



LEADING BY EXAMPLE Col. Brandon J. Tellez, commandant of cadets, completes the Assault Course alongside basic cadets from the Air Force Academy Class of 2030 during Basic Cadet Training at Jacks Valley, Air Force Academy, Colorado Springs, July 13, 2026. The training develops confidence, teamwork, discipline, and resilience as basic cadets build warfighting readiness during the second phase of BCT. U.S. Air Force photo by Jonathan Suni

USAA UNVEILS THE NATIONAL MILITARY MONUMENT

SAN ANTONIO, Texas - As Americans continue commemorating our nation's 250th anniversary, The National Military Monument opened to the public July 28, offering a one-of-a-kind tribute honoring more than 41 million Americans who have answered the call to serve across 250 years of our nation's history.

Located on the steps of the Lincoln Memorial in Washington, D.C., the monument invites visitors to reflect on the generations of Americans whose courage, sacrifice and commitment has shaped our country and safeguarded the freedoms we enjoy today.

Drawing from military and public records dating back to

the Revolutionary War, the monument honors generations of Americans who answered the call to serve. Because no single historical record captures every individual who has served, the names displayed have been assembled from multiple trusted sources, such as National Public Records (Virginia Beneficiary Identification and Records Locator Subsystem, National Parks Service, WWII Army Enlistment, Multiple POW Lists), Veteran Service Organizations and USAA members who opted in.

"This monument is ultimately about people," said Juan C. Andrade, President and CEO of USAA. "Every name represents someone who stepped away from family and chose something greater than themselves. Their service has protected the freedoms we enjoy today and

shaped the nation we call home. We hope every person who walks through The National Military Monument leaves thinking about someone they know who served, reflecting on their sacrifice and carrying forward a deeper sense of gratitude."

This monument brings tradition and technology together, its towering double-sided flags blend classic monument design with cutting-edge digital screens that illuminate the names of generations of military servicemembers. As visitors walk alongside the monument, the flags appear to gently wave in the wind, creating a powerful reminder that behind every stripe is a person, a family and a story of service.

Throughout the installation, interactive kiosks invite visitors see **Monument, page 2**



USAA unveils The National Military Monument, honoring more than 41 million Americans who have answered the call to serve since the Revolutionary War. Courtesy photo

August military observances

Antiterrorism Awareness Month: The Department of the Army designated August to emphasize the importance of constant vigilance and security. This month focuses on educating service members, military families, and civilian employees on how to spot and report suspicious activities to prevent threats.

August 1: Air Force Day

Established by the War Department in 1947, this day originally celebrated the founding and achievements of the U.S. Army Air Forces. While the modern Air Force celebrates its separate birthday in September, August 1 remains a day to honor aviation history and the service's early milestones.

August 4: U.S. Coast Guard Birthday

This day honors the founding of the Revenue Marine in 1790 by Alexander Hamilton, which later merged with the U.S. Life-Saving Service to become the modern Coast Guard. It celebrates the branch's long history of maritime law enforcement, coastal defense, and search and rescue operations.

August 7: Purple Heart Day

This day pays tribute to the brave service members who have been wounded or killed in combat while serving in the U.S. military. The medal is the nation's oldest military award, originally created by General George Washington in 1782 as the Badge of Military Merit.

August 10: U.S. Department of Defense Birthday

Originally established as the National Military Establishment under the National Security Act of 1947, the agency was officially renamed the Department of Defense in 1949. This day marks the unification of the nation's military branches under a single cabinet-level executive department.

August 10: Agent Orange Awareness Day

This day raises awareness about the devastating, long-term health effects suffered by millions of veterans exposed to tactical herbicides during the Vietnam War. It serves as a reminder of the ongoing medical advocacy, benefits, and support needed for impacted families.

August 14: Navajo Code Talkers Day

Formally established by President Ronald Reagan in 1982, this day honors the Native American soldiers who used their traditional language to transmit secret tactical messages during World War II. Their uncrackable code was crucial to securing Allied victories across the Pacific theater.

August 16: National Airborne Day

Created to honor the nation's elite paratroopers, this day marks the anniversary of the first official U.S. Army parachute jump in 1940. It celebrates the bravery and specialized combat capabilities of airborne forces throughout military history.

August 29: Marine Forces Reserve Birthday

Established in 1916 by the Naval Appropriations Act, this date marks the official creation of the Marine Corps Reserve corps. It honors the "citizen Marines" who maintain civilian careers but stand ready to deploy rapidly to support active-duty units worldwide.

McLaughlin assumes command of USS Jackson (LCS 6)

SAN DIEGO – Cmdr. John N. Wagoner was relieved by Cmdr. Jim McLaughlin as commanding officer of Independence-variant littoral combat ship USS Jackson (LCS 6) during a change of command ceremony held aboard the ship at Naval Base San Diego, July 22. Capt. James H. Hoey, commodore, Littoral Combat Ship Squadron One, was the presiding officer and Capt. Brain C. Bungay, commanding officer, Naval Base San Diego, was the guest speaker at the ceremony.

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USS Springfield shifts homeport to San Diego

by Petty Officer 1st Class
Tiarra Brown

NAVAL BASE POINT LOMA - Los Angeles-class fast-attack submarine USS *Springfield* (SSN 761) arrived at its new homeport here July 21.

Springfield joins the three Los Angeles-class fast-attack submarines already assigned to Submarine Squadron 11. The homeport shift follows the recent departure of USS *Alexandria* (SSN 757) which recently transitioned to Bremerton, Was., for inactivation.

Springfield's crew has per-

formed tremendously over the last few years in support of national security operations in the Pacific while forward deployed in Guam," said Cmdr. Greg Storer, commander of USS *Springfield*.

"We look forward to joining the San Diego submarine team and continuing to operate whenever and wherever we are called upon."

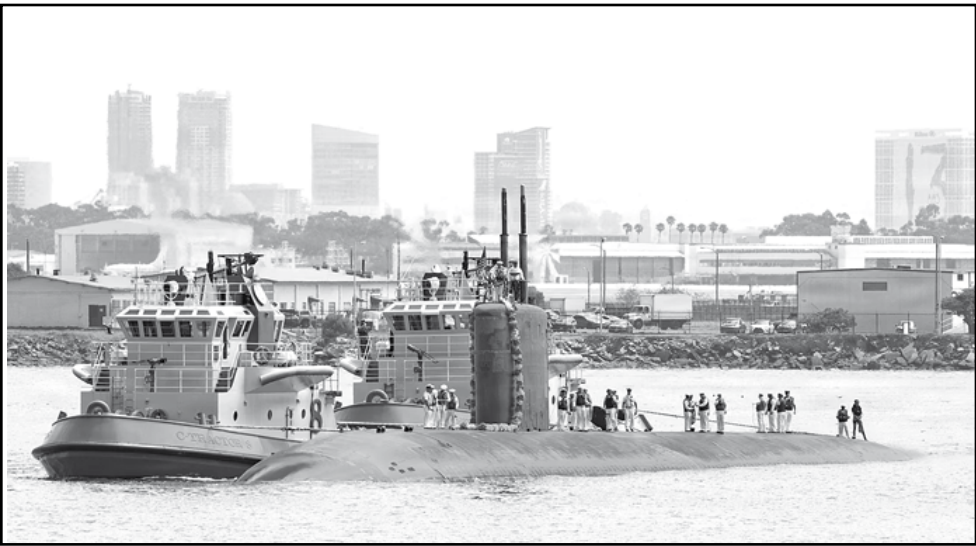
Since *Springfield's* arrival in Guam in March 2022, the submarine and its crew completed multiple operational deployments and conducted missions vital to national security and

regional deterrence. Most recently, *Springfield* returned to Naval Base Guam May 31, 2026, following a routine deployment in the Western Pacific.

