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SIXTY-FIFTH YEAR NO. 47
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THE STANDARD Air Force Senior Airman Anna Konig salutes during an Honor Guard graduation ceremony at Eglin Air Force Base, Fla., April 24, 2026. About 11 new airmen graduated from the 120-hour course. U.S. Air Force photo by Samuel King, Jr.

Metro San Diego named among the best as DOW's 'Large Fire Department of the Year'

A big 2025 full of successes for the Metro San Diego Fire Department, from mitigating a 16,000 wildland fire on San Clemente Island, to educating over 11,000 people about fire prevention, propelled them into the list of winners of the 2025 DOW Fire and Emergency Services Awards May 4.

DOW and FE&S working group representatives from the military services and Defense Logistics Agency selected nine winners from a total of 41 nominations.

"These remarkable individuals form the bedrock of our operational readiness, ensuring the safety and security of our service members, their families, and the critical infrastructure supporting our national defense," said Robert E. Thompson, performing the duties of the Assistant Secretary of War for Energy, Installations, and Environment. "Their expertise in fire prevention, public education, and emergency response enables them to continuously provide essential services that preserve mission capability and protect lives."

Each year, three of DOW's most outstanding fire departments receive recognition for achieving the highest degree of excellence in mission support and fire protection management. For 2025, **Small Fire Department of the Year**: Naval Support Activity Annapolis, Md.; **Medium Fire Department of the Year**: Fort Stewart-Hunter Army Airfield, Ga. and **Large Fire Department of the Year**: Metro San Diego.

For Metro San Diego, mitigating the 4-day, 16,000-acre wildland fire on SCI saved crucial facilities and ensured no loss to endangered wildlife. The department educated over 11,000 military personnel and local community members through fire prevention classes. The department also mitigated 3,000 emergency incidents including five structure fires, 15 shipboard emergencies, 50 hazardous materials, 15 technical rescues, and over 2,000 EMS calls.

For more information, visit the DOW F&ES Awards website at <https://www.acq.osd.mil/eie/emr/fes/index.html>.

PSYCHEDELIC DRUGS ON THE VERGE OF APPROVAL FOR MENTAL ILLNESS, BUT FOR VETERANS, HEALING HAS ALREADY BEGUN

by Scott Sutherland
 Staff writer

On the heels of the April 18 executive order by President Trump to accelerate research leading to the use of psychedelic drugs for veterans in crisis, an equine therapy group based in Alpine has already saddled up by offering a different brand of treatment at its facility.

Participants. In an e-mail from Mark Rogoff, media relations spokesperson for Saddles in Service, "Those who have been diagnosed with or are experiencing symptoms related to post-traumatic stress (PTSD), anxiety, depression, job-related stress, and/or traumatic brain injuries are partnered with a horse through their healing journey."



Photo courtesy of Saddles in Service

At Saddles in Service, the core purpose is helping veterans, active-duty military, and first responders overcome trauma through equine-assisted healing at no cost to par-

Unlike the federal executive order regarding psychedelics, which involves numerous agencies including the VA and Health and Human Services, the work at Saddles in Service is more of a one-on-one experience. Their results speaks volumes - 1,171 heroes have been served, 9,376 program sessions conducted, and 92 percent of participants are reporting reduced anxiety and depression, impacting more than 4,000 lives, including families.

Case studies involving horses to help heal lives demonstrate that animal-assisted therapy significantly reduces anxiety, depression, and loneliness while increasing social engagement and motivation in patients with men-

tal health conditions, dementia, and high stress.

The group Horses for Mental Health advocates for equine-assisted services for mental health. According to their website, they're building a movement that "champions horses as powerful partners in healing."

In their facility in Alpine, Saddles in Service's equine-assisted healing offers a different path - one that is experiential rather than clinical. According to the e-mail from Rogoff, horses mirror human emotion in real time, helping participants rebuild trust, process trauma and reconnect with purpose.

see **Therapy**, page 2

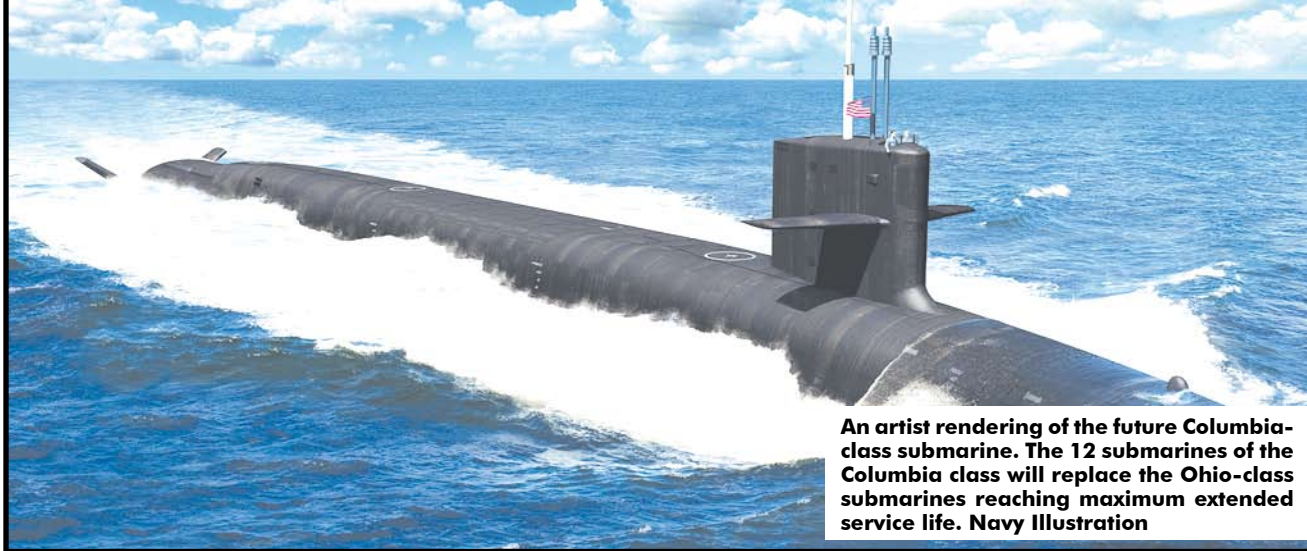
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WAR DEPARTMENT'S \$1.5 TRILLION BUDGET PROPOSAL INCLUDES SIZABLE NUCLEAR TRIAD INVESTMENT



An artist rendering of the future Columbia-class submarine. The 12 submarines of the Columbia class will replace the Ohio-class submarines reaching maximum extended service life. Navy Illustration

by C. Todd Lopez, Pentagon News

The War Department aims to modernize the U.S. nuclear triad - including air, land and sea weapons - and the fiscal year 2027 budget proposal includes ample investment to make that happen, said Secretary of War Pete Hegseth during testimony on Capitol Hill recently.

"[This budget] invests in it — \$71 billion in our nuclear triad and [nuclear command, control and communications], understanding that if you get that wrong, you get everything else wrong," Hegseth told senators during the Senate Armed Services Committee hearing.

The secretary pointed to Iran's pursuit of nuclear weapons as an example of why the U.S. has a nuclear deterrent and why it must maintain that strategic deterrent capability.

"Imagine what the situation in the region would look like if Iran also wielded a nuclear weapon — and the limits it would put on our capabilities in those situations," Hegseth said. "Our adversaries have to deal with that dilemma because of the strength of our nuclear triad — so that \$71 billion investment, the [direct reporting program managers] that have been put over top of it to move those systems left ... it's just been a priority since we came into the building, and we're funding it accordingly."

Within President Donald J. Trump's FY27 budget request, \$71.4 billion is allocated to modernizing all three legs of the U.S. nuclear capability.

