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ARMED FORCES DISPATCH

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SIXTY-SIXTH YEAR NO. 19
NOVEMBER 2026



BIRTHDAY BOY **Marine Corps Lance Cpl. Bruno, the Marine Corps Recruit Depot San Diego and Western Recruiting Region mascot, poses for a photo to celebrate his birthday at Marine Corps Recruit Depot, San Diego, Oct. 22, 2026. The mascot's job is to boost morale, participate in outreach work and attend events and ceremonies. U.S. Marine Corps photo by Lance Cpl. Madeline Zane**

November military observances and events

Military Family Month: Honors the sacrifices, support, and dedication of U.S. military families.

Warrior Care Month: Focuses on the physical and mental care, recovery, and transition of wounded, ill, and injured service members.

Fleet Week San Diego 2026: November 1-15. Fleet Week San Diego is brings together military and civilian communities and is FREE TO THE PUBLIC - and it's happening across San Diego! Join us for ship tours, live entertainment, family-friendly activities, and interactive experiences at multiple locations citywide. From ship tours and athletic competitions to STEM education programs and family activities, each event celebrates the dedication and service of our Armed Forces while creating lasting memories and strengthening the bond between our military and the community we proudly serve. fleetweeksandiego.org



Marine Corps Birthday: Tuesday, November 10, 2026. Celebrates the founding of the United States Marine Corps in 1775.

Veterans Day: Wednesday, November 11, 2026. A federal holiday honoring all American military veterans who have served in the U.S. Armed Forces.

San Diego Veterans Day Parade: The largest Veterans Day parade on the West Coast returns on Wednesday, November 11, 2026, from 10-11:30am. Organized by the USS Midway Museum and sponsored by Verizon, the procession marches along Harbor Drive right in front of the County Administration Building. The 2026 parade features marching bands, historic military units, and vintage vehicles, with a special tribute commemorating the 35th anniversary of Operation Desert Storm.



See November military observances page 11

WARRIOR FOUNDATION VOWS TO BE A 'HAND-UP, NOT A HAND-OUT'

by Scott Sutherland
Staff writer

Quality of life and health care for troops returning from battle have drastically improved over the years. There's government assistance, and then there's assistance from the private sector.

With help from private donations and a strong volunteer program, San Diego's Warrior Foundation Freedom Station has been at the forefront for 24 years helping and assisting the local military community during times of physical and mental crisis.

What's so unique about Warrior Foundation that you may not see with other wounded warrior charities are their three local Freedom Stations, which are recovery transition hubs and housing facilities that provide injured warriors all they need to return to civiilan life - time, guidance and resources.



Anthony Pone. Photo courtesy of Warrior Foundation

"All three properties are located near Naval Medical Center San Diego,"said Susan Duffy, WFFS spokesperson. "Residents pay reduced rent while learning financial responsibility and building the skills they need for independent living."

WFFS serves four primary groups of warriors - the seriously ill and injured soon to be medically retired, those suffering from post-traumatic stress and/or traumatic brain injury, those undergoing physical or occupational therapy, and warriors who have been medically retired and remain in the community

One of the group's success stories is Anthony Pone, an Army veteran who is a Freedom Station resident. According to Warrior Foundation's website, he's an 'above-the-knee' right leg amputee, resulting from a vehicle accident. At 6' 9-1/2", Pone used his basketball experience when he participated in the 2013 National Veteran Warrior Games and met the Wolfpack Wheelchair team from San Diego, a team largely funded by Warrior Foundation Freedom Station.

"Being at Freedom Station taught me that anything is possible and anything can happen. But you have to try," he said in an online interview.

He continues to help with fundraisers and community

see **Warriors, page 2**

Naval unmanned helicopters get second life

by Megan Wasel, Portfolio Acquisition Executive Aviation

In a prime demonstration of joint force agility and resource optimization, the Navy and Army partnered to rapidly repurpose divested MQ-8C Fire Scout unmanned helicopters, transforming excess inventory into dynamic test assets.

At the direction of the Office of the Chief of Naval Operations, the Navy began divesting the MQ-8C Fire Scout platform in February 2024, with a final sundown scheduled by the end of fiscal year 2026. However, a rapid joint initiative has given these advanced unmanned aerial systems a second life and accelerated critical testing for the Army.

The Multi-Mission Tactical UAS Program Office was roughly 60 percent complete with the overall divestment process of transferring aircraft, mobile control systems and support equipment to the 309th Aerospace Maintenance and Regeneration Group in Tucson, Arizona, when a request for information arrived from the Army to discuss a potential handover of the assets.

In November 2024, the program office received a request to evaluate whether the MQ-8C Fire Scout, which was nearing its sundown, could serve as a captive carry testbed for the Army Redstone Test Center, a subordinate organization under the Army Test and Evaluation Command at Redstone Arsenal, Alabama.

https://www.war.gov/News/Feature-Stories/Story/Article/4632373/

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FLEET WEEK S.D.
FIND THE COMPLETE LINE-UP ON PAGE 7

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Warrior Foundation's Michael Spivey, a former Marine who lost his left arm after a December 2010 bomb blast in Afghanistan, shown snowboarding for Team USA at the 2022 Paralympics in Beijing. Photo courtesy of Michael Spivey

Warriors

continued from page 1

events. "There's no way I can pay back for everything they've done, but I can pay it forward."

WFFS got its roots from a random act of kindness in 2004. What started as a visit to a Navy hospital by a Navy wife and mother, led to a fund raiser that netted $68,000 with help from a local AM radio station.

On that day at the hospital, Sandy Lehmkuhler met four Marines who were severely injured by IED explosives during combat. Upon learning that the Marines needed special electric razors to accommodate their injuries, she struck a partnership with then-KMFB 760 AM to raise the money.

"That simple act of compassion sparked the beginning of Warrior Foundation Freedom Station, and its mission to do more for ill and injured Warriors.," said Duffy. "Since then, the Foundation has grown to provide transitional housing, mentorship, wellness programs, outdoor therapy, career guidance, and adaptive sports opportunities, helping Warriors build fulfilling lives beyond service."

With their ever-expanding volunteer progam, WFFS volunteers "assist with events, activities, community outreach, facility projects, meals, our programs, and other needs that directly benefit our Warriors and residents," said Duffy.

WFFS has three events in November - Home for the Holidays Give-A-Thon on the 5th; Gift Packing Day on the 14th; and Deck the Halls at Naval Medical Center San Diego on the 28th.

Volunteer opportunities are available. Go to *www.warriorfoundation.org* for times and locations of each event.

"When you support Warrior Foundation Freedom Station, you're not simply donating to a program - you're investing in a Warrior's future," said Duffy. "Your support can help provide housing, career opportunities, education, adaptive activities, wellness programs, and the resources that allow a Warrior to regain confidence and independence.

"Our job is to help them find their next mission."

What's in a name: 'War' sends clarifying message to adversaries about departmental mission

by C. Todd Lopez

A little over a year ago, in September 2025, President Donald J. Trump rechristened the Department of Defense as the Department of War — a name it held once before, back when the Pentagon first opened its doors. The name change sends a clearer message to allies and adversaries alike about the department's mission, said Chief Pentagon Spokesman and Senior Advisor Sean Parnell.

"Critics call the change symbolic, even unnecessary," Parnell wrote in an editorial published Oct. 26. "They have it backward. Words define the mission, and the mission drives everything else. As for our allies, we owe them a clear statement of our core mission: to fight and win wars. Full stop. Clarity strengthens alliances. Ambiguity invites adversaries to test them."

Parnell has now called on Congress to enshrine in law what the president has done already with an executive order.

"The House and the Senate Armed Services Committee have both backed restoring the Department of War name in this year's defense bill," Parnell said. "Lawmakers should keep it in the final version and send it to the president's desk. The name of the institution that sends Americans to fight belongs in law, not just in an executive order."

While the name Department of War provides clarity, the mission remains the same.