"We are excited to welcome *Springfield* to San Diego and the warfighters of Submarine Squadron 11," said Capt. Philip Sylvia Jr., commander, Submarine Squadron 11.

"The crew brings extensive knowledge and experience from their forward-deployed presence, and we look forward to continuing to increase our readiness and capabilities with another apex predator on our waterfront."

Springfield is the fourth ship of the Navy to bear the name.



Los Angeles-class fast-attack submarine USS *Springfield* (SSN 761) arrives to its new homeport at Naval Base Point Loma July 21. *Springfield* is assigned to Commander, Submarine Squadron 11, home to four Los Angeles-class fast-attack submarines which are capable of supporting various missions, including anti-submarine warfare, anti-ship warfare, strike warfare and intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance. U.S. Navy photo by MC2 Rashan Jefferson

The sub was named in honor of both the cities of Springfield, Ill., and Springfield, Mass.

Springfield was launched on Jan. 4, 1992 and commissioned on Jan. 9, 1993.

<https://www.cpf.navy.mil/Newsroom/News/Article/4553993/>

Monument

continued from page 1

to search for parents, grandparents, siblings, friends and loved ones who have served. For many, the experience will transform from simply viewing a monument into discovering a personal connection to America's military story.

Beginning July 28, visitors can also search online, confirm loved ones are included and submit names that are not yet represented, allowing this living tribute to continue growing over time. Due to privacy protections and the availability of public

records, some currently serving military members and veterans may not yet appear.

The National Military Monument opened to the public, July 28, and admission is free. Visitors can learn more, search for names and submit additional records by visiting USAA.com/Monument250.

More than a monument, this installation stands as a national expression of gratitude and respect for the millions of Americans whose service has defined our country's first 250 years and continues to safeguard its future.

Hegseth presents Mexican Border Defense Medal to service members

by C. Todd Lopez, Pentagon News

Secretary of War Pete Hegseth recognized 50 U.S. service members- including for the first time, Marine Corps personnel - with the Mexican Border Defense Medal July 27.

"From Day 1, operationally, this department, this building, these services rushed, surged down to the border to stop the invasion of our southern border, which is truly what it was," Hegseth said.

The secretary noted that since January 2025, American troops from all services, and with a variety of skills, have been working first to gain and then maintain 100 percent operational control of America's southern border and to stop both drug traffickers and the flow of illegal immigration.

"You have been dynamic, you have been creative, you have been aggressive, you have used the authorities you've been given [and] you work with your law enforcement partners," Hegseth said. "That's why, for over a year, there's been effectively zero illegals crossing our border ... especially on the national defense areas," Hegseth said. "We decided our soil, our homeland, will be defended, and we will utilize our troops in those places to do it and give them maximum authorities to ensure that we stop the invasion of our southwest border."

<https://www.war.gov/News/News-Stories/Article/Article/4556429/>



YOUR 2026 AIR SHOW EXPERIENCE SOARING INTO AMERICA'S 250TH

America's Air Show returns on September 25-27, celebrating 250 years of American spirit, innovation, and aviation excellence.

As the nation's largest military air show, this one-of-a-kind event delivers an unforgettable flight line experience featuring immersive

experiences, military demonstration teams, civilian aerobatic performers, aerial solo acts, vintage aircraft, and iconic warbirds.

Join the hosts at Marine Corps Air Station Miramar for three action-packed days of high-flying excitement, patriotism, and fun for the whole family.

Open to the public Friday through Sunday, the Miramar Air Show is where friends and families come together to create unforgettable memories while honoring America's proud legacy and the future of flight.

ID Requirement: All attendees ages 18 and older must present a

valid form of government-issued identification for entry to the Air Show. Entry will not be permitted without proper ID.

For non-U.S. citizens planning to attend, please ensure you possess valid documentation demonstrating your current legal status in the United States.

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Armed Forces Dispatch

published by Western States Weeklies, Inc.

2604 B-280 El Camino Real, Carlsbad, CA 92008

619-280-2985 • E-mail: editor@navydispatch.com

Editor.....Scott Sutherland

The Dispatch is published online weekly on Thursdays, and in print on the 1st & 16th of each month by Western States Weeklies, Inc., as a commercial, free-enterprise newspaper. The editorial objective of the Dispatch is to promote support for a strong military presence. Contents of the Armed Forces Dispatch are not necessarily the official views of, or endorsed by, the U.S. Government, the Department of Defense, the U.S. Navy or U.S. Marine Corps. The opinions and views of writers whose materials appear herein are those of the writers and not the publishers. Appearance of advertising does not constitute endorsement by the Department of Defense or any other DOD component, this newspaper, or Western States Weeklies, Inc. Subscriptions mailed USPS First Class.

Secretary of War Pete Hegseth and Air Force Gen. Dan Caine, chair of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, appeared before the Senate Appropriations Committee on Capitol Hill July 21, where the two leaders spoke in support of President Trump's June 24 supplemental budget request to Congress.

U.S. concludes 13th night of strikes on Iranian military targets

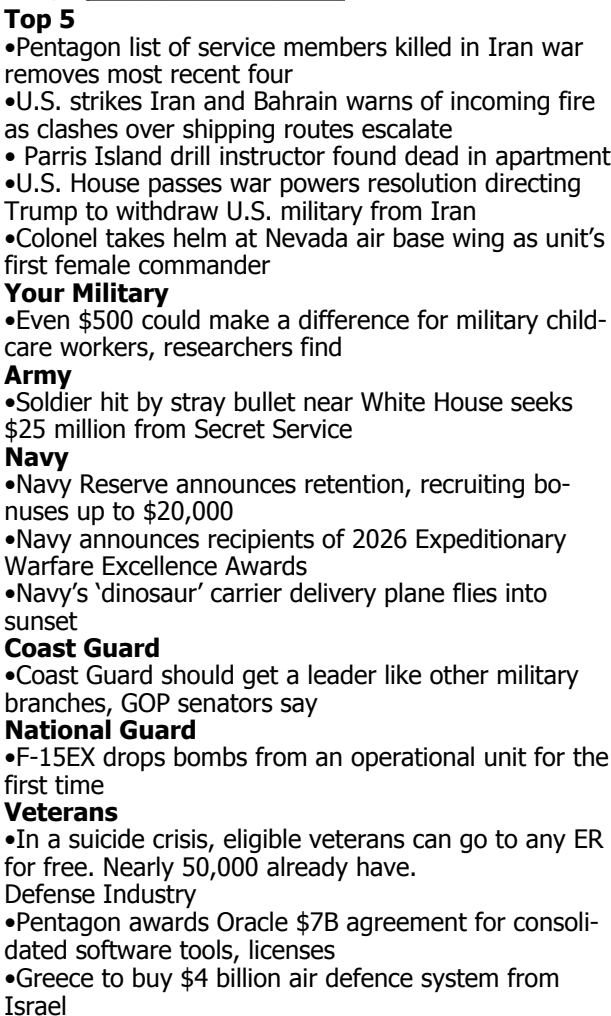
More than 50,000 U.S. service members are currently operating across the Middle East.

