over at the car next to you to see an elderly woman in a large sedan with her seat fully forward and a death grip on the steering wheel, wearing an enormous pair of wrap-around sunglasses?

Have you ever been in a buffet line, and as the older gentleman ahead of you scoops the cottage cheese, you notice he has on elastic-waisted polyester pants hiked well above his waistline, likely ordered in multiple colors from an ad in the back of Parade Magazine?

Have you ever scanned the

The threshold of old

sunbathers at the community pool and noticed older women wearing skirted bathing suits that cover their crepey thighs and sensible sandals that won’t bother their knobby toes? And, on those occasions, did you think to yourself, “I’ll never be like that.”

But the Old Timers we see in our everyday lives didn’t raise a white flag and surrender to Old Age. They sauntered unsuspectingly over life’s invisible threshold without a care in the world, completely unaware that Old Age was creeping up on them like the Delta Force. Before they knew it, they were seized. No longer able to identify fashion and lifestyle trends, Old Timers find that their main objective is comfort, and who could begrudge them that?

Now that I am practically 60, I’m scared that Old Age might happen to me before I’m ready. I still dream of future travel adventures, transformative self-discoveries, and personal physical achievements. I’m not ready to throw in the towel just yet.

But what if I’ve already stepped off the precipice without knowing it?

Recently, I needed a pair of new sneakers, but I refused to order Hokas for the mere fact that all my older friends swear by them. “They’re so comfortable!” they tell me, a sure sign of Old Age. In denial of my arthritic joints, I stubbornly insisted on finding “cool” sneakers. I tried on at least a dozen pairs but was unable to find shoes with a stiff enough arch, a wide enough toe box, and enough ankle support to not set off my bad knee, my arthritic lower back, and my achey bunions. I

realized that Hokas, like aging, may be unavoidable.

I’ve also taken to drinking a microwaved cup of coffee each day around four-o’clock. I often comment that the house feels chilly. I watch Court TV. I can name the birds that perch on our bird feeder. I suddenly have the urge to play Mahjong.

Uh oh.

Should I give up and embrace aging? Stock up on Glucosamine? Don wrap around shades? Appreciate well-cooked vegetables? Ensnore myself in granny squares? Take up Spider Solitaire? Or, should I resist the inevitable advancement of time with all my might? Cram myself into trendy jeans? Bone up on hip hop? Inject my face with fillers? Develop a taste for seaweed? Take surfing lessons?

Probably not a good idea, and besides, my children would be traumatized from embarrassment. I suspect that the key to aging gracefully is to accept that it will happen without me realizing it.

Regardless, I will pray that God grants me the Serenity to accept that while I may not be a geezer, I’m certainly no spring chicken anymore. The Courage to resist the urge to order \$19.99 poly-blend slacks from the weekly newspaper insert, instead of buying a decent pair of Levis at the PX. And the Wisdom to know the difference between all-you-can-eat tapioca pudding and good crème brulee.

Amen.

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AutoMatters™ & More



by Jan Wagner

Being slow can be a good thing. In fact, some creatures’ very survival in the wild depends on it.

“Survival of the Slowest” is the newest exhibit at the Fleet Science Center. It features live animals housed inside 19 temperature- and humidity-regulated, natural habitats. The animals include Maple the sloth, Casper the albino iguana and Aphrodite the boa constrictor. Several of the animals are brought out daily, for interactive presentations led by wildlife educators who travel with the exhibit, care for the animals, discuss their adaptations and survival strategies for slowness, answer questions about them and even help you take selfies with the animals. All of the exhibit’s animals are rescues.

On the day that I visited, we were introduced to a Black Rat Snake — one of the most active and social animals in the exhibit. These can usually be found up and down the eastern side of the United States and Canada. They are related to Garter Snakes.

Their coloration is great for camouflage. If you look inside their enclosure, you will see foliage, rocks and other things that the snake can hide under. In the wild they hide from predators, such as birds and larger animals.

