

# ARMED FORCES DISPATCH

San Diego Navy/Marine Corps Dispatch

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**SIXTY-FIFTH YEAR NO. 19**  
**SEPTEMBER 23, 2025**



**GOING, GOING, GONE** Lt. Hollis Connick, a member of the U.S. Coast Guard women's rugby team, runs the ball downfield against the U.S. Navy women's rugby team during a match at the 2025 Armed Forces Women's Rugby Championships at the Chula Vista Elite Athlete Training Center, Sept. 7, 2025. Department of War photo by MC1 Colby A. Mothershead

## AIR FORCE ANNOUNCES ARRIVAL OF SECOND B-21 TEST AIRCRAFT

from Secretary of the Air Force Public Affairs

The Department of the Air Force announced the arrival of the second B-21 Raider flight test aircraft, Sept. 11, at Edwards Air Force Base, Calif., enhancing the Air Force's capacity to conduct

comprehensive testing and sustainment training.

The addition of the second aircraft expands the service's testing capabilities beyond initial flight performance checks, enabling progression into critical mission

systems and weapons integration testing phases. This advancement marks a step toward operational readiness of the nation's sixth-generation stealth bomber.

"With the arrival of the second B-21 Raider, our flight test campaign gains substantial momentum," said Air Force Secretary Troy Meink. "We can now expedite critical evaluations of mission systems and weapons capabilities, directly supporting the strategic deterrence and combat effectiveness envisioned for this aircraft."

The presence of multiple test aircraft provides Air Force maintainers hands-on experience in managing simultaneous aircraft sustainment operations, testing the effectiveness of maintenance tools, technical data and the logistical processes that will support future operational squadrons.

"The addition of a second B-21 accelerates the path to fielding," said Air Force Chief of Staff Gen.

David Allvin. "By having more assets in the test environment, we [can] bring this capability to our warfighters faster, demonstrating the urgency with which we're tackling modernization."

Concurrent with the expanded flight-testing effort, fiscal year 2026 will see the launch of extensive military construction projects at all three designated B-21 main operating bases. Ellsworth Air Force Base, S.D., the first base set to receive operational B-21 aircraft, is already progressing on numerous infrastructure projects to ensure readiness when the aircraft arrive.

"The B-21 Raider program represents a cornerstone of our strategic nuclear modernization," Allvin said. "The concurrent efforts in testing, sustainment, preparation and infrastructure investments clearly illustrate our commitment to providing unmatched capabilities to deter and defeat threats well into the future."



**Airmen assigned to the 912th Aircraft Maintenance Squadron at Edwards Air Force Base, Calif., prepare to recover a B-21 Raider for test and evaluation on base, Sept. 11. U.S. Air Force photo by Kyle Brasier**

## Bungay relieves Heely, Jr., as commander of Naval Base San Diego

**SAN DIEGO** – Capt. Brian C. Bungay relieved Capt. Bob A. Heely, Jr. as commanding officer of the naval base here San Diego (NBSD), during a change of command ceremony held aboard the base, Aug. 28.

Vice Adm. Brendan McLane, commander, Naval Surface Forces, served as the guest speaker for the event and commended Heely for his outstanding leadership, dedication, and service to the fleet, tenant commands and the San Diego community during his tour.

"The success of NBSD matters not just to the Fleet but to our national defense. Our maritime dominance is in high demand around the world," said McLane. "Capt. Heely, I know you made it your mission to own this challenge, job well done! You truly made Naval Base San Diego a force generation machine and you never stopped advocating for our Sailors and their families."

Since assuming command of NBSD in February 2023, Capt. Heely inspired a team of more than 2,000 Sailors and civilians to provide the highest quality of shore infrastructure, programs, and services while advancing the warfighting readiness of Naval Surface Forces Pacific and Third Fleet through Fleet-focused outcomes.

Upon assuming command, Bungay addressed the Sailors, civilian workforce, and community partners for the first time as NBSD's new commander, emphasizing his commitment to operational excellence, support to the Fleet, and continued quality-of-life improvements.

"I look forward to building upon the strong partnerships with our local partners and local and state representatives to strengthen the bond between the Navy and the San Diego community," said Capt. Bungay. "To the Naval Base San Diego team, I am honored to join your ranks, and I know I have much to learn. I commit to giving you my best every day and together we will continue the mission with excellence, professionalism and pride" - [see photo, page 8](#)

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# Defending America against drug traffickers

By C. Todd Lopez  
Pentagon News

Secretary of War Pete Hegseth visited service members in the U.S. Southern Command area of responsibility earlier this month, and met with Sailors aboard USS *Iwo Jima* who are involved in defending the United States against the influence of criminal drug traffickers.

“The secretary spoke to service members about their contribution [to] protecting the homeland from narco-terrorists who poison the American people,” said Chief Pentagon Spokesman Sean Parnell during the War Department’s Weekly Sitrep video.

Aboard *Iwo Jima*, Hegseth told Sailors how impressed he is with their work, and

how important it is to keeping America safe.

“What you’re doing right now, it’s not training,” Hegseth told the Sailors. “This is a real-world exercise, on behalf of the vital national interests of the United States of America, to end the poisoning of the American people.”

As part of the trip, Hegseth, along with Air Force Gen. Dan Caine, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, visited Air National Guardsmen at Muniz Air National Guard Base, just outside of San Juan, Puerto Rico.

“What you’re doing here is critically important to American citizens, to American families [and] to communities that have been ravaged by

violence ... ravaged by drugs and ravaged by violent gangs and criminality [due to] a porous Southwest border and drugs pouring into our country,” Hegseth told the service members.

