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SIXTY-THIRD YEAR NO. 21
 OCTOBER 16-31, 2023



Army Soldiers in class 10-23 of the 7th Army Noncommissioned Officer Academy's (NCOA) Basic Leadership Course conduct their graduation ceremony in Grafenwoehr, Germany, Sept. 29, 2023. The 7th Army NCOA mission is to train and develop future leaders who are adaptive, disciplined, and ready to lead effectively at the squad and team levels. U.S. Army photo by Spc. Christian Carrillo

ENERGY ACTION MONTH HIGHLIGHTS THE CRITICAL ROLE ENERGY PLAYS IN STRATEGIC COMPETITION

ARLINGTON, Va.- In recognition of Energy Action Month, the Department of the Air Force is showcasing energy's critical role in great power competition,

particularly in the Indo-Pacific Region.

Building on its three-year theme, "Powering Possibility,"

the department is advancing game-changing energy technologies and processes to secure safe, reliable, and efficient energy for the joint fight and ensures its ability to deter adversaries, and if needed fly, fight and win.

redundant energy systems that increase survivability. It also increases our range and endurance, capabilities that are fundamental to the success of an Air Force."

"Welcome to great power competition, welcome to Energy Action Month! Energy will be the margin of victory in near peer conflict. Whether it is operational or installation energy, we must work to advance innovation and re-optimize to set the pace in this arena," said Dr. Ravi Chaudhary, assistant secretary of the Air Force for Energy, Installations, and Environment. "Energy efficiency ruggedizes our installations, increases our combat capability, and offers

Delivering operational and installation energy capabilities that increase agility of the joint force and investing in technologies that revolutionize Department of the Air Force energy use are among the assistant secretary's top priorities. This year, the department advanced key energy initiatives, including introducing the Climate Campaign Plan to adapt to and mitigate the effects of a changing climate, choosing JetZero for the next phase of a Blended Wing Body prototype aircraft project, and progressing

see next page



An experimental electronic vertical take-off and landing aircraft is parked at taxi way following a ground test at Edwards Air Force Base last month. U.S. Air Force photo by Harlan Huntington

S.D. Marine base 'not suitable' for homeless camp, colonel says

by Irene Loewenson, Marine Corps Times

The Marine colonel in charge of a San Diego base has shot down some advocates' idea of housing the city's homeless people on the installation's land.

Sunbreak Ranch is a concept for "a large-scale temporary ranch" that would be a "temporary home" for homeless San Diegans, according to its website. The advocates pushing for the ranch are eyeing several possible sites, including at least five at Marine Corps Air Station Miramar, according to George Mullen, who has spearheaded the idea.

But in a letter to San Diego Mayor Todd Gloria on Oct. 2, first reported by Voice of San Diego, the commanding officer of the California base argued that the Miramar property east of Interstate 15 "is not a suitable location" for the ranch.

"In the last twenty years four aircraft have crashed in this undeveloped area," Col. Thomas Bedell wrote to the mayor, noting that the area is in the approach corridor for aircraft preparing to land aboard the air station.

"Finally, any course of action that increases the risk of wildfires to the local community is not supportable," Bedell wrote.

In a recent to *Marine Corps Times*, 1st Lt. Jacoby Hawkins, a spokesman for the California installation, confirmed the authenticity of the letter linked by Voice of San Diego and referred to the letter as "our general statement regarding the entire situation."

Mullen said in an e-mailed statement to *Marine Corps Times*, "Naysayers and pessimists are a dime a dozen... this plan is too damn good not to have our Marines involved."

The Sunbreak Ranch initiative aims to "provide real help to our homeless brothers and sisters (and stop pretending that allowing them to sleep, urinate, and defecate on our city streets is helpful or humane to anyone)" and "return our cities to the Rule of Law," Mullen wrote in a Times of San Diego op-ed in January with former NBA star Bill Walton.

Continue reading at <https://www.marinecorps.com/news/your-marine-corps/2023/10/09/san-diego-marine-base-not-suitable-for-homeless-camp-colonel-says/>.

Welcome home to our Sailors & Marines

We've had many returning Marines this month, from various units.

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USS Jackson (LCS 6)

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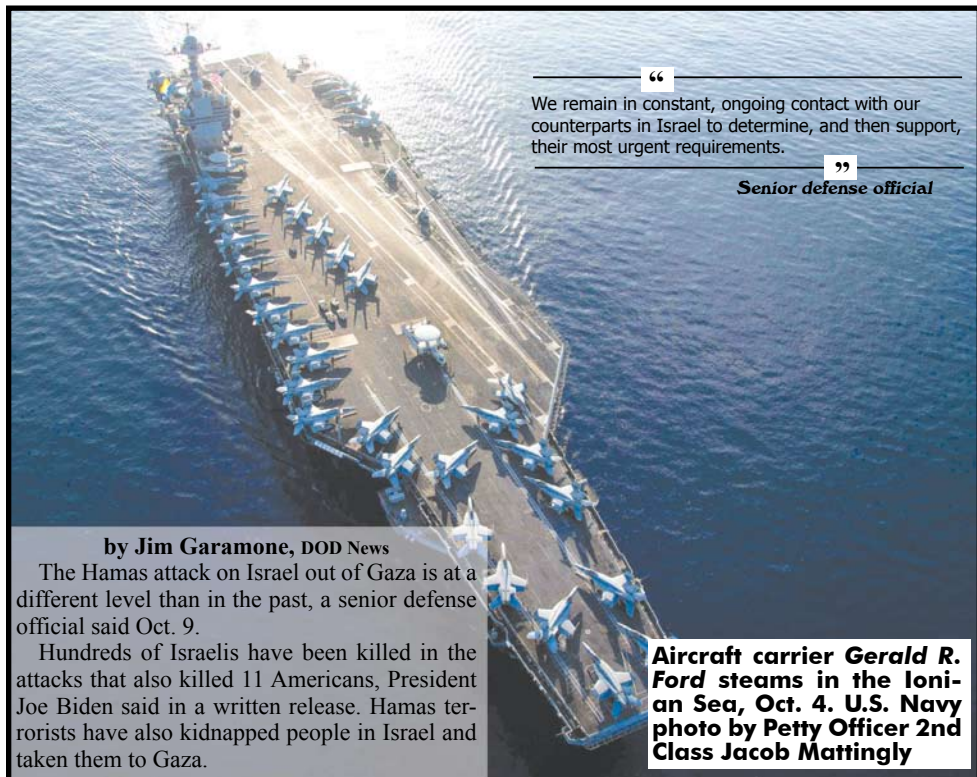
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See pages 10-12

U.S. helps Israel defend against Hamas attacks



“ We remain in constant, ongoing contact with our counterparts in Israel to determine, and then support, their most urgent requirements. ”

Senior defense official

by Jim Garamone, DOD News

The Hamas attack on Israel out of Gaza is at a different level than in the past, a senior defense official said Oct. 9.

Hundreds of Israelis have been killed in the attacks that also killed 11 Americans, President Joe Biden said in a written release. Hamas terrorists have also kidnapped people in Israel and taken them to Gaza.

Aircraft carrier **Gerald R. Ford** steams in the Ionian Sea, Oct. 4. U.S. Navy photo by Petty Officer 2nd Class Jacob Mattingly

“While we are still working to confirm, we believe it is likely that American citizens may be among those being held by Hamas,” Biden said. “I have directed my team to work with their Israeli counterparts on every aspect of the hostage crisis, including sharing intelligence and deploying experts from across the United States government to consult with and advise Israeli counterparts on hostage

recovery efforts.”