Black Rat Snakes can grow in length from three to eight feet. They feel the most comfortable when they coil the bottom half of their body around something — for example,

Survival of the Slowest - now at The Fleet Science Center

around an arm of the wildlife educator who introduced us to her.

One of their adaptations for self-protection is called musking, in which they can release a very unpleasant, foul odor if they feel threatened.

Even though they are not Rattlesnakes, they too can use their tail to create a rattling sound to scare off predators. Since they do not actually have rattles in their tail, they rapidly strike their tail against something solid, like a tree.

Black Rat Snakes are carnivorous. Their prey includes smaller rats (more nutritious than mice), as well as squirrels, mice, chipmunks, birds (sometimes quail or chicks) and amphibians.

Black Rat Snakes are non-venomous constrictors. If they find a rat, they would bite it on the face, wrap their body around it and squeeze. They do not squeeze until their prey is dead. Rather, they hold the rat by the face to induce fear and panic, causing a heart attack. They continue to squeeze until they feel no movement. Then they swallow their prey whole. To save energy, that can take anywhere from a few seconds to a few minutes.

They have a few ways to get the prey into their body. They use their body to push one end of the food into their mouth. They may also use items around them, such as rocks and branches, to help push the food in. They can also use gravity, whereby they sit with their head up and use gravity to pull down the food through their body. Sometimes when they eat you may see a little lump travel down their body. That is the food going all the way to the snake’s stomach, to be digested. Their stomach is a little way past midway down.

At the exhibit, they do “frozen

thawed feedings,” as opposed to feeding with live food — for ethical reasons. Also, if the snake was not hungry when they left a live rat in the snake’s enclosure, the rat might get defensive and actually hurt or kill the snake, since they have very sharp teeth which can bite through skin, muscle and bone.

Black Rat Snakes do not have to eat every day, which is a helpful adaptation because in the wild they may not find food very often. They can go for months without eating. The snakes in this exhibit eat once every other week.

Their life span is approximately 10-15 years, depending upon the circumstances of their environment. When the weather turns very cold, their metabolism slows down and they enter a state called brumation, which is similar to hibernation but not a deep sleep.

How often they shed their skin depends upon their rate of growth. Younger Black Rat Snakes might shed once every other month, whereas older, slower-growing snakes might only shed a few times per year.

“Survival of the Slowest” is included with your admission, and will be at the Fleet Science Center until September 1, 2025. For more information, visit: <https://www.fleetscience.org/experiences/survival-slowest>.

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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Veterans News

Medal of Honor spotlight: Army Tech. Sgt. Yeiki Kobashigawa

by Katie Lange, DOD News

When Army Tech. Sgt. Yeiki Kobashigawa encountered enemy machine gun nests in Italy during World War II, he didn’t shy away. Instead, he pushed the attack with a fearlessness that helped the Allies take the country back from the Nazis. Nearly half a century later, he received a belated Medal of Honor for his actions.

Kobashigawa was born Sept. 28, 1917, in Hilo, Hawaii, to Japanese immigrants Shintsu and Kame Kobashigawa. After a few years, his family moved to Wai’anae on the island of Oahu, where he and his eight siblings grew up.

When Kobashigawa was 12 or 13, his father became sick, so he dropped out of school to support his family. The young man worked on a sugar plantation as a laborer. He also enjoyed baseball and played in local leagues in his spare time.

In November 1941, Kobashigawa was drafted into the Army and assigned to the 298th Infantry Regiment of the Hawaiian National Guard.

Weeks later, Pearl Harbor was attacked. Kobashigawa was at home on leave and preparing for a baseball game when alarms sounded on the island. He quickly



Army Tech. Sgt. Yeiki Kobashigawa smiles while wearing his combat uniform circa World War II. Courtesy Photo

caught a ride to Schofield Barracks to prepare for war, but shortly after arriving at the post, Kobashigawa said his rifle was taken from him.