President Donald J. Trump signed an executive order Jan. 20 designating cartels and other organizations as foreign terrorist organizations, which authorizes the military to engage any perceived threats from such entities.

“Narco-terrorists will find no safe harbor in international waters or anywhere in our hemisphere,” Parnell said. “If you traffic drugs toward our shores, the United States military will use every tool at our disposal to stop you cold.”



Secretary of War Pete Hegseth presents his coin to Navy Petty Officer 1st Class Zachary Suter, assigned to Patrol Squadron 5, during a troop engagement at Muñiz Air National Guard Base, Puerto Rico, Sept. 8. His visit highlighted Puerto Rico’s vital role in strengthening homeland defense and supporting regional security operations. U.S. Air Force photo by Senior Airman Katelynn Jackson



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## Alaska Army Guard rescues individuals from 2 small aircraft crashes

by Alejandro Pena  
Alaska National Guard

JOINTBASE ELMENDORF-RICHARDSON, Alaska - Alaska Army National Guard aviators with the 1-168th General Support Aviation Battalion recently rescued individuals from two plane crashes across Alaska.

On Sept. 5, the Alaska Rescue Coordination Center opened a mission in response to a request for assistance from the Alaska State Troopers.

The Alaska AMNG accepted the mission and dispatched a Nome-based UH-60L Black Hawk crew to the vicinity of the crash site about 45 miles south of St. Michael.

The UH-60 crew spotted a downed two-seat general aviation aircraft, along with two uninjured individuals, and located a clearing on the tundra to land. The downed small aircraft pilot and a visiting hunter were picked up and transported to Nome,

where they were released to the Alaska State Troopers.

On Sept. 8, the Alaska Rescue Coordination Center opened another mission in response to a request for assistance from the National Park Service.

The Alaska ANG dispatched a Black Hawk crew to the reported crash site in the Wrangell Mountains about 175 miles east of Anchorage.

The crew spotted the downed two-seat general aviation air-

craft, along with two uninjured individuals and located an open gravel bar to land. The two individuals, who were on a hunting trip, were picked up and transported to Gulkana, where they were released to the park service.

The two incidents and successful outcomes highlight the vital importance of having an emergency communication plan when recreating in Alaska’s remote and rugged terrain.



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## Top 5

- Venezuela says U.S. Navy raided tuna boat in Caribbean as tensions rise
- Air Force revamps special operations wing relocating to Arizona
- Utah Air Guard base to wind down tactical air control party squadron
- Navy officer pleads guilty to murdering wife at Japanese hotel
- Troops in DC encounter few crises, but plenty of walking and yard work

## Navy

- U.S. naval shipyards accelerating outsourcing for new construction programs

## Marine Corps

- F-35s arrive in Puerto rico for counter-drug operation
- Marine Corps releases new guidance on Maven Smart System rollout

## Air Force

- Airman joins recruiter hall of fame for getting 100 people to enlist
- Two B-21 Raider stealth bombers photographed together for the first time
- Air Force B-2 bomber tests ship-killer bomb off of Norway
- Air Force reworks plan for special ops wing at Davis-Monthan

## Coast Guard

- With \$1B and a new shipyard, Canada's Davie sets sights on Coast Guard's new icebreaker

## National Guard

- Trump says he'll send National Guard troops to Memphis
- Pentagon plan envisions 1,000 troops for Louisiana policing mission

## Cyber, Space & Unmanned

- U.S. needs to be building tens of thousands of Shahed-136 clones right now

## LIFESAVING GUIDELINE RELEASED TO RECOGNIZE, MANAGE DANGEROUS MUSCLE CONDITION IN WARFIGHTERS

by Sharon Holland

When muscles work too hard, they can actually begin to break down — a dangerous condition known as exertional rhabdomyolysis, or ER. Left untreated, ER can quickly lead to kidney damage, chemical imbalances in the body or even life-threatening complications.

Now, doctors and medical leaders across the Military Health System have a newly released, comprehensive,

standardized, evidence-based playbook to help them recognize and manage ER in service members. The Clinical Practice Guideline for the Management of Exertional Rhabdomyolysis was developed by the Uniformed Services University, in collaboration with the Army Heat Center and other Department of War partners through the Warrior Heat- and Exertion-Related Events Collaborative based at USU's Consortium for Health and Military Performance.

### Statement by Chief Pentagon spokesman Sean Parnell, on grooming standards for facial hair outlined in the rapid force-wide review of military standards

After a rapid force-wide review of military standards, Secretary of War Pete Hegseth recently directed the Services to implement the following grooming standards for facial hair.

"The grooming standard set by the U.S. military is to be clean shaven and neat in presentation for a proper military appearance," said Hegseth.

Commanders must apply consistent criteria and appropriately consider the Department's interests in safety and uniformity when authorizing individual

exceptions. Military medical officers will provide a written recommendation concerning a shaving waiver to the commander who is the final approval authority. Service members with an approved shaving waiver will participate in a medical treatment plan. Unit commanders will initiate separation of Service members who require a shaving waiver after more than one year of medical treatment.

The memo can be found at <https://media.defense.gov/2025/Sep/15/2003799859/-1/-1/1/GROOMING-STANDARDS-FOR-FACIAL-HAIR.PDF>.

"We are very pleased to release this 2025 Rhabdomyolysis CPG update, which presents multiple significant changes and additions from our 2020 product," said Dr. Francis O'Connor, professor of military and emergency medicine and CHAMP medical director. "Our joint service team of DOW providers, representing hundreds of years of military relevant experience, has worked very hard to share the most current evidence-based information to our military colleagues to optimize the diagnosis and initial management of warfighters impacted by exertional rhabdomyolysis, and importantly, facilitate return to duty decisions."

