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ALBERT'S FLYOVER Marines assigned to the Silent Drill Platoon perform a drill sequence during a Blue Angels' "Fat Albert" C-130J Super Hercules flyover at Marine Corps Air Station Yuma, Ariz., Feb. 25, 2025. U.S. Marine Corps photo by Lance Cpl. Christopher Prella

Hegseth directs civilians to prepare 5 bullet points on weekly work

by C. Todd Lopez, DOD News

Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth recently signed a memorandum to all Defense Department civilian employees directing them to prepare five bullet points detailing their work accomplishments from the prior week.

When issued, those same employees can expect an e-mail from the Defense Department requesting that same information, he wrote. Within 48 hours they are expected to reply to that e-mail, with their accomplishments included, and add their supervisors as recipients.

The responses, Hegseth said in a video statement released earlier this month, will be consolidated internally within the department in order to satisfy related directives from the Office of Personnel Management.

OPM sent a request for the same information, but the department's Office of Personnel and Readiness told employees to stand down on the request. Now that the department has worked with OPM to get more clear guidance on what is expected, Hegseth said employees can start writing their submissions.

"The Department of Defense initially paused this directive ... but now requires all DOD civilian employees to submit five bullet points on their previous week's achievements," Hegseth said in his memorandum.

According to guidance from the secretary, it is an e-mail from the Defense Department employees should respond to. Responses to that e-mail should not include classified or sensitive information. Additionally, Hegseth said in his memorandum, non-compliance may lead to further review.

Civilian employees who wouldn't have e-mail access in the 48 hours following delivery of the e-mail due to being on leave, shift work or other reasons, were to complete the request within 48 hours of regaining access, the secretary wrote.

Additionally, civilian employees who do not typically have e-mail access will work with their supervisors to meet the request.

In his video statement to the civilian workforce, Hegseth said civilian employees are important to the department's mission, and that submitting five bullet points about their work will support that.

"Our civilian patriots who dedicate themselves to defending this nation working for the Department of Defense are critical to our national security," he said in his video statement. "As we work to restore focus on DOD's core warfighting mission under President Trump's leadership, we recognize that we cannot accomplish that mission without the strong and important contributions of our civilian workforce."

DOD OFFERS HEALTH CARE FLEXIBLE SPENDING ACCOUNT TO SERVICE MEMBERS

by C. Todd Lopez, DOD News

Enrollment for the new Health Care Flexible Spending Account benefit runs through March 31.

Service members can sign up and put as much as \$3,300 in pretax earnings into an account each year, which can be spent on qualifying health care expenses.

"A Health Care Flexible Spending Account is an optional benefit that enables service members and their families to use pretax earnings to pay for eligible health, dental and vision care expenses," said Ronald Garner, assistant director of military compensation policy within the Defense Department.

Garner said that married service members who are both eligible for an HCFSA can maintain two separate accounts and contribute as much as \$6,600 each year.

Component service members, reservists and National Guardsmen on Active Guard Reserve duty and members of the Coast Guard Reserve on active duty for more than 180 days are all eligible to participate.

The HCFSA is already available to federal civilian employees and to many in the private sector, but it's only now available to service members. Garner said it's something the department has been working on for a while. TRICARE, he said, is an extensive program, but can't cover everything, and in some cases, an HCFSA may help.

"No health care, no health insurance program is going to cover every cost, and many costs

are unforeseeable," he said. "For instance, if your child gets sick in the middle of the night, you're not going to wait until you can go see a doctor to get some cold medicine. You're going to run down to the local pharmacy and grab some cold medicine and bring it back so that you can take care of your child. That's a cost that will be covered by the HCFSA."

Eligible service members should look closely at their own financial situation and how much they expect to spend each year on health care expenses before deciding to contribute, he said, adding that some service members are more likely to benefit from an HCFSA than others.

"I would say that, in my experience, this is going to be really valuable to military families," he said. "For example, I think that there's going to be a lot of

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Petty Officer 3rd Class Nikita Stroud monitors the vital signs on a young patient during a checkup in Jacksonville, Fla., June 29, 2023. U.S. Navy photo by Deidre Smith

Aircraft carrier Carl Vinson, warships arrive in South Korea amid North's threats

STARS AND STRIPES - A U.S. aircraft carrier and two warships arrived at South Korea's largest port March 2 in a show of force aimed at deterring North Korean provocations, the South Korean navy said. USS *Carl Vinson* pulled into Busan, about 200 miles southeast of Seoul, as part of ongoing efforts by the United States and South Korea to strengthen cooperation and train for threats posed by North Korea, according to a South Korean navy news release. The aircraft carrier was accompanied by cruiser USS *Princeton* and destroyer USS *Sterett*, the release said. All three warships are homeported in San Diego. "Our military will strongly punish any North Korean provocation, and the South Korea-U.S. alliance will support peace and stability on the Korean Peninsula and in the region through close cooperation," South Korean navy Rear Adm. Lee Nam-gyu said in the release.

Continue reading this story at <https://www.stripes.com/branches/navy/2025-03-02/carl-vinson-aircraft-carrier-south-korea-17004377.html>.

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Rear Adm. Michael Wosje, commander of Carrier Strike Group One, suits up for his 1,000th 'trap' flight aboard USS Carl Vinson on Feb. 16. Navy photo by MC3 Nate Jordan

This Navy admiral just bagged his 1,000th landing on an aircraft carrier

by Matt White
Task & Purpose

With a thunderous bang, a Navy F/A-18 slammed onto the deck of USS Carl Vinson on Feb. 16, snagging a steel wire with its tailhook to complete a "trap," the Navy's term for a safe landing on the deck of an aircraft carrier.

Though carrier traps can be famously terrifying, the pilot of this F/A-18 was probably not particularly nervous. For Rear Adm. Michael Wosje, the landing was his 1,000th time piloting a plane onto a carrier deck, a milestone that put Wosje into one of the most exclusive lists in the U.S. military: the Navy's Grand Club, the list of Navy pilots and flight officers who have recorded 1000 carrier traps.

Capt. Sterling Gilliam, a retired Navy captain with over 1,300 traps, is the director of the National Naval Aviation Museum in Pensacola, Fla., which maintains a board with the names of every aviator to hit 1,000 traps. The Tailhook Association's website also keeps an online list of self-reported 1000-trap flyers.

"Naval Aviation started in 1911, which is pretty remarkable in and of itself, that the Wright brothers flew in 1903 and less than eight years later, some clowns are trying to figure out how to do that from a boat," Gilliam told *Task & Purpose*. "But since 1911, less than 600 people - less than 400 pilots and 200 [flight officers] - have hung around long enough, lived long enough, and been successful enough to get 1,000 arrested landings. To make a sports metaphor, it's sort of like getting 3,000 hits in baseball."

Landing on an aircraft carrier is widely viewed as one of aviation's toughest skills. Pilots have to slam their 50,000-pound planes precisely onto a carrier's deck - which can be moving in high seas - and snag a steel cable with the plane's tailhook (unsurprisingly, night traps are considered particularly terrifying).

Come in too low, the plane can slam into the stern of the carrier,

as a Navy F-35C did in 2022. Too high or off-center, the hook will miss the cable and send the plane rolling off the deck, with just a few seconds to power up and fly away before hitting the water.

And if everything goes right, the plane and the pilot in it still violently slam onto the deck and get jerked from 150 miles per hour to zero in under two seconds.

Typically, said Gilliam, pilots and flight officers need about 17 years to reach the 1,000 trap mark, usually doing so in senior ranks like commander or captain while holding senior jobs in a carrier's hierarchy, like squadron commander, Air Boss or commanding officer of their carrier.

In some cases, senior pilots on a deployment nearing the milestone have been known to 'bag' their 1,000th as a pair on the same sortie.

Wosje hit the landmark last

Nimitz-class ships. Late in his career, Carter was the longest-serving superintendent of the U.S. Naval Academy and today is the President of the Ohio State University.

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Wosje hit the landmark last

Pentagon deploys stryker brigade, aviation battalion to southern border

by Army Maj. Wes Shinego, DOD News

The Pentagon is deploying a Stryker Brigade Combat Team and a General Support Aviation Battalion to the southwestern border, accelerating efforts to fulfill President Donald J. Trump's directive to bolster military support in securing the U.S. -Mexico border. The units, equipped with wheeled vehicle and air capabilities, are set to reinforce border operations in the coming weeks, Pentagon Press Secretary Sean Parnell announced March 1.

