

ARMED FORCES DISPATCH



San Diego Navy/Marine Corps Dispatch

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SIXTY-FIFTH YEAR NO. 26
NOVEMBER 16-30, 2025

see related story on page 6

A GUNFIGHTER'S HONOR A static display is staged during a memorial ceremony at Marine Corps Air Station Camp Pendleton Nov. 7, 2025. Marines, family, and friends gathered to pay tribute to Maj. Tyler R. Braconi, whose service and sacrifice were remembered during the ceremony. U.S. Marine Corps photo by Cpl. Renee Gray

COAST GUARD SOLICITS POTENTIAL LOCATIONS FOR ADDITIONAL TRAINING CENTER

WASHINGTON - The Coast Guard, in coordination with the Department of Homeland Security, announced a Request for Information (RFI) and market research to identify prospective locations for an additional training center Nov. 10.

The Coast Guard is conducting market research to identify facilities across the country that can be used to support projected service growth of up to 15,000 personnel. To address existing training space deficits and secure infrastructure to support increased throughput for recruit training, minimum requirements for a potential training center are defined

as follows:

- **Lodging for 1,200 recruits
- **A dining facility capable of seating 400 personnel
- **A medical facility to support 1,000 personnel (minimum 200 medical encounters and 200 dental encounters per day)
- **Fourteen classrooms sized to accommodate 30-60 students
- **An auditorium with a ca-

capacity of 500+ students

- **A pool with 6 lanes, 25 yards in length, and a minimum depth of 4 feet
- **A multipurpose gymnasium/athletic/sports facility suitable for sitting 1,200 personnel
- **Office space for 400 staff members
- **A land area of 150-250 acres
- **Proximity to a small commercial service or larger airport within 30 miles

Through the RFI, the Coast Guard released screening and evaluation criteria to evaluate those locations eligible for consideration. The Coast Guard is providing communities meeting the screening criteria an opportunity to submit potential candidate locations by responding to the RFI at SAM.gov. The Coast Guard is accepting responses to

this RFI until Dec. 8, 2025. Additional information regarding the RFI and market research, including location criteria, is available at the Coast Guard's Force Design 2028 website. Potential candidates will receive additional information from the Coast Guard as part of the assessment process, based on the approved requirements and evaluation criteria.

Earlier this year, Secretary of Homeland Security, Kristi Noem, announced Force Design 2028, the Coast Guard's bold blueprint for change to ensure the service is ready for the challenges of the future. By focusing on four campaigns – people, organization, contracting and acquisition, and technology – Force Design 2028 is transforming how the Coast Guard

see **Coast Guard**, page 3

Secretary of War announces acquisition reform

The following memorandums were referenced by Secretary of War Pete Hegseth during his remarks at the National War College on Fort McNair, Washington, D.C., on November 7. These directives outline the Department's next phase of acquisition.

The memorandums—"Transforming the Defense Acquisition System into the Warfighting Acquisition System to Accelerate Fielding of Urgently Needed Capabilities to Our Warriors," "Reforming the Joint Requirements Process to Accelerate Fielding of Warfighting Capabilities," and "Unifying the Department's Arms Transfer and Security Cooperation Enterprise to Improve Efficiency and Enable Burden-Sharing"—direct sweeping reforms across the Department of War to strengthen deterrence, rebuild the industrial base, and accelerate capability delivery to the warfighter.

Together with the newly released Acquisition Transformation Strategy, these memorandums redefine how the Department develops requirements, manages programs, and engages industry to ensure America's warfighters receive critical capabilities at the speed of relevance.