Calling the overall request a generational investment to deliver peace through strength with a force so capable it would be “absurd for anyone to challenge it,” Hegseth also spoke to the

In terms of readiness, Hegseth said the supplemental request includes \$20 billion to fund military pay, replace equipment used during recent operations, sustain forward-deployed forces and grow personnel strength while stabilizing shortfalls and sustaining the National Guard.

“I’ve come to you today to request the necessary funds while in the window of opportunity,

A definitive floor vote schedule for the supplemental request has not yet been finalized.



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Agreement reached with South Carolina to protect rights of military, overseas voters in special primary election and runoff

Department of Justice
Office of Public Affairs
The Justice Department announced July 21 an agreement between the Department and the State of South Carolina through the South Carolina State Election Commission and its Executive Director to help ensure that military service members, their family members, and U.S. citizens living overseas have an opportunity to participate fully in the upcoming special federal primary election and a runoff primary election, if necessary.

Coast Guard transitions Expeditionary Cutter Squadron to enhance operational capabilities

WASHINGTON - The Coast Guard transitioned its Expeditionary Cutter Squadron (ECS), historically called Patrol Forces Southwest Asia (PATFORSWA), to operate in the Western Pacific conducting maritime security operations and cooperative maritime activities with allies and partner nations in the region, in response to national security requirements.
The Expeditionary Cutter Squadron will be capable

Justice Department’s commitment to protecting the right to vote for members of our armed forces deployed around the world, their families, and U.S. citizens overseas, and ensuring that these voters are afforded a meaningful opportunity to vote in all federal elections,” said Assistant Attorney General Harmeet K. Dhillon of the Justice Department’s Civil Rights Division. “South Carolina officials worked with the department immediately to find a resolution to safeguard voting rights for the state’s military and overseas voters in the upcoming primary

election and potential runoff.”
Due to the death of Sen. Lindsey Graham, the special primary election to replace him as the Republican nominee for the 2026 General Election must occur on Aug. 11, 2026, and any runoff primary election, if necessary, must occur on Aug. 25. The agreement is necessary to provide a remedy for a potential violation of the Uniformed and Overseas Citizens Absentee Voting Act.
The agreement provides that for the Aug. 11, 2026 special primary election, South Caro-

lina will send UOCAVA ballots by Aug. 1, 2026 to all eligible UOCAVA voters who have made a standing request for UOCAVA ballots for all elections through December 2027. Ballots will include information indicating that UOCAVA voters can return ballots securely by electronic transmission, and all ballots must be returned by Aug. 11, by electronic transmission, express mail, or post.

Each ballot also includes instant runoff voting, so that UOCAVA voters can select a candidate for a runoff election, if necessary, on Aug. 25, 2026. The agreement requires that by July 24, 2026, South Carolina contact all eligible UOCAVA voters who did not make a standing request to let them know about the special election deadlines and offer to send ballots by electronic mail if they would like to participate.

The agreement also requires that South Carolina publicize the deadlines about the special primary and runoff elections and the information in the agreement to potential South Carolina UOCAVA voters, including the availability of the Federal Write-In Absentee Ballot to participate in those elections.



Declassification of the DoW internal After-Action Review of the Covid disease 2019 vaccine mandate report

As part of the Department of War’s continuous effort to rebuild trust with Service members discharged under the COVID-19 vaccine mandate, Secretary Pete Hegseth directed the National Academy of Public Administration (NAPA) to conduct an After-Action Review (AAR) capturing lessons learned to improve future policy.
Additionally, due to President Trump’s and Secretary Hegseth’s commitment to accountability and transparency, the Department will publicly publish the review’s findings.
To supplement NAPA, the Under Secretary of War for Personnel and Readiness will convene an internal panel of DoW military and civilian employees. The objective of this panel is to review the official decisions, coordination, planning, and execution of the COVID-19 vaccine mandate from January 2020 through January 2023.
“The Department is fully committed to restoring honor and rebuilding trust with the warfighters impacted

by the COVID-19 vaccine mandate,” said Under Secretary of War for Personnel and Readiness Anthony J. Tata. Under the leadership of President Trump and Secretary Hegseth, we continue to prioritize reinstatement, deliver remedies, and establish permanent safeguards against future mandates.”
Tata added that, “the actions detailed in these memorandums reflect our ongoing dedication to transparency and accountability.
“By having members of the affected community lead the internal after-action review and further analyze how the COVID-19 vaccine mandate influenced decision-making and readiness—and making the findings public—we will ensure that the Department learns from the past and does not repeat these mistakes in the future.”
The memorandum on the Review of the Department of War Coronavirus Disease 2019 Vaccine Mandate is available at <https://media.defense.gov/>.

Monthly observances for August: Crayons, eye exams			
Nat’l Wellness Month	Family Meals Month	Nat’l Catfish Month	World Photographer
Nat’l Dog Month	Nat’l Breastfeeding	National Brownies At	Nudist History Month
Nat’l Back To School	Nat’l Peach Month	Brunch Month	Black August
Int’l Peace Month	Indie August	Nat’l Goat Cheese	Nat’l Win With Civility
Happiness Happens	Nat’l Panini Month	American Artist	Int’l Cult Awareness
Nat’l Sandwich Month	Kids Eat Right Month	Appreciation Month	Children’s Vision and
Family Fun Month	MedicAlert Awareness	Arrr-gust: Int’l Pirate	Learning Month
Nat’l Eye Exam Month	Black Business Month	Nat’l Golf Month	Nat’l Water Quality
Nat’l Crayon Collection	Nat’l Clown Month	Get Acquainted with	Motorsports Awareness
Romance Awareness	Nat’l Shooting Sports	Kiwifruit Month	Rawgust
Education & History	Nat’l Immunization	Shop Online for Gro-	Drawing August
Health & Awareness	Awareness Month	ceries Month	Nat’l Truancy Prevention