Each SBCT is a mechanized infantry force of approximately 4,400 soldiers, and the Army's nine SBCTs - seven active-duty and two National Guard - are known for their rapid deployment and versatility. Built around the Stryker vehicle - an eight-wheeled armored platform - the brigade balances mobility, protection and firepower. Capable of transport via C-130 Hercules aircraft within 96 hours, the Stryker excels in operations requiring swift response.

Complementing this, the GSAB, with roughly 650 troops, brings aviation muscle - UH-60 Black Hawks for command and medical evacuation, and CH-47 Chinooks for heavy lift - enhancing operational reach and support.

The Stryker's design - lighter than tanks, yet more robust than light infantry - makes it ideal for the border's vast terrain, while the aviation battalion's air traffic control and lift capacity ensure seamless coordination.

"These forces will arrive in the coming weeks, and their deployment underscores the department's unwavering dedication to working alongside the Department of Homeland Security to secure our southern border and maintain the sovereignty, territorial integrity and security of the United States under President Trump's leadership," Parnell said in a statement.

This deployment marks the latest wave of active-duty troops sent to the border since Trump's inauguration on Jan. 20, 2025. Following his declaration to "seal the border" and combat illegal immigration and drug trafficking, initial deployments included 1,600 Marines and soldiers by late January, joining 2,500 reservists already mobilized.

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DOD gender dysphoria incompatible with military, service members must serve in accordance with sex

DOD News

Service members diagnosed with gender dysphoria will soon be processed for separation by their respective services, according to a new policy memorandum from the Defense Department's Office of Personnel and Readiness.

In a Feb. 26 policy memorandum titled "Additional Guidance on Prioritizing Military Excellence and Readiness," the department detailed, among other things, how affected service members will be separated from the military, the use of pronouns, using sex for determining both adherence to standards as well as use of shared military facilities, and cessation of department funding for medical care related to gender dysphoria.

"It is the policy of the United States government to establish high standards for service member readiness, lethality, cohesion, honesty, humility, uniformity, and integrity," the policy memorandum reads. "This policy is inconsistent with the medical, surgical, and mental health constraints on individuals with gender dysphoria or who have a

current diagnosis or history of, or exhibit symptoms consistent with, gender dysphoria."

Service members affected by the policy may apply for and be considered for a waiver on a case-by-case basis if there is a compelling government interest in retaining the service member who directly supports warfighting. If they don't obtain a waiver, service members with gender dysphoria are disqualified from military service and must be processed for separation.

Those service members may elect to separate from service voluntarily and will be eligible for voluntary separation pay if they choose that route. Those same service members will also not have to repay any bonuses received, even if they have a remaining service obligation.

Service members who choose to be separated involuntarily will be eligible for involuntary separation pay, which is less than voluntary separation pay. Those service members may be required to pay back any bonuses they received.

As an example, an E-5 service member with 10 years of ser-

vice would collect \$101,628 in voluntary separation pay, while that same service member would collect \$50,814 in involuntary separation pay.

Additionally, impacted service members with more than

Service members who choose to be separated involuntarily will be eligible for involuntary separation pay, which is less than voluntary separation pay. Those service members may be required to pay back any bonuses they received.

18 years of service but less than 20 years of service are eligible for early retirement.

All service members affected by the policy will be separated with an honorable characterization of service, except where their record otherwise warrants a lower characterization. Additionally, service secretaries will waive remaining military service obligations for those separated under this policy.

The policy directs the identification of affected service members within 30 days. Once

identified, separation procedures will begin within 30 days.

In an executive order in January, President Donald J. Trump made it the policy of the federal government to recognize only two sexes, male and female. That memorandum said that within the federal government, "sex" will refer to an individual's "immutable biological classification as either male or female."

In addition to guidance related to the separation of service members with gender dysphoria, the latest guidance also includes direction on terms of address related to sex, the use of sex as a factor in adherence to standards and use of facilities, and departmental funding of medical procedures related to gender dysphoria.

Going forward, the policy memorandum says, Defense Department funding will no longer be used to pay for medical procedures associated with facilitating sex reassignment surgery, genital reconstruction surgery as a treatment for gender dysphoria or newly initiated cross-sex hormone therapy.

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LUKE AFB, Ariz. (Feb. 26, 2025) - Air Force Lt. Col. Michael Ress fastens his oxygen mask to his helmet aboard a F-16 Fighting Falcon. U.S. Air Force photo by Senior Airman Katelynn Jackson

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Exercise Southern Edge goes west

by Senior Airman
Kate Bragg
307th Bomb Wing

In an era where global security hinges on seamless collaboration, Exercise Southern Edge headed to the West Coast to improve interoperability and communication integration between bomber forces and special operations forces (SOF) worldwide.

Southern Edge 25, the third iteration of the Air Force Reserve-led exercise, occurred in late February at March Air Reserve Base, Calif.

This multinational joint exercise aims to strengthen relationships with allied SOF units while pushing the limits of long-range strike coordination. It tests and refines beyond-line-of-sight (BLOS) communications, ensuring precision and speed during high-stakes missions.

In previous years, Southern Edge operations centered at Barksdale Air Force Base in Louisiana. However, this iteration focused on maritime operations off the coast of California, with long-range communication taking center stage.

During the exercise, Canadian and Marine Corps SOF units were tasked with transmitting unplanned targets to aircraft operating over the water via satellite communications and high-frequency radio, covering several thousand miles.

"They're able to send those targets from well over the horizon," said Air Force Lt. Col. Corey Hancock, commander of the 343rd Bomb Squadron. "We receive those targets, incorporate them into our system, and execute."

According to Hancock, the unplanned targets from the SOF

units provide aircrews with the flexibility to adapt as situations evolve.

"As things rapidly evolve, we can handle that on the fly and make sure that those missiles get to their targets," he said.

A primary objective of the exercise is to enhance communication between NATO ground forces and U.S. bomber platforms, particularly the B-52.

"That's one of the big pushes in this exercise; being able to talk to legacy bombers because we bring such massive firepower to the fight," said Hancock. "It is critical that we're able to link that fight via our older software and older architecture."

Maj. Zev McCarty, an electronic warfare officer assigned to the 343rd Bomb Squadron, said that Exercise Southern Edge

helps identify communication shortfalls and develop effective Tactics, Techniques, and Procedures for messaging between aircrews and SOF during conflicts with peer adversaries.

"We're capable now of recognizing how to pass messages, what must be said, and a clearer picture of why," said McCarty.

Since its inception, Southern Edge has consistently expanded in both size and scale. While future locations for the exercise are yet to be determined, Hancock said the B-52 and its crews are ready to undertake missions virtually anywhere.

"What we've been trying to exercise is showing that we can do these long-range communications and show the enemy that we can do the mission from really anywhere that has enough concrete for us to land," said Hancock.

Army

*Soldier on Army's 'most-wanted' list for 9 years sentenced to prison
*Army prep course jeopardized health of recruits, IG says
*These are the Army's best medics of 2025

Navy

*This Navy admiral just bagged his 1,000th landing on an aircraft carrier
*Former Sailor pleads guilty to planning attack on Naval Station Great Lakes
*Male and female made sole choices in personal spaces as Navy ends diverse gender designations
*Is the Type 26 Frigate a good choice for Norway?

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*Marine Corps program will allow senior enlisted to keep serving without reenlistment paperwork

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*USAF Air Base in England is nuclear capable again: Watchdog report
*F-16s, KC-135s brave Greenland chill for NORAD exercise
*OA-1K light attack special ops aircraft officially named Skyraider II

*America mobilises entire B-1 bomber fleet

*F-15 nose-mounted infrared sensor hinted at in new Boeing photo

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*As space becomes more crowded, Space Force turns to AI

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*Michigan governor calls on Trump administration to send another fighter squadron to Selfridge

Your Military

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*Most troops with families to serve 3-year tours in South Korea
*No more female 4-stars: Franchetti firing leaves top ranks filled by men

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*Disabled vets continue to struggle finding post-military employment
*Retired 4-Star officers join suit to house homeless veterans at California VA Medical Center

Military Culture & History

*Gene Hackman, Oscar-winning actor and Marine veteran, dies at 95
*Park Service works to preserve 'silent sentinels' of surprise attack on Pearl Harbor

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Account

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value to those who have family members who are part of the Exceptional Family Member Program. I think those families tend to incur a lot of expenses and often unforeseen expenses that others do not. I think a program like this is going to be particularly beneficial to that group of service members and their families."