Because the Japanese were the perpetrators of the attack that

launched the U.S. into World War II, Americans were fearful of Japanese Americans, known as nisei. As a result, they were barred from military service. Those in Hawaii who were already serving, including Kobashigawa, were taken out of integrated units and moved into the segregated Hawaiian Provisional Infantry Battalion.

By mid-1942, the Army moved the battalion to the mainland and redesignated it as the 100th Infantry Battalion. The 100th, along with the newly created 442nd Regimental Combat Team, were segregated units for nisei who wanted to prove their allegiance to America.

In August 1943, the 100th was deployed to North Africa. A month later, they moved into Italy, attached to the 34th Infantry Division.

During the unit’s march toward Rome, Kobashigawa was wounded several times, according to the National World War II Museum. But he truly distinguished himself on June 2, 1944, near Lanuvio, Italy.

During an attack that day, Ko-

bashigawa and his unit, Company B, encountered strong enemy resistance from a series of enemy machine guns.

After spotting one of the machine gun nests about 50 yards away, Kobashigawa crawled forward, threw a grenade and then charged the enemy position with his submachine gun, all while a fellow soldier provided cover fire for him. Kobashigawa killed one enemy soldier and captured two others.

Soon, the pair was being fired upon by another machine gun nest about 50 yards further away. Kobashigawa quickly directed the rest of his squad to move to their current position. He then moved forward again to subdue that second enemy position.

After throwing grenades at the second nest, Kobashigawa stayed back this time to provide the cover fire for his comrade, who charged the position and took four enemy soldiers prisoner.

Kobashigawa soon discovered four more enemy machine gun nests and led a squad to neutralize two of them.

The 100th became one of the most decorated units of World War II; however, in the years after the war, only one nisei soldier received the Medal of Honor: Pfc. Sadao Munemori, who died in battle. Kobashigawa instead received the Distinguished Service Cross, the nation’s second highest military award for valor.

When the war ended, Kobashigawa returned to Hawaii and worked as a maintenance mechanic for Hawaiian Cement. He married a woman named Haruko Miyashiro and had two sons, Merle and Floyd, and a daughter, Jill.

According to Kobashigawa’s obituary in the Honolulu Star-Advertiser, he rarely spoke about the war, to the point that his children didn’t even know of his Distinguished Service Cross until the 1980s. The newspaper said his son, Merle, found out about it when his daughter went on a field trip to Washington, and stumbled on her grandfather’s name on a display.

In the 1990s, legislation sponsored by a Hawaiian senator led to an official review of the many

Distinguished Service Crosses received by Japanese Americans for their heroics in the 1940s, despite the discrimination they faced at the time. The yearslong review resulted in the military upgrading 19 of the 52 Distinguished Service Crosses to Medals of Honor, as well as one Silver Star.

Seven members of the 100th and several more nisei soldiers received that honor on June 21, 2000. Kobashigawa was one of only a handful of men still alive to receive it in person from President Bill Clinton during a White House ceremony.

Merle Kobashigawa said his father actually had to be talked into going to the ceremony; the elder Kobashigawa initially told the Army to “put the medal in the mail,” the son told newspapers at the time.

Kobashigawa died March 31, 2005, in his hometown of Wai’anae. He is buried at the National Memorial Cemetery of the Pacific in Honolulu.

Kobashigawa’s Medal of Honor is on display at the National World War II Museum in New Orleans.

CLASSIFIED ADS

SOCIAL SECURITY MATTERS

Can my wife and I get spouse benefits from each other?