Places of Worship

Bayview Church <i>Attract...Assimilate...Activate</i> Terry W. Brooks, Sr. Pastor 6134 Pastor Timothy J. Winters St., San Diego 92114 • (619) 262-8384 Sunday Worship Services 7:30am, 9:15am, 11:15am Studies In Christian Living (formerly Sunday School) Tues & Thurs online only 6pm (contact Church for sign up). In person Saturday 9am & 10am www.bayviewbc.org info@bayviewbc.org	First Baptist Church of Coronado <i>"Reach Up, Reach Out, Reach Our World"</i> Jim W. Baize, Pastor www.fbcoronado.com Sunday Adult Bible Study 8:45am, Sunday Worship Service 10am Meeting in person and online on YouTube or Facebook FB: First Baptist Church of Coronado email: secretary@fbcoronado.com 445 C Ave., Coronado, CA 92118 (619) 435-6588	Mt. Zion Missionary Baptist Church San Diego <i>"Teamwork Makes the Dream Work"</i> - Nehemiah 4:1-6 Join us for worship services: Sunday School 9:30am, followed by Morning Worship at 11am Rev. Dennis Ray Anderson, D. Min., Pastor 3045 Greely Ave., San Diego, CA 92113 619-233-3296 - office
Bethany Lutheran Church Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod 2051 Sunset Cliffs Blvd., Ocean Beach 92107 (Parking lot off the Alley - North of the building) Worship 11am Sundays Bible Class, Wednesdays 10am (619)222-7291 Office@BethanyLutheranOB.org	Mesa View Baptist Church Dr. Darrow Perkins, Jr., Th.D. Pastor/Servant CWO3, USMC (Ret.) <i>Seeking Sinners; Saving Souls, Strengthening Saints</i> Sunday School at 8:45am • Morning Worship at 10am Wednesday Night Bible Study 7pm 13230 Pomerado Rd., Poway • 858-485-6110 • www.mesaview.org	Southwest Baptist Church <i>"To know Christ and to make Him known"</i> Welcome All Retired Military/Chaplain as Pastors Sunday Bible Study: 9:30am Sunday Worship Service: 11am Wednesday Prayer Service: 7pm 2295 Leon Avenue, San Diego, CA 92154 Phone: (619) 423-2477 Email: pastor@swbcsc.org www.swbcsc.org
Christ Community Church <i>"Helping people love God, find community and make a difference"</i> Sunday services at 8:45am and 10:30am Children's ministry for all kids. Life groups for teens and adults. 9535 Kearny Villa Rd. Mira Mesa, 92126. Just off I-15 and Miramar Rd. More Info: www.gotoChrist.com	Military Outreach Ministries Int'l Church <i>"Supporting all families, all people, at all times"</i> Dr. Dennis Eley, Jr, Th.D., MBA Sunday Worship Service 12:30-2:30pm in person Thirsty Thursday Bible Study 7-8pm (on Zoom) Location: Murphy Canyon Chapel, 3200 Santo Road, San Diego, 92124 619-733-0621 • www.militaryoutreachministries.org	St. Luke's Lutheran Church 5150 Wilson Ave., La Mesa, CA 91942 Phone: (619) 463-6633 website: www.st-lukes-la-mesa.org Worship: 9am Pastor: Mark Menacher, PhD. <i>We thank you for your service!</i>

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Air Force launches myBodyComp, reinforces deadline for waist-to-height ratio measurements

from Secretary of the Air Force
Public Affairs

WASHINGTON - The Air Force has officially launched myBodyComp, the service's official application for recording waist-to-height ratio measurements. While myFitness remains the system of record for physical fitness and readiness assessment scores, myBodyComp serves as the official tool for logging weight-to-height ratio.

All Airmen without a qualifying exemption should have a current WHtR measurement recorded no later than July 31. Air Reserve Component members have until Aug. 31.

The requirement, directed in a July 9 memorandum from the Office of the Assistant Secretary of the Air Force for Manpower and Reserve Affairs, is a one-time biometric data collection that establishes a baseline for the modernized Physical Fitness Readiness Program, which took effect July 1. The measurement is not part of the Physical Fitness Readiness Assessment and will not affect fitness scores, test currency or other personnel actions.

"Standards are the foundation of discipline and readiness," said Air Force Chief of Staff Gen.

Ken Wilsbach, in his July 13 Letter to the Force on standards. "To strengthen our readiness, every Airman must focus on fitness and appearance standards."

Airmen who completed a measurement during the diagnostic period, March 1 through June 30, and retained the assessment as official do not need to reassess; those measurements

and the member may be applied toward the requirement.

Members with a full medical exemption documented on an AF Form 469, a pregnancy or postpartum exemption, or a composite exemption tied to an approved retirement or separation within 12 months are not required to complete the measurement. Partial exemptions

nel, who measure the member's waist at the midpoint between the bottom rib and the top of the hip bone and compare it against height to determine the ratio.

ARC members in a qualified duty status must meet the requirement, and members performing a regularly scheduled drill or unit training assembly in July or August must complete the measurement no later than Aug. 31. ARC wing and installation commanders will oversee execution within their organizations.

Installation points of contact are force support squadron fitness assessment cell and fitness information manager personnel. The Air Force Services Center has published training materials covering measurement procedures and data entry on its fitness SharePoint site. Questions that cannot be resolved at the installation level may be sent to AFSVC.FitnessPrograms.Workflow@us.af.mil.

Standards are the foundation of discipline and readiness. To strengthen our readiness, every Airman must focus on fitness and appearance standards

Air Force Chief of Staff Gen. Ken Wilsbach, in his July 13 Letter to the Force on standards.

carry over automatically. Airmen whose diagnostic scores were purged, or who have no score entered since March 1, must complete a new measurement before the deadline. A purged score documented on a hardcopy AF Form 4446 signed by both the assessment administrator

for individual fitness components, such as the run or push-ups, do not exempt a member from the WHtR measurement unless a medical provider specifies otherwise.

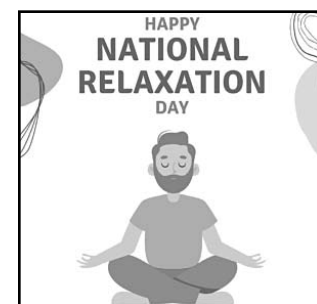
Measurements are conducted by trained PFRA administrators or fitness assessment cell person-

August 15 is National Relaxation Day. Here's how to celebrate it.

(STATEPOINT MEDIA) National Relaxation Day, celebrated every year on Aug. 15, is an annual celebration of self-care.

Because reducing stress can have positive effects on your mind and your overall wellness, it's important to take time to relax, no matter how busy life gets.

While these days, you may find yourself reflexively reaching for your devices during



downtime, there are much better ways to actually reduce stress and feel rejuvenated.

Secretary of War's most recent local flag officer announcements

Secretary of War Pete Hegseth announced July 17 that the president has made the following nominations for Navy Region Southwest:

Rear Adm. (lower half) **Kevin J. Brown** for appointment to the grade of rear admiral. Brown is currently serving as commander, Naval Medical Forces Pacific, San Diego.

Rear Adm. (lower half) **Donald W. Marks** for appointment to the grade of rear admiral. Marks is currently serving as commander, Carrier Strike Group NINE, San Diego.

Feeling overwhelmed, anxious or stressed is common, but taking time for yourself can help you cope and feel your best.

Here are five alternatives to scrolling:

1. Calling a friend
2. Going for a stroll
3. Practicing breathing exercises
4. Reading a book
5. Listening to calming music

Other Ways to Celebrate Unplug: Turn off phones, step away from social media, and take a digital detox.

Get Outside: Go for a slow walk in nature, visit a park, or lounge by the water.

At-Home Comfort: Read a favorite book, take a warm bath, or enjoy a quiet cup of coffee or tea.

Navy Reserve expands bonus opportunities to strengthen recruiting, retention

The Navy Reserve has introduced expanded bonus opportunities for eligible enlisted Sailors and officers as part of its fiscal year 26/27 Recruiting and Retention Incentive Program, reinforcing its commitment to attracting highly qualified talent and retaining the experienced leaders needed to support the Fleet.

These incentive programs, effective June 1, 2026, provide financial bonuses for eligible personnel affiliating with the Navy Reserve, entering direct commission programs, reenlist-

ing, or continuing their service in critical career fields. The expanded bonuses are designed to strengthen the Selected Reserve by recognizing the value of prior military experience while encouraging continued service in support of national defense.

The incentive programs include four enlisted bonus opportunities: the New Accession Training Enlistment Bonus, Reserve Component Affiliation Bonus, Prior Service Reenlistment Bonus, and Selective Retention Bonus. Depending on eligibility, enlisted

Sailors may qualify for bonuses of up to \$20,000 for joining, affiliating with, or continuing service in the Selected Reserve.