The senior defense official said the unprecedented Hamas attack is notable for its violence. “I want to differentiate this from other times we have seen conflicts between Israel and Hamas in Gaza,” the official said. “This is ISIS-level savagery that we have seen committed against Israeli civilians — houses burned to the ground, young people

massacred at music festivals.”

Since the attack on Saturday, Secretary of Defense Lloyd J. Austin III has been working to make clear that the U.S. unequivocally supports Israel’s right to defend itself. Austin and the rest of the National Security Council have been calling allies and partners throughout the Middle East and Europe with this message.

Energy continued from page 1

a first-of-its-kind nuclear micro-reactor at Eielson Air Force Base, Alaska.

Operational energy, or aviation fuel, comprises the majority of the Department of the Air Force’s energy usage, providing a tremendous opportunity to optimize energy consumption and build flexibility in places like the Indo-Pacific.

Operational energy initiatives increase the lethality of the department by improving the combat power and training effectiveness of every ounce of fuel use. These initiatives increase the efficiency of legacy aircraft by reducing drag and improving engines, add productivity to our missions with advanced planning and scheduling tools, and deliver tactical solutions to operators to extend range or time on station while ensuring that fuel is available where and when the warfighter needs it.

The Blended Wing Body

project supports the Secretary of the Air Force’s operational imperatives that act as a roadmap for successfully bringing about new technologies to deter and, if necessary, defeat modern-day adversaries.

The BWB project does this by leveraging new transformational aircraft technology that is significantly more efficient (at least 30 percent) than current platforms, offering more aircraft range, refueling capability, and cargo capacity. This transformational technology decreases logistics risks, improves readiness, and will be vital for a fight in the Pacific.

Installations are also foundational to projecting combat power in air, space, and cyberspace. Reliable access to sufficient, quality power and water ensures missions are on time and proceed to target.

The Department of the Air Force has launched a series of pilot initiatives across the enterprise to explore electrification, carbon pollution-free procure-

ment, and innovative energy technologies to build resilience for installations.

For example, the department is pursuing non-tactical vehicle pilots across 45 installations and continues to advance the nuclear micro-reactor pilot program. This clean energy technology can operate independently from the commercial grid and can produce both power and heat for long intervals between refueling, making it a promising power source for remote domestic military installations critical to the national security infrastructure.

The department is also using innovative contracting methods to implement microgrids, which supply bases with onsite power and bolster mission continuity by “islanding” from local grids during unplanned commercial outages. For example, the microgrid at Kadena Air Base, Japan, kept base power intact during a recent typhoon. The microgrid was funded by innovative energy savings methods piloted by 18th Wing leadership.

“We’re also making very clear to adversaries or those that might be entertaining entering this conflict to escalate it that they should think twice and not take advantage of the instability,” the official said.

Austin spoke to Israeli Defense Minister Yoav Gallant on Saturday and Sunday. Austin is getting operational updates and learning what equipment

and capabilities Israel needs to defend itself, the official said.

The United States is “surging” support to Israel, including air defense capabilities and munitions. “We remain in constant, ongoing contact with our counterparts in Israel to determine, and then support, their most urgent requirements,” the official said. “The bottom line is we are working as fast as pos-

sible to provide critically needed munitions of various types and other equipment.”

Defense Department officials are also working with U.S. industry to expedite the shipment of military equipment that the Israelis had already ordered.

Refer to <https://www.defense.gov/News/News-Stories/Article/Article/3551956/>.

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USS JACK H. LUCAS



The Navy commissioned future USS Jack H. Lucas (DDG 125) as the newest Arleigh Burke-class guided-missile destroyer Oct. 7 at Tampa Bay, Fla.

Erik Raven, under secretary of the Navy, delivered the commissioning ceremony's principal address.

"Commissioning Jack H. Lucas means we continue to deliver fast, agile, and networked surface combatants to the Navy. Jack H. Lucas is built to fight. It's a fast, maneuverable, versatile, and lethal ship – capable of tackling any mission it is given," said Raven. *"It will keep the Navy and Marine Corps adaptive and ready, and also uphold our commitment to maintaining the free flow of commerce, deterring military aggression, and facilitating quick responses to natural disasters across the globe."*

Ruiz. "The Navy and the Marine Corps team – our destinies are intertwined. The Navy, the ship, represents the perseverance of Americans. This beautiful ship represents the grit, the determination, of enlisted Marines, enlisted Sailors, and all of us that we will not give up until we win."

Capt. Brett Oster, Jack H. Lucas' commanding officer, recognized the driving force behind the ship's namesake, and how his

crew reflects that memory.

"There is something you can never, ever deny about Jack H. Lucas. That man loved this country. That is why we're here, because we love this country. You can never take that away – his dedication," said Oster. *"When you have a purpose, and you have dedication, and you have vision, and you have teamwork, anything that you set your sites on can come together."*

DDG 125 is the 73rd Arleigh Burke-class guided-missile destroyer to be commissioned and the first in the Flight III configuration. She is the first naval warship to bear the name USS Jack H. Lucas. The ship is named for Pfc. Jack Lucas, who served in the Marines during World War II, earning the Medal of Honor for his heroism at Iwo Jima, when he was just 17 years old. Lucas was the youngest Marine and youngest serviceman in World War II to be awarded the United States' highest military decoration for valor. In 1961, he returned to military service as an Army captain and trained younger troops headed for Vietnam. Lucas passed away on Jun. 5, 2008, in Hattiesburg, Miss.

Ruby Lucas, one of the ship's sponsors, and Jack's wife at the time of his death, emotionally thanked the audience for coming to honor her husband before giving the order to "man our ship and bring her to life!" alongside co-sponsor, philanthropist Catherine B. Reynolds.

On behalf of the President of the United States and for the Secretary of the Navy, the 20th Sergeant Major of the Marine Corps, Sgt. Maj. Carlos Ruiz, USMC, placed USS Jack H. Lucas into commission.

"Something inside Lucas' souls said, 'I need to get to the fight.' And fight he did," said

Army

◆ **Army identifies two 11th Airborne Soldiers killed in LMTV rollover**

◆ **Contractor who sold Army shoddy filters ordered to pay over \$500,000 but avoids prison**

◆ **Army combat medics honored for saving choking baby's life**

Navy

◆ **Sailors plead guilty in connection to shipmate's fentanyl death**

◆ **Navy Sailor launches rescue of small puppy saved during overseas deployment: 'Can't leave a comrade behind'**

Marine Corps

◆ **Marine Corps experimental 'loyal wingman' drone makes first flight**

◆ **Hawaii Man faces life in prison for fentanyl overdose of Marine in 2021**

◆ **Marine identified and buried at Arlington nearly 80 years after WWII death**

◆ **Marines kick-off flight testing of XQ-58 Valkyrie drone for 'penetrating affordable autonomous collaborative killer' initiative**

Air Force

◆ **Duke Field to get military's first electric aircraft charging station**

◆ **Air Force squadron doubled down to train pilots after storm damaged 20 aircraft**

◆ **Air Force's Mideast drone experiments may feed Replicator effort**

Space Force

◆ **Space Force seeks bids for next phase of national security launches**

◆ **Space Force launched model rockets with students in Cripple Creek**



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Contractor who sold Army shoddy filters ordered to pay over \$500,000 but avoids prison

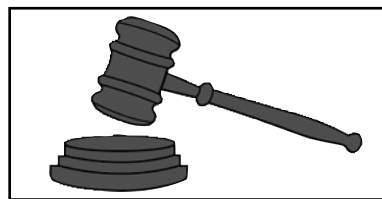
by J.P. Lawrence
Stars and Stripes

A New York defense contractor was ordered to pay over a half-million dollars in financial penalties for his "very stupid decision" to use cheap, unapproved materials in filters designed to protect Soldiers from toxic gases and nuclear radiation.