Typically, enrollment in programs like an HCFSA occurs only during Federal Benefits Open Season, which runs from mid-November through mid-December. With the announcement of the new HCFSA benefit for service members, a special enrollment period is available from March 3-31, 2025.

At other times of the year, Garner said, an array of qualifying life events will also allow service members who are not already signed up for an HCFSA to enroll outside the typical open season. Some of those

life-changing events include deployment, a permanent change of station, marriage, or the birth of a child, he said.

According to DOD's "2023 Demographics Profile of the Military Community," about 46.7 [percent of service members are married, and about 36.7 percent of service members have dependent children. For those members, making sure their families are taken care of and that their financial situation is squared away is something that contributes to military readiness, said Garner.

"When families are more financially secure, the force is more ready and more lethal," he said. "When service members are having to worry less about the welfare of their families and their financial welfare, they are more focused on the mission. And I think that can only benefit the organization."

Use of an HCFSA, for some service members, lowers overall

taxable income, putting more money in their pockets to spend in other areas, Garner said. And that means those military families will be more confident that they are taken care of.

"These men and women have given parts of their lives to serve their country and to serve their fellow citizens, and I think that certainly deserves recognition," Garner said. "We become better when we care about the welfare of our service members, not only because of its impact on the mission, but because of its impact on the nation and on those service members and their families."

Before enrolling in the HCFSA, service members should talk with a military tax expert, DOD personal financial manager, or personal financial counselor to learn how to take advantage of the account and how it will benefit them. These services are available at no cost to service members.

Gender

continued from page 3

Within the department and military services, service members will use terms of address for one another that reflect their sex, including common customs and courtesies among service members.

"In keeping with good order and discipline, salutations (e.g., addressing a senior officer as "Sir" or "Ma'am") must also reflect an individual's sex," the policy memorandum states.

When it comes to fitness standards, grooming standards, or use of facilities, for instance, the new guidance also requires that sex will be the only determining factor.

"Where a standard, requirement, or policy depends on whether the individual is a male or female (e.g., medical fitness for duty, physical fitness and body fat standards; berthing, bathroom, and shower facilities; and uniform and grooming standards), all persons will be subject to the standard, requirement, or policy associated with their sex," the policy memorandum reads.

In addition to affecting existing service members, the policy memorandum also states applicants for military service and individuals in the delayed entry program who have a current diagnosis or history of, or exhibit symptoms consistent with, gender dysphoria are also disqualified for military service.

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MESSAGE TO THE FLEET

"The work of our Navy continues without disruption. We will sustain forward-deployed lethal forces that enhance the peace and deter our adversaries. We remain focused on improving lethality, strengthening our warfighters, and readying our platforms. We will continue to do what the Navy does best: deliver warfighting advantage for the Nation." See [NAVADMIN 038/25](#) for the entirety of ADM Kilby's message to the Fleet.



SPOTLIGHT

CHINA CORE KNOWLEDGE COURSE

The Office of Naval Intelligence has launched the "China Core Knowledge" online course on Navy e-Learning. This voluntary, unclassified course aims to introduce and deepen understanding of China's military and naval advancements for all Navy personnel. Knowledge is power. Learn more about the course [here](#).

<https://www.mynavyhr.navy.mil/Portals/55/Messages/NAVADMIN/NAV2025/NAV25015.txt?ver=RDsjCHb4pWrr0zXGPcWgg%3d%3d>



PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

ENAVFIT UPDATE

Effective May 1, eNavFit will no longer be available for Fleet use. The Navy will instead consolidate performance evaluation needs and services into a modernized and more capable NAVFIT98A. New features of NAVFIT98A include functionality in Microsoft Office 365 and auto-validation tools to reduce submission errors and rejection rates. Read more about the change [here](#).

https://www.mynavyhr.navy.mil/Portals/55/Messages/NAVADMIN/NAV2025/NAV25012.txt?ver=w5vO8IUh_Bmw9R2mpWoTmg%3d%3d



Army to sunset Army Google Workspace accounts

by Jonathan Austin, Army News Service

WASHINGTON - The Army announced it will decommission Army Google Workspace accounts on Feb.28. Users must manually forward their email data to their new Army 365 (@army.mil) accounts.

Lt. Gen. Jeth B. Rey, Deputy Chief of Staff, G-6, said, "this impacts a very small number of Army Soldiers, civilians and contractors. This does not impact anyone's personal Gmail accounts nor their existing Outlook or Army 365 accounts," he said.

Two years ago, the Army sponsored a pilot program under the Defense Information Systems Agency to use Army Google Workspace as a collaboration tool for users. However, fewer than 16% of the military audience ended up using the capability. Based on data findings from the Army Audit Agency of the pilot program, the Army determined that the use demand does not warrant future capability pursuit.

"As part of the Army 'transforming in contact' approach, this software shift improves Army operational effectiveness while simultaneously being more efficient with taxpayer dollars," Rey said.

Rey said individual Gmail data will be retained for National Archives and electronic discovery purposes, but the data will not be automatically transferred to the user's army.mil account. It is up to the individual user to forward their email data to their new Army 365 email account, he said.

A notification has gone out to every Soldier impacted by the change, sharing the steps needed to successfully transition to their A365 email account. Active users that transition will receive an A365 license that allows utilizing the web version of Microsoft Office Apps and desktop version of Teams.

For assistance, users can contact local S6/IMO or open a ticket with the Army Enterprise Service Desk via <https://www.aesmp.army.mil/csm> or call 866-335-2769 (ARMY).



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Navy to scale back salvage effort after recovering 15 tons of wreckage from jet crash

from Times of San Diego staff and wire reports

The Navy plans to remove heavy water-borne equipment brought in to recover the wreckage of a fighter jet that recently into San Diego Bay, officials said Feb. 28.

Having recovered more than 15 tons of wreckage from a 13,000-square-foot underwater debris field in the Shelter Island basin, crews took away the barge and crane March 2, re-opening the area to civilian boaters.

An estimated 9,000 pounds of remnants of the aircraft remained in the bay as of Feb. 28, 17 days after the unoccupied EA-18G Growler hurtled into the harbor and broke apart, according to the Navy's 3rd Fleet command.

Station North Island

Witnesses described seeing the fighter jet flying at what seemed to be unusually low altitudes just before it took a steep nosedive.

Scaled-down salvage operations were expected to continue over the next couple of weeks, the Navy reported.

After the two aviators who had bailed out of the aircraft were pulled from the water by the crew of a fishing boat, paramedics took them to UCSD Medical Center in Hillcrest, where they were admitted in good condition.

The crew safely ejected during the apparent mechanical emergency that preceded the plane going down near Shelter Island in rain and mist at about 10:15 a.m. Feb. 12. The crash followed a landing approach to Naval Air

The cause of the accident remains under investigation, according to the Navy.

Former hospital ship *Mercy* CO takes helm as DHN Pacific Rim Chief Medical Officer

SAN DIEGO - Retired Navy Capt. John Rotruck has stepped into the role of chief medical officer for Defense Health Network Pacific Rim. Rotruck, whose career spans operational medicine and leadership positions including command of hospital ship USNS *Mercy* (T-AH 19), now oversees medical quality and safety across nine military treatment facilities (MTF) throughout the Pacific region. "As chief medical officer, I have a responsibility for the overall quality and safety oversight of the care delivered in our network's military treatment facilities," said Rotruck. "I support and enable the CMOs at each MTF to be successful, in collaboration with our nursing and dental colleagues at both the network and MTF levels." Rear Adm. Guido Valdes, director of Defense Health Network Pacific Rim, welcomed Rotruck to the team. "Captain Rotruck brings invaluable operational experience and a deep understanding of our Indo-Pacific mission," Valdes said.

USS *Tripoli* to forward deploy to Japan

by Ladonna Singleton

Commander, Naval Surface Force, U.S. Pacific Fleet Amphibious assault ship USS *Tripoli* (LHA 7) will move to Sasebo, Japan, as part of a scheduled rotation of forces in the Pacific, the U.S. Navy announced recently.

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

The forward presence of *Tripoli* supports the United States' commitment to the defense of Japan, enhances the national security of the United States and improves its ability to protect strategic interests. *Tripoli* will directly support the Defense Strategic Guidance to posture the most capable units forward in the Indo-Pacific Region.