For officers, the updated policy provides three incentive programs: the Officer Affiliation Bonus, Officer Accession (Direct Commission Officer) Bonus, and Officer Retention Bonus. Eligible officers may receive affiliation bonuses of up to \$10,000, direct commission accession bonuses of \$12,000, and retention bonuses of up to \$12,000 annually for three years in designated communities.

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Local Military

Ex-San Diego ships have sinking feeling during RIMPAC

Courtesy Story

Ships and aircraft participating in exercise Rim of the Pacific (RIMPAC) 2026 conducted a planned, live-fire sinking exercise (SINKEX) and sank decommissioned USS Mobile Bay (CG 53), July 12, and decommissioned USS Peleliu (LHA 5), July 17.

They were sunk in waters 15,000 feet deep, more than 50 nautical miles off the northern coast of the island of Kauai.

“Watching our Sailors work side-by-side with partners from around the world, executing complex maritime events togeth-

er, is the strongest reminder of why these relationships matter,” said Vice Adm. Jeff Jablon, the RIMPAC 2026 Commander, Combined Task Force (CTF). “SINKEXs are a prime example of the strength and readiness our partnerships create.”

During the SINKEXs, participating units from Australia, Canada, Italy, Japan, New Zealand, Spain and the U.S. Navy,



Four tugboats escort the hulk of decommissioned Peleliu through Pearl Harbor. U.S. Navy photo by MCSN Nathan Cahall

Air Force, and Army gained proficiency in tactics, targeting and live-firing against a surface ship at sea. Live-fire exercises deliver hands-on, realistic training that sharpens partner nations’ capabilities to coordinate, plan and execute sophisticated maritime operations, including precision targeting and strike capabilities.

“The successful execution of multiple SINKEXs highlights the unbreakable bond and growing capability of our coalition,” said Republic of Korea Navy Rear Adm. Inho Kim, RIMPAC 2026 Combined Force Maritime Component Commander (CFMCC).

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MIGUEZ ASSUMES COMMAND OF U.S. 3RD FLEET

by Ryan Tabios, C3F
Vice Adm. Marc Miguez assumed command of U.S. 3rd Fleet (C3F) from Rear Adm. Richard Meyer during an assumption of command ceremony held at C3F headquarters in San Diego, July 20.

Adm. Steve Koehler, commander, U.S. Pacific Fleet, presided over the ceremony. During his remarks, Koehler highlighted C3F's critical role in generating combat-ready naval forces, strengthening maritime security, and supporting operations and partnerships in the region. He recognized Meyer's steadfast leadership

and welcomed Miguez to the helm of the fleet.

Meyer concluded his tenure leading C3F after assuming duties as acting commander following Vice Adm. John D. Wade's departure earlier this year. During his time as acting commander and his prior service as deputy commander, Meyer led fleet operations, exercises, and readiness initiatives supporting the fleet's mission.

Miguez assumes command after most recently serving as the Navy Chief of Legislative Affairs. A former enlisted Marine and career Naval Flight Of-

ficer, he has accumulated more than 4,000 flight hours and over 1,000 carrier-arrested landings. His previous command assignments include Strike Fighter Squadron (VFA) 213, Carrier Air Wing 3, and Carrier Strike Group 2 during the 2023-2024 deployment of Nimitz-class aircraft carrier USS Dwight D. Eisenhower (CVN 69).

C3F leads naval forces in the region and provides the realistic, relevant training necessary to execute our Navy's role across the full spectrum of military operations - from combat operations to humanitarian assistance and disaster response.

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man on the street

If you could compare yourself with an animal, what would it be and why?



"Domestic cats. I have two cats and we share the same things."

*Alma Przybylko
NAS North Island*

"Grizzly bears. I like to fish and so do they."

*ET1 Gino Tolentino
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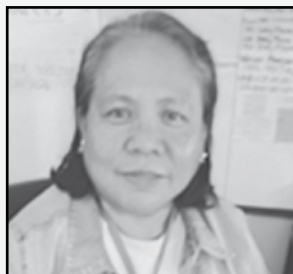
"Orangutans, because of my long limbs, dude."

*Austin Arnce
Naval Base San Diego*



"Robins. They are providers - they provide their young in the nest."

*Mylenne La Sala
NAB Coronado*



"Raccoons, because of the amount of food I eat."

*Genaro Bermudez
NAB Coronado*



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Construction milestone for new recruit barracks at MCRD San Diego

by Mario Icarl

SAN DIEGO - Naval Facilities Engineering Systems Command (NAVFAC) Southwest participated in a topping off ceremony for MCRD San Diego's future 121,496 square foot recruit barracks with members from Clark Construction and stakeholders from MCRD San Diego July 15.

"Construction is inherently hard," said NAVFAC Southwest Executive Officer Capt. Ben Wainwright. "It goes much smoother when you have a good team, good communication,

tion (ROICC) Miramar / MCRD San Diego & in-house design team," said MCRD San Diego Public Works Officer Lt. Cmdr. Lauren Grounds. "This project was 100 percent designed in-house by NAVFAC, and it is impressive seeing it come to life this fast and efficiently."

The facility contains company administration offices, two small bays with 124 beds, and ten standard bays consisting of 86 beds per bay which will hold a total of 984 recruits. A separate central restroom facility with showers is included in the associated design



MCRD San Diego's future recruit barracks is expected to be completed spring 2028. Photo by Mario Icarl

good collaboration, and the fact that we are extremely responsive to information requests, submittals, and all questions that come up across the team and stakeholders. That is phenomenal... Thanks for all the amazing teamwork you all have done to produce this amazing facility in front of us. It is going to bolster MCRD's legacy, and they'll continue to make Marines because of all of you."

Located in the historical district of MCRD San Diego, the \$47.7 million multi-story recruit barracks is currently under construction. This barracks is designed to complement MCRD's existing barracks by taking on similar architectural features and colors seen throughout the installation to create a unified consistent look and feel, while complying to safety and seismic codes.

"This project is going smooth and fast thanks to the coordination of Clark Construction and NAVFAC Southwest Resident Officer in Charge of Construc-

tion for each bay. Additionally, the facility features laundry amenities and designated quarters for drill instructors.

NAVFAC Southwest's design team on this project includes architects and engineers from NAVFAC Southwest Planning, Design, and Construction Core In-House Design. Project construction oversight for this project is provided by NAVFAC Southwest's ROICC MCAS Miramar / MCRD San Diego, Project Managers Paul Jenkins and Brandon Jackson, Design Manager Walter Rubio, Engineering Technician Jesse Bosang, Architect and Designer of Record Lead Alberto Equihua, and Construction Manager Keshava Prasad.

Construction is estimated to be completed by the spring of 2028.

NAVFAC Southwest supports planning, design, construction, real estate, environmental and public works in the Southwest region.



Capt. (Ret.) Tony Holmes (left) and Naval Surface Warfare Center, Port Hueneme Division (NSWC PHD) Commanding Officer Capt. Nicholas Hoffman, cut their change of command cake July 17, 2026, following a transfer of power at NSWC PHD on board Naval Base Ventura County. Holmes retired from a 38-year career in the Navy after Hoffman relieved him of duty. U.S. Navy photo by Jhon Parsons



READY TO LAUNCH A Sailor assigned to amphibious assault ship USS Boxer signals a Marine Corps F-35B Lightning II to take off during flight operations in the U.S. Central Command area of responsibility, July 17, 2026. U.S. Marine Corps photo by Sgt. Trent A. Henry



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by Jan Wagner

Every year San Diego Comic-Con is a unique experience, and this year was no exception. There were loads of interesting, informative and entertaining panels, and the Comic-Con Masquerade (choreographed and with incredible, custom-made costumes) in the San Diego Convention Center. For those you needed a Comic-Con badge, as did the opportunity to check out the many exhibits and vendors in the massive Exhibit Hall. Speaking of which, I added my share of revenue to the event, with my purchases of gifts to share some of the Comic-Con joy with others. There were also Comic-Con exhibits and activities in several nearby hotels that included gaming, Stern pinball, the Comic-Con art show & sale — plus a brilliantly creative and entertaining Her Universe Fashion Show.