ER occurs when strenuous activity, such as intense training, heavy labor or combat conditions, causes muscle fibers to break down and release their contents into the bloodstream. Early warning signs may include extreme muscle pain, weakness or very dark urine. In severe cases, ER can lead to acute kidney injury, requiring hospitalization or even dialysis.

Although the guideline was created with warfighters in mind, it also has broad applications in the civilian world. Athletes, firefighters, first responders and anyone engaged in high-

see **Guideline, page 8**

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Editor.....Scott Sutherland

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The Hughes Fire burns near Los Angeles, Jan. 22, 2025. Photo courtesy of U.S. Forest Service

# Preparedness for the unexpected starts at home

by David Vergun

The Federal Emergency Management Agency's Ready Campaign has observed National Preparedness Month every September since 2004 to encourage Americans to prepare for emergencies. This year's theme is "Preparedness Starts at Home."

This month is a great time to take small steps to make a big difference in being prepared, said Army Col. Nathan Allen, director of defense support of civil authorities for events and incidents.

Get your family, home and pets ready for emergencies like

fires, power outages, floods, hurricanes and tornadoes. Some places are more risk-prone than others, he said, citing FEMA emergency recommendations.

Make an emergency plan that includes evacuation routes and emergency meeting points, taking into account the specific needs of individuals with disabilities.

Items to add to an emergency supply kit include first aid items, medications, a battery or solar-powered radio with emergency channels, flashlights and extra batteries, candles and lighters, at least a week's worth of



**IT'S SHOW TIME** Members of the Golden Knights, the Army's parachute team, exit an aircraft during the Joint Base Andrews Air Show in Maryland, Sept. 12, 2025. The show featured U.S. military and civilian aerial demonstrations, static displays and opportunities for the public to engage with service members. U.S. Air Force photo by Senior Airman Alexis Redin

water and nonperishable foods, and power bank chargers for cellphones and other electronic devices.

Get some training on how to use your first aid supplies, as well.

A reliable site for inclement weather warnings and updates is <https://www.weather.gov>. For more information about preparing for unexpected emergencies and disasters, visit <https://www.ready.gov>.



## Japan, the Philippines and the U.S. conduct Maritime Cooperative Activity

from U.S. Indo-Pacific Command

SOUTH CHINA SEA — The combined armed and defense forces of Japan, the Philippines and the United States, demonstrating a collective commitment to strengthen regional and international cooperation in support of a free and open Indo-Pacific, conducted a Multilateral Maritime Cooperative Activity (MCA) within the Philippines' Exclusive Economic Zone, Sept. 11-13.

These combined maritime capabilities build upon previous MCAs and our continuous operations together, which strengthen the interoperability of our armed and defense forces doctrines, tactics, techniques, and procedures.

MCAs are conducted in a manner consistent with international law and with due regard to the safety, navigational rights, and freedoms of all nations.

Participating units included the Ōsumi-class amphibious tank landing ship JS Osumi (LST-4001), the Jose Rizal-class guided-missile frigate BRP Jose Rizal (FF 150), Arleigh Burke-class guided-missile destroyer USS *John Finn* (DDG 113) and a U.S. Navy P-8A Poseidon maritime patrol and reconnaissance aircraft assigned to Patrol Squadron (VP) 9.

The U.S., along with our allies and partners, upholds the right to freedom of navigation and overflight and other lawful uses of the sea and international airspace, as well as respect to the maritime rights under international law.

U.S. 7th Fleet is the U.S. Navy's largest forward-deployed numbered fleet and routinely interacts and operates with allies and partners in preserving a free and open Indo-Pacific region.

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### MCAS Miramar volunteer opportunities

The MCAS Miramar Family Support Program connects you with meaningful volunteering opportunities that strengthen the military community and enhance the well-being of Marines and their families.

Make a difference by giving your time, sharing your skills, and supporting the community.

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- Navy Marine Corps Relief Society**  
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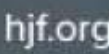
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## Navy SEAL Museum San Diego opens to the public October 4

The Navy SEAL Museum San Diego, located downtown near the Embarcadero at 1001 Kettner Blvd., will open to the public this fall, beginning 10 a.m. on October 4.

Navy SEAL Museum San Diego will provide a world-class experience to hundreds of thousands of visitors annually and will offer unparalleled access and insight into the secretive world of Navy SEALs.

“NSMSD will bring the Navy SEAL story to life through educational exhibitions, retired SEAL docents, sensory interactive experiences, virtual reality environments, and community engagement impact programs,” said Elaine Ryan, spokesperson for the museum, “which will impart values found in the Navy SEAL Ethos like leadership, adaptability, perseverance, and serving something higher than oneself.

Tickets are now on sale. Visitors should buy their tickets online in advance. Admissions will be timed-entry tickets to ensure a smooth visitor flow.

“Navy SEALs have played transformational roles in our

nation’s history through clandestine operations,” said Museum Executive Director Beef Drechsler. “And due to that fact, many Americans have no idea what it takes to become a

### Hours of Operation

Monday - 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Tuesday – Closed

Wednesday-Sunday -  
10 a.m. to 5 p.m.

SEAL, how we came to be, what our missions entailed, and where we’re going in the future.”

“We will convey all of this through engaging and hands-on exhibitions that utilize cutting-edge technology, as well as face-to-face interactions with docents—most of whom served in the SEAL Teams—and other special warfare operators, giving the visitor an unparalleled learning experience and an appreciation of the sacrifices made by anyone serving in uniform.”