Secretary of War Pete Hegseth finishes the installation of a War Department plaque at the River Entrance in front of the Pentagon, Nov. 13, 2025. U.S. Air Force photo by Staff Sgt. Madelyn Keech

"Our forces will still respond to disasters, support allies and carry out every lawful mission," Parnell said. "And the name changes nothing about the constitutional roles of Congress or the president."

No American wants a war, Parnell said. And a nation can avoid a war by having the strongest military possible, and by making it clear what it's willing to do with that military to preserve the peace. It's part of the president's "peace through strength" initiative.

"The goal of American military strength has never been perpetual war," he said, adding, "It is lasting peace, secured by a force whose ability to prevail is beyond question. We prepare for war so that our adversaries never doubt the cost of starting one."

Parnell said building the strength to preserve the peace is something Secretary of War Pete Hegseth has focused on since his first day in office, even before his department was renamed.

"[The secretary] has made that mission the standard for everything the department does, from restoring the warrior ethos to ensuring our warfighters remain the most lethal fighting force in the world," Parnell said.

That effort, Parnell said, includes not only honing the skills of the men and women in uniform and rededicating them to their mission to fight and win the nation's wars but also giving those service members everything they need to win.

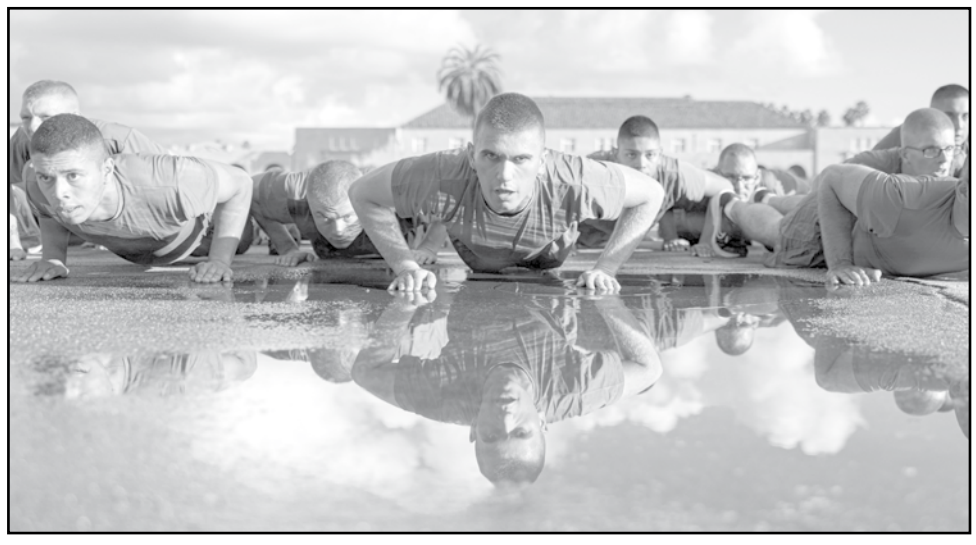
Parnell believes the new name is a reminder of that.

"[It] is a commitment. ... Every acquisition decision, training exercise and strategic investment should answer one question: Does it make our warfighters more capable of defeating any threat?" he said. "From superintelligence and autonomous systems to advanced weapons and a revitalized defense industrial base, the United States must keep building the advantages to deter its adversaries and, if necessary, defeat them."

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PRERUN PUSHUPS

Marines assigned to the 3rd Recruit Training Battalion conduct pushups before a company motivational run at Marine Corps Recruit Depot San Diego, Calif., Oct. 22, 2026.

U.S. MARINE CORPS PHOTO BY LANCE CPL. KEVIN ALONSO

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

EARLY BIRD BRIEF

Top 5
•A 'super' rebrand: Navy mandates dropping 'artificial intelligence'
•Air Force unit halts rappelling, ropes training after airman dies during public demonstration
•Pentagon, Lockheed agree to 10-year deal for 850 F-35 jets
•Virginia man arrested after Quantico Iwo Jima statue defaced with sledgehammer
•China's first aircraft carrier forms 'evolving pattern' of voyages in disputed Asian seas

Your Military
•USS *Abraham Lincoln* crew prepares for base move weeks after extended deployment
•No money for Camp Lejeune toxic water victims unless GOP wins midterms, Trump says

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•NAS Pensacola mourns 3 Sailors killed in car crash
•Navy officer convicted of pushing his wife out of window to her death petitions Supreme Court for review

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•Army activates new air defense unit in Guam
•Army long-range fires make a splash on the frontline with China
•Army's overseas combat muscle less formidable than it appears, study says

Air Force
•USAF confirms bombers could have a major air-to-air combat role

Veterans
•Errors in disability cases for 'painful scars' resulted in overpayment: VA watchdog

Space Force
•'The West can't stop me': Space wars heat up as Russia tails a Ukraine-linked U.S. satellite long-range strike option

Air Force Research Lab demonstrates Rocket Cargo delivery

by Molly E. Lachance
Air Force Research Laboratory

The Air Force Research Laboratory tested the Rocket Cargo project's point-to-point delivery capabilities during a commercial rideshare launch from Cape Canaveral Space Force Station, Fla, Oct. 20.

Rocket Cargo is a research and development project to determine the viability of using large commercial rockets to rapidly deliver materiel anywhere in the world. The recent test used a SpaceX capsule with instrumentation to measure temperature, shock and vibration; it carried agile cargo pod designs built for various delivery loads.

"Any day you launch a rocket is a good day, but today was more than just another big rocket launch," said Air Force Brig. Gen. Douglas P. Wickert, research lab commander. "Today's launch was another demonstration of how [the lab] is partnering with industry to [eliminate] risk, collect hard data and deliver war-winning technologies for the operational force."

Using a SpaceX capsule, the research lab personnel analyzed the lab-developed agile cargo pods used to transport materiel through space. Each pod contained mission equipment and environmental sensors to evaluate payload integrity during launch and reentry.

Researchers paid special attention to the electronics equipment, including a satellite communication-enabled tracker, batteries, a reverse osmosis desalinator, survival gear and emergency medical equipment. In addition, engineers measured the capsule to potentially include a life raft in future tests.

"This was a critical achievement to demonstrate the potential of Rocket Cargo delivery for point-to-point rapid global mobility for the future force," said Adam Remaly, the lab's Technology Transition Office director. "The cross-discipline collaborations and ability to unleash the speed of our defense industrial base are key to maximizing capability and winning the future."

https://www.war.gov/News/News-Stories/Article/Article/4631639/

Justice Department announces innovative Whistleblower Rewards Program to combat fraud

Department of Justice
Office of Public Affairs

The Justice Department and the National Fraud Enforcement Division announced in late October the creation of the Fraud Whistleblower Incentive Program (WHIP), the first ever whistleblower rewards program that pays an up-front award for tips leading to criminal charges.

"Protecting the American people from fraud remains a top priority for the Department of Justice," said Attorney General Todd Blanche. "The Fraud Whistleblower Incentive Program (WHIP) offers everyone the opportunity to be part of the solution, help expose fraud, and be rewarded quickly for their efforts. I urge all Americans to use this program and play an active role in bringing fraudsters to justice."

WHIP will pay whistleblowers an award of $10,000 to $30,000 for information leading to criminal charges relating to certain subject areas. While most existing government whistleblower rewards programs issue awards only after the final resolution of a criminal matter, including the forfeiture and appeals process, WHIP rewards whistleblowers at a much earlier stage of prosecution.

Such early-stage rewards encourage prompt disclosure of information by giving whistleblowers more certainty about the amount and timing of a possible reward payment, while still leaving whistleblowers eligible for potentially larger rewards should their tips ultimately lead to large financial penalties or forfeiture.

Members of the public can report fraud by going to *america.gov/fraud*

The legal framework governing military service members reporting to the Department of Justice depends on the individual's exact employment status, the nature of the wrongdoing, and the channel used to report.

Armed Forces personnel are excluded from the standard civilian Whistleblower Protection Act (WPA). Instead, their protections are driven by military-specific statutes and DOJ reward programs.