Reginald Cannon, 55, was fined \$200,000 and told to repay \$315,944, the Justice Department said in a statement Oct. 4. He also received two

years of probation at his sentencing in U.S. district court in Buffalo.

He originally faced the pos-



sibility of up to two years and three months in prison after pleading guilty to wire fraud

in May, according to court documents.

Cannon's Rochester-based company, Burnett Process, signed a contract in 2015 to sell the Army M98 gas particulate filters, which protect wearers from chemical, biological, radiological, nuclear and explosives threats, court filings said.

The scheme was uncovered before it caused harm to any-

one in the military, prosecutors said.

"This defendant attempted to cut costs and increase his profits by using products that were not in compliance with the contract entered into," U.S. Attorney Trini Ross said in Oct. 4's statement.

Cannon told the Army that the 3,650 filters he provided them were manufactured with American-made materials instead of "much cheaper filter paper" from China, prosecutors said.

After an employee refused to sign a certificate of compliance with the contract standards, Cannon thrice signed doctored forms saying the products were up to snuff, a sentencing memorandum said.

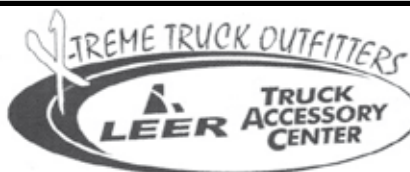
"I signed them to get it done and made a very stupid decision to do so," Cannon said, according to the sentencing memorandum.

The filters are used at shelters and mobile hospitals and on Navy ships, the Justice Department statement said.



Where are our ships at sea

These are approximate positions of the Navy's deployed carrier strike groups & amphibious ready groups throughout the world as of Oct. 2, 2023, based on Navy and public data. You can access this and other information through the U.S. Naval Institute's portal at <https://news.usni.org/topstories>.



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Career and Education

Does your student need internet access? Here's what to know

(StatePoint) With students back in the classroom, providing the resources they need to be successful is top of mind for parents and educators. Yet for the millions of students limited by lack of internet access, their education hangs in the balance.

Today, one in five U.S. households lack this essential resource, highlighting equity disparities for students across the country.

T-Mobile's Project 10Million, a \$10.7 billion nationwide initiative aimed at helping to close the digital divide in education, is offering free internet connectivity and mobile hotspots to up to 10 million eligible K-12 student households.

Coral Almazan knows from her own high school experience the power and importance of having internet access. Almazan and her family signed up for Project 10Million during her sophomore year. She graduated from high school in June with honors and an Associates of Arts degree in cybersecurity, thanks to having internet connectivity that allowed her to also tackle college courses through a local running start program.

She credits her success, and the



According to advocates and educators, having internet access and working to close the digital divide not only opens doors, but also helps create a level playing field for all students. Courtesy photo

fact she's now starting a bachelor's program this fall, to her hard work and dedication and to Project 10Million.

"Having me, my parents and my three siblings all doing our work at the same time, watching videos and online lessons, doing Zoom calls - our internet slowed down to the point where I couldn't really use it for school," says Almazan. "Once I got the T-Mobile hotspot and service, I didn't struggle as much, and it made doing my coursework so much easier. I don't think I could have been able to get through high school without the hotspot."

Today, internet connectivity is a basic need for remote and hybrid learning, allowing students to effectively complete homework assignments, research, collaborate with peers and communicate with teachers. Fortunately, T-Mobile's Project 10Million is an ongoing initiative that is offering hotspots and internet connectivity to eligible students.

Almazan encourages families struggling with internet connectivity to look into Project 10Million. Students and parents can check eligibility and sign up for the program today by visiting www.t-mobile.com/p10m.

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Thursday, Nov. 9 | 8-11:30 a.m. | KMB (IP)
Friday, Dec. 8 | 8-11:30 a.m. | KMB

★ **Job Search Strategies** ★
Wednesday, Nov. 1 | 1-3 p.m. | NBPL (IP)
Wednesday, Nov. 8 | 9-10:30 a.m. | NBSD (IP)
★ **Resume Writing** ★
Wednesday, Oct. 18 | 9-10:30 a.m. | NBSD (IP)
Thursday, Oct. 26 | 1-3 p.m. | VSM (IP)
Thursday, Nov. 2 | 9-11 a.m. | BVH (IP)
★ **Spouse Employment, Empowerment and Development** ★
Monday, Dec. 4 | 10 a.m.-12 p.m. | NBC (IP)
★ **Boots-2-Business** ★
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Thurs.-Fri., Oct. 26-27 | 7:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m. | KMB (IP)

★ **Navy Spouse in Transition** ★
Wednesday, Oct. 25 | 1-3 p.m. | NBPL (IP)
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SAN FRANCISCO (Oct. 3, 2023) Musician 2nd Class Jordan Frazier feeds a giraffe at the San Francisco Zoo following a performance during San Francisco Fleet Week 2023. U.S. Navy photo by MC2 Christine Montgomery



VICENZA, Italy, (Sept. 29, 2023) Soldiers walk down red-carpeted steps on their way to a dining in event. The dining in fosters camaraderie and embraces esprit de corps among soldiers and civilians. U.S. Army photo by 1st Lt. Katherine Sibilla

Pacific Partnership 2023 returns to Papua New Guinea

PORT MORESBY, Papua New Guinea – Pacific Partnership arrived in Papua New Guinea Oct. 9 to conduct the largest annual multinational humanitarian assistance and disaster relief preparedness mission conducted in the Indo-Pacific.

Returning to Papua New Guinea following last year’s visit to Kimbe, Pacific Partnership enables participants to work together to enhance disaster response capabilities and foster new and enduring friendships in Papua New Guinea. Engagements for this year’s mission are scheduled to take place across Port Moresby and Wewak.

At the invitation of Papua New Guinea, Pacific Partnership’s mission is to conduct tailored humanitarian and civic preparedness activities in areas such as engineering, disaster response, public health, and Papua New Guinea outreach events. This year’s mission, featuring nearly 1500 personnel, was a joint effort on behalf of Australia, Canada, Chile, Japan, Republic of Korea, New Zealand, the United Kingdom and the United States.

“Pacific Partnership empowers nations to enhance their infrastructure and ability to respond to disaster emergencies,” said Navy Capt. Claudine Caluori, mission commander. “I am proud to announce our return to Papua New Guinea follow-

ing last year’s success, and to exchange valuable knowledge, skills, and relationships that will endure long after the mission departs.”

While in Papua New Guinea, Pacific Partnership 2023 will provide tailored medical care focusing on subject-matter exchanges and community education, conduct repairs at a local schoolhouse, and knowledge exchanges with exercises covering disaster response and humanitarian assistance. Ad-

ditionally, the U.S. Pacific Fleet Band, accompanied by a Japan Maritime Self Defense Force singer, will perform in a variety of community engagements.

“The Papua New Guinea Defense Force is looking forward to collaborating with the U.S. Navy and our allies to conduct another successful round of Pacific Partnership,” said Col. Craig Solomon, Papua New Guinea Defense Force Chief of Force Preparation. “Our countries are bonded by a common interest in

promoting a stable and secure Indo-Pacific by working to enhance readiness for potential hazards and responses.”