For more information, the strategy and memorandums can be found by searching the following key words:

- Acquisition Transformation Strategy*
- "Transforming the Defense Acquisition System into the Warfighting Acquisition System to Accelerate Fielding of Urgently Needed Capabilities to Our Warriors"*
- "Reforming the Joint Requirements Process to Accelerate Fielding of Warfighting Capabilities"*
- "Unifying the Department's Arms Transfer and Security Cooperation Enterprise to Improve Efficiency and Enable Burden-Sharing"*



Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth, shown here Sept. 30 at key leaders all-call meeting. DOW photo

Next cost-of-living adjustment set at 2.8%

The Social Security Administration announced a 2.8 percent cost-of-living adjustment (COLA) for 2026, affecting Social Security recipients, veterans receiving disability compensation, and military retirees. For vets rated at 100 percent disability with no dependents, the increase will add about \$107 per month. The adjustment becomes effective December 1, 2025, with the first payment reflecting the increase arriving December 31. Veterans and retirees do not need to apply, as the increase will be applied automatically. While the COLA helps benefits keep pace with inflation, critics note that the increase remains modest compared to rising costs for housing, healthcare, and everyday goods.

Department of War releases Fiscal Year 2025 Military Intelligence Program budget

On Nov. 3, the Department of War released the Military Intelligence Program (MIP) appropriated top line budget for fiscal year 2025. The total was \$27.8 billion, includes supplemental funding, and is aligned to support the Interim National Defense Strategic Guidance. The Department determined that releasing this top line figure does not jeopardize any classified activities within the MIP. No other MIP budget figures or program details will be released, as they remain classified for national security reasons.

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If you are interested in sponsorship opportunities, please contact USO CA Executive Director Ryan Okita at rokita@uso.org.



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Mayport, Fla.-based USS *St. Louis* returns from southern border operations

Courtesy Story
Commander, 2nd Fleet

NAVAL STATION MAYPORT, Fla. – Freedom-variant littoral combat ship USS *St. Louis* (LCS 19), operating under U.S. Northern Command (USNORTHCOM) in the Gulf of America, returned here after completing a surge deployment on November 10.

Also returning were with the “Valkyries” of Helicopter Maritime Strike Squadron (HSM) 50 Detachment 5 and embarked U.S. Coast Guard Law Enforcement Detachment (LEDET) 408.

The future of autonomous fighters displayed in Rome

SAN DIEGO - General Atomics Aeronautical Systems, the world leader in uncrewed aircraft systems, recently participated in the 25th anniversary of the International Fighter Conference as the event's only Four-Star Lead Partner, reflecting the company's global commitment.

General Atomics' growing production fleet of unmanned combat jets - including the MQ-20 Avenger, XQ-67A Off-Board Sensing Station, and YFQ-42A Collaborative Combat Aircraft - is defining the global future of autonomous and semi-autonomous combat jets, leading the way in autonomy development, manned-unmanned teaming, and affordable, rapid delivery at scale. The company's vision for its Gambit Series of modular, scalable, uncrewed fighters paves the way for U.S. forces, allies and partners to quickly evolve global air forces for the future fight.

Navy assets are deployed under U.S. Northern Command's maritime homeland defense authorities with a U.S. Coast Guard Law Enforcement Detachment embarked to enable maritime interdiction missions to prevent the flow of illegal drugs or other illegal activity. USNORTHCOM is working together with the Department of Homeland Security to augment U.S. Customs and Border Protection along the southern border with additional military forces.

“The crew of *St. Louis* is grateful for the opportunity to support and defend the homeland,” stated Cmdr. Lee Shew-

make, commanding officer, USS *St. Louis*. “We are always ready to demonstrate the U.S. commitment to international cooperation and supporting regional security and prosperity. Our officers and Sailors onboard welcome every opportunity to collaborate with our partners, strengthening our interoperability and shared goals in the area.”

In support of USNORTHCOM's mission to restore territorial integrity at the U.S. southern border, *St. Louis* reinforced the nation's commitment to border security by enhancing maritime efforts and supporting interagency collaboration. The ship's deployment highlights the Department of War and Navy's dedication to national security

Coast Guard

continued from page 1

operates and shaping a more agile, capable and responsive fighting force. Growing Coast Guard end strength by up to 15,000 is a cornerstone of this transformation.

With more than 95,000 miles

of shoreline, 25,000 miles of navigable rivers and 4.5 million square miles of U.S. exclusive economic zone, the Coast Guard defends the nation, protects the marine transportation system, regulates and safeguards ports and waterways, leads the nation in maritime drug interdiction and secures the maritime border.