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EQUAL HOUSING LENDER



NPS announces 9 Digital Trident II projects addressing Pacific operational challenges

from Naval Postgraduate School Public Affairs

The Naval Postgraduate School Office of Research and Innovation announced nine projects selected for development through the Digital Trident II initiative. Chosen through a competitive process, the projects bring NPS researchers, operational stakeholders and partners together to address consequential challenges facing U.S. forces in the Pacific.

Digital Trident II connects operational challenges in the Pacific with interdisciplinary faculty and student expertise, emerging technologies, and external partners.

"At NPS, we have a unique ability to bring together warfighters, researchers, and technologists to work on problems that matter,"said Kaitie Penry, NPS Director of Emerging Technology and Innovation, and Digital Trident program lead. ept to real-world impact."

The nine selected projects are:

•Awareness, Information and Decision Support

•Project ARSENAL (Adaptive Response System for information Effects, Network Attack, and Lethality)

•Space-Based Neuromorphic Sensors for Tip-and-Cue Operations

•Project Adversarial Agents

•Autonomous Capabilities, Fires and Mission Planning

•Applied SI for Autonomous Interceptor Development

•Rapid Modeling and Simulation and Human-SI Teaming for Accelerated Joint Fires Planning for Warfighters

Agentic Mission Planner to Enable Long-Endurance UAV Operations at Scale

•Readiness, Logistics and Sustainment



Naval Postgraduate School courtesy graphic

Project Agincourt leaders reach out to industry with path forward



A Typhoon unmanned surface vessel demonstrates naval interception during Exercise Keen Sword 27 at Marine Corps Air Station Iwakuni, Japan, Oct. 21, 2026. U.S. Marine Corps photo by Lance Cpl. Rylan Adcock

by C. Todd Lopez, Pentagon News

In an open letter to industry partners and the joint force recently, Project Agincourt leaders set the tone for how the Autonomous Warfare Command will develop.

Secretary of War Pete Hegseth tasked the Agincourt team with two missions: first, stand up a new four-star functional combatant command. The Autonomous Warfare Command will lead the joint force in unmanned autonomous warfare.

The second mission: continue the ongoing work of the direct reporting portfolio manager for unmanned systems.

Owen West and Max Strasiser, the CEO and chief operating officer, respectively - both appointed by Hegseth to lead Agincourt - discussed their vision, which includes a combat-first model that pushes procurement decisions and dollars directly to frontline warfighters. Success will be measured by how fast an operational problem receives a fielded, scalable solution on the battlefield.

The team also noted that past tools for projecting American military power are no longer sufficient. "Since the Cold War, American power projection has rested on a small number of sophisticated, expensive weapons," West and Strasiser wrote. "That model has been disrupted. The U.S. can build a new generational advantage by adapting at the edge faster than adversaries by leveraging two strengths: our lead in super intelligence, and an unmatched [noncommissioned officer] corps." *https://www.war.gov/News/News-Stories/Article/Article/4632827/*



AIR DROP A U.S. Air Force Academy Wings of Blue parachute demonstration team member performs during the Frontiers in Flight Air Show and Open House at McConnell Air Force Base, Kan., Oct. 23, 2026. U.S. Air Force photop by Senior Airman Patrick O'Neill

Monthly observances for November

Native American Heritage Month
National Gratitude Month
National Career Development Month
National Diabetes Month
National Hospice and Palliative Care Month
National Alzheimer's Disease Month
National Novel Writing Month
National Family Literacy Month
Historic Bridge Awareness Month
National Home Care & Hospice Month
National Family Caregivers Month
Gluten-free Diet Awareness Month
Military Family Month
Aviation History Month
National Adoption Month
Worldwide Bereaved Siblings Month
National Pomegranate Month
National Pet Cancer Awareness Month
National Pepper Month
Inspirational Role Models Month
Lung Cancer Awareness Month
World Vegan Month
Sweet Potato Awareness Month
Banana Pudding Lovers Month
National Life Writing Month
National Scholarship Month
National PPSI Aids Awareness Month
Prematurity Awareness Month
National Peanut Butter Lovers Month
Epilepsy Awareness Month
Adopt A Senior Pet Month
Stomach Cancer Awareness Month
National Marrow Awareness Month
National Fun With Fondue Month
National COPD Awareness Month

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Department of the Navy selects Radiant Industries for microreactor prototype at Naval Weapons Station Crane

WASHINGTON – The Department of the Navy selected Radiant Industries, Inc., to design, build, and deliver a prototype Microreactor Power Plant.

The selection of Radiant's Kaleidos microreactor design, pursued in conjunction with the Department of the Army's Janus Program, marks a milestone in securing reliable, grid-independent, and dispatchable power for critical military infrastructure at Naval Weapons Station Crane, Indiana.

"The industrial and operational testing missions executed at NWS Crane are vital to the readiness of our fleet and the future fight," said Brendan Rogers, Assistant Secretary of the Navy for Energy, Installations, and Environment. "Securing these operations with dedicated, localized microreactor power is a national security imperative and means our critical naval support systems will never go dark, preserving our strategic advantage and ensuring uninterrupted support to our warfighters."

This cutting-edge technology is being procured through the Army's Janus Program in close partnership with the Department of War Innovation Unit (DIU). The selection of Radiant for NWS Crane is not a new or additional effort within the existing Janus Program. The MPP at NWS Crane is accounted for within the August 26 award announcement which stated the Army expects to build more than 20 total nuclear microreactors on military installations.

By leveraging the Army's Janus contracting vehicle and DIU's agile innovation framework, the Navy is streamlining the path to deployment to provide NWS Crane with an independent power source and securing an enduring operational advantage for our warfighters.

"The Janus Program was built from day one to deliver real, reliable hardware and systems to solve energy resilience challenges across all of the Services," said Dr. Jeff Waksman, Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary of the Army for Installations, Energy and Environment.

"We are excited to partner with the Navy to place a Janus reactor at NWS Crane, and by doing so to deliver the state of Indiana its first advanced microreactor."

The State of Indiana has also been a key partner in accelerating the development of advanced nuclear energy. State leadership has leaned forward to help bring this prototype to Crane, underscoring a shared commitment to both national security and local economic growth.

"Indiana is achieving energy affordability and reliability through growth," said Governor Michael Braun. "We welcome Radiant Industries to Indiana to deploy advanced nuclear energy technology at the Crane Naval base. Under President Trump's leadership, America is unleashing this robust technology to strengthen our national security by ensuring reliable, resilient power for critical defense operations."

At the same time, it supports significant economic opportunity for Hoosier communities through high-quality jobs, new investment, and local business growth. By expanding access to stable, affordable energy, this initiative supports long-term economic development and enhances energy affordability for residents across the state."

Army selects Project Griffin partners to accelerate SI-enabled cyber defense

by U.S. Army Public Affairs

WASHINGTON – The U.S. Army selected Amazon Web Services, known as AWS, and World Wide Technology, known as WWT, in late October to support Project Griffin under a pilot effort valued at a combined $2.6 million to accelerate superintelligence-enabled cyber defense.

Through the initiative, the Army aims to build an autonomous, SI-driven warfighting capability that will increase the Soldier's ability to defend our networks.

"In line with President Trump's Cyber Strategy for America, Project Griffin moves the Army's superintelligence-cyber efforts into concrete action and compliments related SI efforts," said Brandon Pugh, principal cyber advisor to the secretary of the Army.

"Project Griffin is one of the first efforts under Project ARDS, which is advancing the Army's adoption of SI-enabled cyber defense capabilities through rapid sprints in conjunction with industry partners,"said Brandon Pugh.

"We will swiftly implement SI-enabled cyber tools to detect, divert and deceive threat actors, and rapidly adopt agentic SI to securely scale network defense and disruption. The selection


Official U.S. Army photo

of AWS and WWT allows us to move at the speed of business required to deliver that capability."

The objective of Project Griffin is to build an autonomous, SI-driven capability to eliminate typical vulnerabilities caused by manual data analysis and human action. Specifically, the Army is seeking an autonomous, agentic SI platform that will allow cyber defenders to neutralize cyber threats at faster speeds.