As part of PP23, the mission team will conduct missions throughout Southeast Asia and the South Pacific Islands.

For more information about Pacific Partnership visit www.facebook.com/pacificpartnership, www.instagram.com/pacificpartnership/ or <https://www.dvidshub.net/unit/C-LGWP>.

Do these computers sold at Navy Exchanges pose a cyber threat?

by Karen Jowers

In a recent report in *Military Times*, lawmakers are urging Navy Exchange officials to stop selling Lenovo computers and other products, because of their reported links to the People’s Republic of China government.

“The exchange should not be selling Lenovo products to U.S. service members, let alone incentivizing such purchases with tax-free, discounted prices,” stated lawmakers on the House Select Committee on the Chinese Communist Party, in a letter to Navy Exchange Service Command CEO Robert Bianchi, dated Oct. 4.

They asked for a briefing to the Select Committee no later than Oct. 20, to explain why the Navy Exchange decided to sell these items. “Lenovo is closely affiliated with the People’s Liberation Army, the Chinese Academy of Sciences, and the [People’s Republic of China] government,” stated the letter, signed by Rep. Mike Gallagher, R-Wisconsin.

The People’s Republic of China espionage campaigns “are highly sophisticated and could certainly target U.S. service members on their personal computer and IT devices,” the lawmakers wrote.

All eligible shoppers can buy from the Navy Exchange, regardless of branch of service. Neither Marine Corps exchanges or Army and Air Force exchanges have

carried Lenovo products since 2019, according to spokespersons for those exchange services.

A quick check of the Navy Exchange website shows nine Lenovo laptops and one desktop computer for sale. Information was not immediately available from Navy Exchange officials on the number of products sold in stores, or the volume of sales. A response to the lawmakers’ concerns was not available by publication time.

In a statement provided to *Military Times*, officials from Lenovo, a company with headquarters in Beijing and Morrisville, North Carolina, denied those connections with China.

“The assertions regarding Lenovo cited in Chairman Gallagher’s letter are based on past claims that were inaccurate, unsubstantiated or resolved years ago,” officials stated. “Lenovo is not affiliated with the People’s Liberation Army in any way, is not invested in or controlled by the Chinese government or the Chinese Communist Party, and does not participate in or have links to Chinese state-run cyberespionage campaigns.”





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Davis selected as next Pacific Fleet Master Chief

PEARL HARBOR, Hawaii - Command Master Chief Don Davis has been selected as the 20th Fleet Master Chief for the U.S. Pacific Fleet.

Davis will relieve Fleet Master Chief James "Smitty" Torcorzic, who has served as the Pacific Fleet senior enlisted leader since July 2021. He will be retiring in spring 2024 after 34 years of naval service.

"We serve at a consequential time in the history of the Indo-Pacific," said Adm. Samuel Paparo, commander of U.S. Pacific Fleet. "Master Chief Don Davis is an exemplary leader who is mission-focused, resolute, and caring. Along with his professionalism and warfighting spirit, he brings deep knowledge across all domains and the joint forces. He will be a valued partner as we lead the Fleet. I am proud to serve alongside him."

In his new assignment, Davis will serve as the senior enlisted leader for the world's largest fleet command, which comprises more than 150,000 military and civilian personnel, approximately 200 ships and submarines, and 1,500 aircraft.

He was selected into the Command Master Chief (CMC) Program in 2009. His previous CMC tours include USS *Lassen*

(DDG 82), Expeditionary Strike Group 7/Amphibious Force Seventh Fleet, USS *Tortuga* (LSD 46), Expeditionary Strike Group 3, U.S. Pacific Fleet Chief Petty Officer Training Team, 3rd Marine Aircraft Wing, Navy's 3rd Fleet, and Marine Corps Forces, Pacific.

"Master Chief Davis is a stellar leader and I have every confidence he's going to continue leading Pacific Fleet Sailors and Marines to success," said Torcorzic. "He brings a breadth of knowledge and experience in the joint world, thanks to his service with numerous Navy-Marine Corps units in the Indo-Pacific. We're fortunate to have his experience and perspective at the helm."

Davis is a native of San Diego. He joined the Navy in September 1988. He is a graduate of the Senior Enlisted Academy, Command Master Chief/Chief of the Boat Command Leadership Course, Senior Executive Asia-Pacific Orientation Course, and the Navy Senior Leader Seminar in Monterey, Calif.

His decorations include:



Master Chief Donald L. Davis, Jr. Official Navy photo

Legion of Merit, Meritorious Service Medal (3 awards), Navy and Marine Corps Commendation Medal (4 awards), Navy Achievement Medal (5 awards) and various unit and campaign awards.

He is authorized to wear the Fleet Marine Force Warfare Specialist, Enlisted Surface Warfare Specialist, and Enlisted Aviation Warfare Specialist insignia.

Davis is slated to assume the duties as the Fleet Master Chief in February 2024.



Marines with 13th Marine Expeditionary Unit present arms during the opening ceremony for Exercise Valiant Mark 2023 at Camp Pendleton Oct. 7. U.S. Marine Corps photo by Staff Sgt. Dana Beesley

SINGAPORE ARMED FORCES, I MARINE EXPEDITIONARY FORCE BEGIN VALIANT MARK 2023

CAMP PENDLETON - The Singapore Armed Forces and the 13th Marine Expeditionary Unit are conducting Valiant Mark 23 (VM23) here until Oct. 21.

VM23 is a bilateral exercise between the SAF and United States Marine Corps designed to maintain and strengthen partnerships and enhance overall interoperability.

Through these routine exercises we foster a more seamless and collaborative working relationship with our Singapore partners, better preparing us to respond to challenges we may face within the Indo-Pacific region.

"Earlier this year, the 13th MEU was deployed to the western Pacific and worked closely with the SAF in Singapore. During Valiant Mark 2023, we will pick up where we left off, continue our bilateral training, and create everlasting personal and professional bonds," said Col. Stuart Glenn, commanding officer, 13th MEU. "It is an honor to be working with our Singaporean partners again."

Since the mid-2000s, Valiant Mark has served as an annual command-post staff exercise with field-training events at alternating venues in Singapore and the United States. The training continues to provide unique opportunities for the U.S. Marines to train with their Singaporean counterparts and strengthen the two countries' long-standing defense partnership.

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San Diego LGBT Community Center announces 2023 Veterans Wall of Honor inductees

Inductees who served under anti-LGBTQ policies like Don't Ask Don't Tell will be among those honored

The San Diego LGBT Community Center (The Center) announces the 2023 inductees into the Benjamin F. Dillingham, III & Bridget Wilson LGBT Veterans Wall of Honor. The LGBT Veterans Wall of Honor Induction Ceremony will take place the Thursday before Veterans Day on Thursday, November 9, 2023, from 6 to 8 p.m., at The Center.

The public is invited to join the community in honoring the inductees at the ceremony on November 9, 2022, from 6-8 p.m. at The San Diego LGBT Community Center, 3909 Centre Street, San Diego. The evening will include a brief program with a celebration of military colors, the National Anthem, recognition of inductees, and special remarks.

Since 2011, The LGBT Veterans Wall of Honor has recognized LGBTQ veterans with ties to San Diego. Many of those recognized

served under anti-LGBTQ policies that prevented their ability to serve safely and openly. Other veterans who served after the ending of those policies are recognized for the systematic discrimination they faced.