“The U.S. Navy commends the crew of *St. Louis* for their deployment in support of U.S. Northern Command's mission,” stated Capt. Wade Smith, commodore, Littoral Combat Ship Squadron 2. “*St. Louis* reinforced our nation's commitment to border security and interoperability with our partners and Allies.”

St. Louis brought maritime capabilities in response to Presidential executive orders and a national emergency declaration and clarification of the military's

role in protecting the territorial integrity of the United States.

A Coast Guard Law Enforcement Detachment (LEDET) was embarked aboard *St. Louis*. Coast Guard LEDETs carry out a variety of maritime interdiction missions, including counter-piracy, military combat operations, alien migration interdiction, military force protection, counter terrorism, homeland security, and humanitarian response.

USS *St. Louis* is assigned to Littoral Combat Ship Squad-

ron 2 and homeported here. The littoral combat ship is a fast, agile, mission-focused warship designed to operate in near-shore environments to counter 21st-century threats. It is a class of small surface combatants armed with capabilities to defeat challenges in the world's littorals. LCS can operate independently or in high-threat scenarios as part of a networked battle force that includes larger, multi-mission surface combatants such as cruisers and destroyers.

Armed Forces Dispatch

published by Western States Weeklies, Inc.

2604 B-280 El Camino Real, Carlsbad, CA 92008

619-280-2985 • E-mail: editor@navydispatch.com

Editor.....Scott Sutherland

The Dispatch is published online weekly on Thursdays, and in print on the 1st & 16th of each month by Western States Weeklies, Inc., as a commercial, free-enterprise newspaper. The editorial objective of the Dispatch is to promote support for a strong military presence. Contents of the Armed Forces Dispatch are not necessarily the official views of, or endorsed by, the U.S. Government, the Department of Defense, the U.S. Navy or U.S. Marine Corps. The opinions and views of writers whose materials appear herein are those of the writers and not the publishers. Appearance of advertising does not constitute endorsement by the Department of Defense or any other DOD component, this newspaper, or Western States Weeklies, Inc. Subscription cost is \$75/year.

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‘MARINES’ docuseries premieres on Marine Corps birthday

by Capt. Isaac Lamberth
THE PENTAGON – Netflix recently announced MARINES, a new four-part documentary series offering an unprecedented inside look at the Marine Corps. Produced by Lucky 8 TV and Amblin Entertainment, and distributed by Netflix, the series will premiere Nov. 10, coinciding with the 250th anniversary of the Marine Corps’ founding on Nov. 10, 1775.

Directed by Chelsea Yarnell, known for her work producing Cheer and America’s Sweethearts: Dallas Cowboys Cheerleaders, MARINES follows several members of the 31st Marine Expeditionary Unit during a deployment across

the Indo-Pacific. The series immerses viewers in the intensity, camaraderie and personal sacrifice of Marines as they undergo training and live aboard USS *America* (LHA 6) and USS *Green Bay* (LPD 20), all while navigating the high-stakes region where the United States faces strategic challenges.

Described by Netflix as a “coming-of-age” military documentary, MARINES embeds viewers with a variety of ranks and personalities. From infantry machine gunners, to fighter pilots, to leaders of the unit, the documentary provides an unfiltered look at the faces that make up the Nation’s “911 force.”

“This series offers a raw,



Screenshot image provided by Netflix

authentic and unvarnished look at the 31st MEU,” said Lt. Col. Matt Hilton, the director of the Marine Corps Entertainment & Media Liaison Office. “We partnered with world-class producers because they were committed to accuracy and integrity. Our goal is to help the public better understand the mission of our Marines and Sailors.”

Filmed primarily over the course of three months in 2024, the Marine Corps granted producers rare and unfettered access to Marines at every rank as they confronted the challenges of modern military life and the complexities of serving at the leading edge of America’s defense in the Indo-Pacific region.

The series plunges viewers into the heart of operations rarely

seen by the public. Audiences will experience the tension of high-stakes maritime interdiction missions, known as visit, board, search and seizure, and soar alongside fifth-generation F-35B Lightning II fighters as they perform delicate mid-air refueling maneuvers essential for projecting power across the vast Indo-Pacific.