The United States values Japan's contributions to the peace, security and stability of the Indo-Pacific and its long-term commitment and hospitality in hosting U.S. forces forward deployed there. These forces, along with their counterparts in the Japan Self-Defense Forces, make up the core capabilities needed by the alliance to meet our common strategic objectives.

The security environment in the Indo-Pacific requires that the U.S. Navy station the most capable ships forward. This posture allows the most rapid response times for maritime and joint forces, and brings our most capable ships with the greatest amount of striking power and operational capability to bear in the timeliest manner.

Maintaining a forward-deployed naval force capability with the most advanced ships supports the United States' commitment to the defense of Japan and the security and stability of the vital Indo-Pacific region.

dispatch

Marine air wing takes leadership to the next level

by Maj. Natalie Batcheler
3rd Marine Aircraft Wing
MCAS MIRAMAR - More than 2,000 years of collective Marine Corps experience converged here late last month for 3rd Marine Aircraft Wing Commander's Course 2025, bringing together command teams from across the 43 units within the Wing, for a unique and impactful opportunity to focus on leadership and warfighting.

These seasoned aviators and senior enlisted leaders joined the 3rd MAW commanding general in a three-day event covering topics that spanned distributed maritime and aviation operations, threat briefs, cultural challenges, the future fight, and interpersonal relationships.

Guest speakers brought particular value to the course, joining the event or calling in from across the world. Among briefers

were the Assistant Commandant, Sergeant Major, and Chaplain of the Marine Corps; Marine Corps Warfighting Laboratory; and renowned motivational speaker and best-selling author, Simon Sinek.

The event wasn't just targeting a one-way conversation on how to lead and how to fight, the dialogue continually came back to how creativity, authenticity, and a focus on standards are inextricably woven into the fabric of effective leadership.

"We're a large organization - 14,000 people - it's important that we work together as a team to think about what the challenges are that we have, how we can cooperate and collaborate," said Maj. Gen. James Wellons, 3rd MAW Commanding General.

"I think that Marines understand [our purpose] really well,

but when you get into the nitty gritty of how do I specifically contribute to that - that requires education, focus, concentration."

He also challenged the room, appealing to the power and potential that resides uniquely at the squadron-level.

"You're going to come up with concepts at the unit level that the group or wing's vision won't necessarily account for," Wellons said.

Wellons alluded to recent undertakings at the squadron level that were equally impressive and strategically impactful, including an F-35B squadron planning and executing a joint Expeditionary Advanced Base Operations exercise on San Clemente Island, and an MV-22B squadron conducting a scenario-supported unit training deploy-

ment to Spokane, Wash.

Day one saw a slew of classified briefs and discussions, a deliberate scene-setter for the reality of today's world. The largest wing in the Marine Corps "must be prepared to fight tonight, and win. In any clime and place."

On the second day, Assistant Commandant of the Marine Corps, Gen. Christopher Mahoney, called in from the Pentagon, highlighting the state of service-level attention, and reinforcing the perpetual importance of taking care of Marines.

"You've got to stay engaged, to know how your Marines are living, to be ready to help them solve problems," Mahoney said.

He elaborated on fiscal and programmatic topics, but came

back to the demands Marine leaders must meet."The emphatic nature of your mastery of knowledge, from administration to tactics to your ability to debrief and learn, is critically important."

Simon Sinek, author of Start With Why and Leaders Eat Last, called in and opened the floor to questions. Through the course of a lively one-hour discussion on all things leadership and culture,

the room was captivated and engaged, maximizing this unique opportunity for an intimate venue with a well-respected thought-leader.

Sinek took questions and worked through solutions and concepts with the room.

Continue reading at <https://www.dvidshub.net/image/8894885/smmc-visits-mcas-miramar>.

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38TH ANNUAL NAVY BAY BRIDGE RUN/WALK RETURNS WITH EXCITING NEW 10K COURSE

The Navy Bay Bridge Run/Walk is back for its 38th year, offering participants a rare chance to race across the iconic Coronado Bay Bridge in support of local Sailors and military families.

Scheduled for Sunday, May 18, this premier event is presented by San Diego Gas & Electric, Leidos, the Unified Port of San Diego, and the Navy Exchange.

Registration is now open at www.navybaybridgerun.com.

What's new For the first time, participants can choose between the classic 4.4-mile course or a brand-new, U.S.A. Track and Field-sanctioned 10K race, both offering stunning views of San Diego and the bay. Whether you're a competitive runner or looking for a fun fitness challenge, this event delivers an



unforgettable experience.

San Diego metro area.

Event highlights Participants and spectators can enjoy live entertainment, an event expo, prize giveaways, photo ops, and an awards ceremony for age group and team division winners.

Participant perks

- ✓ Commemorative race shirt & finisher's medal
- ✓ Complimentary transportation back to Hilton San Diego Bayfront via bus or ferry (provided by Flagship Cruises & Events)
- ✓ Exclusive VIP Finish Line Experience (\$25 add-on) featuring premium seating, continental breakfast, and custom caricature drawings

Why it matters Proceeds from the event directly support quality-of-life programs for service members and their families across Navy installations in the

Register today Spots are limited to 10,000 participants - early registration is encouraged. Sign up now at www.navybaybridgerun.com.

Calling all volunteers

There are multiple volunteer opportunities to take part in during race weekend from May 16-19. Duties include: set up, pre-race registration, refreshment distribution, water stations, t-shirt and medal distribution, clean-up, and more. Volunteers will receive a Letter of Appreciation on-site, after the completion of the duties. If you registered for multiple events, you will receive an e-mail for each event that you have volunteered for and a separate LOA will be given for each shift. Volunteer at <https://runsignup.com/Race/Volunteer/CA/SanDiego/Navys-BayBridgeRun>, or call (619) 520-8179.

Seabees 'Can Do' since '42

by Lt.j.g. Drew Verbis, Naval Base Ventura County
PORT HUENEME - March 5 marked the 83rd anniversary of the Navy Seabees, renowned for their expertise in naval construction, engineering and unwavering commitment to service.

The Seabees were created by Adm. Ben Moreell, chief of the Navy's Bureau of Yards and Docks and chiefs of the Civil Engineer Corps., who recognized the need for a militarized construction force following the attack on Pearl Harbor.

"For 83 years, Seabees have provided engineering and construction capabilities to the United States and our allies and partners where and when it mattered most," said Naval Base Ventura County Command Master Chief Kristi Thrift. "Through our men and women who specialize in the seven Seabee ratings, we have upheld our motto, 'with compassion for others, we build, and we fight for peace with freedom.'"

Camp Rousseau, an Advance Base Depot (ABD) for transient Seabee personnel, that would later be designated as Naval Construction Battalion Center Port Hueneme 'Home of the Pacific Seabees,' was established on Oct. 23, 1942. The receiving barracks trained over 10,000 personnel in military combat techniques as well as their chosen construction trades. A quarter of a million men passed through ABD onto Pacific fronts, and more construction material and men were shipped through Port Hueneme than any other port in the United States.

"Since WWII, under the toughest conditions imaginable - danger, harsh terrain, and extreme weather, Seabees have proven to be essential to the most decisive needs of the fight; and when the smoke clears, takes immediate action to provide humanitarian assistance, a key to lasting peace," said Thrift.

During WWII, the Seabees built the Navy's bases around the world and, with their innumerable construction skills, paved the roads to victory in the Atlantic, Alaskan, and Pacific Theaters. Their accomplishments during the war are legendary, including building over 400 advance bases, 111 major airfields, 441 piers, 2,558 ordnance magazines, hospitals to serve 70,000 patients, and housing for 1.5 million service members. Nearly 325,00 Seabees joined, serving on four continents, 300 islands, and suffering more than 300 combat deaths, while earning more than 2,000 Purple Hearts.



Some San Diego Weekend Events - March 8-9

Saturday, March 8

- Mermaid Half Marathon San Diego
Tecolote North Playground
Mission Beach, 7 a.m.
- Easy Seed Starting Workshop
Native West Nursery
Nestor, 9 a.m.
- Wildlife Tour
San Elijo Lagoon Ecological Reserve
Cardiff-by-the-Sea, 9 a.m.
- Lane Field Park Market & Live Music
Lane Field Park
Downtown San Diego, 10 a.m.
- Free Improv Comedy Class for Adults
Pacific Beach Recreation Center,
10 a.m.
- TinyFest California
Del Mar Fairgrounds, 10 a.m.