2023 San Diego LGBT Veterans Wall of Honor inductees are: Daniel Kenneth Baggett, USN (he/him) Moses G. Beeman II, USMC (he/him) Roger C. Cornell, MD, USAF (he/him)

Jimm Crouch, USN (he/him) Michael A. Dwyer, USA (he/him) Melissa Johnson, USAF (she/her) Carl Francis Moccacafiche, USA (he/him) Turquoise Teagle, USN (they/them) Romie Lee Wilford, USN (he/they)

By serving our country honorably and with distinction, each veteran honored as part of this LGBT Veterans Wall of Honor has served as a role model for advancing equality for all. The LGBT Veterans Wall commemo-

rates these veterans' lives in hopes that their courage, bravery, and sacrifices will continue to inspire future generations.

The November ceremony comes on the heels of the Pentagon's announcement on September 20, 2023, the 12th anniversary of the repeal of Don't Ask Don't Tell, that it would step up efforts to help streamline the process of removing dishonorable discharges for LGBTQ+ veterans who were previously targeted under this

policy due to their sexual orientation and/or gender identity.

"Prior to this announcement, veterans had to individually submit an application and documents relevant to their services in order to remove a dishonorable discharge due to Don't Ask, Don't Tell," said Veronica Zerrer, LGBT Veterans Wall of Honor Advisory Council Co-Chair and an inductee in 2016. "We can't wait for our Veterans Wall of Honor ceremony to celebrate this announcement!"



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Who invented the LCPV?

National Inventors Hall of Fame is proud to celebrate a 2019 Inductee whose inventions influenced the lives and safety of our armed forces – Andrew J. Higgins, inventor of the "Higgins Boat." Andrew Higgins Aug. 28, 1886 - Aug. 1, 1952 LCPV (Landing Craft, Vehicle, Personnel); Higgins Boats U.S. Patent Nos. 2,144,111; 2,341,866

Andrew Higgins, a New Orleans-based boat builder and inventor, developed and manufactured landing craft critical to the success of the U.S. military during World War II. The best known was the Landing Craft, Vehicle, Personnel (LCPV), or Higgins Boat, used to land American troops on the beaches of Normandy on D-Day.

During the 1930s, Higgins developed the Eureka, a fast, maneuverable and rugged flat-bottomed craft. In a series of competitions with boats from other manufacturers prior to the American entry into World War II, the Eureka's superior performance resulted in the U.S. Navy awarding contracts to Higgins Industries to build landing craft for the military.

Higgins then evolved the Eureka into a series of boats including the Landing Craft, Personnel (Large), and the Landing Craft, Vehicle (LCV), which featured a ramp. Soon afterward, he combined the functions of the LCP(L) and the LCV into the LCPV.



Capable of carrying 36 combat-equipped infantrymen, a Jeep and 12 troops, or 8,100 pounds of cargo, the LCPV featured a crew of four and could float in 3 feet of water, reach a speed of 12 knots, and was protected by two .30 caliber machine guns. Used in North Africa, Italy, France and across the Pacific, and by the U.S. Army to cross the Rhine River into Germany in March 1945, the Higgins Boat became the standard personnel landing craft for the military during World War II.

Higgins was honored by the Army, Navy and Marine Corps for his work, which included high-speed Patrol Torpedo (PT) boats. Named on 18 patents, Higgins remained president of Higgins Industries until his death in 1952.

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OICC China Lake delivers second earthquake recovery project

by Edward Cartagena
Naval Facilities Engineering

CHINA LAKE – Naval Facilities Engineering Systems Command (NAVFAC) Officer in Charge of Construction (OICC) China Lake officially delivered the Academic Training Center, the second of 29 projects, as part of the \$2.7 billion Earthquake Recovery Program aboard Naval Air Weapons Station here Sept. 26.

In August 2021, the project broke ground and the demolition of the aged and earthquake damaged NAVAIR Training Center, commenced. In its place would be a 16,000 sq ft state-of-the-art training facility capable of hosting various training activities, meetings and collaboration space.

The complex is split into Community Learning and Training Centers linked by a covered walkway with an outdoor seating area. The Community Learning Center houses the applied technology laboratory, conference rooms, administrative spaces, an innovation/independent study laboratory and a break area. The Training Center boasts sci-

ence fiction inspired, computer labs, conference and training rooms aptly named after Star Wars, Star Trek and Terminator movies.

“The complexity of the battlefield is growing every day; the way we approach it needs to grow even faster. This cutting-edge facility will ensure that Team WD has access to the most modern training and learning opportunities that will allow them to give the warfighter the very best to win today, tomorrow, and into the future,” said Dan Carreño, Naval Air Warfare Center Weapons Division (NAWCWD) Executive Director.

The Community Learning Center is outfitted with prototyping and soldering stations, 3-D printing and machining rooms. In the midst of the Center is an open space dubbed the Think-Tank that will offer small group meeting space, house the campus library and hosts a plethora of collaborative generating furniture.

“Human Capital is the largest investment we make as an organization. Our people need development opportunities beyond formal training. The

new spaces were designed to provide resources and equipment for hands on learning and the facilitation of knowledge transfer (mentoring/coaching/collaboration)”, said Ariana Shermer, NAWCWD Training Director. “Human Capital Development Department Vision is to Influence a love for learning at NAWCWD.”

The Training Center has a large classroom that can host up to 60 students, two smaller classrooms accommodating up to 25, two computer labs, two large conference rooms and an employee onboarding room.

“The integrated OICC China Lake team is elated to deliver a second project to NAWCWD and NAWS China Lake. Although this is among the smallest in size of the earthquake recovery, military construction projects, we understand the importance this facility plays in attracting talented professionals, retaining our amazing, existing workforce and increasing the knowledge and collaborative spirit needed to develop new and adaptive systems for the future”, said Capt. Ben Wainwright, OICC China Lake, commanding officer.

“Over the last two years, the efforts of our contractor, the Barnhart-Reese construction team cannot be understated. The complexities of removing and installing new underground systems, the miles of infrastructure within these walls and all the brilliant finishing touches are truly a sight to see. BZ to the Barnhart-Reese Team.”

NAWS China Lake is located in the Western Mojave Desert region, approximately 150 miles north of Los Angeles. China Lake’s mission is to support the Navy’s research, testing and evaluation missions to provide cutting-edge weapons systems to the warfighter. The installation is the Navy’s largest single landholding. In total, its two ranges and main site cover more than 1.1 million acres, an area larger than the state of Rhode Island.

OICC China Lake was established in August 2020 to provide engineering, acquisition, and execution oversight for military construction and repair projects caused by the devastating damage from the 6.4 and 7.1 magnitude earthquakes that occurred on July 4 and 5, 2019.

Amphibious assault ship Essex completes dry dock work



SAN DIEGO - Wasp-class amphibious assault ship USS *Essex* (LHD 2) recently undocked from the Pride of California Dry Dock at BAE Systems here. *Essex* underwent a 12-month maintenance period to upgrade and refurbish many key systems aboard. “While no Sailor prefers to be in the dry dock over salty breezes at sea, it’s apparent that the crew here has used their time well,” said Rear Adm. Randall Peck, commander of Expeditionary Strike Group 3.

Submarine Louisiana proves readiness of strategic weapons system

SAN DIEGO - The Navy’s Strategic Systems Programs recently conducted a missile test flight of an unarmed life-extended Trident II (D5LE) missile from USS *Louisiana* (SSBN-743), an Ohio-class ballistic missile submarine, on the Western Test Range off the coast here. The test marks 191 successful missile launches of the Trident II strategic weapon system (missile since it began operations in 1989. “Trident II missile remains unmatched in its reliability,” said Vice Adm. Johnny Wolfe, Jr., Director of Strategic Systems Programs. “The completion of DASO-32 marks an historic milestone in the life of the Trident II D5 weapons system, and provides the SSP team with a tangible reminder of the great responsibility before us.”