However, as in past years, much of what is fun to see and experience are the mostly free pop-ups, activations and exhibits outside, on the streets that are within walking distance of the Convention Center. I personally managed to find, experience and collect plenty of swag from: Paramount+ The Lodge (which included interactive themed sets representing Star Trek: Strange New Worlds, South Park, the UFC and more, complete with food and drinks); Apple TV's SILO; Stuart Fails to Save the Universe (a quest in the well-stocked Stuart Bloom's comic shop); Clash of the Clans:

San Diego Comic-Con 2026 including Apple TV & Marvel Studios in Hall H

Clash for the Stache (interactive team challenge room & themed shopping experience — not free, operating now to Sept. 7 at Seaport Village); Star Trek Fleet Command: 60 Years of Star Trek Archives Experience (a museum-caliber collection of costumes and props — organized by Star Trek series, a VR experience, claw machines with Star Trek prizes, and a personalized photo trading card); Star Trek: Boldly Built (photo op and Magic: The Gathering giveaway); the Petco Park Interactive Zone, featuring the Maruchan Marumart (showcasing a huge variety of Maruchan noodle varieties, with samples), plus Magic: The Gathering Marvel Super Heroes Experience (with instruction, a free starter pack and game play); Adult Swim on the Green (entertainment, games with prizes and an indoor carnival ride!); Percy Jackson and the Olympians; and more.

With a bit of strategic planning, you could even eat for free (thank you Hulu Animayhem, for the food and drinks inspired by Futurama and King of the Hill). Even though I have a Comic-Con badge each year, I probably spend at least half of my time exploring downtown San Diego to find and experience these gems.

It must have been fate that, as I was returning home on the San Diego Trolley from the final day (Sunday) of Comic-Con, the stranger — and fellow Comic-Con attendee who I was discussing our experiences there with, gave me a sticker that perfectly brings to mind yet another very popular feature of Comic-Con: "Comic-Con SWAG BANDIT." Yes, without even try-

ing very hard, I now have large bag overflowing with swag: T-shirts, posters, Magic: The Gathering playing cards, a My Little Pony collectable (not for me!), a custom and plastic-encased Star Trek trading card with me wearing a Federation uniform, boxes of Red Vines, pins, stickers, comic books, a bobble-head, a frisbee plus a Doctor Doom mask and cape from the insanely cool Marvel Studios presentation in Hall H — and that is just some of the free stuff.

Comic-Con will be remaining in San Diego through 2030, at least. It would not be nearly as much fun for all anywhere else. San Diego is where Comic-Con began, and our venue is unique. Whereas some other cities have huge convention centers, a large part of the charm of San Diego Comic-Con is the activation-filled Gaslamp Quarter and surrounding blocks (usually not requiring a Comic-Con badge). If this event moved entirely into a huge convention center, it would not be nearly as much fun, nor would it be as accessible.

A picture can be worth a thousand words, so I will upload many of my photos — from all four days plus Preview Night, including the Hall H Apple TV panels and the Marvel Studios experience — to the "AutoMatters & More" website. 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. Copyright © 2026 by Jan Wagner — AutoMatters & More #938r1

The Meat & Potatoes of Life



by Lisa Smith Molinari

In the Avis rental car, I set my GPS for Elizabeth City, the small North Carolina town where my elderly father had recently died. A row of fuchsia blooming crepe myrtles along the road leaving the Norfolk Airport transports me back in time.

Our Navy family was stationed in the area twenty years ago. We lived in a Dutch Colonial house in the Virginia Beach suburbs. It was a sweet time for our young family, where we had impromptu driveway parties with neighbors, our kids rode scooters in the cul-de-sac, and we could hear the elementary school announcements from our front porch.

During the sweltering summer months when school was out, I packed a small cooler with juice boxes, sandwiches, Gogurts and Cosmic Brownies, and took the kids to local pools or beaches. We'd come home in the late afternoon to rest, where our house stayed cool under the shade of towering Loblolly Pines. If the mosquitos weren't bad, we'd sit outside in the evening and listen to the crickets while the kids chased fireflies.

These memories accompany me on my trip south to retrieve the ashes of my father.

The humid air invading the vents of my rental car are infused with a familiar aroma. Of brackish water. Of strip malls with ice cream joints.

Of Saturday youth soccer games with orange wedges. Of crab cakes and baskets of hush puppies. Of steam radiating from hot sidewalks after a summer rain.

I follow signs south, leading me beyond the urban sprawl. Just across the boarder into North Carolina, the land becomes a mix of marshy forested wetlands dotted with bear crossing signs, and velvety verdant farmland where neat rows of corn and soybeans bask in the sun.

The small houses clustered here and there along the road tell a story of hard work. Old inoperable tractors with grass growing high around their wheels stand as yard ornaments.

Hand-painted signs advertise freshly picked green beans, tomatoes, and peaches. White clapboard churches, vacant and slumbering, wait for Sunday.

Graceful mimosa trees join the crepe myrtles, their peachy-pink flowers adding a soft touch to the scenery. I spy a few magnolias, their bold white flowers standing out against waxy dark leaves. In the moist, hot climate, all vegetation appears to grow aggressively and uncontrolled, fed by the waters of the Pasquotank River flowing from the Great Dismal Swamp. I wiz by trees, fences, and entire houses smothered by wild grapevines.

Approaching Elizabeth City — not really a city at all — billboards and businesses welcome me. Like Pavlov's proverbial dog, my mouth waters when I see a Currituck BBQ pink neon sign. I imagine pulled pork with vinegary Carolina sauce, piled high on a bun

with creamy coleslaw and a side of fried green tomatoes.

My hunger hones in on a pick up truck parked alongside the road, overflowing with plump local cantaloup and watermelons. I plan my meals for the day.

But not yet. There's too much to do.

At my father's assisted living facility, I'll be met by the sweet southern staff who'll offer their condolences. For three days, I'll sort through his belongings, clear out his apartment, pay his bills, return his cable boxes, cash in his big change jar, and pick up his ashes at Mitchell's Funeral Care and Creations. Following his explicit instructions, I'll mix his ashes with his wife's and their dogs', and sprinkle them over the brackish southern waters of Currituck Sound.

We live in a vast and beautiful country, where each region has its own distinct character, climate, customs and culture. As military families, we're fortunate to have the opportunity to experience new places, not as tourists, but as residents who must acclimate, assimilate and adapt. At each new duty station, we store memories of past homes deep in our psyches, where they stay until something, or someone, unpacks them.

I park at Brookdale Senior Living facility, and step out into the familiar humidity, ready to face the difficult tasks at hand. I'm reminded that our nomadic military lives leave pieces of us everywhere, imprinting on our souls. No matter how far I wander, I'm grateful that I often feel like I'm coming home.