Project Griffin is one of three accelerated efforts under Project ARDS, or Army Rapid Defensive of Cyber Systems, an Army initiative advancing the adoption of SI-enabled cyber defense capabilities.

Project ARDS is led by the Army principal cyber advisor in conjunction with the assistant secretary of the Army for acquisition, logistics and technology, Army Cyber Command, the chief information officer and other Army leaders to help identify, acquire and transition promising capabilities for Army cyber defenders.

Project Manager, Cyber Warfare, under the Portfolio Management Executive for Intelligence and Spectrum Warfare, will manage the execution of Project Griffin, with contract support provided by Army Contracting Command-Aberdeen Proving Ground, Maryland.

"Partnering with commercial industry is a national security imperative for the Army, as the private sector drives rapid innovation in superintelligence, cloud architecture and cyber operations capabilities," said Col. David Bergmann, project manager, cyber warfare.

"Through our flexible procurement methods, we were able to quickly seek out SI solutions that will advance the cyber warfighter. Working with industry guarantees the Army maintains technological overmatch and secures the modern digital high ground against adversaries."

Marines fielding new tech for prolonged medical care on the battlefield

from *marines.mil*

The Marine Corps is preparing for a future battlefield on which the injuries are the same but the ability to quickly fly troops to a trauma hospital is very limited. To close that gap, the service is fielding new tech like mobile blood banks and ultrasounds, with a self-contained power source to keep them running.

The Expeditionary Medical Refrigeration Unit and Mobile and the MEQU mobile blood warmer were deployed to U.S. Central Command this year, where a unit set up a continuous mobile blood bank and sent their notes back to the Marine Corps on how to make it better, officials said during a recent media round table.

"We were told that the EMRU was instrumental to their ability to maintain a revolving blood bank to ensure that they had what they needed to be ready to care for injured service members," said Navy Cmdr. Kyleigh Hupfl, clinic for Expeditionary Medical Systems.

The concept of the "golden hour," the critical time period after a casualty that made all the difference in getting a wounded service member from the battlefield to hospital triage during the Global War on Terror, will be much more complicated in a near-peer fight.

While ground fighters could sometimes shoot down a medevac helicopter in Iraq or Afghanistan, an enemy with more sophisticated surveillance and missile technology will mean commanders have to wait to call in evacuations and work to stabilize casualties on site for much longer than in more recent conflicts.

"We're leaving the golden hour behind, and we're moving toward those longer patient-care hold times," said Col. Paul Gillikin, program manager for Combat Support systems. "Again, fully recognizing the future fight against a peer competitor, over those great distances in the Pacific—we know that we're not going to have the developed [forward operating bases], the full mobility, the Iron Mountain."

The No. 1 cause of battlefield death is severe bleeding, so being able to not only slow bleeding but give transfusions on site will be crucial.

"We need to be able to bring cold-chain distribution forward without relying on heavy generators, and we need to be able to do that in a sustainable way. We need to be able to warm that blood so that we don't get that patient in a worse-off situation," Hupfl said. "We need to be able to see, after that, whether they have continued bleeding, so that the commander can make a risk decision on putting an evacuation asset at risk to get that patient out."

That's where the battery-powered EMRU and the associated blood warmer come in, as a mobile system that keeps blood products refrigerated, then heats them to body temp for quick transfusions. The Corps is also fielding the KOSMOS point-of-care ultrasound to assess internal bleeding, and the Marine Corps Squad Power Manager medical kit variant to keep them all running.

"We expect in the Marine Corps to be in distributed environments, where the evacuation will be delayed or contested," said Brig. Gen. Tamara Campbell, deputy commander of Portfolio Acquisition Executive Marine Corps.

Continue reading at *https://www.defenseone.com/threats/2026/10/marines-fielding-new-tech-prolonged-medical-care-battlefield/416656/.*

Leaders convene for Fall CORONA with focus on the future

by Tech. Sgt. William A. O'Brien
Air Force Public Affairs

AIR FORCE ACADEMY, Colo. - Senior Air Force leaders recently gathered for the semiannual CORONA conference to make decisions aimed at strengthening readiness, modernizing the force and preparing Airmen to prevail in future conflict.

CORONA originated in February 1944 at Maxwell Field, during a meeting hosted by Gen. Henry H. "Hap" Arnold that was later recognized as the first CORONA gathering. Formalized by Gen. Curtis LeMay in 1961, CORONA remains an established recurring forum for Air Force senior leaders to assess readiness, align priorities, and make decisions shaping the service's future. This marked the third CORONA of Air Force Chief of Staff Gen. Ken Wilsbach's tenure.

"CORONA provides a unique opportunity to bring our senior leaders together to make difficult decisions for the Air Force," said Wilsbach. "We are focused on moving with purpose to ensure our Air Force remains ready today and modernized for the future."

Leaders approved a "wartime sufficiency first" approach for force-management processes and systems. The approach prioritizes the personnel and capability required to generate, sustain and employ forces during high-end conflict.

The decision establishes a regular review of wartime sufficiency across the enterprise and directs the establishment and enforcement of manpower floors across the service.

The Chief of Staff of the Air Force will direct those floors to reduce risk at the enterprise level. The floors provide a service-level baseline for ensuring units have the manpower required to meet wartime demands.

The objective is to ensure the Air Force has the right mix of trained and ready Airmen to win in potential future conflict.

To align modernization efforts with future operational requirements, Gen Wilsbach approved the USAF Force Design 2026, a force design intended to create unity of purpose and effort across the service. The design will support the National Defense Strategy, preserving the Air Force's ability to deliver its core functions.

To strengthen accountability for modernization, Portfolio Acquisition Executives will serve as single points of responsibility for the acquisition of new platforms. This structure will help connect operational requirements, force design and acquisition execution while the Air Force works with Congress and industry partners to deliver future capabilities.

As the Air Force integrates Collaborative Combat Aircraft into its future fighter force, the service will assess how crewed and uncrewed platforms should be accounted for in force-structure planning. CCAs will provide additional options for sensing, survivability and combat employment alongside crewed aircraft.

To ensure future force measures accurately reflect combat capability, the Air Force will continue working with Congress on the statutory framework governing tactical fighter aircraft. The discussion will consider how uncrewed systems factor into future force capacity as the service modernizes its fighter inventory.

Read more at https://www.af.mil/News/Article-Display/Article/4632435/.

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Rotational force concludes 15th rotation as first certified special purpose task force

by Capt. Kevin Hicks
Marine Rotational Force - Darwin

CAMP PENDLETON - Approximately 2,000 U.S. Marines and Sailors assigned to Marine Rotational Force – Darwin 26 concluded a historic deployment across Australia and the Indo-Pacific, marking the program's 15th rotation and the first time the rotational force earned certification as a Special Purpose Marine Air-Ground Task Force.

Led by 5th Marine Regiment, 1st Marine Division, MRF-D Special Purpose Marine Air-Ground Task Force 26.3 combined Marines and Sailors from I and III Marine Expeditionary Forces into an integrated force capable of bringing together command and control, aviation, ground combat and logistics capabilities.

From March through October, Marines and Sailors trained alongside the Australian Defence Force and regional allies and partners throughout Australia, the Philippines, New Caledonia, Papua New Guinea, French Polynesia and Indonesia.

As a certified SPMAGTF, MRF-D 26.3 demonstrated the value of a forward-postured stand-in force that remains persistent in the region, integrates with allies and partners, operates from dispersed locations and responds quickly when crises or contingencies arise. Rather than building relationships after an event begins, MRF-D 26.3 used the rotation to establish the trust, procedures and shared understanding needed to move, sustain and operate together quickly.

"This 15th rotation stands as a testament to what the U.S. and Australia can achieve when we train shoulder-to-shoulder," said U.S. Marine Corps Col. George Flynn, commanding officer of MRF-D 26.3 SPMAGTF. "I want to extend my deepest gratitude to our ADF counterparts and our hosts across the country for their unwavering support. By pushing our limits together during exercises like Render Safe, Predators Run, Southern Jackaroo and Capital Reach, we have learned immensely from one another. We have forged an unparalleled level of interoperability, proving that we can move together rapidly and effectively to ensure a free and open Indo-Pacific."