Marines deactivate historic F/A-18 training squadron

MIRAMAR - The 3rd Marine Aircraft Wing recently deactivated Marine Fighter Attack Training Squadron (VMFAT) 101, a historic F/A-18 Hornet training squadron here. Since 1969, instructor pilots of the VMFAT-101 “Sharpshooters” have qualified combat aviators and sent them to operational squadrons worldwide. The squadron commemorated the event by “flying the barn,” launching 18 aircraft in a single flight. More than 300 Marines, Sailors, veterans, family members and community supporters then gathered for a sundown ceremony to commemorate the squadron’s history and contributions to Marine Corps readiness.

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Tripoli Junior Enlisted Association earns the Bob Feller Act of Valor award

SAN DIEGO – The Junior Enlisted Association (JEA) aboard amphibious assault carrier USS *Tripoli* (LHA7) was awarded the Bob Feller Act of Valor Award for the calendar year 2023.

Bob Feller was a Major League Baseball pitcher who played for the Cleveland Indians from 1936 to 1956. In 1941, following the attack on Pearl Harbor, Feller enlisted in the Navy and served aboard USS *Alabama* (BB 60) as a Gun Captain. He was released from active-duty service as a Chief Petty Officer, Aug. 22, 1945. In 2013, the Bob Feller Act of Valor Foundation established the Bob Feller Act of Valor Award in his honor.

One of the categories for this award recognizes a group of Sailors, ages 18-25, who work together as a team to promote peer-to-peer mentorship and reduce destructive decision making

and behaviors in Sailors. This team can work together in either a professional or personal capacity.

“I was really quiet when I first checked into *Tripoli*, but joining the JEA really helped me to meet new people and experience new things,” said Airman Dejon Hunter, a member of the JEA. “It feels good to be a part of a team like this, and I’m excited to keep growing with them.”

Tripoli’s JEA has 145 members, and have successfully executed more than 50 association events. They hosted multiple morale boosting and fundraising events, all of which helped to promote camaraderie throughout the command. The association also assisted in coordinating and executing community service opportunities while on their maiden deployment in the U.S. 7th Fleet area of operations and their efforts continued even after *Tripoli* returned to the ship’s homeport of San Diego.



Capt. John Keifaber, center, commanding officer of USS *Tripoli*, stands with the ship’s Junior Enlisted Association. U.S. Navy photo by MC3s Austyn Riley



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Camp Pendleton honored with DOD maintenance award

Camp Pendleton is among this year's winners of 2023 of the Secretary of Defense Maintenance Awards. These awards are presented annually to recognize outstanding achievements in weapon systems and military equipment maintenance.

The Rear Adm. Grace M. Hopper Award for Software Maintenance Excellence recognizes the top organic software activity that, through its mission accomplishments, provided extraordinary capability for operational units supported. The award is named after RDML Grace Hopper, a pioneer of computer programming who popularized the idea of machine-independent programming languages. This year's winner is the 76th Software Engineering Group from the Oklahoma City Air Logistics Complex, Tinker Air Force Base.

The Department also selected the Sustainment Training, Advice, and Assistance of Foreign Military Forces Awards. The awards recognize teams or organizations that have excelled at providing training, advice, and assistance to the militaries of developing countries as part of U.S. foreign policy goals. In the Ministerial Category, the winner is the Ministry of Defense Resident Advisor Team to Kyiv,

Ukraine, from the Institute for Security Governance, Defense Security Cooperation Agency. The operational category winner of this year's award is the 95th Transportation Company, 498th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion, Camp Carrol, Republic of Korea.

The Robert T. Mason Award for Depot Maintenance Excellence recognizes exceptional quality and achievement in Department of Defense depot-level maintenance programs. It is awarded for outstanding mission accomplishment, effective support to warfighters, and innovative logistics processes. This award commemorates Robert T. Mason, a former Assistant Deputy Under Secretary of Defense for Maintenance Policy, Programs and Resources, who championed the Department's depot-level maintenance program. The Submarine Maintenance, Modernization, and Overhaul Program at Pearl Harbor Naval Shipyard and Intermediate Maintenance Facility is this year's recipient.

Six field-level award winners were selected in three categories: small, medium, and large. The small category winners are Forward Support Company, 84th Engineer Battalion, Schofield Barracks, Hawaii; and 912th

Aircraft Maintenance Squadron, Edwards Air Force Base, Calif. Winners from the medium category included *Marine Aviation Logistics Squadron 39, 3rd Marine Aircraft Wing, 1st Marine Expeditionary Force, Camp Pendleton*; and Southeast Regional Maintenance Center, Naval Station Mayport, Fla. Large category winners were *1st Maintenance Battalion, 1st Marine Logistics Group, 1st Marine Expeditionary Force, Camp Pendleton*; and 18th Maintenance Group, Kadena Air Base, Japan.

From the six field-level winners, only one will be selected as this year's recipient of the highly coveted Phoenix Award. Phoenix Award winners are considered to be the best of the best and held in very high esteem as the top-performing field-level maintenance unit in the Department. The Phoenix Award winner will be announced at the annual DoD Maintenance Awards Banquet in December.

Units will formally be presented their awards at a ceremony Dec. 19, at the San Diego Convention Center in San Diego. The ceremony is held in conjunction with the annual DoD Maintenance Symposium.

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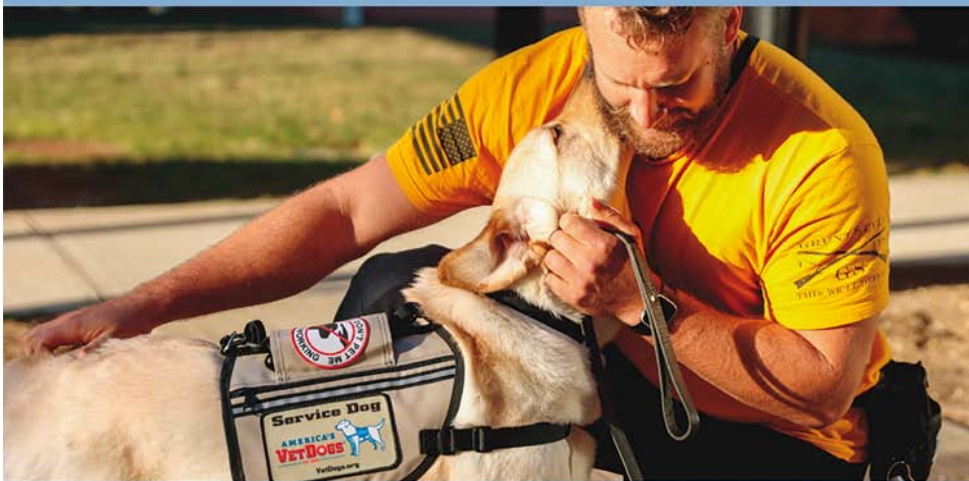