In the air domain, there's \$6.1 billion for the B-21 Raider, a dual-capable penetrating

strike stealth bomber, that can deliver both conventional and nuclear munitions. The Raider was first unveiled in 2023 and is planned as a central component of the nuclear triad's air leg. A top priority for the department, the Air Force plans to procure a minimum of 100 B-21 aircraft.

The FY27 budget also includes \$4.6 billion for the LGM-35 Sentinel, intended to modernize and replace the Minuteman III intercontinental ballistic missile weapons system with 400 operationally deployed missiles and 450 silos across the U.S. The Sentinel program includes infrastructure projects, such as hardened silos and other facilities, across five states.

Around \$1.5 billion is included for the long-range standoff cruise missile, a replacement for

the bomber-delivered AGM-86B air-launched cruise missile.

And for the sea-based leg of

the triad, there is \$16.2 billion for the Columbia-class ballistic missile submarine. The Columbia-class is currently in production and will replace the existing Ohio-class vessels. The president's budget includes the procurement of the fourth submarine in this class and additional funding for the continued development of the third sub in the class, USS Groton. There is also funding here for research, development, test and evaluation, as well as for investment in the industrial base that builds the Columbia-class submarine.

Enhancements to the industrial base are not limited to just those private sector companies that build submarines. Hegseth said the War Department is very interested in strengthening the entire industrial base, because

the ability of America's private sector to quickly provide the most advanced weapons, munitions and other material to the department is critical to national security.

"A nation's ability to build, to innovate and to support critical needs of its warfighters at speed and at scale is the foundation upon which its deterrence and survival rests," Hegseth told lawmakers.

For years, the secretary said, the defense industrial base had been neglected. But that has changed.

"Under the leadership of President Trump, our builder in chief, we are reversing this systemic decay and putting our defense industrial base back on a wartime footing," he said.

Therapy

continued from page 1

In a testimonial, Brandon V., a Navy veteran, found Saddles in Service before it was too late. "I was dry firing a pistol into my mouth almost every morning," he said.

Another Navy veteran, Kasea S., said, "Nothing compares to just being out here with my horse."

SIS is on board with the exploration of emerging therapies, including psychedelics, in appropriate medical settings. Key psychedelic therapies for veterans include MDMA-Assisted Therapy, or methylenedioxymethamphetamine, often regarded as the most promising treatment for PTSD,

and Psilocybin-Assisted Therapy used to treat treatment-resistant depression, anxiety, and PTSD.

According to information provided by Saddles in Service, while national attention turns toward emerging therapies, the crisis remains urgent. According to the VA's 2025 National Veteran Suicide Prevention Annual Report, nearly 18 veterans die by suicide every day in the U.S., and first responders are more likely to die by suicide than in the line of duty.

"Many of the people who protect our country and communities carry invisible wounds of service, including PTSD, depression, and suicidal thoughts," said David

Perloff, Saddles in Service Vice President of Marketing & Community Relations. "Saddles in Service helps save lives by giving these heroes a path to rebuild trust, purpose, and connection."

There is a waitlist of heroes seeking help. A donation of \$7,500 sponsors a full healing journey for one participant, moving them from the waitlist into the program. Of course smaller donations to help support the program are welcome. "Let's get behind this program and make sure they have the resources they need," said Robert M. of U.S. Customs & Border Protection.

Visit the Saddles in Service website for more information at <https://saddlesinservice.org/>

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

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

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Editor.....Scott Sutherland

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Fort Leonard Wood drill sergeants sentenced to prison for engaging in sexual relationships with trainees under their supervision

by Michelle McCaskill

FORT LEONARD WOOD, Mo. – Two Army drill sergeants who engaged in prohibited sexual relationships with their trainees and conspired to cover it up have been sentenced to prison, ending their military careers.

Staff Sgt. Michael L. Serrano, 34, and Sgt. 1st Class Brian L. Sullivan, 39, both assigned to A Company, 2nd Battalion, 10th Infantry Regiment, 3rd Chemical Brigade, both pleaded guilty to their crimes during their court-martials April 2 -22 at the Fort Leonard Wood courtroom.

On Aug. 7, 2024, the day prior to her graduation from Basic Combat Training, the trainee victimized by Sullivan came forward with a letter to the unit staff duty officer describing how Sullivan pursued her which led to an intimate relationship. She also described how Serrano engaged in a similar relationship with another trainee.

The letter was shared with command leadership who provided the information to the Department of the Army Criminal Investigation Division and an

investigation was initiated.

Army CID agents interviewed the trainees along with other witnesses who observed the actions and behavior of both Drill Sergeants towards the victims.

When interviewed by Army CID agents, Sullivan and Serrano conspired to cover-up their crimes by agreeing on a fabricated story in which they denied having any relationship with the trainees. The eyewitness accounts of several witnesses in the unit and the testimony of the victim trainees countered these false claims.

Serrano pleaded guilty to wrongfully attempting to develop a sexual relationship with a trainee and engaging in prohibited sexual activity with a trainee. The military judge sentenced him to 47 days in prison, a reprimand, reduction in rank to E-1, and he will receive a General Discharge from the Army through a subsequent command initiated administrative action.

Sullivan pleaded guilty to abusive sexual contact and was sentenced by the military judge to 84 days in prison, reduction of

rank to E-1, and he will receive an Other Than Honorable discharge from the Army through a subsequent command initiated administrative action. Upon release from prison, Sullivan



will be required to register as a sex offender and will be subject to federal and state sex offender registration requirements.

Per the terms of their plea agreements, the government dismissed the remaining charges for both defendants.

“The conviction and sentence in this case shows the seriousness in which the Army takes these types of offenses and the commitment to providing a safe and secure environment in which trainees take their first steps forward as members of our force,” said Capt. Tyler Eason, prosecutor, Fourth Circuit, Army Office of Special Trial Counsel. “Through the investigative work of Army CID and the courage of

the victims in this matter, these Drill Sergeants were held responsible for their actions.”

“Drill Sergeants are entrusted by the American people to transform civilians into Soldiers,” said Special Agent in Charge John McCabe, Army CID’s Midcentral Field Office. “Exploiting a position of authority to pursue a relationship for personal gratification is a betrayal of that trust. Army CID will aggressively investigate these offenses to protect our trainees and ensure the integrity of our training environment.”

Serrano and Sullivan will serve their prison sentences at the Midwest Joint Regional Correctional Facility at Fort Leavenworth, Kan.

This case was investigated by Army CID’s Fort Leonard Wood Resident Agency and prosecuted by Eason and Capt. Alex Egan, 3rd Chemical Brigade.

The Army Office of Special Trial Counsel is comprised of specially trained military lawyers, legal professionals and support staff responsible for the expert and independent prosecu-

tion of murder, sexual assault, domestic violence, child abuse, kidnapping and other serious criminal offenses. Headquartered at Fort Belvoir, Va., OSTC has eight regional headquarters that oversee 28 field offices located across the country to include Europe and Korea. For

more information visit <https://www.army.mil/ostc>.

If you would like to report a crime, have information about a crime, or have been the subject or survivor of a crime, you can submit anonymous tips to Army CID at www.p3tips.com/armycid.



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U.S. launches Project Freedom

USCENTCOM

TAMPA, Fla. — U.S. Central Command (CENTCOM) forces began supporting Project Freedom, May 4, to restore freedom of navigation for commercial shipping through the Strait of Hormuz.

The mission, directed by the President, will support merchant vessels seeking to freely transit through the essential international trade corridor. A quarter of the world's oil trade at sea and significant volumes of fuel and fertilizer products are transported through the strait.

“Our support for this defensive mission is essential to regional security and the global economy as we also maintain the naval blockade,” said Adm.



Project Freedom in Strait of Hormuz. Photo provided by U.S. Central Command

Brad Cooper, CENTCOM commander.

Recently, the U.S. Department of State announced a new initiative, in partnership with the Department of War, to enhance coordination and information

sharing among international partners in support of maritime security in the strait.