Veterans News

Veteran's Village of San Diego Homeless Court



VETERANS VILLAGE OF SAN DIEGO

Veterans Village of San Diego (VVSD) participates in the Homeless Court Program (HCP), which began in 1988 at the VVSD Stand Down 1988 event. Due to the overwhelming need of the indigent and overburdened court system, HCP fills a valuable community need.

The Homeless Court Program provides the perfect partnership between the court, prosecutor, public defender and local service agencies to help resolve legal issues for the homeless population.

HCP helps removes the obstacles that prevent homeless and indigent individuals from reintegrating back into the community addressing a broad spectrum of misdemeanor offenses including jaywalking, charges of being

under the influence of a controlled substance, theft and driving under the influence. Misdemeanors with growing fees and fines become a hurdle that many simply cannot overcome.

HCP has been a tremendous success from the first Stand Down in 1988, where 116 homeless veterans stated that their greatest need was to resolve outstanding bench warrants. In the years following, from 1989 to 1992, HCP has resolved 4,895 cases for 942 homeless veterans.

Because of the increased demand for the HCP, it has expanded from annual, to quarterly, and now monthly sessions. Today more than 10,000 individuals have participated in HCP and are moving towards reclaiming their lives of dignity and productivity.

HCP sentencing provides "credit for time served" for the participant's accomplishments in shelter activities. These activities include life-skills, chemical dependency or AA/NA meetings, computer and literacy classes, training or searching for employment, medical care (physical and mental), and counseling.

These activities replace the traditional court sentence options of fines, public work service, and custody. The alternative sentencing structure is not coercive or punitive in nature, but rather designed to address the underlying causes of a person's homelessness and recognize the person's efforts to make changes to improve his or her life.

COMPACT Act covers crisis ER care

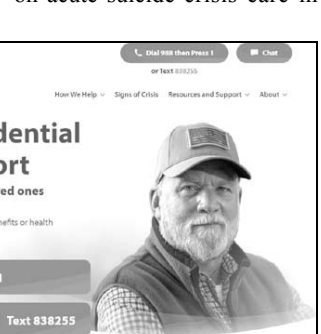
FLEET RESERVE ASSOCIATION - Under a benefit created by the Veterans Comprehensive Prevention, Access to Care, and Treatment (COMPACT)

Act and implemented by VA in January 2023, an eligible veteran in a suicidal crisis can go to any emergency room, VA or civilian, and VA will cover the care, whether or not that veteran is enrolled in VA health care and whether or not that veteran has insurance.

VA data provided to *Military Times* show 49,341 veterans have used the Emergent Suicide Crisis Benefit since fiscal 2023, including 15,218 in fiscal 2025 and 9,434 in the first half of fiscal 2026.

The COMPACT Act covers emergency evaluation and treatment, up to 30 days of inpatient or crisis residential care when

clinically appropriate, up to 90 days of outpatient follow up, and transportation costs. VA spent nearly \$110 million on acute suicide crisis care in



fiscal 2025, and 72 percent of veterans who have used the benefit have since enrolled in VA health care.

Awareness remains the gap. The Disabled American Veterans reports that its service officers routinely meet veterans who believe they must already be enrolled in VA health care, must hold a service connected rating, or must travel to a VA medical center before the benefit applies.

Uncertainty about whether an emergency room visit will generate a bill discourages veterans from seeking help at the moment intervention matters most. The account anchoring this reporting was a retired Navy master chief who learned the benefit existed only after a community hospital identified him as a veteran and told him his care was covered.

FRA asks every shipmate to carry this information into their branch, their unit, and their family. No veteran in crisis should hesitate at an emergency room door over the fear of a bill.

The Veterans Crisis Line is available around the clock by dialing 988 and pressing 1, by text to 838255, or at *VeteransCrisisLine.net*.

FRA will continue to press VA and Congress to close the awareness gap and to protect this benefit through the appropriations process, because keeping our Shipmates alive is the first obligation of the Sacred Trust.

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MOVIES AT THE BASES

Movie schedules subject
to change. PLEASE CHECK
THE WEB SITE DAY-OF

MCAS MIRAMAR
<https://miramar.usmc-mccs.org/dining-entertainment/movies>

MCB CAMP PENDLETON
<https://pendleton.usmc-mccs.org/dining-entertainment/theater>

NAS NORTH ISLAND
<https://coronado.navylifsw.com/programs/>

select recreation from top tab
and drop down to movies

NAS NI Lowry Theater
Policy

- Outside food and beverage are NOT permitted: Sales from the snack bar support the movie program.
- These Theaters are cashless facilities. Debit and credit cards accepted only.

NBSD 32ND STREET
<https://sandiego.navylifsw.com/>

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a relaxing time in front of the
big screen.



CROSSWORD PUZZLE

Across

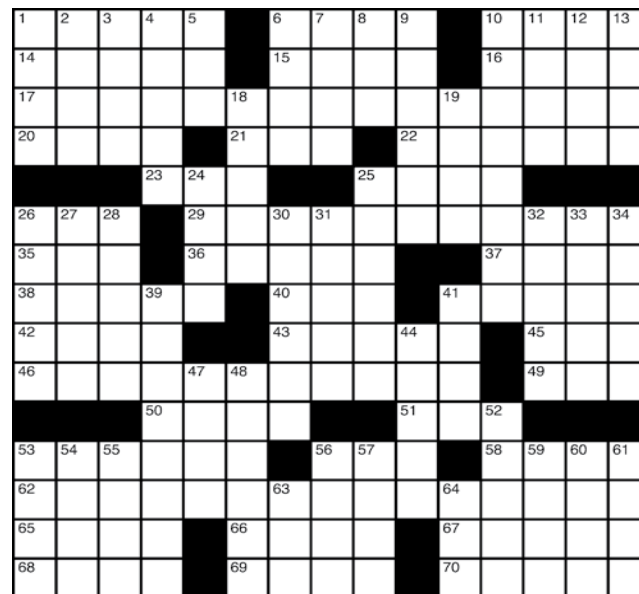
1 Pours to the brim
6 Fit together
10 ___-porter: ready-to-wear
14 Cellphone bill statistic
15 Baseball's Moises
16 Resign, in chess
17 "Make yourself comfortable"
20 Editor's "Don't change that"
21 Lubricate
22 Start a journey
23 Sine ___ non: essential
25 Quick bite
26 Personal connections
29 "Don't be a stranger!"
35 Maple tree fluid
36 Backless sofa
37 "Cheers" actress Perlman
38 Olympics venue
40 It tops a king
41 Riyadh resident
42 Pooh's Hundred ___ Wood
43 Show gratitude to
45 Squealer
46 Regardless of how things go
49 Phoenix MLB team, on
scoreboards
50 New Look designer
51 U.S. Presidents, so far
53 Deprived (of)
56 Broke bread

58 Machu Picchu builder
62 Where a puppy may learn
the starts of 17-, 29- and
46-Across
65 Stretched tight
66 Capital of Peru
67 2000s "American Idol"
judge Abdul
68 Syringe, briefly
69 Throwaway part of a
cherry
70 Annual Tournament of ___
Parade

Down

1 Commotion
2 ___ any wonder?"
3 Out past curfew
4 Pride parade letters
5 Caribbean, e.g.
6 Sushi roll type
7 Airline to Tel Aviv
8 Luke, to Darth
9 Big Apple river
10 Large amount
11 Chocolate-caramel candy
brand
12 Jacob's twin
13 Modern message
18 Raccoon relative
19 Sabbath activity