Sunday, March 9, 2025

- One-Of-A-Kind Holiday Decor
Pacific View Arts Center
Encinitas, 12 p.m.
- Miso Workshop
San Diego Craft Collective
Liberty Station, 12:30 p.m.
- 25 Years of The Drawing Show
Central Library
East Village, 1 p.m.
- City Ballet: Swan Lake II
Balboa Theatre
Downtown San Diego, 2 p.m.
- We Are Continuous
Diversionary Theatre
University Heights, 2 p.m.
- Sideways Stories from Wayside School
Casa del Prado Theatre
Balboa Park, 2 p.m.

LOCAL PHOTO GALLERY



MCAS MIRAMAR (Feb. 26, 2025) Sgt. Maj. Carlos A. Ruiz, the sergeant major of the Marine Corps, speaks to Marines at the Provost Marshal's Office here regarding the importance of their mission during a base visit. Ruiz visited MCAS Miramar as part of a tour of west coast installations to better understand the needs and capabilities of the Marines stationed there. U.S. Marine Corps photo by Lance Cpl. Jackson Rush



MCRD SAN DIEGO (Feb. 27, 2025) Drill Instructor Sgt. Angel Felix, with Golf Company, 2nd Recruit Training Battalion, recites Marine Corps knowledge to recruits during a two-kilometer introduction hike here. During training, recruits conduct a series of progressively longer hikes to physically and mentally condition them to create combat readiness for any necessary future operations as the world's force in readiness. U.S. Marine Corps photo by Lance Cpl. Janell B. Alvarez



NAS NORTH ISLAND (Feb. 12, 2025) - Navy Sailors and contractors conduct maintenance on an oven aboard aircraft carrier USS Theodore Roosevelt while pierside here. The carrier is undergoing routine maintenance and equipment upgrades during a Planned Incremental Availability. U.S. Navy photo by MC3 Theodore Minkala

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<https://www.midway.org/give-join/volunteers/volunteer-opportunities/>

Spring break on a shrimpy budget

Arguably, I produce my best ideas when I'm dead broke. And so it was, that when I was 21 and didn't have two nickels to rub together, I planned a spring break trip.

It was 1988 and my rent was overdue. My college roommates and I were scheduled to graduate in two months. We were interviewing to finally realize the careers we'd been studying four years to attain, but none of us had job offers yet.

Chris was from a wealthy Iowa family and had a credit card paid by her parents and a reliable car. Heidi was from a working-class family in rural Ohio, and like me, had to work part-time through college for spending money. Heidi and I also had cars, but they were the kind of junkers that could only be relied upon to get us to Kroger's for midnight study snack runs and often left us stranded on the interstate when we drove home for the holidays.

For Heidi and I, the idea of going on a spring break trip was financially ludicrous, because our part-time jobs only produced enough funds for meager groceries, rent, and cheap beers. Still—it was our senior year. Our last chance to really let our big, frizzy, permed hair down and have some fun before we'd be forced to become real-world adults.

We simply had to go on a spring break trip. The only question was, "How'r we gonna pay for it?"

It was time to get creative. In a newspaper ad, I found a small two-bedroom condo for rent in Marco Island, Florida, that might

be affordable if we stuffed it with enough girls. So, I recruited my Kappa Delta sorority sisters, Mary and Andrea, to join Chris, Heidi and I on the trip. Chris agreed to drive us from our frigid Miami of Ohio campus apartment to sunny Florida, as long as we covered gas. I also had the bright idea for each girl to take one night to cook dinner for everyone.

Thanks to my penniless genius,
**The Meat & Potatoes
of Life**



by
Lisa
Smith
Molinari

we were ready to hit the road on our Senior Spring Break Trip! Twenty hours later, we were unpacking our bags at the condo complex in Marco Island, ready to hit the beaches and bars in our neon bathing suits, knock-off Vuarnet sunglasses, and jellies sandals.

I can't recall who provided dinner those first few days, but I offered to cook seafood on my designated night. When that day came, I drove with Heidi into town to shop for the necessary ingredients — buttery red potatoes, tender-crisp green beans, lemons, Old Bay seasoning, and three steaming pounds of fresh Gulf Coast shrimp. I couldn't wait to impress my midwestern friends with my coastal cooking skills.

"Twelve dollars a pound?!" I whisper-screamed to Heidi at the seafood counter, "That's gonna

wipe me out!" I had no idea that shrimp was so expensive — my parents had always paid for it. But it was too late to back out. Once again, I got creative.

I vaguely remembered a faded, hand-drawn sign I'd seen in the scrub trees on the side of a lonely dirt road ...

"This shrimp is so fresh!" my college girlfriends declared. It wasn't until all the shrimp had been eaten and the dishes were cleared that I told them how, and where, I'd bought it.

The sign had read, "Bait Shrimp \$2.50 a pound." The weathered woman down the dirt road told me that she'd "fish the big-uns out" for me. She promised that they were "good eatin'," which she knew from personal experience. From her rickety wooden dock, she scooped her wrinkled hand into the Gulf, plucking from a corral swarming with hundreds of live shrimp until she filled a bag.

"WE JUST ATE BAIT SHRIMP?!" my flabbergasted friends choked on their wine coolers.

"That's nothing," I told them, "Before I steamed them, I had to pinch the heads off while they were still alive." My friends never forgave me for serving them bait for dinner, but we had a blast that week nonetheless.

Necessity is the mother of invention, but poverty is the creative college roommate who planned an awesome spring break trip.

www.themeatandpotatoesoflife.com

AutoMatters™ & More



by Jan Wagner

In anticipation of the 2025 air show season, before dawn last Saturday morning I made the two-hour drive from my home in San Diego to Seeley, Calif., just beyond a runway and outside a perimeter fence of Naval Air Station El Centro, to watch and photograph a practice session of the Navy Blue Angels, which were rumored to be taking off at 8 a.m., followed by the Air Force Thunderbirds.

My drive east on I-8 went through a scenic mountain pass. Then the terrain flattened and I reached my destination in the Imperial Valley.

It had been several years since I had last been here. At that time, the more athletic photographers were able to climb on top of a large stack of conveniently placed haybales, in order to take pictures of the planes taking off without having the perimeter fence in their shots. See <https://automatters.net/2017-naval-air-facility-el-centro-air-show-featuring-the-blue-angels/>.

Haybales are now gone, so the large number of spectators watched from the boundary dirt road - some photographers shooting from the beds of pickup trucks, through sunroofs and from ladders. I mostly opted for the stability of standing on the ground.

As we're told by the commanding officer regarding the Blue Angels: "Since 1946, it has been our honor to represent the Navy and Marine Corps to audiences both at home and abroad as we showcase the excitement, precision, and

Navy Blue Angels, Air Force Thunderbirds practice for the upcoming air show season

power of naval aviation."

"Our team consists of 140 world-class, active-duty Sailors and Marines, each one bringing experience and expertise from their service in the fleet. We're honored to serve as the representatives of the more than 800,000 active-duty, reserve, and civilian men and women currently serving worldwide in the Navy and Marine Corps."

"By design and by their nature, naval forces operate abroad and are seldom seen by our nation's citizens. The Blue Angels have the unique ability to highlight the importance of naval aviation while honoring its historical significance. We proudly represent the heritage, agility, flexibility, and importance of naval aviation to 21st-century warfighting."

"Our team looks forward to showcasing the mainstay of modern naval air power operating off U.S. aircraft carriers, the combat-proven F/A-18 Super Hornet, along with the Marine Corps' premiere logistics support aircraft, the C-130J Super Hercules. Both of these aircraft are operating around the world and around the clock carrying out the mission of our Navy and Marine Corps team."

"We enter our 79th year with a dedication to the mission, strong work ethic, and a relentlessly positive attitude. These values have underscored every Blue Angels performance since the organization's inception. Each member of our team strives daily to ensure the flight demonstration epitomizes the teamwork, professionalism, and precision found in every aspect of the Navy and Marine Corps. Our team is thrilled to have the opportunity to share our passion for our profession and our nation with people around the world."