“This was a tremendous and rare opportunity to embed with the Marine Corps,” said Kim Woodard and Greg Henry, co-presidents of Lucky 8. “We were granted full and unfettered access to document the intensity of deployment and training.”

EMLO facilitated production to ensure compliance with security, accuracy, policy and propriety (SAPP) standards. While the Corps facilitated access and reviewed material for factual accuracy, it had no editorial control over the final cut. What audiences will see in the show is exactly how creators intended the show to be seen.

The series also delves into the Marine Corps’ ambitious Force Design initiative, a modernization program launched in 2020 that has reshaped parts of the Corps by reorganizing units, and streamlining personnel requirements, to name a few.

Read more at marines.mil.

Army

•‘That’s a tank’: Army introduces AI-aided target recognition to Next Gen

Navy

•What it would take to build Trump’s Golden Fleet ‘battleships’

•Carrier USS *Ford* holding off of North Africa as Trump reportedly won’t strike Venezuela

•Department of the Navy honors 250 years of the Navy and Marine Corps this Veterans Day

Air Force

•Dick Cheney’s legacy with the Air Force

•Air Force’s new top enlisted leader had long career in security forces

•Three Air Force MAJCOMs get new leaders

Space Force

•Space Force astronauts? New report says guardians in space would be asset for future ops

Coast Guard

•Coast Guard sets historic record with amount of cocaine seized in FY25

Veterans

•Wounded Warrior Project provides \$2M in grants to food programs helping veterans, military members

•Drug used to treat PTSD nightmares recalled for cancer risk

•Student veterans facing SNAP delays are ‘just trying to make ends meet,’ nonprofit warns

Cyber, Space & Unmanned

•Army seeks high-energy laser systems to kill drone swarms

•In-Q-Tel invests in Vast

•Germany moves to field a miniature anti-drone missile

•BAE Systems and Turkish Aerospace form alliance on drones

•Belgium’s Liege airport temporarily halts flights after new drone sighting

Defense Industry

•GCAP fighter jet designers push to keep weapons, drone options open

•Lockheed’s Aussie arm makes pitch to sustain future Australian Virginia-class submarines



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Photo courtesy of Marine Corps Community Services

Holding down the home front

Supporting, honoring family caregivers in November

During World War II, Americans were asked to make sacrifices for the nation. Everyday items like gas, sugar, meat, and canned goods were rationed, and many families tended “Victory Gardens” to supplement their food and show their patriotism.

Today, military families continue that legacy of sacrifice and dedication, holding down the home front in their own ways.

Challenges may include missed holidays, single parenting during deployment, deferred career plans, changing schools, saying goodbye to friends, or

living far from family.

Every family is unique in how it navigates these challenges while maintaining resilience and connectedness.

This November, we celebrate the patriotism, resilience, and sacrifices of military families for Military Family Appreciation Month.

Discover support for your family

Connect with MCCS Marine and Family Support programs at <https://www.usmc-mccs.org/marine-family-support> to access resources, counseling, child-care, and community services designed to strengthen military families.



Balance your left and right brain with tools that inspire learning

(StatePoint) Whether you’re still a student or long past your school years, making learning a hobby outside the classroom can keep you sharp, particularly if you pair activities that involve logic, analysis and facts with those that involve creativity, imagination and intuition. Here are some great tools to inspire you in your educational journey and balance your left brain and right brain:

Discovering the Joy of Music: When it comes to immersing yourself in the world of music, there is no more fundamental place to start than the keyboard. The Casiotone CT-S1 is a stylish, ultra-portable keyboard suited for musicians and composers of all levels. Its incredible sound quality and 61 full-size keys with touch response make it an ideal musical partner for beginners and seasoned players alike, and its sleek, portable design, strap pins and optional battery operation make it fun to play anywhere.