Dear Rusty: My wife and I are currently collecting Social Security. We both started receiving SS at 62 years old. That said, we get by on a tight budget. A retired friend told us about an option which allows a spouse to collect half (1/2) of the other spouse's SS monthly income. My question has two parts: 1. Can we both collect on each other's SS? And 2. Are there any pitfalls? Signed: Seeking an Increase

Dear Seeking: Well, I'm afraid spousal benefits aren't quite that simple. One spouse may be eligible for additional benefits from the other, but only if that spouse's personal Social Security retirement benefit at their full retirement age (FRA) is less than half (50%) of the other spouse's FRA entitlement. Note that for spouse benefits, FRA amounts are used regardless of when you actually claim benefits. Full retirement age for both you and your wife is 66, so that means that if you both claimed at 62 your FRA entitlements were higher – about 25% more – than you are both currently receiving.

Since you applied for benefits some time ago at about the same age, one way to estimate if one of you may be entitled to an additional amount as a spouse is to evaluate your current monthly amounts. If either of you are getting a benefit which is less than half of the other's amount, it's possible that the one with the lower benefit may be entitled to more as a spouse. And note, only one spouse is eligible for benefits – you cannot both get spouse benefits from each other.

Another way to explore this is for the spouse with the lowest monthly Social Security benefit to contact Social Security at 1.800.772.1213 to ask if spouse benefits are available. Noting that contacting SS these days can be a time-consuming process, yet another way is for you to provide us (the AMAC Foundation's SS Advisory Service) with both of your current monthly SS benefit amounts (before any deductions) and the exact ages when each of you claimed. Using that information, we can do the math to see if either of you might be entitled to more as a spouse. But, in the end, only the spouse with the lower benefit may be eligible, and then, only if their FRA entitlement (not their actual current amount) is less than 50% of the other spouse's FRA entitlement.

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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. <http://www.veteranmuseum.org/>

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 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

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 for children 3 & under and Active Duty military including reservists (w/valid ID). Adult \$39 (ages 13+). Youth \$26 (ages 4-12). Veterans (w/ID) \$26*Must show ID at entrance. Open daily 10-5, last admission 4pm. <https://www.midway.org/>

The Ranch House Complex at Camp Pendleton. Listed as the Santa Margarita Ranch House Nat'l Historic Site and as a California State Historical Landmark. Docent-led tours are available by appointment; masks required. Please email your request to: MCBCAMPEN_history@usmc.mil or phone (760)725-5758 The Camp Pendleton Historical Society is a 501(c)3 organization in support of the base's History and Museum's programs. Go to: www.camppendletonhistoricalsociety.org/ for information. Hours: Open daily 10am-5pm • Last admission at 4pm

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

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Rabbits: RHDV2

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**Additional \$65 fee if outside our service area for microchips and vaccine services is waived through 12/31/25

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License fees for altered dogs: License fees for unaltered dogs:

\$20 / one year

\$60 / one year

\$35 / two years

\$100 / two years

\$50 / three years

\$150 / three years

If you are late with your license renewal there is a \$25 late fee.

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- Rabies
- Dogs: DAPP
- Bordetella
- Cats: FVRCP
- Rabbits: RHDV2

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Spotting borderline personality disorder: Early signs may lead to better treatment

newsinhealth.nih.gov

We all have trouble from time to time managing strong feelings or relationships. But for people with borderline personality disorder (BPD), these are a constant struggle. They cause a lot of distress and can often lead to self-harm and suicidal thoughts. Experts are trying to identify who's at risk for developing BPD early in life, in the hopes of more effective treatment.

"Historically, borderline personality disorder has been viewed as an adult disorder that just appears when someone's 18," says Dr. Diana Whalen, a psychiatry professor at Washington University in St. Louis. "But we know that can't possibly be the case. We know that there are developmental risks or red flags that come well before someone is 18."

Adults with BPD tend to be impulsive. They have frequent changes in their moods and feelings. They struggle to control their emotions. Such challenges can affect how they feel about themselves. They can also affect their relationships with others.

Whalen's team has been studying symptoms in young kids who are at risk for developing BPD. They've found that kids who hide feelings of sadness are more likely to show symptoms of BPD later on. So are kids who have trouble understanding and talking about their emotions. Not



wanting friends to have other friends and being more sensitive to social rejection are also early risk factors.