At the website of the Air Force Thunderbirds, we learn that: "On May 25, 1953, just six years after the Air Force became its own branch of service, the Thunderbirds were born as the Air Force's official air demonstration team. The team, designated the 3600th Air Demonstration Unit, was activated at Luke AFB, Arizona. Over the years and with many different aircraft, the Thunderbirds have continued to represent those who deserve the most credit: the hardworking Airmen who serve our country every day."

"The Thunderbirds perform for people all around the world to display the pride, precision and professionalism the U.S. Air Force represents. Through air shows and flyovers, they aim to excite and inspire. In addition to showcasing the elite skills all pilots must possess, the Thunderbirds demonstrate the incredible capabilities of the Air Force's premier multi-role fighter jet, the F-16 Fighting Falcon."

"There is nothing like experiencing a Thunderbirds performance in person. Watch powerful fighter jets elegantly maneuver in the sky with only a few feet separating each wingtip."

For more information and air show schedules, visit <https://www.blueangels.navy.mil> and <https://www.airforce.com/thunderbirds/overview>.

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

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Veterans News

Fleet Reserve Association Newsbytes: Legislative survey, VA sets new record

2025 legislative survey results

The Fleet Reserve Association has unveiled the results of its 2025 legislative survey.

Representing enlisted personnel from the Navy, Marine Corps, and Coast Guard, the FRA surveyed active-duty members, reservists, retirees, veterans, and their families to pinpoint critical issues.

The findings highlight healthcare access, retirement benefits, and quality-of-life concerns as key areas of focus. These results will not only shape FRA's advocacy but also be weighed against the legislative agendas of the sea services to ensure alignment and impact.

Healthcare remains a cornerstone issue for FRA members, particularly retirees who form the largest respondent group. Access to and quality of TRICARE and VA healthcare topped their concerns, with strong resistance to fee increases and privatization of VA services.

Many expressed frustration over unfulfilled promises of free

lifetime healthcare, a sentiment echoed by veterans who oppose limiting VA care to service-connected conditions. FRA aims to push for policies that maintain robust, affordable healthcare options, ensuring the sea services' legislative plans address these pressing needs.

Retirement benefits also emerged as a critical focus, especially for retirees who dominate the survey's demographic. Protecting cost-of-living adjustment for retired pay and securing concurrent receipt of military retired pay and VA disability compensation are top priorities.

Members overwhelmingly believe these benefits are earned through decades of service, a view FRA will champion in discussions with lawmakers and sea service leadership. This emphasis seeks to safeguard financial stability for those who've dedicated their careers to the nation.

Quality-of-life benefits, from commissary privileges to burial options, round out FRA's agenda. Active-duty respondents, though few, stressed the impor-

tance of housing allowances and education benefits, while retirees valued caregiver support and exchange privileges.

A notable proposal—creating a second national military cemetery to complement Arlington—gained traction, reflecting a desire to preserve military honors without restrictive burial policies. FRA will advocate for these enhancements, ensuring they resonate with the broader goals of the Navy, Marine Corps, and Coast Guard.

These member-driven priorities will guide FRA's advocacy efforts and dialogue with sea service leaders. By aligning its advocacy with the legislative agendas of the Navy, Marine Corps, and Coast Guard, FRA aims to amplify its influence on Capitol Hill and within the Department of Defense.

The survey's clear message—honoring service with tangible support—sets the stage for a year of focused action to uphold the promises made to sea service personnel and their families.

VA sets new record

The VA has reached a significant milestone by processing over one million disability claims in Fiscal Year 2025, achieving this feat nearly two weeks earlier than in FY24. This marks the fastest claims processing rate in the department's history, despite a 15.6 percent increase in claims submissions compared to the previous year.

Notably, the VA recorded its 10 highest claims processing days within the last month alone, with Feb. 12 setting an all-time record - over 12,000 claims processed in a single day.

Of the more than one million claims completed so far in FY25, over 60 percent were granted, leading to \$62 billion in compensation and pension benefits distributed to approximately 6.9 million veterans and survivors.

The department's claims accuracy rate has also risen to over 92 percent, demonstrating a commitment to precision and fairness in evaluating claims.

VA Secretary Doug Collins

credited this achievement to the leadership of President Trump, stating, "Under the leadership of President Trump, we are strengthening the department so it works better for veterans, families, caregivers, and survivors." He emphasized the VA's commitment to enhancing ser-

vice levels and ensuring timely benefits for those who have served the nation.

<https://www.fra.org/fra/Web/News/Publications/NewsBytes/Web/Content/NewsBytes.aspx?hkey=20e16051-03c8-43a2-89f1-bf3b24ad4a34>



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✓On select Saturdays every month, there will be a Cars & Coffee meet up at the Point Mugu Auto Skills Center for car enthusiasts. Bring a friend and bring out that garage queen, that work in progress, or anything on wheels. Just come out and meet some new friends and get to know the crew of the MWR Auto Skills Center.

MARCH 29, 8 a.m. - 10 a.m.
Cars and Coffee events are open to everyone with regular base access. You may sponsor guests if you want ... all are welcome. Feel free to bring the family.
For more info, call the Auto Skills Center at (805) 989-7353.

CLASSIFIED ADS

SOCIAL SECURITY MATTERS

Ask Rusty - Am I entitled to more Social Security from my ex-husbands?

Dear Rusty: I am 76 years old and a retired high school counselor/teacher. I was married to my first husband from 1968 until 1981. He is still living, and he remarried two more times and, I believe, he is currently divorced. He is 77 years old. His income was always much higher than mine. I was married to my second husband from May 1989 until we divorced in April 2017. My second husband died in June 2023. What I wonder is if I am entitled to receive Social Security benefits based upon the income of either of my ex-husbands? Signed: Twice Divorced Spouse

Dear Twice Divorced: Divorced spouses are entitled to the same benefits as a current spouse if their marriage lasted at least 10 years which, in both cases, yours did. The other caveat is whether your own SS retirement benefit is less than you are entitled to from either of your ex-husbands. If your own SS retirement benefit is less, then you will get an incremental amount on top of your own SS retirement to bring your total monthly benefit up to your spousal (or surviving spouse) entitlement.

Since your first husband is still living, it is likely that your best financial option is to claim a surviving ex-spouse benefit from your deceased 2nd husband. The reason is that survivor benefits from husband #2 are based on his actual benefit at his death, whereas benefits from a living ex-spouse (husband #1) are based upon his full retirement amount. In other words, it is likely that 100% of deceased husband #2's benefit at his death is more than 50% of living husband #1's current benefit at his full retirement age (FRA).

It is, of course, possible that 50% of your first husband's FRA entitlement is more than 100% of your second husband's benefit at death, in which case your ex-spouse benefit from your first husband could be more. The only way to sort this out is to contact Social Security (1.800-772-1213) to make an appointment to apply for surviving ex-spouse benefits from your deceased second husband. Explain that your first ex-husband is still living, and that you are unsure of what your benefits are as your first husband's ex-spouse. Social Security will be able to determine from their records which one provides you with a higher benefit amount (provide each husband's Social Security number when you call). As I said, your best financial option will likely be to take your survivor benefit from your deceased second ex-husband (note, however, if your first ex-husband also dies before you, you can subsequently file for a survivor benefit from him, if that is more than you are getting from your second husband's record).

MOVIES AT THE BASES

MOVIE SCHEDULES ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE SO PLEASE CHECK THE WEB SITE DAY-OF TO MAKE SURE THE TITLE AND TIME ARE STILL CORRECT...

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

NBSD and 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.
- **Premium Offerings**
- Audiovisual assistive equipment available to customers at the front counter.
- Handicap seats and child booster seats are available.



Movie Rating System

- G – General audiences ALL ages admitted.
- PG – Parental guidance suggested some material may not be suitable for children.
- PG-13 – Parents strongly cautioned some material may be inappropriate for children under 13.
- R – Restricted under 17 requires accompanying parent or adult guardian.

SD Humane Society offers a Community Veterinary Program

For pet families with limited financial resources, the San Diego Humane Society's Community Veterinary Program provides affordable, compassionate and exceptional veterinary care to help keep pets out of shelters and with the people who love them. Clinic services are available at our San Diego Campus by appointment only, Tuesday through Saturday from 8 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. We also offer mobile clinic services twice a month, bringing veterinary services directly into the communities that need them most.

Please note: The Community Veterinary Program does not provide emergency or urgent care services. Eligibility requirements for our services include: Household income under \$70k/year and/or proof of enrollment in SSI, SNAP card, SSDI, WIC, pay stub, other federal/state assistance or unemployment benefits.