The Maritime Freedom Construct aims to combine diplomatic action with military coordination, which will be critical

during Project Freedom.

U.S. military support to Project Freedom will include guided-missile destroyers, over 100 land and sea-based aircraft, multi-domain unmanned platforms, and 15,000 service members.

Eerie Company: A new threat at Joint Multinational Readiness Center

by Staff Sgt. Troy Wharton

HOHENFELS, Germany — Soldiers assigned to the newly established Eerie Company, 1st Battalion, 4th Infantry Regiment, used first-person-view drone systems to enhance reconnaissance capabilities during Joint Multinational Readiness Center exercises in Hohenfels, Germany.

Acting as the opposing force during the exercise, the company replicated a modern battlefield threat by combining emerging drone technology and electronic warfare with traditional infantry tactics, creating a realistic training environment for rotational units.

Established in December, Eerie Company specializes in short-, mid- and long-range reconnaissance to provide timely, accurate battlefield intelligence. The unit was created to address the evolving demands of modern warfare and to increase situational awareness across the battalion.

“The rate at which modern warfare is moving, and due to current conflicts, this company was established to help bridge that gap and be the eyes and ears of the battalion,” said Capt. Luther Salmon, company commander.

One of the primary systems the company employs is the Archer, a first-person-view drone used to replicate emerging aerial threats observed in ongoing global conflicts, including the war in Ukraine.

Spc. Ryan Hatcher, an infantryman and subject matter expert on the system, emphasized its effectiveness during training.

“It’s pretty good for an FPV,” Hatcher said. “Other FPVs we’ve flown here in Hohenfels, Germany, we’ve only been able to max out at eight to 10 minutes of battery life.”

Hatcher added that operating



Army Pfc. Alexander Walker, an Infantryman assigned to 4th Infantry Regiment, sets up the eBee Vision during Combined Resolve 26-07 in Hohenfels, Germany, April 23. U.S. Army photo

first-person-view drone systems is not limited to a specific military occupational specialty, which allows Soldiers from across the formation to qualify as drone pilots and contribute to reconnaissance efforts.

He said the Archer can be configured for multiple roles,

including intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance. In some scenarios, similar systems may be equipped with munitions, allowing Soldiers to train on identifying the differences between armed and unarmed drones.

<https://www.army.mil/article-amp/292170/>



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- U.S. military commanders to brief Trump on military options against Iran
- Ceasefire 'stops' War Powers clock on Iran, Hegseth claims
- VA shuttering underperforming clinics, addressing leadership shortcomings at others
- Some U.S. troops cite benefits of Germany presence as Trump threatens pullback
- Congress ends partial government shutdown, funding Coast Guard

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- The U.S. Army wants to manufacture meatless proteins in combat zones
- Fort Polk Soldier charged for threatening to attack synagogue

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- From prototypes to production: U.S. Air Force seeks nearly \$1B for initial CCA procurement

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- Space Force eyes operations 'hub' for expansive data transport constellation

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- National Guard officers earn medals for apprehending gunman in DC shooting

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- After reductions, VA chief says facilities can 'hire where they need and what they need'

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- Northrop Grumman delivers sensor for missile-warning satellite as Pentagon cancels program
- Romania enters U.S. counter-drone marketplace
- Romania picks Rheinmetall's Lynx combat vehicle in \$4 billion acquisition
- Air Force clears T-7A Red Hawk for low-rate production
- Army awards deal to AV for new Switchblade 400 kamikaze drone to support LASSO program



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Navy boosts support for military families with major childcare expansion

by Coleen R. San Nicolas-Perez
CNIC Public Affairs

WASHINGTON, D.C. - The Navy is expanding its Child and Youth Programs (CYP) with more than 900 new childcare spaces slated to open at key fleet concentration areas through 2028.

This initiative, part of a broader readiness strategy for Sailors and their families, includes construction of new facilities, innovative facility conversions, and long-term capital investments in modern infrastructure.

“Supporting our Sailors means supporting their families,” said Vice Adm. Scott Gray, commander of Navy Installations Command. “Access to high-quality, reliable

In addition to construction of new facilities, the Navy is using innovative approaches to accelerate the availability of care. At Naval Base Kitsap, a former chapel and community center were converted into modern Child Development Center (CDC) spaces, adding approximately 154 more slots for children.

The Navy is committed to enhancing the quality of its CYP programs. By the end of FY26, the Early Learning Matters (ELM) curriculum will be fully implemented across all Navy CDCs worldwide. The world-class ELM curriculum is grounded in the latest research on child development and brain science, promoting school readiness through a play-based, inquiry-driven approach.

“The ELM curriculum is a

To further support families, the Navy is also expanding community-based care options. The Military Child Care in Your Neighborhood (MCCYN) program is adding 1,000 fee-assistance spaces in FY26 to give families more high-quality choices in their local communities.

The MCCYN program is a Department of War initiative that provides fee assistance to eligible military families, helping offset the cost of community-based childcare when installation care is unavailable.

Construction, NBPL



Groundbreaking for Child Development Center at Naval Base Point Loma May 10, 2024. U.S. Navy photo

Naval Base Point Loma continues construction of a new 35,987-square-foot Child Development Center (CDC) to provide quality childcare services for military personnel and authorized civilians.

Designed to accommodate up to 292 children aged six weeks to five years, the facility includes age-appropriate activity rooms, administrative offices, training rooms, and staff support areas.

This project aims to reduce the current childcare waitlist and support the needs of military families in the San Diego area.

Four major construction projects are currently ongoing - one at Naval Base Point Loma, two at Naval Base Kitsap, and one at Joint Expeditionary Base Little Creek-Fort Story. These projects represent the next phase of the Navy's long-term strategy to modernize and expand its childcare infrastructure.

childcare reflects our commitment to our people and increases fleet readiness. This year's expansion makes significant progress toward that commitment, and it is only the beginning.”

Four major construction projects (MILCONs) are currently ongoing - one at Naval Base Point Loma (*see sidebar story and photo*), two at Naval Base Kitsap, and one at Joint Expeditionary Base Little Creek-Fort Story. These projects represent the next phase of the Navy's long-term strategy to modernize and expand its childcare infrastructure.

game-changer for everyone in our centers,” said Maryann Coutino, director of the Navy Child and Youth Programs. “For children, it provides a predictable, engaging, and rich learning environment that builds critical thinking skills and eases the stress of PCS moves.

“For our Child and Youth Program professionals, it is an empowering tool that offers a clear framework for intentional teaching, fostering their professional skills and allowing them to focus on what they do best - creating meaningful interactions that help our youngest learners thrive.”

Special & General Court-Martial tried within Navy Region Southwest

The following reports the most recent results of every Special and General Court-Martial tried within Navy Region Southwest.

Reference to the inclusion of a waiver of an administrative separation board in the plea agreement will only be reported in those cases where a punitive discharge is not adjudged as part of the sentence.

- At a General Court-Martial in San Diego, Seaman Jovany L. Jabro pled guilty to one specification of sexual assault of a child who attained the age of 12 years old, but had not attained the age of 16 years. The military judge sentenced him to 18 months confinement and a Dishonorable Discharge

- At a Special Court-Martial in San Diego, MMC Patrick

Z. Jackson pled guilty to one specification of incapacitation from duty due to drunkenness. The military judge sentenced him to a reduction in rank to E-4.

- At a Special Court-Martial in San Diego, an E-5 was tried for one specification of use of a controlled substance. A military judge found the accused not guilty.

- At a Special Court-Martial in San Diego, HM2 Jake E. Dimmitt pled guilty to one specification of being drunk and disorderly. The military judge sentenced him to 31 days confinement and a reduction in rank to E-5.