24 Meat safety agcy.
25 Hr. when many work-
days begin
26 Writer Asimov
27 DEA agent
28 Type of whale
30 Picture next to a
username
31 Luxury vessel
32 "Star Trek" lieutenant
33 Fragrant wood
34 One side of Hispaniola
39 Had no choice
41 Breed of terrier
44 Monikers
47 Coffeehouse amenity
48 TripAdvisor listings
52 Mandarin greeting
53 "Ice cream or cake?"
response, perhaps
54 Online auction venue
55 Enlist again
56 Highest point
57 "There's no 'I' in ___"
59 Entre ___: between us
60 Either of two "Unforget-
table" singers
61 Wistful word
63 Tiny complaint
64 Bit of EMT expertise



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/>

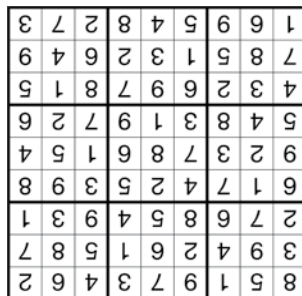
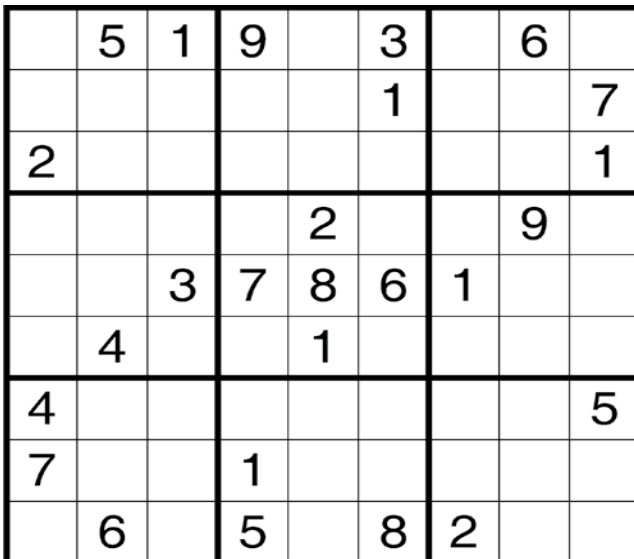
The Ranch House Complex at Camp Pendleton. Listed as the Santa Margarita Ranch House Nat'l Historic Site and as a California State Historical Landmark. Docent-led tours are available by appointment; masks required. Please email your request to: MCBPCAMPEN_history@usmc.mil or phone (760)725-5758

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 Mondays 10am-2pm

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

THANKS FOR READING THE DISPATCH!

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Watch out for wildfire smoke: Staying safe with fire nearby

nih.gov

Wildfires can be sparked by human activity or natural events. Over the past few decades, they have become increasingly common. The flames can destroy buildings and endanger people in the immediate vicinity.

But wildfires can harm people even if no one is nearby. This is mainly because of the smoke they create.

“We sometimes see smoke in the air hundreds of miles away from a wildfire,” says Dr. Aubrey Miller, an NIH expert on environmental disasters. NIH-funded researchers are looking for ways to keep people safer when these natural disasters strike.

Smoke contains tiny pieces of material, called particulate matter. Particulate matter can irritate your eyes, nose, and throat. Some particulate matter is small enough to move deep into your lungs when you inhale it. This can damage the lungs and make it more difficult to breathe, especially for people who already have heart or lung problems.

Inhaled particulate matter can also end up in your blood. Blood travels all around your body, to every organ. So breathing in wildfire smoke can increase the risk for serious health problems, like a heart attack or stroke.

When wildfire flames reach a town or city, they start to burn streets, buildings, furniture, and other manufactured materials. “Think about what’s burning: plastics, heavy metals, arsenic,” Miller says. “These can cause a whole series of other hazards for the community.”

Wildfires can raise your risk for health problems that happen long after the smoke is gone, too. For example, exposure to polluted air may increase the risk of developing cancer and brain diseases, like Alzheimer’s disease and other dementias. Some studies suggest that pregnant women exposed to wildfire smoke may be more likely to give birth early or have a baby with a low birth weight. Both can affect a baby’s health and development. Researchers are continuing to study the possible effects on pregnant women and children.

Wildfires can also affect your mental health. Living through a



natural disaster increases your risk for anxiety, depression, and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD).

Researchers are looking for better ways to measure and counter wildfires’ health effects. They’re also starting to collect data more quickly after a fire begins to better understand the exposures and

health impacts. This will help them determine when certain actions would be most helpful to reduce the fire’s immediate and long-term consequences.

Scientists are also looking at what happens when multiple extreme weather events happen at the same time.

“Often we have a heat wave on top of the wildfire, and that might have compounding effects,” Miller says. “We’re trying to understand what happens when these sorts of things come together.”

The health effects of wildfires are wide-ranging. But there are ways you can protect yourself and your loved ones. See the Wise Choices box for tips.

Wise Choices Reduce Wildfire Smoke Exposure

- Spend less time outdoors and keep windows closed when the air outside is smoky or poor quality. Track the air quality in your area using AirNow.gov.
- Limit indoor air pollution when smoke levels are high outside. Avoid using anything that burns, including fireplaces, candles, and gas stoves.
- Run the air conditioner to cool your house rather than opening windows. If possible, keep the system’s fresh air intake closed to avoid bringing smoke inside, and make sure the filter is clean. Seek shelter elsewhere if it’s too hot inside and you don’t have air conditioning.
- Wear a mask if you have to go outside. Special masks called N95 respirators are particularly good at keeping out smoke.
- Consider using indoor portable air cleaners to reduce smoke-related particulate exposures.
- Talk to your health care provider about leaving the area if you already have problems with your heart or lungs. These pre-existing conditions raise your risk for more serious health consequences when you are exposed to smoke.

Huge congratulations are in order!



NMRTC San Diego Commander, Capt. J.J. Bailey, recognized our newest Shipmates of the Month and surprise-announced our Sailors of the Quarter recently! Let’s hear it for these stellar performers!

Shipmates of the Month

Standing out in a Command full of outstanding Sailors is no easy task. Every month, up to 30 exceptional Sailors are nominated for this honor. To earn this title, each recipient was selected through a rigorous and competitive merit-based selection process within their respective directorates:CS2 John Reycard Polendey; HM3 Malik Silva; HM3 Shaelon Filomeno; HM3 Angellea Hernandez; HN Eui Jong Kim; HM3 Exzabrea Hubisz; HN Brayden Boye; HN Ashlyn Villalta Anariba. You represent the very best of our team, and your daily hard work keeps our mission moving forward!

The Big Surprise: Sailors of the Quarter!

While our Shipmates of the Month knew they were being recognized, Capt. Bailey had one more trick up his sleeve. In a surprise reveal that caught them completely off guard, he announced NMRTC San Diego’s newly selected Sailors of the Quarter!

Standing out over an entire quarter requires relentless dedication, expertise, and a true commitment to the team. Please join us in giving a massive BRAVO ZULU to:

- Junior Officer of the Quarter: LT Amanda Rabbit
 - Senior Sailor of the Quarter: HM1 Philip Dorsainvil
 - Sailor of the Quarter: PS2 Valeria Vargas
 - Junior Sailor of the Quarter: HM3 Rebecca Miranda
 - Blue Jacket of the Quarter: PSSN Sadie Sanchez
- We are incredibly proud of all of your accomplishments!



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.

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