<https://www.sdhumane.org/programs/community-veterinary-program/>

ARMED FORCES DISPATCH CLASSIFIEDS

To place your ad, please call our Classified Advertising Department at (619) 280-2985.

CAREGIVER

CAREGIVER/CNA – 25 years experience. 24 hour live-in. California requirements. Call for more info 760-234-2644. 4/1

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HELP WANTED

Delivery driver. 2 Thursday mornings a month. Must have own vehicle w/proof of insurance. Approx. 3 hours \$80. Milspouse/retired military pref. Nat'l City area. 619-280-2985.

USS Midway Museum is recruiting volunteers for docents, air craft restoration, ship restoration and safety. www.midway.org/give-join/volunteers/volunteer-opportunities/

Armed Forces Dispatch newspaper delivery driver for news racks, stands, countertops, etc. Coronado, Silver Strand, Imperial Beach. 2 Thursday mornings a month (approx 3 hours). Must have clean driving record, dependable car w/insurance, base access. 619-280-2985.

RENTALS APARTMENTS

BONSALL – 2BR/2BA fully furnished, W/D \$3200/mo. utilities & high speed internet included. Pet ok. 760-758-8582. 4/1

CHULA VISTA – 2BR/2BA. \$2700 (265 Woodlawn) & 3BR/2.5BA \$3800. New construction, near I-5, W/D in unit, 10 minutes to NASNI/32nd. 619-454-2545. 4/1

DOWNTOWN/GASLAMP – Furnished apt. Free cable TV/wifi/laundry. Full kitchen, parking available, 1 mo. min., king size bed, no smoking, no pets. \$3500/mo. Call 619-232-4045, www.mudvilleflats.com. 3/1

- "Nothing is impossible, the word itself says 'I'm possible!'"
- "You're braver than you believe, and stronger than you seem, and smarter than you think".

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 Imperial Beach
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PACIFIC BEACH – Sunny 2BR, one mile from beach, very walkable to restaurants, bars. \$3,650/mo. Call for showing (858)967-0147. 4/1

RENTALS HOUSES

4-XL Master Bedrooms
 home central in Mission Valley West. 7 min. to everything in SD. Trolley 5 min walk. Panoramic Views Atop a Hill. Total remodel, Granite kitch/bath, all new floor, everything new, all SS. appl. W/Dr. Short term ok 1-3-6 month leases. \$6,500 monthly. 310-975-4538 Avail. now!!

NATIONAL CITY – 3.5BR/1.5BA. 5 min. from 32nd St. Dry side. Kitchen has diner theme. Large patio. \$3900/mo. 619-908-9977. 3/1

RENTALS HOUSES

SAN DIEGO – 3BR/3BA, 2 car garage. No smoking/drinking/drugs/pets, no evictions. W/D hookups. \$250 off 1st month rent. \$3250/mo. 4300 Newton Ave. 951-210-8392. 4/1

SAN YSIDRO – 3BR/1BA \$2750/mo move in special: 50% off 1st month, newly remodeled, near freeway and schools, 10 miles from 32nd St Naval Base- txt 619-417-8307. 3/16

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VOLUNTEERS WANTED

USS Midway Museum is recruiting volunteers for docents, air craft restoration, ship restoration and safety <https://www.midway.org/give-join/volunteers/volunteer-opportunities/>

Armed Forces Dispatch • (619) 280-2985

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E-mail: editor@navydispatch.com

Visit our military museums

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

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

MCRD Command Museum & Historical Society. Museum focusing on Marine Corps history from the 19th century to today is also a research library. <https://www.mcrdmuseum.org/>

Free admission • The Pass and ID Center may issue day passes to visitors who wish to visit the museum and do not possess military ID-call (619) 524-4200 for information on base access.
 1600 Hochmuth Ave, San Diego, 92140 • (619) 524-4426
 Hours: Mon 8am-3pm, Tue-Fri 8-4; Family day 8-5:45; Sat 10:30-5, • Closed Sunday

USS Midway Museum. The USS Midway Museum is a maritime museum located in downtown San Diego at Navy Pier. The museum consists of the aircraft carrier Midway. The ship houses an extensive collection of aircraft, many of which were built in So Cal.

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

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

The Gaslamp goes green for a good cause on March 15!

The 29th Annual ShamROCK Music + Beer Festival is taking over the Gaslamp Quarter on Saturday, March 15, 2025, from 2 - 10 PM with live music, Irish fare, and plenty of shenanigans games!

All proceeds go to the Gaslamp Quarter Historical Foundation to help us preserve and share history with our incredible community! Get your tickets and find more information on this fun event at <https://www.sandiegoshamrock.com/>

SEEKING VOLUNTEERS!

Want to give back while having some fun?

ShamROCK is a great way to complete volunteer hours, meet new people, or simply experience the excitement of Gaslamp—all while supporting the GQHF!

No prior training necessary—we'll provide all the guidance you need on the day of the event. Volunteers will assist with greeting attendees, helping with games and activity stations, decorating, and more. Email Kelsey at kwood@gaslampfoundation.org to sign up or find out more.

CSUSM veterans event/Library of Congress

On Wednesday, March 19 Cal State San Marcos is hosting a powerful Veterans History Project event showcasing the oral histories of military veterans. This event offers an intimate look into the personal experiences, challenges and triumphs of veterans from diverse backgrounds.

The stories shared will be archived at the Library of Congress and in the CSUSM Kellogg Library. Keynote speaker will be Amy Forsythe, USMC Veteran, Navy Reservist & CSUSM Alumna. Don't miss this unique opportunity to connect with history and hear these extraordinary stories firsthand.

Event venue is the SSUSM USU 2300 Full Ballroom. 5-6 p.m. - Veteran/Military Resource Fair & Reception. 6-8 p.m. - Formal Program. CSUSM Students: FREE; Community: \$10; Military-Affiliated Community & Resource Services Fair Guest: FREE. Tickets (+fees) required. Purchase online at <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/veterans-history-project-an-unveiling-of-the-journey-tickets-950471183897>

Preventing diabetes: Small steps can make a big difference

Chances are, you know someone who has diabetes. It might even be you. Diabetes is one of the most common disorders in the U.S. It affects about 1 in 9 Americans. Diabetes raises your risk for serious health problems. It can damage the eyes, kidneys, nerves, and heart, and it is linked to some types of cancer.

Now, what if you learned that there's a low-cost, scientifically proven way to greatly reduce your chances of getting type 2 diabetes, the most common type? Would you give it a try?

More than two decades ago, a landmark NIH-supported study, called the Diabetes Prevention Program (DPP), released its results. It found that people at high risk for diabetes were much less likely to get the disorder if they lost a little weight through healthy eating and physical activity. Their risk of getting diabetes dropped by nearly 60% compared to people who did not aim to make healthy changes.

For those over age 60, the results were even more striking. Their risk of getting diabetes dropped by 71% when they made healthy changes. The benefits were so clear that the study ended a year early, after just three years. Participants in the comparison group were encouraged to also make the healthy changes to reduce their diabetes risk.

DPP has had a lasting influence on medical care in the U.S. and around the world. Since its initial results were reported, lifestyle change programs based on the findings have become widely available across the country.

A 10-year follow-up study showed that people in the original treatment group delayed diabetes by about four years. A later study found benefits even 22 years after the study began, with people in the lifestyle-change group having about a 25% reduced risk of developing diabetes.

"Even though the initial treatments lasted only three years, participants did have longer-term health benefits," says Dr. William Knowler, an NIH diabetes expert.

NIH-supported researchers continue to study new and proven ways to help people prevent or delay type 2 diabetes. But we already know that taking steps to prevent or manage diabetes can lower your risk of developing diabetes-related health problems.

Are You at Risk?

Diabetes is a disease that occurs when your blood glucose, also called blood sugar, is too high. Glucose is your body's



main source of energy. Normally, a hormone made by the pancreas called insulin helps glucose get into your cells to be used for energy. If you have diabetes, your body doesn't make enough insulin or use insulin properly. Glucose then stays in your blood and doesn't reach your cells.

Anyone can get type 2 diabetes, even children. But certain factors can raise your risk. You're more likely to develop type 2 diabetes if you are at least 35 years old or have a family history of diabetes. Black Americans, Hispanic/Latino Americans, American Indians, and Asian Americans are also at higher risk.