The National Navy UDT-SEAL Museum in Fort Pierce, Fla., was founded in 1985 on the same beaches where predecessors to today’s Navy SEALs trained for World War II. Established to honor the sacrifice



**The Navy SEAL Museum San Diego - the region's newest cultural attraction - opens to the public October 4. Courtesy photo**

of these men and preserve their legacy, Navy SEAL Museum Fort Pierce tells the story of their lineage, beginning with Scouts and Raiders, Naval Combat Demolition Units, and Underwater Demolition Teams. The birthplace of Naval Special Warfare, Fort Pierce provided the perfect training grounds for the teams that would ultimately become U.S. Navy SEALs in 1962.

The opening of Navy SEAL Museum San Diego represents

an expansion of the organization into San Diego - one of the largest military concentrations in the country - and across the bay from Naval Special Warfare in Coronado, where all Navy SEALs are created and trained.

“We have a very compelling and captivating history,” said National Navy UDT-SEAL Museum CEO, Rick Kaiser. “We have strong visitation despite Ft. Pierce being some distance from major tourist centers like Orlando.”

## Midshipmen taste fleet life aboard *Boxer*

by Seaman Dustin Drake, USS *Boxer*

SAN DIEGO – Every summer, the Naval Academy and Navy Reserve Officer Training Corps Universities send their students, known as midshipmen, to submarines, aircraft carriers, and surface ships for professional training. USS *Boxer* recently hosted 44 midshipmen, where the crew provided hands on experience and knowledge that will stay with them throughout their careers as officers in the Navy. Each midshipman was assigned a sponsor to guide them during their time aboard *Boxer*, showing them what various jobs in the Navy entail and how they function. Each path was organized by the ship’s midshipmen coordinator, Lt. Cmdr. Cody Walker, *Boxer*’s plan and tactics officer. “I had experience with midshipmen for my shore duty while I taught at Penn State,” said Walker. “I would send them off to their summer cruises, but I wanted to be on the other side of that this time.” *Boxer* is homeported in San Diego. It’s crew is made up of approximately 1,200 officers and enlisted personnel and can accommodate up to 1,800 Marines.

## ARMing the fleet from Ventura County

Naval Surface Warfare Center, Port Hueneme Division’s (NSWC PHD) Augmented Reality Maintenance System (ARMS) team sent out more than 20 ARMS kits to the fleet in August, putting it closer to meeting command leadership’s goal of ARMS on every deployed ship. “Our highest priority, based on feedback from (Commanding Officer) Capt. (Tony) Holmes, is to make sure that every deploying ship in the fleet pulls away from the pier with ARMS capability,” said Matt Cole, NSWC PHD ARMS project lead. “So far, we have been accomplishing that by targeting deploying carrier strike groups like USS *Nimitz* and USS *Gerald R. Ford* groups. But our current round of fielding is rolling out capability to all our forward-deployed naval forces (FDFN) ships in places like Rota, Spain, and Yokosuka, Japan.” The ARMS kits left the command in mid-August, heading to more than a dozen FDFN ships in the 6th and 7th Fleets. Additional kits were sent to the Navy’s Aegis Ashore Missile Defense sites in Poland and Romania for installation before the end of the calendar year.



# Thunderstruck: Marines compete in first-ever service-wide communications team competition

by 1st Lt. Madison Walls  
3rd Marine Aircraft Wing  
MCAS MIRAMAR - They came from across the globe to compete in the inaugural Thunderstruck Communications Team Competition here Sept. 10.

Unprecedented in scope, the service-wide event, hosted by Marine Wing Communications Squadron 38, Marine Air Control Group 38, 3rd Marine Aircraft Wing tested Marines' ability to integrate physical endurance with expeditionary communications tasks, reflecting the operational demands of distributed operations in contested environments.

**TEAMS COMPLETED A SIX-MILE, COMBAT-LOADED COURSE WHILE EXECUTING HIGH-FREQUENCY VOICE TRANSMISSION, MOBILE USER OBJECTIVE SYSTEM OPERATIONS, AND DATA NETWORKING, ALL UNDER AUSTERE FIELD CONDITIONS.**

"The event attests to the whole-Marine concept — the 'Marine communicator,' not just the everyday communicator," said Lt. Col. Brian Kerg, the commanding officer of MWCS-38. "This training and competition compelled them to do the

exact things they would do in a distributed aviation operations environment."

A total of 15 different units competed in the event each providing a four-Marine team composed of their top communicators. These units represent all three Marine Expeditionary Forces, both the Fleet and the Supporting Establishment, including the active and reserve components.

"They were not only tested on our communications training and readiness standards, but tested while under physical duress and competitive pressure, as they would in a time of war," said Kerg. "As they would if rounds were flying at them. As they would if long-range munitions were falling on their head."

This event marks the first time the Marine Corps has held a service-wide competition specifically dedicated to communications Marines, reflecting the increasing importance of resilient command and control (C2) in distributed operations. By pushing teams to perform under pressure, Thunderstruck highlighted the unique blend of technical skill, problem-solving, and physical toughness required to sustain communications at the tactical edge.

"Imagine a handful of Marines inserted via air and have to move the last tactical mile before they get C2 established," said Kerg. "They are supporting aviation operations and then they are detected. They have to break down their gear, move to another survivable location, and reestablish."

The competition directly supports the Commandant's Planning Guidance and Force Design 2030 priorities. Both call for small, agile and self-reliant teams capable of enabling aviation and Marine Air-Ground Task Force operations in contested and dispersed environments. Events like Thunderstruck ensure that communicators are trained, tested and recognized as critical enablers of battlefield dominance.