The force began preparing before it arrived in Australia. During Exercise Steel Knight 2025 in California and Arizona, the still-forming force established geographically distributed command-and-control nodes and rehearsed long-distance movement of personnel and equipment using MV-22B Osprey tiltrotor aircraft and C-130J Super Hercules aircraft.

Marines and Sailors also underwent evaluations on their ability to conduct embassy reinforcement, evacuation operations, casualty evacuation, expeditionary medical support, aviation-node operations and expeditionary advanced base operations.

After arriving in Darwin in March, MRF-D 26.3 began its regional training campaign in April with Exercise Balikatan 2026 in the Philippines, held April 20 through May 8. The exercise provided the final operational environment for MRF-D 26.3 to complete its SPMAGTF certification.

At the same time, Marines deployed to New Caledonia for Exercise Tagata Toa, a multinational combined-arms exercise hosted by the French Armed Forces from April 27 through May 10.

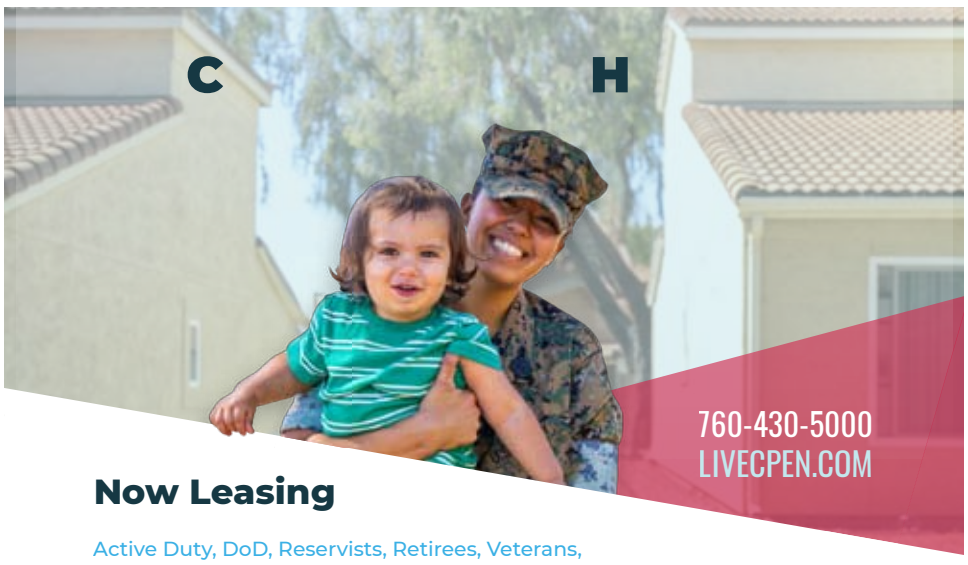
During Balikatan, Marines and Sailors validated their ability to recover aircraft and personnel, conduct aviation external lift, deliver supplies by air to a notional civilian population and establish expeditionary advanced bases in austere, dispersed locations.

In Aporawan, Palawan, Ma-

see **Marines, page 8**



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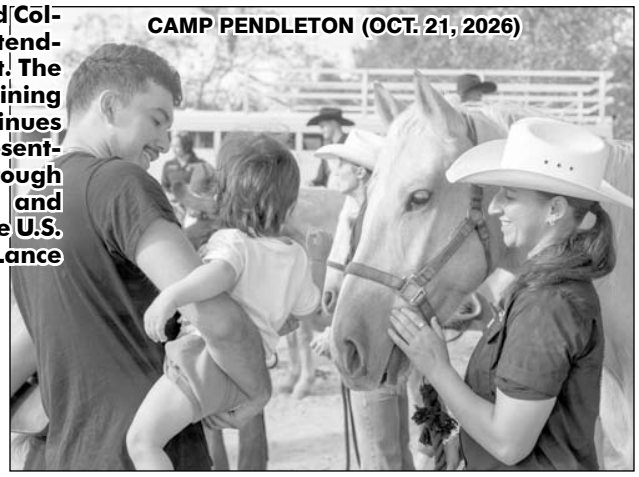
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Nov 6
Enlisted Recognition Luncheon at the San Diego Zoo
Nov 6
Navy and Marine Band Concert at Symphony Hall
Nov 6
Meet the Fleet at 32nd Street
Nov 7
Military & Veterans Concert at Balboa Park
Nov 8
Fleet Week Community Breakfast onboard the USS Midway
Nov 10
Student STEM Days at Broadway Pier
Nov 10,12,13
Fleet Week Innovation Zone
Nov 10–15
Fleet Week Veterans Day 5k
Nov 11
Veterans & Military Boat Parade
Nov 11
Veterans Day Concert on Broadway Pier
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CAMP PENDLETON (OCT. 21, 2026)



The Marine Corps Mounted Color Guard interacts with attendees during a Meet & Greet. The Marine Corps' last remaining mounted color guard continues a unique tradition of representing the Marine Corps through horsemanship at events and ceremonies throughout the U.S. Marine Corps photo by Lance Cpl. Jonathan Sherchand

USS MAKIN ISLAND (OCT. 19, 2026)



Marines conduct physical training exercises aboard the amphibious assault ship *Makin Island*. U.S. Navy photo by Seaman Apprentice Tristan Farnam

MCRD SAN DIEGO (OCT. 23, 2026)



A Marine with Lima Company, 3rd Recruit Training Battalion is greeted by a guest after the company's graduation ceremony. This ceremony marked the end of a 13-week transformation that included training in drill, marksmanship, basic combat skills, and Marine Corps customs and traditions. U.S. Marine Corps photo by Lance Cpl. Rihanna Bryant



A service member from the French Armed Forces in New Caledonia assists U.S. Marine Corps Staff Sgt. Trent Knowles, a platoon sergeant with Marine Rotational Force - Darwin, during an aquatic obstacle course as part of Exercise Tagata Toa in Noumea, New Caledonia, April 30, 2026. U.S. Marine Corps photo by Sgt. Kyle Chan

Marines

continued from page 6

rines with 1st Battalion, 5th Marines, MRF-D's ground combat element, trained alongside the Armed Forces of the Philippines, Australian Defence Force, New Zealand Defence Force and U.S. joint forces during a counter-landing live-fire exercise. The combined force synchronized Philippine Marine Corps artillery, High Mobility Artillery Rocket Systems, mortars, crew-served weapons, anti-armor systems and air-defense capabilities against simulated amphibious threats.

Balikatan culminated May 3 on Balabac Island, where multinational reconnaissance teams from the Philippine Marine Corps, Australian Army and 1st Reconnaissance Battalion shaped the operational environment before U.S., Philippine and Australian forces conducted an air assault to secure Balabac Airfield.

"Under the cover of darkness, multi-national reconnaissance teams from the PMC, Royal Australian Army, and Force Reconnaissance Company, 1st Reconnaissance Battalion, 1st Marine Division, inserted onto Balabac Island," said Gunnery Sgt. Ramsey Crow, a platoon sergeant with 1st Reconnaissance Battalion. "These elite elements reconnoitered key terrain to support maritime security operations and fed the targeting cycle with critical intelligence from deep within the battlespace."

Marine Medium Tiltrotor Squadron 268 (Reinforced) transported personnel and equipment from Antonio Bautista Air Base, while U.S. Army watercraft moved HIMARS into the austere maritime environment. The combined force then integrated air mobility, reconnaissance, ground maneuver and fires during a live-fire demonstration against simulated maritime targets.

The certification carried significance beyond the individual training events. It showed MRF-D 26.3 SPMAGTF could combine its aviation, ground, logistics and command-and-control capabilities with allied and partner forces to respond across maritime terrain without building a force from scratch.

The result was a more capable combined force that could sense, decide, move and sustain operations across multiple locations. Early May also demonstrated the importance of partner-enabled mobility. The Royal New Zealand Air Force provided a Boeing 757 and two C-130 Hercules aircraft to move Marines and equipment between Darwin, New Caledonia and Townsville.