If you’re a total beginner, connect your keyboard to the free Casio Music Space app, which acts as a digital musical score, music teacher and live performance simulator to help



On your lifelong learning journey, you can continually embrace both analytical and creative thinking with tools that make it easy to learn, create and grow. Photo credit: Ridofranz / iStock via Getty Images Plus

you gain skills fast.

Fostering a Love of Books: Assigned reading and independent reading alike are always easier and more enjoyable when you have a huge library at your fingertips. Thankfully, today’s e-readers are better than ever - they’re waterproof, feature color displays ideal for absorbing everything from graphic novels to illustrated textbooks, and have extensive note-taking capabilities.

Mastering Math: Designed to enhance learning and exploration, the fx-CG100 ClassWiz Color Graph is a cutting-edge handheld calculator with an intuitive, high-contrast user interface.

An optional Exam Mode makes it a smart choice for students with upcoming standardized tests. However, with its MicroPython programming capabilities and its robust catalog of mathematical functions,

including basic and statistics functions, graphing capabilities and more, it’s really a tool for anyone interested in continued STEAM learning.

Embracing Your Passions: Whether your interest is in the performing arts, creative writing, cooking, entrepreneurship or history, there’s a course that will fascinate you on Master-Class, a subscription-based service that offers hundreds of courses taught by renowned experts.

An annual subscription offers unlimited access to modules, so you can not only explore your known interests, but also tap into uncharted educational territory.

On your lifelong learning journey, you can continually embrace both analytical and creative thinking with tools that make it easy to learn, create and grow.



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Andre T.

BS, Management Information Systems
U.S. Army Veteran

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Memorial honors HMLA-369 'Gunfighters' fallen Marine

by 1st Lt. Madison Walls

3rd Marine Aircraft Wing
CAMP PENDLETON - Marine Corps Maj. Tyler R. "Jabroni" Braconi, AH-1Z Viper pilot and operations officer with Marine Light Attack Helicopter Squadron (HMLA) 369, was honored during a memorial ceremony here Nov. 7.

More than 600 Marines, family members, friends, and fellow service members from across the U.S. and allied nation militaries, including the United Kingdom and Australia, gathered to pay tribute to Braconi, who lost his life in a Viper aviation mishap on Oct. 16.

The ceremony took place in hangar 5, home of the HMLA-369 "Gunfighters."

The ceremony began with a moment of silence as Braconi's family was escorted into the hangar. Lt. Cmdr. James Lewis, the chaplain for MAG-39, welcomed attendees and offered the invocation.

Marine Corps Gunnery Sgt. (Ret.) Joel Daniel, a professional musician, played the national anthem on bagpipes near the display of the battlefield cross. Maj. Braconi's flight helmet, boots, and flight gear were displayed with his portrait at the center of the ceremony.

Friends and fellow squadron members of Braconi provided remarks, recounting anecdotes of shared experiences and highlighting the lasting impact the fallen Marine had on their lives.

"That was Tyler, equal parts wisdom, humor, tough love, and heart," said Capt. Samuel Kellogg, an AH-1Z Viper pilot with HMLA-369. "He had a way of cutting through the noise and reminding you who you are supposed to be. He made you feel seen. He made you laugh when you needed it the most."

Braconi spent four years in Australia after being selected for a competitive exchange program. There he made lasting relationships with service members from allied nations and returned with friendships that continue to stand strong today, as representatives from across the allied militaries attended.

Following the eulogies, a scripture was read by a fellow Marine and AH-1Z pilot, Capt. Keanu Menendez. Then the commanding officer of HMLA-369, Lt. Col. Christopher Hart, gave remarks.

"All these great things aren't just what 'Jabroni' was all

about," Hart said. "He was more than a Marine officer, more than a Cobra pilot, more than an operations officer. His relationships went far beyond the uniform that he wore. Nothing illustrates this more clearly than the number and diversity of individuals who came here today."

His words carried both pride and sorrow as he shared how Braconi's character extended beyond his accomplishments in the cockpit.

"It's impossible to find the words to explain and express the loss of 'Jabroni,'" Hart said. "He had incredible talent. He had an exceptional reputation as an aviator and as an instructor. Having him carry out the most demanding missions was always an easy yes for me."