"Everyone should feel some level of rejection if you're excluded from something, and that's normal," Whalen explains. "But kids at risk for BPD feel rejected for longer. They also feel rejected in instances that other people may not—like if somebody didn't say hi to them in the hallway at school. They have a hard time not thinking about it. Other kids might ignore that or just move along."

Whalen's team is studying whether social media worsens this effect. "We're trying to figure out: 'Does the online context make that worse because it's always there?'" she explains. "In person, interactions start and stop at very specific times."

Treatments are available to help people diagnosed with BPD. One therapy, called dialectical behavior therapy, can help build emotional and social skills to improve day-to-day life. Some medications have also been shown to help reduce symptoms. A mental health professional can help you find what works best for you.

"We're researching early signs of BPD because we want to try to reduce the suffering of those who have it, and learn how can we intervene sooner," Whalen says. "Adults who have BPD tell us things like, 'I've been suicidal

my whole life' or 'I've never had a friend.'"

If you're concerned that your child is struggling with friendships and managing their feelings, talk with a mental health professional, Whalen advises. They can help create a treatment plan.

"We don't recognize BPD yet as a disorder that can fully emerge in childhood," Whalen says. "But there are risk factors at a young age, and if you're really seeing this at age 8, don't be afraid to mention it to your clinician."



Symptoms of BPD

Not everyone with BPD experiences all of these symptoms. The severity, frequency, and duration depend on the person and their illness.

- Intense mood swings.
- Uncertainty about how they see themselves.
- Feelings for others that change quickly, and swing from extreme closeness to extreme dislike.
- Viewing things in extremes, such as all good or all bad.
- Interests and values changing quickly.
- Acting impulsively or recklessly.
- Plunging headfirst into relationships or ending them just as quickly.
- A pattern of intense and unstable relationships with family, friends, and loved ones.
- A distorted and unstable self-image or sense of self.
- Recurring thoughts of suicidal behaviors or threats. If you or someone you know is thinking about hurting themselves, call or text 988 or visit 988lifeline.org

Dr. Leonard Epstein on family-based obesity treatment

newsinhealth.nih.gov

Excerpts from a National Institutes of Health (part of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services) conversation with Dr. Leonard Epstein, a psychologist who specializes in health behavior change at the University at Buffalo.

NIHNIH: Why are family-based treatments important?

Epstein: Obesity occurs within families, across generations. I believe the most effective treatment involves simultaneously targeting the parent and child for behavior change and weight loss. This has benefits for both the child and parent, with a strong correlation between child and parent (and sibling) weight change. This approach is also more cost-effective than treating the child and parent separately by different health care professionals.

A pediatrician can tell the parent, 'don't bring in junk food' or 'make sure your kid is not eating it,' but if the parent is not changing, it's going to be very difficult for the child. If the parent tells the child 'don't eat this ice cream,' and they're eating a chocolate bar, the

kid is not going to follow.

Our family-based treatment program is based on kids mastering certain skills, like their ability to self-monitor their dietary intake and their activity levels, and to set goals and meet goals. There are also parenting goals: Praising the child for healthy eating. Praising the child for being more active. We do not want the parent to be the food police.

Policing is when a parent asks, "Did you eat that food? Did you do this today? I saw you eat an ice cream cone. Why did you do that?" That kind of parenting in the long run doesn't work—we've demonstrated that in other studies.

As opposed to having only healthy food around, and when the child chooses a healthy food because all the food's healthy, then the parent praises them. Then the child feels empowered because now they're making a positive choice. The parent is happy. The child is happy because the parent is happy. It strengthens the parent child bond, and it strengthens the positive behavior.

NIHNIH: What are some of the challenges for preventing child-

hood obesity?

Epstein: We know that kids get heavier throughout childhood. As kids grow, they eat more food. When kids are really young, they don't have any forward thinking at all. It's all immediate gratification. But as they get older, they develop more of an ability to understand that maybe I shouldn't do something now, but I should wait for the better, later benefit.