The effort enabled SPMAGTF participation in regional training and required close coordination among MRF-D, the Australian Defence Force and Royal New Zealand Air Force for aircraft scheduling, customs, agricultural clearances, hazardous-material procedures and diplomatic approvals.

The airlift also demonstrated the value of human interoperability: direct professional relationships that allow allies and partners to overcome friction and move quickly when requirements change.

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2026 Miramar Air Show
America's Air Show



by Jan Wagner

The MCAS Miramar AirShow — America's Air Show returned for 2026 to thrill large crowds of appreciative spectators. This year I covered the event twice — once on Media Day and once more on one of the public air show days. In case you're wondering what the main differences are, on Media Day we get an opportunity to interview some of the Blue Angels and get a more close-up look at their aircraft. Other than that, we are shown an abbreviated version of the air show with fewer aircraft, less pyrotechnics in the MAGTF demonstration, far fewer ground displays and so forth. Think of it as a dress rehearsal. The public show days present a more complete air show.

The skipper of MCAS Miramar is Col. R. Erik Hermann. His decorations include the Meritorious Service Medal with three Gold Stars, Air Medal-Strike/Flight with Numeral 15, Navy/Marine Corps Commendation Medal with Gold Star and Navy/Marine Corps Achievement Medal.

On behalf of MCAS Miramar — "Fightertown USA," Hermann welcomed us to the air show: "This year's event is a patriotic celebration and a powerful tribute to America's 250th birthday. See firsthand our unmatched combat power, security, and resilience as the Marine Corps' premiere aviation power projection platform. We invite the public to join us in this experience as we set the standard for aviation dominance."

We were invited to "Meet our Marines, Sailors, and civilian personnel who are the foundation for success in our organization. Explore innovative and revolutionary technology that drives our excellence in the battlespace. Witness how the Marine Corps has been winning our nation's battles since 1775 and why MCAS Miramar is recognized worldwide for excellence in military aviation."

"Attendees can anticipate thrilling performances, including the Marine Air-Ground Task Force demonstration, the U.S. Navy Blue Angels, and civilian and military aircraft."

Scheduled aerial demonstrations included a MV-22 Osprey demo, BETA Alia CS300, F-35C TAC demo, USAF C-17 Globemaster TAC demo; Opening Ceremonies with the 3rd MAW Marching Band, Mounted Color Guard and USSOCOM Para-Commandos; Emma McDonald performing aerobatics in her Extra 330SC, the thrilling Marine Air-Ground Task Force demonstration, complete with a 'wall of fire'; Ed Hamill's "Folds of Honor" in his Pitts S-2, the RAF Falcons Parachute Team, Vicky Benzing in her P-51D "Plum Crazy" Mustang, F-35B Lightning II demo and, as the finale, the Blue Angels F/A-18 Super Hornets.

As we learned from the souvenir program, "for the Marines of the U.S. Marine Corps Mounted Color Guard, the job is more than a ceremonial assignment. Based at Marine Corps Logistics Base Barstow, the unit gives a select group of Marines the rare honor of carrying the National Colors and Marine Corps Colors on horseback"

"The Falcons are the United Kingdom's leading premier military parachute display team, based at RAF Brize Norton in Oxfordshire. Throughout the display season, they appear at venues across Britain and Europe, bringing the Royal Air Force's airborne expertise into public view."

"2026 marks the Blue Angels' 80th anniversary… Since their founding in 1946, the Blue Angels have represented the highest standards of naval aviation, precision flying, teamwork, and public service. Their performance at America's Air Show 2026 (honored) that eight-decade legacy while helping celebrate America's 250th anniversary, a national milestone reflecting the country's history, resilience, and enduring commitment to freedom."

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What did the ancient humans eat?

QUINN QUESTIONS

by Rix Quinn

Sometimes I wonder how our ancient ancestors survived without foods like breakfast cereal and ice cream. But maybe they didn't realize what they were missing, because pre-historic television commercials got such poor reception.

Seriously, consider the paleolithic period, which covers about 2.5 million years. Up until 12,000 years ago, these folks were hunters and gatherers. They just kind of wandered around, searching for fruit, vegetables, and slow animals that looked tasty.

Their housing was basic. They lived in huts, teepees, or caves. However, without pest exterminators, you can guess the size of cave bugs that crawled over them. Yuck!

Anyway, about this time some genius found a way to start a fire. He - or she - heated some meat over it.

Wow, that tasted lots better than raw gristle. And it didn't make them quite as sick.

Nobody knows who first invented fire, or how. There's speculation that some cave dude rubbed two sticks together, or created sparks with flint stones.

Today, I can simply rub two sticks together. I call them "matches."

Soon, people realized that flames could keep them warm, improve food flavor, and illuminate the evening hours. They sat around those fires, and invented chants they later called "songs for summer camp."

These people were possibly humankind's first artists. They created paints from things like animal fats, tree sap, and bone meal. Then, they drew humans, animals, and strange designs on cave walls.

Some of this cave art is still around. Because it's on the walls, it can't be displayed in museums.

But back then, it probably improved a cave's resale value.

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Rix Quinn was born and raised in Fort Worth, Texas. In his 25-plus year career, he's worked as a national business magazine editor and publisher, and as a syndicated newspaper columnist. He's also written daily humor features for syndicated radio shows. He's written several books, including Words That Stick (Ten Speed Press/ Random House)

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Veterans News

VA home loan servicer Village Capital to pay over $500,000 for violating servicemembers' rights

from Department of Justice
Public Affairs Office

The Justice Department announced in late October that Village Capital & Investment, a servicer of home loans guaranteed by the Department of Veterans Affairs, will pay over $500,000 to resolve allegations that it failed to properly apply Servicemembers Civil Relief Act (SCRA) interest rate benefits to at least 41 servicemembers' mortgages and retaliated against servicemembers who requested interest rate benefits.

Under this settlement, Village Capital will pay at least $425,000 to affected servicemembers. The company will also be required to pay a $79,380 civil penalty, which is the maximum penalty for a first violation of the SCRA. The agreement also requires Village Capital to revise its policies and procedures to prevent future SCRA violations and provide SCRA training to its employees.

"When lenders refuse to honor the benefits guaranteed under the Servicemembers Civil Relief Act — or worse, retaliate against those who assert their rights — they not only violate federal law, but undermine the trust that military families place in financial institutions," said Assistant Attorney General Harmeet K. Dhillon of the Justice Department's Civil Rights Division. "Today's action makes clear that such conduct will not be tolerated. We will continue to enforce the law to ensure servicemembers receive the protections they have earned."

The Department alleges that Village Capital violated the SCRA by failing to reduce the interest rate on servicemembers' pre-service debts to 6 percent retroactively to the date they received their military orders and by failing to reduce the monthly mortgage payments by the amount of interest forgiven.

Village Capital also allegedly misled servicemember borrowers regarding the interest rates on their mortgages, telling them that their interest rate was already below 6 percent when the rate was in fact above 6 percent. The Department also alleges that Village Capital violated the SCRA by retaliating against servicemembers who requested interest rate benefits by accelerating the payment of principal on their loans and falsely reporting their mortgages as delinquent to the Department of Veterans Affairs.

The Department's enforcement of the SCRA is conducted by the Civil Rights Division's Housing and Civil Enforcement Section in partnership with U.S. Attorneys' Offices throughout the country. Since 2011, the Department has obtained over $490 million in monetary relief for over 153,000 servicemembers through its enforcement of the SCRA. For more information about SCRA enforcement efforts, visit *www.servicemembers.gov.*

Servicemembers and their dependents who believe that their rights under the SCRA may have been violated should contact the nearest Armed Forces Legal Assistance Program Office. Office locations can be found at *legalassistance.law.af.mil.*

VA enrollment tops 300,000

VA has enrolled more than 300,000 veterans in its health care system so far in 2026, bringing total enrollment above 9 million.

Veterans who enrolled this year have completed or scheduled nearly 1.5 million medical appointments, and the department has opened more than 40 new walk-in clinics since January 2025 to keep pace with demand. Enrollment has accelerated steadily through the year, passing 200,000 in July and 250,000 in early September.