The service moved toward its concluding events with the reading of the Marine's Prayer and final roll call. Sgt. Maj. Michael Grabau, sergeant major of HMLA-369, performed the final roll call, a military ritual which pays tribute to fallen members of a unit, signifying the very last time their name will be called in the Marine Corps.

Refer to <https://www.dvidshub.net/news/550831/>.

A season of cool, colorful events.

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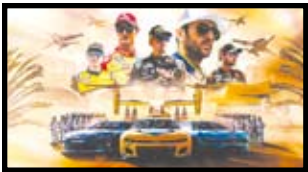
Sixteen turn, 3.4-mile circuit awaits competitors in all three NASCAR national series in 2026

by NASCAR staff report
SAN DIEGO – On Oct. 21, NASCAR declassified renderings of the street course it will use for next year’s NASCAR San Diego Weekend presented by Anduril.

Digital renderings and maps reveal a challenging 16-turn, 3.4-mile street circuit at Naval Base Coronado that mix high-speed action with breathtaking views. The street course will also provide a star-spangled backdrop to celebrate the 250th anniversary of the Navy, June 19-21, 2026.

“It’s so exciting to finally share the street course layout and provide this first look for our long-time and new fans,” said NASCAR San Diego President Amy Lupo. “Anticipation for this event is already high, and we know this course layout will raise that level of excitement even higher. We can’t wait to see how the best drivers in the world meet this challenge, while celebrating America’s Navy.”

Grandstand seating and hospitality will be available throughout the circuit, the



Screenshot image provided by NASCAR San Diego Communications Office.

longest course on NASCAR’s 2026 schedule. It features a quick right-hand turn after the Ellyson Start/Finish Line, before two quick 90-degree left handers launch competitors on a high-octane journey around the San Diego Bay and one of the world’s foremost military installations, Naval Base Coronado.

Course highlights include:

*The Ellyson Start/Finish Line: Named in honor of Commander Theodore Ellyson, Naval Aviator Number One. His training at North Island laid the foundation for its commissioning as a naval air station in 1917 and eventual recognition as the “Birthplace of Naval Aviation.”

* Turn 5, Carrier Corner: This sharp left-hand turn is located between the docking location of two aircraft carriers.

* Turn 8, Coronado Chi-

cane: This begins a series of turns that will provide drivers with a steep challenge as they speed toward the interior of the base.

* Turn 14, Runway Road: Aptly named, given it is located near the north end of Runway 18/36 at Halsey Field.

NASCAR San Diego Weekend presented by Anduril begins with Navy Community Day on Friday, June 19, 2026, with plans to honor the military forthcoming.

Friday access will be open exclusively to members of the Navy at Naval Base Coronado and a limited amount of Coronado residents and then culminate with the NASCAR CRAFTSMAN Truck Series race.

Ticket holders from the general public will be welcome aboard June 20-21, 2026. The NASCAR O’Reilly Auto Parts Series will take center stage on Saturday, June 20, and the stars of the NASCAR Cup Series will compete in the Anduril 250 Race the Base on Sunday, June 21.

Race fans have already begun placing deposits for pre-sale tickets at NASCARSanDiego.com. Tickets went on sale to the public on Nov. 7.



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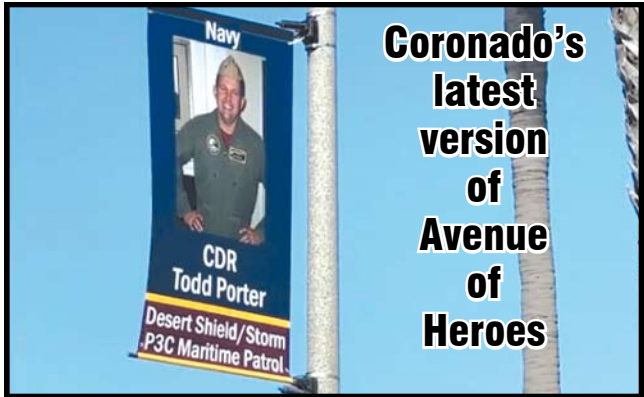
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Coronado's latest version of Avenue of Heroes

The City of Coronado and the Avenue of Heroes Committee held a special ceremony November 1 honoring the 21st group of "hometown heroes" at the Coronado High School Performing Arts Center.