"This is my 15th year in communications field and there has not been a better time to be a communicator in the Marine Corps," said Chief Warrant Officer 2 Kelson Epperson, a space and propagation engineering officer with MWCS-38. "We are now tactically integrated in every system, in every way, and Thunderstruck proves this."

Read the entire text with photos at <https://www.dvidshub.net/news/547777/>.

# Navy relieves USS Santa Barbara commanding officer

MANAMA, Bahrain — Commander of Task Force 55, Capt. Kelley Jones, relieved the commanding officer of USS *Santa Barbara* (LCS 32) Blue crew, Cmdr. Adam Ochs, Sept. 11, due to a loss of confidence in Ochs' ability to command the littoral combat ship.

Blue Crew Executive Officer Cmdr. Jeff Steiner has temporarily assumed command of *Santa Barbara*. Gold crew commanding officer Cmdr. Linzy Lewis

assumed command Sept. 12.

The Navy maintains the highest standards for leaders and holds them accountable when those standards are not met.

*Santa Barbara* is currently on a scheduled deployment in the U.S. 5th Fleet area of operations. The relief does not impact the ship's mission or schedule.

Ochs assumed command of *Santa Barbara* Nov. 22, 2023.

He has now been temporarily reassigned to Commander, Naval Surface Group Southwest.

The U.S. 5th Fleet area of operations encompasses approximately 2.5 million square miles of water space and includes the Arabian gulf, Gulf of Oman, Red Sea, parts of the Indian Ocean, and three critical choke points at the Strait of Hormuz, Suez Canal, and the Strait of Bab al-Mandeb.

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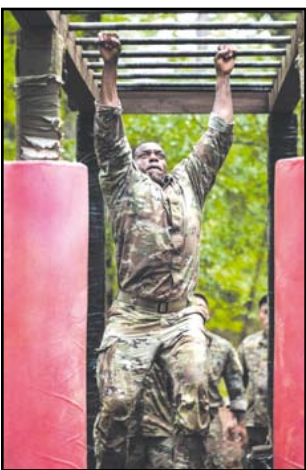
**Guideline**  
continued from page 3

intensity physical activity may face similar risks, making the resource valuable beyond the military.

The new Clinical Practice Guideline gives medical teams:

- \*Clear diagnostic standards to help doctors recognize ER earlier and more accurately.
- \*Risk categories that sort patients into low or high risk based on lab results and clinical signs.
- \*Tools like the McMahon Score, which combines test results and patient information

to predict the chance of kidney injury.  
\*Step-by-step flow charts and decision aids that simplify what can be a complex clinical situation.  
Patients at high risk — those with extremely elevated muscle enzymes, signs of compartment syndrome, kidney damage or complicating factors like sickle cell trait — require close monitoring in the hospital. Others, especially those at lower risk, may be safely managed outside the hospital through rest, hydration and follow-up care within 24 to 72 hours.  
One of the most important parts of the guideline is its



**A drill sergeant candidate traverses monkey bars during the Fit to Win obstacle course at the Army Drill Sergeant Academy course at Fort Jackson, S.C., July 31, 2025. U.S. Army photo by Staff Sgt. Dana M. Clarke**

framework for return-to-duty decisions. Low-risk patients progress gradually from rest to reconditioning, while higher-risk patients follow a tailored

plan developed with input from specialists.  
“At the Army Heat Center, we frequently see cases of exertional rhabdomyolysis, either secondary to heat illness or on its own. Unlike exertional heatstroke, prior to the development of this CPG, return-to-duty guidance was lacking,” said Army Lt. Col. [Dr.] David DeGroot, Army Heat Center director. “Now, providers have a resource to help as they work to return the injured warfighter to duty as quickly as possible, but without jeopardizing their health or increasing risk of reoccurrence.”

The guideline is designed for use by primary care, emergency medicine, sports medicine and operational clinicians across the military. Command medical leaders can also use it to help shape policies around training, selection and deployment cycles. Civilian physicians, athletic trainers and occupational health providers may also find it a valuable reference.



**SKIPPER STRIDE** Capt. Brian C. Bungay walks between the sideboys during a change of command ceremony for Naval Base San Diego, where he relieves Capt. Robert A. Heely Jr. on Aug. 28, 2025. NBSD’s mission is to deliver and provide the highest standard of support and enduring quality of work and quality of life services and solutions that enhance the resilience and readiness of our Fleet, Fighters, and Families. U.S. Navy photo by MC2 Aja Bleu Campbell



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## The Meat & Potatoes of Life



by  
Lisa  
Smith  
Molinari

“I want Oreos and Pepsi,” my grouchy 83-year-old father blared through the telephone from his North Carolina hospital bed, where he was recuperating from recent surgery.

“Okay, Dad, I’ll try, but this is my first time using Instacart, so I hope it works,” I replied from Rhode Island without reacting to his unhealthy snack choices.

“You’re using that damned Internet, so I won’t hold my breath,” he snapped.

My cantankerous father took every opportunity to criticize modern generations’ technology-dependent lifestyles. I’d been the target of his passive-aggressive comments countless times over the years.

“Dad, I sent you a text with a link to...” I’d start.

“I don’t text, I told you. I hate these damned cell phones!” he’d interrupt, even though he played Spider Solitaire on it every day.

To cut down on local errands after Dad began using a walker, I suggested online banking. “That’s horse [BLEEP]! I’ll take my checks to the bank teller, thank you very much,” he blasted.