All prevention is based on engaging in a behavior now for future benefits. Kids are developing that skill throughout their life. It doesn't fully mature until the early 20s. Food is automatically reinforcing. You eat a donut or something sweet, and you feel good right away. Exercise that kids do on the playground is also highly reinforcing. It's a lot of fun. But when you start getting into sports and higher level things, you have to work at it. Oftentimes, it's not fun in the beginning until you get a certain level of skill. Then it becomes fun.

So you have these foods that are immediately reinforcing for everybody. Then you have these activities that are not immediately reinforcing.

It's so easy to make a choice of being sedentary versus active—watching TV versus going for a walk. And our environments are set up now to prompt people to be sedentary for people who are not physically active.

If you took two people who were both the same size and you had them go for a walk, the person who's a regular exerciser would say, 'Wow, that was fun.' But the person who isn't an exerciser would say, 'Oh, that hurt my legs. And, oh, I'm so tired.' You have to develop tolerance to the unpleasant aspects of exercise in order for the pleasant aspects to shine through.

NIHNIH: How do you get kids to be more physically active?

Epstein: The best predictor of kids' activity is parental activity. It's easy for kids to be sedentary if their whole lifestyle, everything they see is inactive. Finding things kids like and being physically active with them—going on bike rides together, going on walks together, all that stuff—will help. And so will having peers who also are physically active. Kids tend to end up with peer groups that are pretty much like themselves.

OUT & ABOUT

Santee Summer Concert Series, June 12-August 14. Community of Santee Summer concerts and weekly Food Truck Rally every Thursday throughout the summer. www.cityofsanteeca.gov/our-community/city-special-events

Navy Band Southwest Flag Day Concert, Friday, June 13, 1-2pm. Free. Celebrate the spirit of Old Glory a day early with an uplifting afternoon of music as the Coronado Public Library (640 Orange Avenue, Coronado, 92118) proudly hosts the Woodwind Quartet of Navy Band Southwest. Bring a friend, wear your red-white-and-blue, and help us strike up the band as we salute Flag Day together.

San Diego Greek Festival, June 14-15. Live bands perform traditional and contemporary Greek music, youth dance troupes in folk costumes, delicious Greek food, imported beer and wine, pastires, etc. www.sdgreekfestival.com

Balboa Park Twilight Concerts, June 17-August 28. For more than 39 years, Twilight's live music under the stars at Spreckles Organ Pavilion has been delighting visitors. Performances every Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday. <https://balboapark.org/twilight-concerts/>

SD International Boat Show, June 19-22. Celebration of all things nautical. www.sdibs.com

Annual Switchfoot BRO-AM, June 21, 7am-5pm at Moonlight Beach, Encinitas. Dedicated to giving back to the community for over a decade. Join 15,000+ beach lovers for a free, all ages, family friendly, community giving event. Enjoy a whole day of surf contests, live concerts on the beach with Grammy award-winning rock band Switchfoot, delicious food and drinks, vendor booths, green initiatives, and more. www.broam.org

Oceanside Juneteenth Celebration, June 21, 10am-5pm, Pier View Way & Freeman Street. Please join us in celebrating the 157th year of liberation and emancipation. Highlights of this year's event promote the importance of education, contributions, and achievement. Featuring performances, kids' zone, educational and community info outreach, free health screenings, vaccine station, local artists and musicians, and food/beverage vendors. www.oceansidechamber.com

Smooth Jazz Festival, June 21-22. Soothing sounds of smooth jazz, delicious food and amazing atmosphere creates unparalleled experience. www.sandiegosmoothjazzfestival.com

Scoop Ice Cream Festival, June 22. Featuring ice cream and gelato vendors. Benefits non-profits supporting under-served San Diego communities. www.scoopsandiego.org