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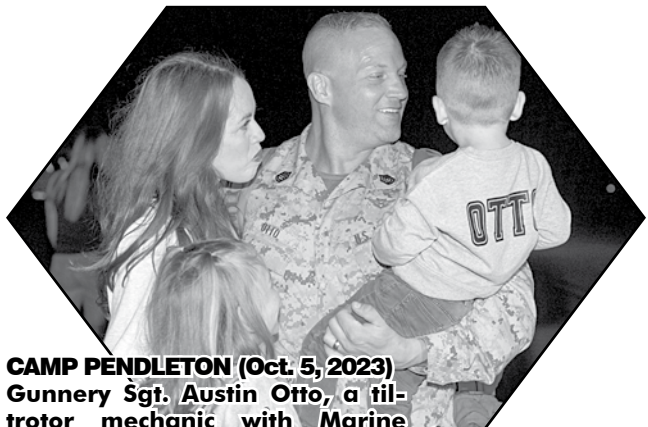
SAN FRANCISCO (Oct. 3, 2023) Marine Corps Sgt. Kasie Wagner, vocalist with 1st Marine Division Band, sings during a public performance as part of San Francisco Fleet Week at Thrive City. U.S. Marine Corps photo by Cpl. Trent A. Henry



PACIFIC OCEAN (Oct. 6, 2023) Sailors aboard amphibious assault ship USS Boxer connects a fuel line with amphibious dock landing ship USS Harpers Ferry during a fueling-at-sea demonstration. Both ships are assigned to Amphibious Squadron Five and currently underway in the 3rd Fleet area of operations. U.S. Navy photo by MC2 James Finney



NAVAL BASE SAN DIEGO (Oct. 4, 2023) Sailors train on a simulator here during Surface Line Week Pacific. Sailors stationed in the San Diego area are participating in various competitions during the two-week competition. About 2,000 Sailors, Marines and Department of the Navy civilians are expected to participate. U.S. Navy photo by MC1 Kelby Sanders



CAMP PENDLETON (Oct. 5, 2023) Gunnery Sgt. Austin Otto, a tiltrotor mechanic with Marine Medium Tiltrotor Squadron 364, embraces his family during a deployment homecoming here. U.S. Marine Corps photo by Sgt. Sean Potter



SAN FRANCISCO (Oct. 4, 2023) Boatswain's Mate 1st Class Marabel Salazar, assigned to amphibious assault transport dock ship John P. Murtha, observes a paramedic with San Francisco Fire Department provide patient care during a ride along for a joint training exercise for San Francisco Fleet week 2023.

U.S. Navy photo by MC2 Christine Montgomery

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The Meat & Potatoes of Life



by
Lisa
Smith
Molinari

“Anyone ready for a sandwich?” Fred asked, prompting me to wonder, “Is he completely insane?!” I was on Fred’s old, wooden, 27-foot sailboat, and not only was I too seasick to think of food, I didn’t understand how any of our four-person crew could eat anything while the boat was drastically heeled over in 30 knot gusts with waves splashing over the bow into our faces.

But sure enough, a male crew member scrambled below deck to retrieve the Ziplock bag containing chicken salad sandwich wraps from a cooler sloshing around in a foot of bilge water, handing them to the other two men while steadying himself against the skewed companionway. He offered one to me, but I waved him off with a sickly smile.

I was amazed at how the three men ate their sandwiches with one hand, while managing the sheets, lines and tiller with the other. I hoped my seasickness would subside so I could eat something, too, because we were only an hour into a round-the-island race, with four more hours to go.

My job as “runner” was first and foremost to not screw anything up, something a novice sailor like me does often. Secondly, I was assigned to release or tighten the backstays during tacks and jibes, and to keep

Don’t ‘just do it’ - Do it NOW

my weight on the high windward side with the rest of the crew. In the small cockpit, that meant essentially wedging myself between two grown men (one of whom I’d only met on the docks that morning) while we propped our feet on the edge of the leeward bench and held onto the windward gunwale.

With at least 16 of the 18-mile racecourse to go, I was already soaked to the bone, queasy, and awkwardly spooning men eating chicken salad sandwiches in driving wind and rain. My thighs were beginning to shake from holding myself upright in the heeling cockpit, and I dreaded having to urinate while squatting over a bucket below deck when nature called.

“Why on Earth am I doing this?” I silently asked myself, but the answer came easy. Simply put, I’d always wanted to sail, and at age 57, I’d finally been given the chance. After decades of putting my own interests aside to focus on our military family, nothing — not my rapidly advancing age, my joint pain, my husband’s career, my work obligations, my 20 pounds of excess weight, my perimenopausal hormones, my lack of sailing knowledge — nothing was going to stop me now.

At dusk, while taking the best hot shower of my life, I winced remembering the mistakes I’d made during the race. If only I’d started sailing when I was younger, I’d know so much more now. I’d be so much more capable if I’d done this a long time ago, when my knees still

had cartilage and my bladder was still reliable.

I’d waited until my husband transitioned out of active duty Navy service before I seriously pursued my long-time interest in sailing. Back when our three kids were little, I occasionally took weekend dinghy sailing lessons at Norfolk Naval Base’s Sailing Center, but I didn’t fully commit because I was managing our military family.

At the time, I thought I was doing the right thing, but 28 years of active duty military life later, I’ve realized that I made a mistake. By waiting, I missed out on years of learning, adventure, and self-fulfillment that would’ve benefitted me immensely today.

Now, I’m an old dog with grey roots, achey joints and a paunch, trying to learn a new trick. I’ll make the best of it, no doubt, but I’ve learned that there was no need for me to put my interests aside in order to be a “good” military spouse. In fact, the happiest military spouses strike a healthy balance between family dedication and personal fulfillment.

Always wanted to take flying lessons? Learn to play the drums? Try stand-up comedy? Brew craft beer? Body build? Take EMT classes? Learn plein air painting? Do wood-working? Try Irish step dancing? Join a volleyball team?

Don’t wait until the work-ups, deployments, PCS moves, child-rearing, and instability of military life is over. Just do it, and do it now.

AutoMatters™ & More by Jan Wagner



For 18 years, This has been a spectacular few weeks for major air shows in Southern California. Last week “AutoMatters & More” covered the 2023 MCAS (Marine Corps Air Station’s) Miramar AirShow — “America’s Air Show,” which was billed as “the largest military air show in America.” This week we’ll cover the following week’s Pacific Airshow Huntington Beach.

To accomplish that I drove back and forth between the greater Huntington Beach area and San Diego five times — not just to cover air show days but also to get my professional camera gear serviced by Canon in Costa Mesa and then return to pick it up, and also cover press events at the Lyon Air Museum in Santa Ana and at the Joint Forces Training Base (JTFB) in Los Alamitos, — where we were treated to our own brief performances by the Thunderbirds and the Golden Knights. Add to that covering the massive event, editing some of the thousands of photos that I took and writing this for you. In addition, I wrote and edited photos for the MCAS Miramar AirShow column, covered the OC AUTO SHOW (in Orange County), and covered the day-long SAM (Storytelling Across Media) symposium and the new Popology (pop culture meets technology) at the Comic-Con Museum in San Diego’s Balboa Park. I’ll be leaving almost immediately to drive to Los Angeles to cover yet another event for you. SoCal is definitely the place to be for non-stop entertainment.

2023 Pacific Airshow Huntington Beach

Pictures really do tell the story best about the Pacific Airshow Huntington Beach, but here is some context for those photos. Whereas the MCAS AirShow was primarily a huge military air show and extensive display of static, mostly military exhibits on the ground; the Pacific Airshow Huntington Beach was billed as “the largest airshow in the United States by attendance, attracting millions of spectators to Southern California every fall.” The massive crowd on the beach was surely a testament to that statement.

This pre-event press release sums it up well:

HUNTINGTON BEACH, CA – September 8, 2023 – The Pacific Airshow (September 29 – October 1, 2023) today announced its best lineup yet, featuring world-renowned military and civilian aviators performing for three days in Huntington Beach. Now in its seventh year, attracting 3 million live spectators, the three-day spectacle in the sky will feature over five hours of programming each day, showcasing a wide selection of aircrafts pushing the boundaries of speeds and skills.