- At a Special Court-Martial in

San Diego, AO3 Ethan K. Erickson pled guilty to four specifications of assault consummated by a battery. The military judge sentenced him to 10 days confinement, reduction in rank to E-1, and a Bad Conduct Discharge.

- At a Special Court-Martial in San Diego, BMSN Kevaune S. Williams pled guilty to one specification of willfully disobeying a superior commissioned officer. The military judge sentenced him to 83 days confinement and a reduction in rank to E-2.

The Navy JAG Corps provides public access to court-martial results, dockets, and filings for Navy and Marine Corps cases. These records cover special and general courts-martial, featuring summaries of findings and sentences, with updates usually posted on Mondays.



Personal Property Activity launches moving website

by Army Maj. Matthew Visser, Personal Property Activity

The War Department's Personal Property Activity will officially launch its new website, www.ppa.mil, creating a centralized digital hub designed to better support DOW personnel and industry partners as they navigate the moving process.

The new platform serves as the definitive single source of truth for all parties involved in supporting global household goods and vehicle shipment, in-transit storage and non-temporary storage. It replaces previously fragmented platforms by providing a modernized, user-friendly experience that focuses on clarity, accessibility and efficiency.

Designed with warfighters in mind, the website provides step-by-step moving guidance and checklists for every stage of the relocation process. It also includes resources on permanent change of station moves, personally procured moves, overseas shipments and guidance for filing claims and shipping privately owned vehicles. It also includes a centralized library of printable tools and guides that help warfighters and their families prepare for their move.

Army Maj. Gen. Lance Curtis, Personal Property Activity commander, said that the website reflects the organization's commitment to improving the relocation experience by offering greater accessibility to military families.

“Our service members and their families deserve a relocation experience built on trust, quality and support,” Curtis said.

The Personal Property Activity exists to ensure every move receives quality service throughout the process. Curtis said the website is a critical step forward in delivering on its commitment to give warfighters and their families a single, authoritative place to find the information they need.

In addition to customer resources, the website introduces an industry and government resource center - a dedicated portal for transportation service providers, personal property shipping offices, personal property processing offices and government stakeholders to access a repository of the latest advisories, business rules and operational guidance.

The website supplements Military One Source, which will con-

tinue to host PPA fact sheets and useful information and replaces the previous Defense Personal Property Program management office website.

Army Col. Mike Ashton, Personal Property Activity director of operations, emphasized the importance of the new platform.

“This website is an investment in how we communicate and operate across the Personal Property Activity enterprise,” Ashton said. “By consolidating our guidance into one website, we improve access to information and create a stronger, more connected system for military families, our field offices and our industry partners.”

The website is a living resource, and users are encouraged to provide feedback to ensure the platform continues to evolve and meet their needs.

The Personal Property Activity call and operations center will be available 24/7 from May 15 to Sept. 15, to support the peak permanent change of station moving season. It can be reached at PCSCallCenter@mail.mil and 1-833-MIL-MOVE.



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U.S.-Australia partnership delivers EW capability

by Michael Smith
 Naval Air Warfare Center
 U.S. Navy and Royal Australian Air Force personnel gathered recently to com-

memorate Anzac Day, marking a century-old sacrifice that now anchors 12 years of daily partnership in electronic warfare operations at Naval

Air Warfare Center Weapons Division.

More than 20 years of cooperative science and technology between Australia and NAW-CWD has produced fielded EW capability for both nations' aircrews. Australia is the only nation besides the United States to operate the EA-18G Growler. The two nations co-developed the Next-Generation Jammer, which is replacing the legacy ALQ-99.

In December 2024, the Royal Australian Navy destroyer HMAS Brisbane launched a Tomahawk cruise missile from the Point Mugu Sea Range. Australia became the third AUKUS nation to demonstrate the capability.

The ceremony honored the origin of that alliance.

About 72 people took their seats just before 8:30 a.m. Dolphins passed close to shore minutes before the ceremony began. Mugu Rock stood behind a thin marine layer, the Pacific breaking gently against its base.

Each chair held a small gift bag marked "Lest We Forget." Inside: a sprig of rosemary and a red poppy pin, both emblems of

remembrance. Alongside them, a koala keychain and an Anzac biscuit.

A Royal Australian Air Force warrant officer opened the service by telling a story most of his American audience had never heard, a story called the "Bridge of Valor."

At Gallipoli in 1915, the warrant officer said, the guns fell silent one afternoon. A Turkish soldier climbed from his trench carrying a white flag. He was not surrendering. He was crossing into enemy fire. He was there to save.

He walked into no man's land, lifted a wounded Australian and carried him across broken ground to the Australian line. He placed the man in the arms of his mates, turned and walked back alone. Only then did the firing resume.

"They remind us that even in the darkest chapters of human history, compassion can cross the deepest trench," the warrant officer said, pointing to monuments at Gallipoli that depict the moment.

Anzac Day marks the anniversary of the first major military action by Australian and New Zealand forces in World War I. They landed at Gallipoli on April 25, 1915.

The campaign lasted eight months and cost more than 8,000 Australian and nearly 2,700 New Zealand lives. For Australians and New Zealanders, Anzac Day is a day of national remembrance.

"In Australia, it needs no explanation," the warrant officer said. "In California, it does: who the Anzacs were, why Gallipoli mattered, and why remembrance still resonates."

The American thread in the Anzac story runs further back than many Americans realize. Before the United States entered World War I, dozens of young Americans crossed the Pacific to enlist in the Australian Imperial Force.

see Next page

Man-on-the-Street What would be your vanity license plate?

BLESSED

"We went through some hard times, but it's good now, and I'm blessed."

AO1 Jorge Gomez
 Fleet Readiness Center Southwest



ULIKTHT

(YOU LIKE THAT! refers to a S.D. Padres' fan chant) "Padres were playing the L.A. Dodgers and we chanted!"

Melissa Corona
 Fitness Specialist



P-STAR

"My new car has the brand logo on the body, but not the make."

ETC Chris Deditz
 Littoral Combat Ship Training Facility Pacific



OSTFRNT

*(The Eastern Front)
 "I was born after the war in Germany, so Ostfront has some historical value for me."

Rick Komisars
 MWR assistant

*See historical reference below



MYWIFEY

"We celebrated our Silver Anniversary on April 28."

John Garcia
 NASNI Fitness Center



*Ostfront, or The Eastern Front of WWII, was the largest and deadliest theater of conflict, fought between Germany (and Axis partners) and the Soviet Union from June 22, 1941, to May 8, 1945.



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PORT HEUNEME (April 16, 2026) Capt. Constance L. Solina salutes during the change of command ceremony in which she relieved Capt. Dean E. Allen as commander of Naval Facilities Engineering and Expeditionary Warfare Center at the Navy Seabee Museum here. Navy photo by Lisa Ferdinando



CAMP PENDLETON (April 29, 2026) Marines assigned to Battalion Landing Team 2/4, 13th Marine Expeditionary Unit, evacuate a simulated casualty to the landing zone during a vertical assault raid here. The execution of this raid is a key event of the amphibious raid course that tests BLT 2/4's and Marine Medium Tiltrotor Squadron 364 (Rein.)'s proficiency in complex raid-force tactics and enhances the 13th MEU's operational capabilities. U.S. Marine Corps photo by Sgt. Martha Linares

EW continued from page 6

They wore the slouch hat, shared bully beef rations and fought alongside Australian diggers in the trenches. The warrant officer called them the "Aussie-Yanks," the first quiet bridge between the two democracies.

Three years later, American and Australian troops fought together for the first time.

At the Battle of Hamel on July 4, 1918, American troops fought beside Australian forces under the command of Australian Gen. John Monash. Monash launched the attack on America's Independence Day as a mark of respect.

When last-minute orders came for Americans to withdraw, many refused. They donned the Australian slouch hat and went into battle beside their Australian mate.