When he couldn’t find his beloved “All in the Family” sitcom reruns, I suggested a cable upgrade. “I need a what? A ‘streaming’ service?! Why the hell can’t I just watch my damned shows?!” he’d grumbled, pointing his over-

## Damned if you do or don’t in the digital age

used clicker at the television and jabbing away in frustration.

“Amazon?” he crabbled when I offered to order dog food to save him a trip to PetSmart, “You think ordering online is so great, but you watch, nothing will come in the mail.”

Once, when I ordered him forty frozen meals so he wouldn’t need to shop, I called him to make sure he’d put the food in his freezer. “They never delivered anything,” he snapped angrily.

“What? But I received an email indicating that the package was delivered to your address, Dad,” I said.

“You can’t trust those damned emails!”

I called back ten minutes later when I found a link in the email showing delivery photo proof. “Dad, I’m looking at a photo of the package sitting just outside your garage,” I said without seizing the perfect “I was right” moment.

“Oh,” he said, sheepishly.

Without a doubt, modern technology has eliminated many time-consuming manual tasks and opened up a new world of capabilities, from Googling answers to almost any question in an instant, to conducting complex business meetings and transactions from a mobile device.

But my father had a point despite his angry delivery. Thanks to modern technology, I’m accustomed to endlessly poking my smartphone keypad numbers, following the orders of a robot voice telling me to “Press one to pay online, press two to enter your account number, Press three....”

When all I want to do is to speak to a human being.

I’ve agreed to no-touch telehealth appointments when, truth be told, what I really wanted was an in-person doctor who’d tell me what the heck is wrong with my shoulder, and that the mole on my back isn’t suspicious. For crimony’s sake, if I have to take my doctor’s appointments over Zoom, the least they could do is write me a prescription. I don’t care if it’s stool softener, aspirin or Smarties— when will doctors learn that patients feel better when their appointments end with a prescription?

In the military, we used to hand-carry our cumbersome health records to every new duty station. Now, with the advent of Military Health System Genesis Patient Portal, all service members’, veterans’ and dependents’ medical records have been digitized and are accessible online through the DS Logon system. With the mere press of a button, I can see lab results, doctor’s notes, medications and more.

The only problem is, the DS Logon system forces users to create a new password every 60 days, with new requirements each time, such as passwords must contain at least 30 characters, eight of which must have not been used in any previous DS Logon password. Thanks to these modern security measures, I keep my DS Logon password on a Post-It note under my keyboard.

Despite it all, I agree with Stephen Hawking who said “Intelligence is the ability to adapt to change.” But I’ll bet he never tried to order Oreos and Pepsi on damned Instacart.

## Dramatic H1 Unlimited Hydroplane blowover & more at San Diego Bayfair 2025

I would like to begin this week’s “AutoMatters & More” by absolutely assuring you that Corey Peabody, driver of the U-9 Beacon Plumbing H1 Unlimited Hydroplane was not injured in his dramatic blowover during the H1 Unlimited Hydroplane Heat Race 1, on Saturday, Sept. 13 at Bayfair San Diego, on Mission Bay.

These boats are fast! As we learn from the history of San Diego Bayfair (at <https://sandiegobayfair.org/history/>) the World Lap Speed Record is 173.384 mph, set at Bayfair in 1999 by driver Dave Villwock. That is much quicker than most of us will ever drive on smooth pavement, yet the waters of Mission Bay were anything but smooth. The weather was gray and overcast.

I observed the blowover from Crown Point — far, far away across Mission Bay. I have been shooting professional auto racing for decades and I have seen many accidents in that time. I’ve also photographed San Diego Bayfair for several years, but I have never before seen — or photographed — anything quite like this. Fortunately, my experience shooting auto racing had taught me to optimize my camera equipment for the extremes of what might happen, just in case. I used my longest lens and my best camera body, set the shutter speed high enough to freeze the action, and carefully watched the action in my camera’s viewfinder — firmly supporting the camera with my left hand, and hovering over the shutter button with my right index finger.

At first the Hydroplanes were skimming over the surface of Mission Bay, as I expected them to be. I followed along with them.

I was not expecting what happened next, but I was ready for it. Suddenly one of the racing boats started to take off into the air! In-

stinctively, I immediately began to decisively press the shutter button, taking one shot at a time in rapid succession as the quickly evolving situation developed.

The boat ended up upside down in the water. I took more photos, as the rescue crews arrived on scene.

Once the driver was attended to, the still overturned boat was slowly towed back to the shore.

On shore a crowd had gathered. They watched intently as divers put a sling under the overturned boat in preparation for it to be righted. After that was done, the front end

**AutoMatters™ & More**



by Jan Wagner

of the boat was lifted so that the water inside it could drain back into San Diego Bay. That gave us an opportunity to see that the boat was badly damaged. It seemed likely, and it was later confirmed, that the boat would not be racing the rest of the weekend.

Finally, one of the tall cranes lifted the boat out of the water, high into the air, and carefully swung it over and down onto the team’s boat cradle, on shore.

As you can see in the 2024 H1 Unlimited Technical Manual (Revision 4) (at [https://www.h1unlimited.com/wp-content/uploads/2024/05/2024-H1-Technical-Manual\\_final.pdf](https://www.h1unlimited.com/wp-content/uploads/2024/05/2024-H1-Technical-Manual_final.pdf)), many pages of rules, developed as a

result of many years of experience, mandate down to the smallest of details, the required construction and specifications of the boats and their systems, and the safety equipment of the drivers. In addition to what you would expect for racing on land, including fire retardant clothing, a helmet (full-faced are not recommended) and a neck restraint system (such as a HANS-type device), since these events are held on water the rules also mandate such things as an emergency escape at the bottom of the boat, which Corey Peabody used to get out of his inverted cockpit.