The U.S. Air Force Thunderbirds, F-22 Raptor Demonstration Team and Canadian Forces Snowbirds will be headlining alongside F-15 combat pilot Tom “Lark” Larkin and the 122d Fighter Squadron F-15s from the Louisiana Air National Guard. Additionally, the Red Bull Air Race World Champion Matt Hall will be joined by Australian aerobatic pilot Emma McDonald for her United States debut, flying their MX and Extra 300 aircrafts. The U.S. Army Golden Knights and U.S. Navy Parachute Teams will help kick-off the show followed by appearances

by the Opener Blackfly and Red Bull Bo-105 Helicopter, flown by Aaron Fitzgerald.

“Every year we try to outdo ourselves, and we’re confident that 2023 will be our most incredible, action-packed lineup of all time,” said Kevin Elliott, Pacific Airshow’s Executive Director. “Millions of people look forward to the annual Pacific Airshow and we aim to make it an unforgettably epic experience for all.”

The Pacific Airshow Huntington Beach’s lineup of performers varied from day to day, as did the weather, so it was good to go more than one day. Whereas the air show was not located on a large airbase with plenty of onsite free parking, there was plenty of parking to be had (some of it free) in Huntington Beach. I passed street free parking on the way there. Of course, if you have a boat, there were also plenty of those off-shore where the passengers could get a great view of the airshow, too. I would recommend purchasing some category of the admission, which will put you closer to show center and the loudspeakers, which will keep you informed.

This is a great annual event. For more information about the Pacific Airshow Huntington Beach and the Pacific Airshow on the new Gold Coast in Queensland, Australia, visit <https://pacificairshowusa.com>.

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 © 2023 by Jan Wagner – AutoMatters & More #811

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SOCIAL SECURITY MATTERS

Disability programs & Social Security

Dear Rusty: I read with interest an analysis of the history, reasons, and financial costs of the SSI (Supplemental Security Income) and SSDI (Social Security Disability Insurance) programs. My question is, specifically, what portion of the Social Security budget goes toward SSI and SSDI vs. for regular SS retirement income for those who paid into the fund during their working lives? How are the costs of SSI and SSDI covered by the federal government? When did these two sections of the budget enter the law and what was the impetus behind them? Signed: An Inquiring Mind

Dear Inquiring Mind: No part of Social Security's "budget" is used to pay SSI (Supplemental Security Income). SSI is a means-tested general assistance program for disadvantaged children and needy disabled adults and aged seniors who have very little income and very few assets. Federal SSI benefits are paid from the government's General Treasury, not from Social Security Trust Funds. SSI is jointly administered by the person's state of residence and the Social Security Administration, and the state usually provides additional benefits to supplement the financial assistance provided by the federal government under the SSI program. The Social Security Administration only administers the SSI program, it does not fund it.

By contrast, SSDI (Social Security Disability Insurance) benefits are for employed Americans who become disabled and unable to work full time. SSDI benefits are meant to provide limited income replacement for the disabled worker, and those benefits are paid from a separate Social Security "DI" (Disability Insurance) Trust Fund. The DI fund receives a portion (0.9%) of the FICA SS payroll taxes every American worker pays on their earnings and is used to pay disability benefits to eligible American workers who are unable to perform "substantial gainful activity" for a year or more. The eligibility criteria to collect SSDI are very strict, but those approved receive their benefits from this separate DI trust fund, not from Social Security's Old Age and Survivors Trust Fund. Payroll taxes collected for disability purposes are deposited in the DI Trust Fund as interest-bearing government bonds, and those DI assets are redeemed as needed to pay SSDI benefits. FYI, SSDI (disability) benefits stop when the person reaches full retirement age, at which point the beneficiary is automatically switched to regular SS retirement, and after which their benefits are paid from the regular "OASI" Trust Fund.

"Regular" Social Security retirement benefits, spousal benefits, dependent benefits, and survivor benefits are paid from Social Security's Old Age and Survivors Insurance (OASI) Trust Fund, which receives most (5.3%) of the 6.2% FICA Social Security tax withheld from the paychecks of American workers. As of the end of 2022, the OASI Trust Fund held about \$2.7 trillion in interest bearing government bonds. Neither SSI or SSDI affect this "regular" OASI Trust Fund - only true SS retirement benefits and benefits for dependents of the retiree are paid from the OASI Trust Fund (As an aside, Social Security reform is needed to prevent the OASI Trust Fund from being fully depleted in 2033).

To answer your last questions, the Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) Trust Fund was established in 1956, after which SSDI benefit payments to eligible disabled American workers began. Federal "Supplemental Security Income" (SSI) assistance was codified into law in 1974. And, as you likely know, Social Security retirement, spousal and dependent benefits were enacted in the 1930s, before the first monthly Social Security check was mailed in January 1940. The impetus behind these programs? Avoiding poverty for the neediest among us. Without these programs, at least 22 million more Americans would be living below the poverty line.

Early detection is key to breast health

Did you know that the most common cancer in American women after skin cancer is breast cancer? According to the National Cancer Institute, "approximately 12.9% of women will be diagnosed with breast cancer at some point during their lifetime." Breast cancer often has no symptoms in early stages when it's most easily treated. This is why TRICARE-covered breast exams and mammograms are important for early detection.

"October is Breast Cancer Awareness Month, and a great reminder to put your health first," said Elan Green, chief of the Medial Benefits and Reimbursement Section for the TRICARE Health Plan at the Defense Health Agency. "Take the time to make sure you're following the guidelines for breast screenings for your age and risk factor."

TRICARE covers clinical breast exams during a covered Health Promotion and Disease Prevention (HP&DP) exam. TRICARE also covers annual mammograms for all women who are age 40 or older, and for women age 30 and older who are at high risk, as defined on the web page. This means you



have a 15% or more lifetime risk of developing breast cancer.

TRICARE mammogram coverage includes digital breast tomosynthesis, or 3-D mammography. An X-ray machine creates a 3-D

mammograms.

Other breast health services include:

- Annual breast Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI), covered beginning at age 30, for women with risk factors

image of the breast, which gives greater accuracy. It also lowers false positives. TRICARE covers 3-D mammography as a preventive health care service through the Provisional Coverage Program. TRICARE also continues to cover 2-D

• Genetic counseling provided by a TRICARE-authorized provider: An authorized provider is any individual, institution/organization, or supplier that is licensed by a state, accredited by national organization, or meets other standards of the medical community, and is certified to provide benefits under TRICARE. There are two types of TRICARE-authorized providers: Network and Non-Network. DS, before BRCA1 or BRCA2 gene testing

If you have questions about when you should begin routine screenings and how often you should be screened thereafter, talk to your doctor. More information is available to help you take command of your health. Learn more about breast health and TRICARE coverage of breast cancer screenings.

Relationships should be safe. If your partner's behavior is putting you at risk, reach out.

Call the National Domestic Violence Hotline at 800-799-SAFE (7233) or find more resources through the Family Advocacy Program: www.militaryonesource.mil/preventing-violence-abuse/unhealthy-relationships/family-advocacy-program-support/

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²Available only through participating retailers and Humana's mail order pharmacy, CareWell Pharmacy™. Allowance amounts cannot be combined with other benefit allowances. Limitations and restrictions may apply. Always consult with your doctor or medical provider before taking over-the-counter medications.





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