A RAAF sergeant traced the alliance from Hamel through

World War II, Korea, Vietnam, Iraq and Afghanistan. The two nations formalized the relationship in the ANZUS Treaty of 1951, which Australia invoked for the first time on Sept. 11, 2001.

"This mateship, forged on a battlefield over 100 years ago, has built an unbreakable foundation," the sergeant said. "On that foundation we will build the bond of friendship for the next 100 years. We are mates."

NAWCWD's Airborne Electronic Attack Integrated Product Team has collaborated with RAAF counterparts since 2009. Uniformed RAAF personnel have been stationed full-time at Point Mugu since 2014.

RAAF engineers and uniformed personnel work daily alongside NAWCWD counterparts at Point Mugu, embedded across programs that include the Next-Generation Jammer, broader EW science and technology and mission data analysis.

DOW contract to support unmanned systems ops

In a Department of War contract for May 4, Peraton Inc., Herndon, Va., was awarded \$17.3 million for Expeditionary Unmanned Systems Operations and fleet support representative support at Naval Information Warfare Center Pacific and Fleet commands which have fielded MK 18 systems.

Work will be performed in San Diego, Little Creek, Va., and various locations outside the continental U.S., including Spain, Bahrain and Okinawa.

This one-year contract includes four one-year options which, if exercised, would bring the overall potential value of this contract to an estimated \$90.6 million. The period of performance of the base award is now, to May 3, 2027.

Naval Information Warfare Center Pacific in San Diego is the contracting activity.

A secure collaborative workspace at Point Mugu lets Australian and U.S. personnel develop EW capability side by side. A separate joint countermeasures facility, which reached early operational capability in July 2024,

provides another workspace where the two nations collaborate on shared aircraft.

A NAWCWD electronic attack programs lead said the partnership delivers what neither nation could deliver alone.

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PORT PATROL Marines assigned to the 31st Marine Expeditionary Unit board Blue Star III, a commercial ship suspected of attempting to transit to Iran in violation of the U.S. blockade of Iranian ports, April 28, 2026. U.S. forces released the vessel after conducting a search and confirming the ship's voyage would not include an Iranian port call. U.S. Marine Corps photo

I MEF equips leaders to build Marine resilience

by Cpl. Joshua Bustamante
I Marine Expeditionary Force

CAMP PENDLETON – I Marine Expeditionary Force is strengthening Marines' readiness through Operational Stress Control and Readiness Generation IV training, a program that equips leaders to recognize, manage and prevent combat and operational stress among Marines.

OSCAR Gen. IV is the latest evolution of the Corps' approach to stress management. It aligns with the Total Fitness model by integrating mental, physical, social and spiritual resilience into daily leadership practices. The program reinforces the role of leaders at every level in maintaining both the well-being of their Marines and the effectiveness of their units.

"Our mental health is just as important as physical health," said Carissa Tourtelot, the preventative behavioral health director for I MEF. "While Marines learn skills like first aid and tactical combat casualty care, OSCAR focuses on 'mental first aid,' enabling Marines to recognize and respond to stress injuries just as effectively as they would with a physical injury."

Rather than treating stress as a reactionary issue, OSCAR Gen. IV emphasizes proactive, small-unit leadership through early intervention and peer engagement. At the team level, the program integrates trained peers, chap-

lains and medical personnel into a unified support network that enables timely conversations and accountability. The "Warrior Toolkit" further equips leaders with guided discussion tools to address stress in real time across garrison and deployed environments. Through constant application, leaders are better positioned to foster a culture where Marines are supported early and effectively.

"Open-ended conversations are the heart of behavioral health," said HM2 Marcelo Carrejo, a behavioral health technician with 1st Marine Division. "There is no one-size-fits-all approach to managing stress and anxiety. Much of mental health work involves asking reflective, open-ended questions."

To ensure this support extends beyond the unit level, OSCAR Gen. IV training connects Marines with a network of institutional resources designed to provide continued care. Participants are introduced to Marine Corps Community Services behavioral health programs, Support the Enlisted Program, and a range of additional resources available across the force.

Continue reading at <https://www.dvidshub.net/news/563824/>.

NSWC Corona, UC San Diego join forces with new education partnership agreement

by Paige Bounds

Naval Surface Warfare Center, Corona Division

In an effort to get advanced technologies in the hands of warfighters faster, Naval Surface Warfare Center (NSWC) Corona Division recently joined forces with the University of California San Diego through the signing of an education partnership agreement in mid-April. The agreement will enable Navy scientists and engineers at NSWC Corona to collaborate with students and faculty at UC San Diego's renowned Jacobs School of Engineering, working together to solve complex naval problems with innovative engineering solutions. "The challenges we will face as a nation are too complex to be solved in silos," said Capt. Joseph Burgon, commanding officer of NSWC Corona. "The work we do will benefit the men and women in uniform who depend upon us to provide the technological edge they need to succeed and return home safely." This signing builds upon an established history of collaboration between NSWC Corona and UC San Diego. More than 50 Triton students have joined NSWC Corona as interns or full-time employees, many starting their careers at the warfare center through the Naval Research Enterprise Internship Program. "The great engineering schools of the next decade will collaborate their way to relevance," said Albert Pisano, dean of the Jacobs School of Engineering. "If you want to be great ten years from now, you have to find the right collaborators and work on relevant projects. That is what we do here." The partnership unlocks several new ways for students and faculty at the Jacobs School of Engineering to engage with the Navy, including research experiences aimed at improving naval technology.

Cahill III announcement from Secretary of War

Secretary of War Pete Hegseth announced May 5 that the president has nominated Navy Rear Adm. **Joseph F. Cahill III** for appointment to vice admiral, with assignment as commander, Naval Surface Forces/commander, Naval Surface Force, U.S. Pacific Fleet, San Diego. Cahill is currently commander, Naval Surface Force, Atlantic, Norfolk, Va.

NAVY TO PREPARE EIS FOR MILITARY READINESS ACTIVITIES ON SAN CLEMENTE ISLAND

SAN DIEGO - Your comments are solicited as the Department of the Navy prepares an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) to evaluate the potential environmental impacts of continued and expanded military readiness activities at San Clemente Island.

The Navy invites public input on the scope of the EIS, including identifying potential alternatives or issues that should be addressed in the National Environmental Policy Act analysis, relaying environmental concerns, identifying historic properties, and providing information or analyses relevant to the Proposed Action or the project's potential to affect historic properties in line with the National Historic Preservation Act. The Navy is accepting comments during a 30-day scoping period now to May 24.

Military readiness activities include training; research, development, testing, and evaluation (collectively referred to

as "testing"); and range improvement and maintenance. The Proposed Action is the continuation of ongoing land-based military readiness activities, new proposed military readiness activities, range improvements and maintenance, and the implementation of a new Wildland Fire Management Plan. Proposed activities would occur on land ranges and over-the-beach training areas of the SCI Range Complex.

SCI is an essential military readiness asset because of its proximity to the largest concentration of naval forces in the U.S. SCI provides rugged terrain and unique range capabilities critical to maintaining the readiness of the Pacific Fleet, Marine Forces Pacific, and units from other military services. The proposed action is needed for the number and type of military readiness

activities currently conducted at SCI are inadequate to meet the Navy's statutory responsibility to organize, train, and equip combat-ready naval forces. The proposal would enhance existing training resources and prepare service members for operations in a real-world environment.

Scoping comments may be submitted via the project website or by mail to: Naval Facilities Engineering Systems Command Southwest, ATTN: SCITT EIS Project Manager, 750 Pacific Highway, Floor 12, San Diego, CA 92132-0058.