There were three official viewing locations: Crown Point, Fiesta Island and Ski Beach — which is also where the pits were. A free shuttle bus gave rides throughout the day.

In addition to this and other classes of boat racing, San Diego Bayfair included two car shows. On Saturday there was a colorful display of lowriders at Crown Point. Then, on Sunday, the focus turned to classic cars. My favorites included a custom Boogie Van, an AMC Javelin, Corvettes and more.

Also on Crown Point, there were demonstrations of flyboarding.

The vendor areas included several that sold hand-made crafts (I bought several as gifts).

To learn more about San Diego Bayfair by Samson Ropes, visit: <https://sandiegobayfair.org>

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

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## Veterans News

# Navy begins removal of USS Arizona mooring platforms

from Navy Region Hawaii Public Affairs

JOINT BASE PEARL HARBOR-HICKAM, Hawaii - The Navy, in coordination with the Pearl Harbor National Memorial, will begin operations for the removal of two World War II-era mooring platforms from the USS Arizona, Sept. 3.

This effort will help preserve and protect USS Arizona and the memorial structure above, while also preventing harm to the environment.

After meticulous planning, analysis, preparation and training, divers from the Navy’s Mobile Diving and Salvage Unit 1, advised by the Navy Supervisor of Salvage and Diving, and supported by locally contracted salvors, will start to carefully extract the aging concrete platforms the Arizona’s hull.

“This salvage operation will help preserve the Arizona for generations to come and assist

in the safety of the more than 1.7 million visitors the Pearl Harbor National Memorial receives annually,” said Rear Adm. Brad Collins, Navy Region Hawaii commander. “The Navy is proud to partner with the memorial and private industry partners to protect USS Arizona and the memorial.”

U.S. Pacific Fleet directed the establishment of Task Force Arizona under Navy Region Hawaii to accomplish the mission, while working closely with federal regulators, the State of Hawaii, and key stakeholders to preserve and protect USS Arizona and the memorial structure above.

The battleship, sunk during the Dec. 7, 1941 attack on Pearl Harbor, is not only incredibly

important to naval history and heritage but also serves as the final resting place for more than 900 Sailors and Marines



Arizona Memorial. Photo courtesy of Pearl Harbor Historic Sites

who died defending against the attack.

In the aftermath of the Pearl Harbor attack, the Navy installed two mooring platforms in 1942 to aid in the salvaging of the Pennsylvania-class battleship’s ammunition and armament for reutilization in the ongoing war effort. After more than 80 years since the original salvage, the

platforms remain attached to the ship, clearly visible for the visitors who come to the Pearl Harbor National Memorial each year.

It was during a routine inspection, Oct. 26, 2023, when park rangers reported one of the platforms had partially collapsed. Ultimately, the Navy decided the removal of the platforms would prevent possible harm to USS Arizona, its memorial and the environment.

“The removal of the platforms will be conducted in a manner that respects the ship’s historic importance to the nation, its sacred war grave status, marine life and the local community,” said Bill Manley, Navy Region Hawaii environmental director. “The Navy is working with appropriate agencies throughout the process to ensure continued safety to the environment.”

While the operation takes place, the Pearl Harbor Visitor Center will remain open. How-

ever, the National Park Service suspended advanced reservations to USS Arizona Memorial in preparation for the removal work to avoid cancelling any tours.

The suspension of reservations began July 9. During removal work, there may be days where the operational schedule allows for visits to the memorial.

When that happens, tours will be on a first-come, first-served basis until the completion of the operation. Once the mission is complete, the park will return to the normal reservation process where reservations are released 56 days in advance and the day prior to each tour date.

<https://cnrh.cnrc.navy.mil>

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## SOCIAL SECURITY MATTERS

## When will funds stolen from Social Security be replaced?

*Dear Rusty: When will the funds stolen from the SS Fund be replaced? They used Social Security when the government ran out of money and used it for illegals. I think the funds should be replaced except for legiti-mate payments to Social Security recipients. This money was never meant to be used by the federal government to pay their bills.* Signed:  
Concerned Senior

**Dear Concerned Senior:** I must tell you that no funds have ever been “stolen” from the Social Security Administration (despite the persistent myth). All money received by SS (from payroll taxes, interest on invest-ments, and income tax on SS benefits) is - and always has been - imme- diately converted to special issue government bonds (investments) which are held in the Social Security Trust Funds, and which pay interest (at the current federal bond rate). Those bond investments held in reserve have been, and are, used only to pay benefits to those who have earned them by contributing to Social Security via payroll taxes for at least 10 years (40 quarters). Only US citizens and legal residents can get Social Security benefits (illegal aliens cannot receive Social Security benefits).

For information, repayment of the special issue bonds held in SS re-serves occurs every day, because incoming revenue has been insufficient to pay all Social Security benefit costs for several years now, which means that the bonds must be redeemed regularly so that full benefits can be paid to all SS recipients who have earned them. There were about \$2.8 trillion in SS reserves as of the end of 2023, but that balance is steadily decreasing (due to being redeemed to pay full benefits). As of the last report by the Trustees of Social Security, the reserves will be depleted in about 2033, unless Congress passes reform legislation to restore SS to full solvency.