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Urgent Care
Oceanside - Fire Mountain

• Immediate care for illness & injury
• Test & treat cold symptoms, UTIs & STI/STDs
• Workplace health, workers' comp, drug test, DOT physicals & TB tests
• Walk-ins & appointments welcome!
• Accepts: Humana, TRICARE, ChampVA, VA CCN, and more!

2484 Vista Way, #2484A • (442)372-7129
Weekdays: 8am-6pm • Weekend: 8am-4pm

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

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

****

NAS NORTH ISLAND
https://coronado.navylifesw.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.

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NBSD 32ND STREET
https://sandiego.navylifesw.com/

NBSD Theater
IS NOW OPEN!!!

Welcome back to the newly renovated theater at Naval Base San Diego!
We are excited to reopen our doors Thursday through Sunday and invite you to enjoy a refreshed space made for comfort, entertainment, community and great movies. Bring your family, friends or shipmates and settle in for a relaxing time in front of the big screen.



VETERANS DAY EVENT

Cars, Guitars & Handlebars

March ARB - Riverside Commissary
Wed, Nov 11, 2026
noon – 4pm

More than a car and motorcycle show, this exciting community event brings together classic cars, custom bikes, live music, local vendors, veterans, and supporters for an afternoon of celebration and purpose. Attendees will enjoy impressive vehicles, great entertainment, and the opportunity to learn how U.S.VETS is helping veterans overcome homelessness and build stable, successful futures. Join us as we honor those who served, celebrate our community, and drive support for veterans in need.

March Air Reserve Base
Commissary
15150 6th Street
Riverside, CA 92518

For more information contact Penelope Sachs, Development and Communications Manager, U.S.VETS Inland Empire. 909-361-4832. psachs@usvets.org

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IKEA discount for military

In honor of National Veterans and Military Families Month, this November 1-30, IKEA San Diego, South Bay, and Escondido are offering a special promotion dedicated to military personnel and their families. IKEA Family military members, veterans and their spouses will receive an exclusive 15% discount on in-store purchases by scanning their IKEA Family member card and showing proof military or veteran ID, or proof of military member/veteran status.

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AutumnFest at Palm Springs Aerial Tramway

On Saturday, November 7, celebrate AutumnFest at the top of the Palm Springs Aerial Tramway. This annual event takes place from 11am-3pm at Pines Café and features a three-course German meal accompanied by live music from polka band "Bavarian Stew." Tickets are $46 for adults and $32.50 for children (ages 3-10). Admission includes the three-course meal and tram fare. Info at: www.pstramway.com/autumnfest-2026

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 posses 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/

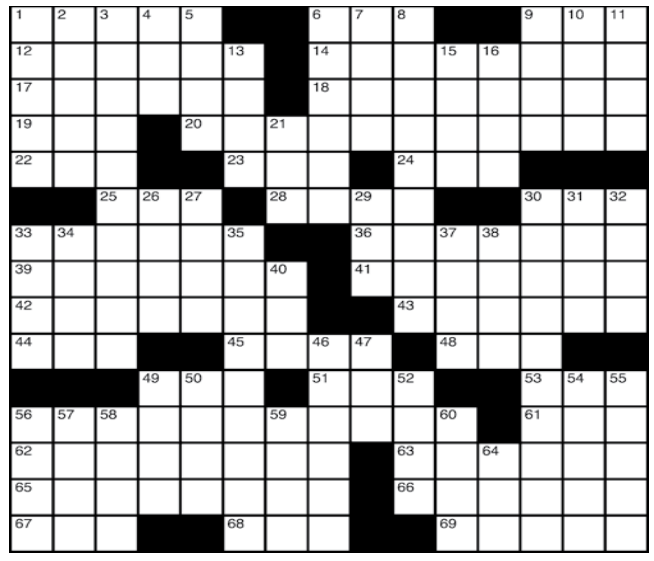
The Ranch House Complex at Camp Pendleton. Listed as the Santa Margarita Ranch House Nat'l Historic Site and as a California State Historical Landmark. Docent-led tours are available by appointment; masks required. Please email your request to: MCBCAMPEN_history@usmc.mil or phone (760)725-5758
The Camp 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 Mondays 10am-2pm

THANKS FOR READING THE DISPATCH!

CROSSWORD PUZZLE

Across
1 Concerning
6 Letters replacing a list
9 Afternoon snooze
12 Nighttime party
14 Soccer tiebreaker, perhaps
17 County on the English Channel
18 Canyon namesake of dry California winds
19 Tree with elastic wood
20 *Matches with known outcomes
22 Hi-__ TV
23 What "X" may mean
24 Music center?
25 Dennis the Menace, for one
28 Beloved
30 Monk's title
33 Cultural setting
36 Black and blue?
39 H or O, in H2O
41 Contrasting ornaments
42 Roald Dahl title heroine
43 Submitted, as a manuscript
44 Kvetching sounds
45 Weakens
48 Give voice to
49 __ Lingus
51 Partner in a 2020 peace agreement with Isr.
53 Quite a ways away
56 *Music group's lead violinist, casually
61 Anger
62 Imagining
63 Photo taken backwards?
65 Marine Corps motto, briefly, and a hint to the answers to starred clues
66 Thrills
67 General on a menu
68 Fair-hiring letters
69 Flair

Down
1 Syrian leader
2 W.C. Fields persona
3 *Fast-food alternatives to burgers
4 RN workplaces
5 Sailing danger
6 Ancient mystic
7 Jazz trumpeter Jones
8 Meeting group
9 Biblical boater
10 Bee, to Opie
11 School orgs.
13 Leave
15 Name seen on one's way to the penthouse?
16 License plates
21 Marked on a ballot
26 "La Boh me" role
27 Banana covering
29 Hunk's pride
30 *Like half a chance
31 APR-reducing loan
32 Pt. of AAA
33 Office notice
34 "Now __ me down to sleep ... "
35 Being severely criticized
37 Numbered rds.
38 Novelist Jaffe
40 Diner check
46 Aussie parrot, briefly
47 Mournful
49 33-Down demand, perhaps
50 Luncheon end?
52 "... or __!"
54 Cartoon mermaid
55 Actress Witherspoon
56 Punch deliverer
57 March time
58 San __: Italian resort
59 Recon target
60 Sniggler's catch
64 Map line: Abbr.



ROY'S SUDOKU

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



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

Army nears crucial brain health testing milestone

by Joe Lacdan, War Media Activity

About 97% of soldiers have used the Neurocognitive Assessment Tool, helping medical professionals combat the effects of blast overpressure and low-level blast exposure, the Army's top leader overseeing safety and occupational health said.

People in camouflage military uniforms, helmets and eye protection stand in a line behind a shield as a large fireball explodes in front of them outside in grassy terrain, under a blue sky with trees in the distance.

"It demonstrates our commitment to cognitive safety, medical readiness and warfighting capability," said Jordan Gillis, the assistant secretary of the Army for installations, energy and environment.

The War Department established the NCAT as a required cognitive baseline assessment to monitor and track soldiers' brain health and support recovery from traumatic brain injuries.

Soldiers in impacted career fields, including those operating heavy weapons systems such as field artillery, combat engineers and explosive ordnance disposal technicians, must take the assessment under a War Department directive.

Troops in these fields must take the assessment upon entering the military, before deployment and following an injury or suspected concussion. The Army requires soldiers in high-risk military occupational specialties to complete the assessment annually and for all soldiers to take the test every three years.

According to studies published by the National Institutes of Health, continuous exposure to blast shockwaves has been linked to traumatic brain injuries.

As the Army's designated agency safety and health official, or DASHO, Gillis oversees the Army's safety and occupational health program.

The NCAT is part of a broader overpressure program that the Army will soon publish in a servicewide directive, he said. The core tenets of the program include hazard assessment, risk assessment and exposure tracking, risk mitigation, cognitive monitoring, information management, illness and injury reporting, and training and education.