SCI. Courtesy photo

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Sat., May 23, 7pm	NAZ Wranglers at San Diego Strike Force*
Fri., June 19, 7pm	Vegas Knight Hawks at San Diego Strike Force*
Mon., July 6, 6pm	Arizona Rattlers at San Diego Strike Force*
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Bucknell **^	17-9	.654	24-22	.522
Navy *	16-10	.615	30-17	.638
Holy Cross *	13-13	.500	21-27	.438
Lehigh	8-18	.308	15-31	.326
Lafayette	7-19	.269	12-33	.267

* Clinched a berth in the Patriot League Championship

^ denotes Patriot League Regular-Season Co-Champion

! Clinched the No. 1 seed in the Patriot League Championship



by Jan Wagner

Recently I spotted one of my dream cars in the most unlikely of places — parked at a Costco Business Center — and yet, if you think about it, this location makes perfect sense. The GTC4Lusso was designed to be the daily driver of Ferraris, so how better to demonstrate that than on a Costco run?

I, too, had been grocery shopping on a Costco run. I had arrived just before they closed for the day, so by the time I left the store to return to my SUV, the parking lot had emptied. As I was walking, I spotted a Ferrari in the next aisle over to mine. I left my cart, pulled out my iPhone and walked across the aisle to take a picture of the Ferrari.

This was not just any Ferrari. This was a 4-seater Ferrari hatchback sports car. It was beautiful, Ferrari-red in color (the best color for a Ferrari, as far as I'm concerned) and, unlike other Ferraris, it is practical. That is something that I have always sought in a sports car but rarely found.

Perhaps the closest I ever came to owning my own practical, daily driver-suitable sports car was my then new, red, 1975 Datsun 280-Z 2+2. That car did indeed check the boxes for a practical design for a daily driver sports car but, for a sports car, it left much to be desired. I tried to autocross it in competition but its performance was far below that of the shorter and lighter, two-

Street spotted - Ferrari-red 2019 Ferrari GTC4Lusso

seater Datsun 280-Z. It was not competitive in its slalom competition class (CASC, in Canada). I tried to improve its performance by having the electronic fuel injection replaced with triple Weber carburetors, but its poor jetting and being placed in an even-higher class for competition, due to its modifications, made it even worse not only as an autocross car, but also as a daily driver.

Ferrari, in terms of its practicality as a daily driver, is very unlike my 2019, 30th Anniversary, fourth generation Mazda MX-5 Miata — a reality that I understood all too well when I had to live with it as my daily driver for two months, while my RAV4 was being rebuilt after being hit by a truck in a major hit-and-run accident. The Miata's tiny trunk with a small opening does not work for Costco runs. Also, the car has no back seat. It is so difficult to get in and out of that I sprained my left knee doing so — an injury that took me months of physical therapy to recover from.

Seeing the Ferrari so distracted me that I inadvertently left my large, full, orange, flatbed shopping cart blocking the aisle. A fellow shopper moved it out of their way so that they could leave.

Soon the owner of the Ferrari came out of Costco, to load his purchases into his car. I told him that I very much admired his car. Fortunately, he was willing to answer my questions about it.

I learned that his is a 2019 model with a 12-cylinder engine, a

backseat that folds down to provide more cargo capacity, and a practical hatchback design that provides easy access for loading and transporting larger items. He actually uses it as a daily driver, and that it has been reliable. That is my idea of an ideal sports car — something that is fun to drive, beautiful to look at and also practical.

As I learned more about it, I kept asking him for permission to look inside and take more pictures. One-at-a-time, I asked him for permission and then took photos of its cargo compartment, beautiful leather interior and under its V-12 engine under its hood.

Needless to say, I love this car, but sadly I will never be able to afford one. The current used price of a Ferrari GTC4Lusso is nearly as high as what their new MSRP was (\$260,750.). At least I got to see it and hear the sound of its glorious V-12 engine when he started it and drove it away.

To learn more about the incredible and practical 2019 Ferrari GTC4Lusso, a Google search will reveal plenty of articles on popular enthusiast websites, or visit here on the Ferrari website: <https://www.ferrari.com/en-EN/auto/gtc4lusso>.

To explore a wide variety of content dating back to 2002, with the most photos and the latest text, visit "AutoMatters & More" at <https://automatters.net>. Search by title or topic in the Search Bar in the middle of the Home Page or click on the blue 'years' boxes and browse. Copyright © 2026 by Jan Wagner - AutoMatters & More #927

The Meat & Potatoes of Life



by Lisa Smith Molinari

Not only did I get married so long ago that I can't even remember the moment I said "I do," a couple years later, someone mistook our VHS wedding tape for a blank, and recorded a football game over it. If it weren't for our photo album, there'd be no visual evidence of the event during which Francis and I promised to love each other until death do us part.

Uncle Allen did manage to record a few clips of the event on his gargantuan shoulder-mounted camcorder, but the shots are so shaky, it appears that our nuptials took place during a magnitude seven earthquake.

Besides, the moment that got the most attention wasn't our vows, it was the military sword arch at the end. My Navy husband, Navy brother, Navy brother-in-law and several Navy friends wore their dress blues. The attendees were in awe, and snapped dozens of photos.

I was in awe, too. I felt so fortunate to have found my soulmate and begin our life together. Like many new military spouses, I knew marrying into the Navy would impact my career. I quit my job as a litigation attorney in Pennsylvania to move to Francis' duty station, but I had no idea that I'd never practice law again.

After our first PCS move, our son was born, and I began my longest-

The risks & rewards of 'I do' in the military

running job, as a stay-at-home mom. I was good at it, but SAHMs don't earn a living, get promoted, or contribute to their 401ks. Francis was the family breadwinner, and I made the sandwiches.

Even though I was a lawyer, I never took steps to protect myself financially in the event that our marriage failed. Francis knew what I'd given up for him, and showed appreciation. In return, I trusted him to protect my future.

As romantic as that sounds, it's incredibly risky. Today, more than 40 percent of first marriages end in divorce. Even though four in ten divorces happen before year ten, rates of "gray" divorces after 20+ years of marriage are rapidly increasing. Add military life stressors to a relationship, and marriage becomes very risky business, indeed.

Active duty military couples have higher annual rates (3.4 to 3.7) of divorce than civilians (2.4 to 2.9). Rates are even higher for female service members (4.8), enlisted servicemembers (3.1 to 4.1), and Marines (3.8). Rates increase with less years of marriage, less income, more deployments, and the more control the service member has over the couple's finances.

Furthermore, many military spouses face a greater likelihood of post-divorce poverty due to loss of earning power, less social security, and resume gaps. Recognizing this, Congress passed the Uniformed Services Former Spouses' Protection Act (USFSPA) in 1982 to allow state divorce courts to divide military retirement pay between service members and spouses.

Also, the USFSPA also allows state courts to grant spouses certain lifetime military benefits such as base privileges and government healthcare under the "20/20/20" rule (20 years of marriage overlapping 20 years of eligible service and 20 years of retirement-creditable service). If there are only 15 years of overlapping marriage to a 20-year service person, then USFSPA allows state courts to grant only one year of Tricare coverage but no other privileges.

While courts will take into account military spouses' career sacrifices under general fairness principals, divorce decrees can vary widely depending on jurisdiction and judge. Military spouses must prove evidence of lost earning capacity, inability to work, military-related career interruptions, justified resume gaps, and cannot rely on general statistics about the impact of military life on spouses.

I feel secure in my marriage, but I realize how foolish I was in my youth to trust love alone to protect me. There's nothing more romantic than safeguarding a military spouse's financial future. This can include pre and post-nuptial agreements guaranteeing fair alimony, military pension division, and support for a spouse re-entering the workforce. Military spouses can also be equally involved in marital financial decisions. Military couples can treat these preventative measures not as a precursor to divorce, but as loving gestures to protect one's soulmate.

Another thing I really wish I'd been smart enough to safeguard 33 years ago — that VHS wedding videotape.