People who are overweight or have obesity and people who don't get enough physical activity are also more likely to develop the disease. But these are changeable factors.

About 1 in 3 American adults has a condition called prediabetes. It occurs when your blood sugar is higher than normal, but not yet high enough to be called diabetes. Most people with prediabetes don't realize they have it. That's because prediabetes tends to have few symptoms, and many people don't get screened.

"We can diagnose prediabetes

and diabetes with a very simple blood test known as a hemoglobin A1C. You don't need to fast to do this test," says Dr. Tannaz Moin, a physician and diabetes researcher at the University of California, Los Angeles. The A1C test reflects your average levels of blood sugar over the past three months.

"Prediabetes is viewed as a very strong risk factor for type 2 diabetes. But not everyone with prediabetes goes on to develop type 2 diabetes," Moin adds. "That's why it's important to be screened and talk with your medical providers about your risk factors and things that you can do to prevent type 2 diabetes if you're at risk."

A Role for Medications

Although making healthy lifestyle changes has proven effective for preventing diabetes, it doesn't work for everyone. For those people, medications may help.

NIH's DPP study looked at whether the diabetes drug metformin might also prevent or delay diabetes onset. It found that the drug could reduce the risk of developing diabetes by about 30%. For some patients, a combination of metformin and lifestyle changes might be best.

In recent years, a class of drugs called GLP-1 drugs has

become widely available for weight management and diabetes treatment. These drugs have proven effective at reducing weight and keeping blood glucose in check. Some studies hint that they might also help to prevent or delay diabetes.

"Body weight is an important factor that determines the risk of getting type 2 diabetes. So the potential here is great," says Knowler. "But the problem is, as with any new drugs, it takes many years to know how effective and safe they will be. And a huge problem with any kind of weight loss is sustaining it, not achieving it."

Because GLP-1 drugs are still relatively new, it's not entirely clear how outcomes will change if people stop taking the drugs. And possible side effects of long-term use are still uncertain.

Healthy Changes That Last

"Making lifestyle changes is hard. So it's important to get the support you need to make the changes last," says Dr. Joshua J. Joseph, a physician and diabetes researcher at Ohio State University. "You can get that support through programs like the CDC's National Diabetes

Prevention Program (NDPP)."

NDPP is based on the findings of NIH's DPP study. It aims to help people make long-term lifestyle changes that prevent or delay diabetes (see the Wise Choices box).

Local hospitals, health departments, libraries, senior centers, and faith-based organizations may also offer programs or seminars to help prevent type 2 diabetes. For physical activity, look for activities that you enjoy. Experts recommend brisk

walking for a low-cost activity. Working out with others can be motivating for some people. Consider group classes like Zumba or Pilates.

"It's important to think of diabetes prevention throughout the lifespan. So, it's just as critical to work with children on healthy eating and healthy behaviors as it is to work with older people," Joseph explains. "If we work across the life course, it could lead to large reductions in the development of diabetes in the U.S. and around the world."

Wise choices Aim to prevent diabetes

- **Maintain a healthy weight. If you are overweight, set a weight-loss goal. Start by aiming to lose at least 5% of your current weight.**
- **Get moving. Get at least 30 minutes of physical activity 5 days a week.**
- **Eat healthy. Find tips for healthy eating at www.myplate.gov.**
- **Get support. CDC's National Diabetes Prevention Program (NDPP) offers year-long programs nationwide. Participants work with a lifestyle coach in person or online to build healthy habits that last. It's free to eligible participants. Find an NDPP near you at <https://www.cdc.gov/diabetes-prevention/lifestyle-change-program/find-a-program.html>**



Your Local USO Wants You!

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

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

Ready to apply to be a USO San Diego volunteer?

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

- On the right side see "Interested in volunteering?"
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- Navigate to your area
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Positions may be available around San Diego county at:

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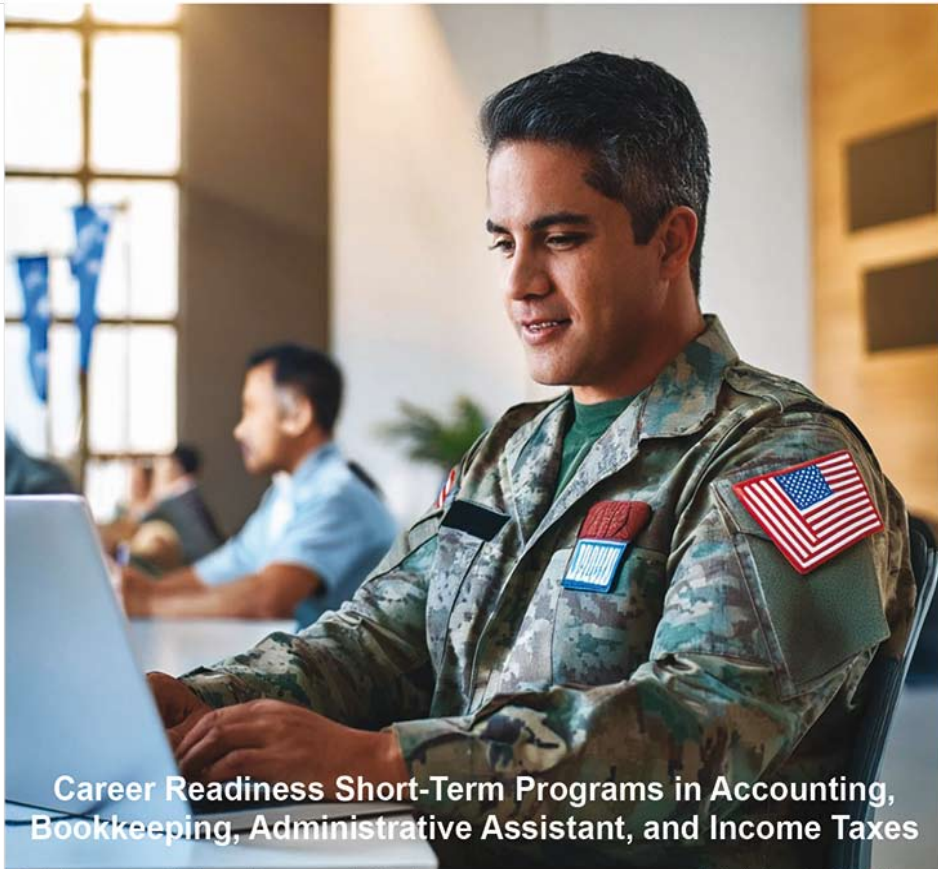
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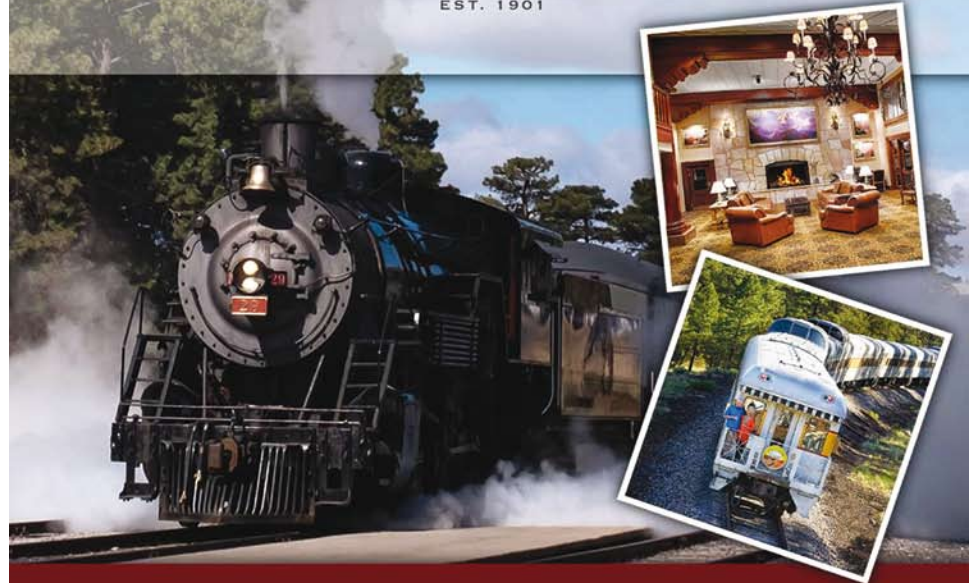
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