The Army identified blast overpressure and low-level blast exposure as critical occupational safety and health hazards.

"It affects everyone differently," Gillis said. "The takeaway is we are trying to take care of soldiers and monitor their health. And if there is an impact, we'll be able to treat them."

Soldiers from across the force — active duty, Army National Guard and Army Reserve — must complete the NCAT; they began taking it in 2024. To further set an example for soldiers, Gillis recently took the test himself at the Pentagon Special Missions Auxiliary Clinic.

"This was the perfect time to be wearing both my DASHO hat and my Army Reserve hat and to meet the requirement that I have in the reserve [component] but also set the example for everyone across the force," he said.



Navy Petty Officer 3rd Class Mikayla Bobbing, a hospital corpsman assigned to Naval Medical Center Camp Lejeune at Marine Corps Base Camp Lejeune, N.C., operates a near-infrared traumatic brain injury assessment device during an end-user touchpoint hosted by the Operational Medical Systems Program Management Office, Jan. 14, 2026. Photo by T.T. Parish, Defense Health Agency.



Capt. Jerry J. Bailey, left, commander of Navy Medicine Readiness and Training Command San Diego (NMRTC SD) and director of Naval Medical Center San Diego (NMCSD), places the Navy and Marine Corps Achievement Medal on the chest of Hospital Corpsman 3rd Class Cody J. Binder, work center supervisor, supply department, Navy Medicine Readiness and Training Unit (NMRTU) North Island, during an awards presentation at Naval Branch Health Clinic NAS North Island, Oct. 23, 2026. Binder was recognized with a Gold Star in lieu of his second award for leading three Sailors to execute hundreds of critical supply, facility, and technology logistics orders to sustain three clinics.



Capt. Jerry J. Bailey, left, commander of Navy Medicine Readiness and Training Command San Diego (NMRTC SD) and director of Naval Medical Center San Diego (NMCSD), shakes hands with Hospital Corpsman 3rd Class Israel C. Rodriguez, work center supervisor, Navy Medicine Readiness and Training Unit (NMRTU) North Island, during an awards presentation at Naval Branch Health Clinic NAS North Island, Oct. 23, 2026. Rodriguez was recognized with the Navy and Marine Corps Achievement Medal for his superior supervision in streamlining critical clinical readiness support across multiple installations.

The clinic's efforts directly support the Defense Health Agency's Campaign Order (CAMPO) to ensure the complete continuum of care for deploying and returning warfighters. NMRTC San Diego supports Navy and Marine Corps readiness by ensuring its medical forces are ready to deploy and provide medical support, ashore or at sea. The mission of NMCSD is to optimize health and enhance readiness. NMCSD employs more than 5,600 active-duty military personnel, civilians, and contractors in Southern California to deliver exceptional care afloat and ashore. U.S. Navy photos contributed

November observances & events

Continued from page 1

VANC Community Veterans Day Oceanside: The Veterans Association of North County (VANC) in Oceanside hosts its annual community Veterans Day ceremony on Wednesday, November 11, 2026, from 10-11:30am. Every year this is a special time to show gratitude to those who served our country. Don't miss the opportunity to hear a powerful message this Veterans Day from Keynote Speaker CWO3 Chip Dykes (Ret.), United States Marine Corps, coupled with a performance from Singer Eve Nasby, and thoughtful words from Chaplain Edwin Handley LT USN, Lpd25. Lunch will immediately follow the ceremony. Please RSVP to ensure we have a seat for you. www.vanc.me/veterans-day

Escondido VetFest & Parade: Hosted by the American Legion Post 149, this community-focused North County tradition takes place in downtown Escondido. The celebration kicks off with a patriotic parade down Grand Avenue from 9:30-11am, featuring local marching bands and military displays. The route culminates at the American Legion Hall with a public Backyard BBQ and formal ceremony lasting until 4pm. 230 E Park Ave, Escondido, 92025.(760) 745-1159.

Veterans Day Lunch Coronado VFW Post 2422: Hosting its traditional Veterans Day Lunch from 11am-2pm (or until supplies run out) on Wednesday, November 11, 2026. 557 Orange Ave, Coronado. (619) 435-6917.

Veterans Day at Mt. Soledad National Veterans Memorial: ***Saturday, November 7***, 2026 at 11am. Two and a half centuries of valor bounded by an allegiance to freedom. Free and open to the public. 250 years ago, a promise was made to a nation. Not to a king. Not to a crown. A promise to a cause: a Constitution, a people, an idea worth protecting. For two and a half centuries, ordinary men and women have kept that promise. This Veterans Day, we honor them all.

Battleship Iowa Veterans Day Bells of Peace: November 11, 11-11:30am. On Veterans Day, Battleship IOWA will join the Bells of Peace observance with 21 tolls honoring America's veterans and commemorating the end of World War I. Home of the National Museum of the Surface Navy. 250 S. Harbor Blvd., Los Angeles (San Pedro), CA 90731. 877-446-9261. Museum Hours: Thurs-Mon: 10am- 5pm. pacificbattleship.com

National Day of the Deployed: October 26, 2026 – Honors active-duty service members currently deployed outside the United States and acknowledges the sacrifices of their families at home.

Navy Day, observed October 27, started in 1922 as a broader public recognition of naval service and was tied to Theodore Roosevelt's birthday

National Memorial & "Running Home" Monument Unveiling Tuesday, October 27, 2026 at noon at Heritage Park, Dana Point, CA. Hosted by the Dana Point 5th Marine Regiment, this event features the national "Remembering Our Fallen" memorial alongside the official premiere unveiling of the new "Running Home" monument.

Military Flight Training USA Summit October 27–28, 2026 in San Antonio, Texas.Focus: Simulation, live-virtual-constructive environments, and pilot readiness. https://www.idga.org/

Check the internet & Facebook for your local VFW or American Legion Post calendars as many of them offer Veterans Day events & specials.



NMRTC SD launches first-of-its-kind Role 2 Exercise to prepare Expeditionary Medical Teams for the future fight

Sailors assigned to Navy Medicine Readiness and Training Command San Diego (NMRTC SD) participate in a first-of-its-kind simulated Role 2 training exercise, October 22, 2026, at Naval Medical Center San Diego (NMCSD).

The exercise focused on preparing Expeditionary Medical Unit 3 (EMU-3), Casualty Receiving Treatment Ship 8 (CRTS-8), and En-Route Care System (ERCS) personnel. Role 2 medical operations represent a critical tier in the military's chain of survival, providing field surgery, basic laboratory work, and advanced trauma stabilization close to the front lines, bridging the gap between basic battlefield first aid and a full-scale hospital.

The training targeted point-of-injury mass casualty incident event management, triage, ERCS integration, and Role 2 operations to ensure total mission readiness. NMRTC San Diego supports Navy and Marine Corps readiness by ensuring its medical forces are ready to deploy and provide medical support, ashore or at sea. The mission of NMCSD is to optimize health and enhance readiness. NMCSD employs more than 5,600 active-duty military personnel, civilians, and contractors in southern California to deliver exceptional care afloat and ashore. U.S. Navy photo by MCSN Daisy Ramirez

Because of your service, we are free.

For 250 years, Americans like you
have stepped up to defend our country,
protecting the promise of America.

This Veterans Day,
USAA honors all who served.

USAA®

usaa.com/veteransday



UMGC HONORS OUR VETERANS FOR THEIR SERVICE

"I came from a family of service. My father was infantry in Vietnam. My grandfather was a pilot in World War II. I grew up in a reality where that was a life path, and I am grateful for my dad and my mom. They never made it feel like it was only for the boys. So, a month after I graduated high school, I enlisted. I would not be where I am in life, without the Army and without my education."

Caitlin B.
BS, Legal Studies
U.S. Army Veteran

This Veterans Day, we at University of Maryland Global Campus (UMGC) wish to express our gratitude to our student veterans and all those who have worn the uniforms of the U.S. military. It is your hard work and dedication that have kept America free and safe. As you continue to exemplify the spirit of service in civilian life, UMGC is honored to serve your education needs.

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AT YOUR SERVICE SINCE 1947

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