Veterans News

Veterans get real about their mental health journeys

by Dr. Tamara M Campbell
Veterans Affairs

Are you having a hard time deciding whether changes in your feelings or behavior are temporary or a cause for concern? Do you hesitate to ask for help? Ever wonder if mental health care could really make a difference?

For Mental Health Month this May, VA is inviting you to learn from hundreds of other veterans who have shared how they handled these questions and considerations. They're men and women of all ages, from all branches of service, with a wide range of military and life experiences.

Speaking openly in their own words, veterans share the ups and downs of their mental health journeys. They talk about their symptoms, why they asked for help, which treatments worked best for them and how mental health care changed their lives. In sharing their stories, they're hoping other veterans like you will hear something that will guide you on your own path forward.

"My anxiety would go up"

As a veteran whose emotions or behaviors may be impacting your quality of life, you're not alone.

Jamie, a Marine veteran, described feeling overwhelmed. "I couldn't focus on one thing, so I wasn't going to focus on anything," she said. "And then my anxiety would go up and then depression would set in because I just couldn't function."

For Stanita, a Navy vet, self-imposed isolation became a warning sign. "I would withdraw. I didn't want to interact with others in any way," she said.

For Nick, an Army veteran, there was no mistaking his biggest symptom. "I got off active duty and there was a huge hole missing in my life, and so I turned to alcohol to kind of fill that void," he said. "I was going through 18 beers a night and passing out."

"Don't wait to ask for help"

If you're a veteran feeling uncertain about reaching out for

support, this is a common experience. Many veterans hesitate, for a variety of reasons. Veterans sharing their stories urge others to overcome their reluctance or



any barriers they might encounter when seeking care.

"Don't wait to ask for help," said Nick, who started treatment after he became suicidal and a friend drove him to a VA hospital. "We think that we can fix our problems ourselves, and you just have to accept that you might not be able to."

Gregg, who was a major general in the Army, didn't let his rank dissuade him from

seeking treatment for symptoms of bipolar disorder and sharing his story with other Veterans. "I'm not going to be stigmatized, embarrassed, ashamed,"

he said. "If you have a mental health issue and you don't get help, you're looking at a path of destruction."

"I've learned so many things"

Mental health treatment and support from VA gives veterans the tools they need to improve their quality of life. Hear veterans explain which treatments and support worked for them and how treatment impacted their lives.

Jamie, diagnosed with attention-deficit hyperactivity disorder, mild depression and anxiety, said that receiving talk therapy, learning mindfulness and gaining confidence to reveal her true self made a huge difference. "I could tell that was easing my stress and anxiety once people saw me for me," she said. "I feel more support today than I ever have."

Nick, diagnosed with PTSD and depression, believes he'd still be drinking if not for the 28-day inpatient program with VA that started his path to recovery. One-on-one therapy with life coaching keeps him on course.

Stanita said every tool she's learned in therapy has helped her manage her PTSD, anxiety and depression. "I've learned so many things, to be honest, and I actually utilize every technique that I have been taught," she said. "Get help. It will help you navigate the world better."

Ready to take the next step? Find a Veteran story that speaks to you and explore VA mental health resources by visiting <https://www.maketheconnection.net/mental-health-month/>.

<https://news.va.gov/146482/veterans-get-real-mental-health-journeys/>



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Gator by the Bay Zydeco, Blues & Crawfish Festival, May 7-10. Spirit of Louisiana comes to SD to fill your ears with swinging music and fill your bellies with pounds of crawfish. gatorbythebay.com

San Diego International Fringe Festival, May 12-24. Brings the beautiful, the bizarre and the unexpected. <https://sd-fringe.org/>

79th Annual Ocean Beach Kite Festival, May 16, 10am-3pm. Perfect for kids from 0-102, who like building, designing, flying, and/or watching kites. Robb Athletic Field, 2525 Bacon St. San Diego. **Asian Cultural Festival May 16.** asianculturalfestivalsd.com

Over the Line Beer Fest and OTL Tournament, May 16. <https://www.ombac.org/beerfest-otl/>

Island Vibe Music Festival, May 16. islandvibemusicfestival.com

Navy Bay Bridge Run, May 17, 8am, Hilton Baysfront Park. Sign up today. <https://www.navybay-bridgerun.com/>

Escondido Street Festival, May 17, 10-6. Grand Avenue Festival, a cherished annual event for over 30 years, vendors, live music.

Valley Center Western Days, May 22-23. Parade, Stampede Rodeo & Festival, pancake breakfast, 5K fun run. "Celebrating America" Parade, May 23, Grand Marshal - American War Hero and local resident Captain E. Royce Williams, USN (ret). Join us as we honor Captain Williams (he'll be 101 during the parade!) and celebrate America's 250th birthday. <https://www.westerndays.org/>

Santee Street Fair & Craft Beer Festival, May 23, santeestreetfair.com

Julian Rocks Gem Show, May 23-25. visitjulian.com/julian-rocks-gem-show/

Vista Strawberry Festival, May 24, 8am-6pm. Free Strawberry Festival. Arts & Crafts, competitive pie eating... vistastrawberryfest.com

SANDAG unveils Bike Anywhere Day 2026 Pit Stop Map

Participants Can Pedal to More Than 100 Pit Stops Across the San Diego Region on Thursday, May 21

The SANDAG Bike Anywhere Day 2026 Pit Stop Map is now available to help participants plan their route for the annual event on Thursday, May 21, from 6:30 to 9:30 a.m. The map includes more than 100 pit stop locations, from Oceanside to El Cajon, and Tijuana.

For more than 30 years, SANDAG has hosted this regional event to celebrate National Bike Month in May to alleviate traffic and reduce air pollution while promoting biking as a fun, sustainable, and healthy transportation choice. On Bike Anywhere Day, riders can explore more than 1,800 miles of bikeways throughout the San Diego region.

In 2025, more than 10,000 pit stop visits were recorded across the region. This year, registered participants will

be automatically entered into the Bike Anywhere Day Sweepstakes for the chance to win one of five e-bikes, courtesy of Ridepanda.

Participants can pick up a free commemorative t-shirt and enjoy refreshments and snacks at any Bike Anywhere Day Pit stop on Thursday, May 21, while supplies last. Pit stop hosts include community organizations, local businesses, healthcare providers, schools, and government agencies.

In addition to Bike Anywhere Day, SANDAG is celebrating National Bike Month with free bike classes and group bike rides. To learn more about Bike Month activities, visit SANDAG.org/bikemonth. View the San Diego Regional Bike Map online or pick up the newest printed edition for free at any pit stop on the day of the event.

To register to participate in Bike Anywhere Day, visit SANDAG.org/bikeday.

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Active duty military, Museum Member, Children under 12: Free
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MCRD Command Museum & Historical Society. Museum focusing on Marine Corps history from the 19th century to today is also a research library. <http://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 Mondays 10am-2pm

Marine Corps Mechanized Museum Camp Pendleton. Managed under the auspices of Camp Pendleton's Museum Division Office, the collection of over 50 vehicles ranges from World War I to the first Gulf War. It includes Patton tanks, armored wheeled and tracked vehicles, trucks, jeeps and amphibious vehicles. When coming aboard Camp Pendleton, please ensure that you have a valid photo ID for every vehicle occupant along with current registration and proof of insurance. <https://www.themech.org/> 24194 Vandegrift Blvd, Oceanside, CA 92058. (760) 725-5758. Mon-Thur 8am-4pm, Fri 8am-1pm, Closed Saturday & Sunday

Armed Forces Dispatch • (619) 280-2985

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Detecting language difficulties: DLD can have subtle signs

from NIH

Many kids start talking later than expected. Most eventually catch up with other kids their age. But some kids have language difficulties that persist. This can be a sign of a condition called developmental language disorder, or DLD.

DLD is a communication disorder that persists into adulthood. It can interfere with learning, understanding, and using language.