FYI, the Association of Mature American Citizens (AMAC) is working hard to prevent depletion of the Trust Fund, suggesting to Congress a way to reform the program so future generations can fully benefit from it, with AMAC's Social Security Guarantee proposal (see this). AMAC is constantly working to prevent depletion of the SS Trust Funds, which would result in an across the board cut in everyone's benefit by about 23%. AMAC works every day in Washington D.C. to ensure Social Security is here for many generations.

*This article is intended for information purposes only and does not represent legal or financial guidance. It presents the opinions and interpretations of the AMAC Foundation's staff, trained and accredited by the National Social Security Association (NSSA). NSSA and the AMAC Foundation and its staff are not affiliated with or endorsed by the Social Security Administration or any other governmental entity. To submit a question, visit our website ([amacfoundation.org/programs/social-security-advisory](http://amacfoundation.org/programs/social-security-advisory)) or email us at [ssadviser@amacfoundation.org](mailto:ssadviser@amacfoundation.org).*

### About AMAC

The 2.4 million member Association of Mature American Citizens [AMAC] [www.amac.us](http://www.amac.us) is a vibrant, vital senior advocacy organization that takes its marching orders from its members. AMAC Action is a non-profit, non-partisan organization representing the membership in our nation's capital and in local Congressional Districts throughout the country. And the AMAC Foundation ([www.AmacFoundation.org](http://www.AmacFoundation.org)) is the Association's non-profit organization, dedicated to supporting and edu-cating America's Seniors. Together, we act and speak on the Association members' behalf, protecting their interests and offering a practical insight on how to best solve the problems they face today. Live long and make a difference by joining us today at [www.amac.us/join-amac](http://www.amac.us/join-amac).

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# Health & Fitness

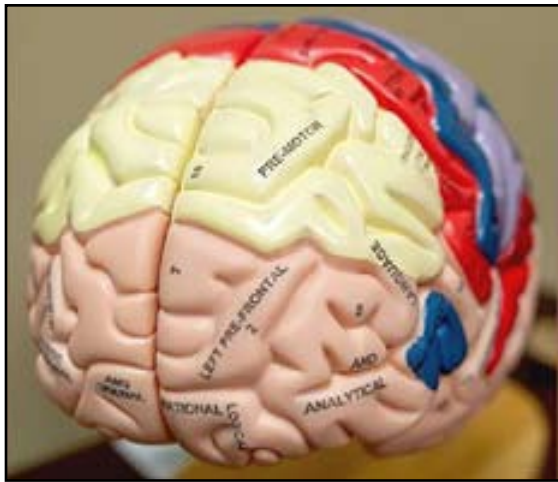
## 10 years of U.S. military partnership with NCAA improves concussion research and care

by Derik Crotts,  
MHS Communications

As college football season gets underway, it's worth remembering that the games we cheer for are also linked to one of the most ambitious brain health research efforts ever undertaken. Ten years ago, the Department of Defense (now Department of War) and the NCAA launched a bold partnership: the Concussion Assessment, Research and Education program, better known as the NCAA-DOD Grand Alliance CARE Consortium. The idea was simple but powerful — by combining the experiences of athletes and service members, researchers could better understand traumatic brain injury and concussion, improving safety and care both on the athletic field and in the line of duty.

“What began as a research collaboration has grown into the largest concussion and TBI study in history,” said Dr. Paul Pasquina, professor and chair of the department of physical medicine and rehabilitation at the Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences. “More than 60,000 student-athletes and service members have participated, generating insights that have transformed how concussions are recognized, diagnosed, and managed.”

CARE has helped to define



the natural history of concussion, advance the science of recovery, and guide evidence-based policy changes across sports and the military.

In recent years, the partnership expanded through the Service Academy Longitudinal mTBI Outcomes Study, referred to as SALTOS.

A decade of impact: 10 Years of U.S. military partnership with NCAA improves concussion research and care. Ten years ago, the Department of Defense (now Department of War) and the NCAA launched a bold experiment in partnership: the Concussion Assessment, Research, and Educa-

tion program, better known as the NCAA-DOD Grand Alliance CARE Consortium. The idea was simple but powerful — by combining the experiences of athletes and service members, researchers could better understand traumatic brain injury and concussion, improving safety and care both on the playing field and in the line of duty.

“By following cadets and midshipmen across their academic and military training, SALTOS is uncovering how brain injuries affect long-term readiness, performance, and health,” added Pasquina.

Together, CARE and SALTOS

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represent a model of cross-sector collaboration — universities, clinicians, military researchers, and athletes working side by side.

The results have been profound and impactful. Findings from these initiatives have informed concussion protocols used across the NCAA, influenced U.S. military health policies, and sparked new innovations in diagnostics, imaging, and biomarkers.

“As we reflect on a decade of CARE and SALTOS, it's clear that this partnership has done more than advance science — it has improved outcomes and led to further changes that aim to

reduce head impact exposures and concussions,” said Dr. Deena Casiero, NCAA chief medical officer. “By uniting athletes and service members in this research, we've accelerated knowledge in ways that would have been impossible alone. This collaboration continues to set the standard for how we protect brain health, both on the field of play and in service to our nation.”

As the collaboration marks its tenth year, the mission is far from complete.

“The results from CARE/SALTOS have helped shift the culture,” said Ms. Kathy Lee, director, of

Warfighter Brain Health Policy. They encourage early reporting, address the stigma of injury, and emphasize that protecting the brain is essential to long-term readiness.

The next decade promises advances in precision medicine, digital health tools, and preventive strategies.”

And just as athletes and warfighters both push themselves to the limit — one in pursuit of victory, the other in defense of our nation — CARE and SALTOS remind us that protecting the brain is key to sustaining peak performance, resilience, and readiness for all who play and all who serve.

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