OB Street Fair and Chili Cook-Off, June 28. Oceanfront chili cook-off, live stages with continuous live music and entertainment, a community mural project, artists alley, carnival rides and games, food and vendor gooths, beach-side beer garden and more! www.oceanbeachsandiego.com

SD County Fair Summer 'Pet-Tacular' coming June 11-July 6

Established in 1880, the San Diego County Fair now welcomes nearly one million guests each summer, making it the county's largest and longest-running annual event. The 2025 Fair will open June 11 through July 6, closed Mondays and Tuesdays, for a 20-day season. This year's theme celebrates pets and pet ownership—"Summer Pet-tacular!" The fair is cashless so bring a credit or debit card. There are cash to credit card machines available for a fee. Save money on admission by purchasing tickets in advance online. For more information, visit sdfair.com

This year's Fair will once again feature festivals each weekend that bring rich cultural, musical and social information and entertainment to fairgoers through dance, music, and more. Here is the full schedule of festivals:

- June 14: Asian Pacific Islander (Paddock)
- June 21: Native American Heritage Day (Arena)
- June 21: Out at the Fair (Paddock)
- June 28: Gospel Music Day at the Fair (Paddock)
- July 5: K-Pop Festival (Paddock)
- July 5: Bluegrass Music Day at the Fair (Avenue)

Concerts at the Fair

Jun 11 : Live and Collective Soul	Jun 22 : The Evolution Of Pop
Jun 11 : Ozomatli	Jun 25 : Chelsea Cutler and Quinn XCII
Jun 12 : Foreigner	Jun 25 : The Long Run
Jun 12 : Strait Country	Jun 26 : Yeah Yeah Yeahs
Jun 13 : Maxwell	Jun 26 : Jared Rogerson
Jun 13 : Jesse Royal	Jun 27 : Jon Pardi
Jun 14 : Zedd	Jun 27 : The Expendables
Jun 14 : 9 to the 9th	Jun 28 : Jessie Murph
Jun 14 : 24K Magic	Jun 28 : Forever Ray
Jun 15 : Los Tigres Del Norte	Jun 29 : Banda El Recodo
Jun 15 : Sure Fire Soul Ensemble	Jun 29 : Dead Man's Party
Jun 18 : Jordan Davis	Jul 2 : Third Eye Blind
Jun 18 : That Arena Rock Show	Jul 2 : Michael Minelli
Jun 19 : Xscape	Jul 3 : The Como La Flor Band
Jun 19 : No Duh	Jul 5 : Ziggy Marley
Jun 20 : 2 Chainz and Lil John	Jul 5 : Long Beach Dub Allstars
Jun 20 : Jake Shimabukuro	Jul 6 : Los Tucanes De Tijuana
Jun 21 : Sammy Johnson	Jul 6 : Devotional
Jun 21 : Matthew Phillips	
Jun 22 : Banda MS	

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 (760) 286-8880
 Open 7 days a week 10am-8pm

AMVETS is a 501c3 non-profit organization that generates revenue for our mission to help the American veteran community. Every purchase made in our store gives AMVETS the ability to positively impact a veteran that needs support in our community!



Your Local USO Wants You!

Volunteers are our greatest asset and the backbone of the USO. Whether helping a Sailor or Marine with a connecting flight, distributing a Care Package, serving snacks with a smile, providing local information, or “welcoming home” ships and troops from deployment, volunteers are vital to the success of the USO’s mission.

While the duties of a volunteer may vary, the goal is always the same – to improve the quality of life of service members, boost their morale, and serve as the link between service members and the American people.

Ready to apply to be a USO San Diego volunteer?

Visit <https://volunteers.uso.org/>

- On the right side see “Interested in volunteering?”
- Click red “Register Here” button
- Navigate to your area
- Finally, select the USO San Diego center nearest to you!

Positions may be available around San Diego county at:

Neil Ash Airport Center
Camp Pendleton USO Center
San Diego MEPS Center
Special Events



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