"DLD is incredibly prevalent, but many people don't know about it," says Dr. Mary Alt, a speech and language expert at The University of Arizona.

It's one of the most common developmental disorders. DLD can affect a child's speaking, listening, reading, and writing.

The exact causes of DLD aren't known. It tends to run in families. But both genes and other factors are thought to play a role in changing how the brain develops.

Building stronger language skills is key for kids with DLD. Scientists are developing ways to boost their learning. They're also trying to identify kids with DLD earlier to get them support sooner.

Noticing Signs

Late talking can be one of the earliest signs of DLD. Young kids with DLD may struggle learning words. They might have difficulty talking.

"If you have a young child who isn't using a language to communicate, but is more using body language and gestures, that's a sign that they're having difficulty with learning language," says Dr. Jim Montgomery, a professor of communication sciences at Ohio University.

Another early sign of DLD is using simple language. By the time they reach preschool, most kids start using sentences.

"The sentences that a child with DLD might use are much simpler," says Alt. "Instead of saying, 'Look, the dog is running,' the child with

DLD might say, 'Him run.'"

Alt's team recently tracked the progress of kids who were late talkers at ages 2 to 3 years. Her study showed that late talking can be a red flag for language and reading struggles later on.

Over one-half of the late-talking kids in her study were diagnosed with a learning disability once they reached school. DLD is a risk factor for developing a learning disability, but it's not the same.

DLD affects basic language skills, which can affect a child's school performance. Kids with DLD may struggle to learn vocabulary. They may have difficulty structuring sentences. Or they may not be able to tell or write stories in an organized way.

"Signs of DLD fall along a continuum, from quite mild to pretty profound," Montgomery explains.

Kids with a learning disability struggle with skills, such as reading, writing, or math. Dyslexia is one example. Kids with dyslexia struggle with linking speech sounds to letters and words. They have difficulty with sounding out letters and spelling or recognizing words.

"Dyslexia and DLD often go hand in hand because both involve language," Alt explains. "Dyslexia is the problem with written language. DLD is a problem with oral language. Often, once a child gets the dyslexia label, they're never tested for oral language. There is a difference between kids who have dyslexia only and kids who have dyslexia and DLD."

Many kids show signs of both DLD and dyslexia. People with DLD are six times more likely to be diagnosed with reading and spelling disabilities by the time they're adults. Difficulties with understanding language can make math more challenging, too. Kids with DLD are four times more likely to have a math disability.

Screening for Differences

DLD can be difficult to recognize, as the signs aren't the same

for every child.

"A very mild case of DLD might be something that may not affect a child that much in their everyday conversation or in everyday functioning," Alt explains.

But it may become apparent as reading and writing get more complex in school. "More severe DLD could mean having difficulty getting your basic needs met because you can't express them," she adds.

"Language differences can be subtle to notice for those with mild DLD," says Dr. Suzanne Adlof, a speech-language researcher at the University of South Carolina.

"But school is a place the impact of DLD is going to be noticed.

Camp Pendleton's historic Santa Margarita Ranch House complex now open most Mondays for tours

For those interested in visiting the Santa Margarita Ranch House National Historic Site, an additional opportunity has been made available to the public.

The Santa Margarita Ranch House complex, which includes the Ranch House, Bunkhouse Museum and Chapel, is now open every Monday (except on Federal holidays) between the hours of 10am and 2pm.

During these hours, Docents will be available to welcome visitors and give tours, or simply answer questions related to the history of the ranch and other historic sites on Camp Pendleton. In 1841, Don Pio Pico and his brother Andres Pico were granted the 133,000 acres Rancho Santa Margarita y Las Flores.

Their historic ranch house became the headquarters of a working cattle rancho that would expand to over 230,000 acres into today's Orange County. Before private ownership and possibly as early as 1806, it was an outpost of Mission San Luis Rey de Francia, with an adobe building, vineyards and crops.

Before Spanish and Mexican control, the site was the location

Right now, schools don't have systems that assess oral language before the academic impacts are noticed."

Adlof's team is developing oral language screening tests for schools. To do so, her group is first tracking how language typically develops across school-aged children. They're looking at kids from kindergarten through 3rd grade.

The team will use their findings to develop standards to design a screening test. Such a test could identify kids whose language skills are falling behind their peers. The test could also be used to measure if treatments are helping kids catch up with their peers.

Personalizing Progress

of the prehistoric/ethnohistoric Native American Payómkawichum (Luiseño) village, Topomai.

In 1942, nearly the entire original Mexican land grant became Marine Corps Base Camp Pendleton. The historic adobe Ranch House served as the private residence for thirty-five different Commanding Generals and their families, from 1947 until 2007. Today the Ranch House and other adobe buildings are preserved as a National Historic Site.

In addition to the new Monday schedule, the Rancho Santa Margarita y Las Flores Docents, a 501(c)(3) organization supporting Camp Pendleton's History & Museum Division, also provide free private tours.

To schedule a tour, call (760) 725-5758 or email MCBCAMPEN_history@usmc.mil. Visitors without base access credentials must submit their request at a minimum of two weeks prior to their expected visit by calling (760) 725-5758 or emailing MCBCAMPEN_history@usmc.mil.

For more information on the historic sites aboard Camp Pendleton, visit: <https://www.pendleton.marines.mil/about/#tab/history>.

Signs of DLD

Younger kids may have DLD if they:

- are late to put words together into sentences.
- struggle to learn new words and make conversation.
- have difficulty following directions because they do not fully understand the words spoken to them, not because they are stubborn.
- make frequent grammatical errors when speaking.

Older kids and adults may have DLD if they:

- are limited in using complex sentences.
- have difficulty finding the right words and making conversation.
- have difficulty understanding figurative language.
- show reading problems.
- make frequent grammatical and spelling errors.

Certain specialists can help kids with DLD improve their language skills. Speech-language pathologists are experts in communication. They can test for DLD and provide treatment. Interventions are tailored to support a child's individual challenges.

"The nature of the treatment is going to change as kids get older because their language changes and their deficits change," Montgomery says.

Montgomery's group is testing ways to teach complex sentences to school-aged kids with DLD. They're comparing two strategies. One explicitly teaches kids about grammar. The kids learn specific rules about the different parts of a sentence. The other gives lots of examples of complex sentences verbally. This taps into the kids' natural ability to learn the sentence structures. Montgomery is testing which teaching strategy works

better for kids with DLD. "Typically, kids learn grammar without trying. You don't have to teach them," Alt says. "Kids with DLD aren't always going to pick up on that naturally."

Alt's team is studying which treatment strategies work best for kids aged 2 to 5. And they're trying to understand why some kids don't respond to current interventions.

Researchers are continuing to develop better ways to support kids with DLD. But there are many interventions a child can get right now. If you have concerns about your child's speaking or language abilities, talk with their doctor.

"Anytime a child is showing difficulty with reading and writing in the classroom, it is important to check how their oral language skills are progressing," Adlof advises. "It could be a sign of DLD."

Operation Appreciation returns May 16

Oceanside is gearing up for its annual Armed Forces Day Operation Appreciation. Created by the Oceanside Chamber in 2002, Operation Appreciation is a heartfelt event dedicated to honoring and celebrating our military's brave men and women. On Saturday, May 16, from 11am to 4pm, the community comes together to provide a day of recognition for active-duty military stationed at Camp Pendleton and nearby military bases.

Thousands of active-duty military and their families will be treated to a day of free food, entertainment, and a fun zone for kids at the Junior Seau Pier Amphitheater. Free parking is available in both the Civic Center Parking Structure and the Transit Center parking structure.

The day features a variety of activities, including a children's fun zone, live music, and free food provided exclusively for active-duty military members and their families. All active-duty military and their dependents must bring an active-duty military ID card for fun zone activities and a free lunch. This event is open to the public, and food and fun zone tickets are available for purchase.

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