This newest iteration will commemorate 14 veterans and active-duty service members as part of Group XXI of the Avenue of Heroes program. Each honoree currently lives in, has lived in, or has served in Coronado.

Their names and service details will be featured on commemorative banners along Third and Fourth Streets, from Orange Avenue to Naval Air Station North Island, where they will remain on display from November 2025 through May 2026.

The Avenue of Heroes is a military service recognition pro-

Video grab from project-coronado.org.

gram sponsored by the city and the Avenue of Heroes Committee. It was created to honor the many men and women who have lived in Coronado during their military service. The program was established in 2014 through a partnership between the City, VFW Post 2422, the Third and Fourth Streets Neighborhood Association, and the Coronado Historical Association.

November 2025 Group XXI honorees: Stanley Antrim, Thomas Ashworth Jr., Paul B. Austin, Louis E. Burke Jr., Fred Eckert, Thomas R. Edison, Michael William Emerson, William "Bill" Hiscock, William "Bill" McClure, Paul Anthony Pensabene, Edward S. Pietrzak Jr., Fred E. Rose, Donald F. Steuer, and John "Jack" Kendall Winston

George Washington CSG departs Busan

Courtesy Story
Carrier Strike Group 5
Aircraft carrier *George Washington* and its strike group departed Busan, Republic of Korea, after a port visit Nov. 9.

Rear Adm. Sharif H. Calfee, commander, Naval Forces Korea, met with CSG 5 leadership and welcomed the crew of *George Washington* to Busan.

"USS *George Washington* Strike Group port visit to Busan underscores the unwavering commitment of the United States to the Republic of Korea and to maintaining security and stability in the Indo-Pacific region," said Calfee. "This port visit provided invaluable opportunities to strengthen interoperability with our ROK Navy allies, further enhancing our collective ability to respond to any challenge, as well as serving as a powerful demonstration of naval strength that sends a clear message of deterrence while reaffirming our enduring alliance."

The U.S. and ROK alliance have promoted peace and security in Northeast Asia and the Korean Peninsula for more than 70 years. *George Washington* last visited ROK in 2014. This

port visit marked its return to reinforce the Navy's commitment to a shared vision for a free and open Indo-Pacific. While in port, *George Washington* hosted visits from U.S. and ROK military leadership.

"Our first year back as the Navy's premiere forward-deployed aircraft carrier would not be complete without a visit to Busan and engagements with our friends and long-standing allies in the Republic of Korea," said Capt. Tim Waits, *George Washington's* commander "I'm incredibly grateful for the hospitality provided to us in Busan as well as the opportunities we had to work with and train alongside ROK Navy."

George Washington was most recently in San Diego in July 2024 to facilitate a crew and air wing swap with USS *Ronald Reagan*.

The swap was to prepare *George Washington* for its return as the forward-deployed carrier in Japan, with *Ronald Reagan* moving to the West Coast. *George Washington* then departed San Diego in October 2024 to head to Yokosuka, Japan.



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20th Anniversary Japanese Classic Car Show

In October, the 20th Anniversary Japanese Classic Car Show, under sunny Southern California skies, brought together a broad cross-section of Japanese cars, trucks, motorcyles and more. The location was Marina Green Park in Long Beach.

Whereas these days many are considered classics, 65 years ago Japanese cars were unknown in North America. Toyotas and Datsuns first arrived in North America in the late 1950s. Domestic and European cars were already well established, so the Japanese faced an uphill battle to gain market share. It did not help that Japanese products exported here had a reputation for being cheap commodity goods, so it was unknown whether or not consumers would be willing to purchase Japanese cars.

The first Japanese cars that were sold here were not particularly well-suited to the North American market. Domestic automobiles were rather large and comfortable, with plenty of luggage space and often with over-the-top, trendy styling. Engines were large and gas was cheap — great for the seemingly endless highways. They were designed to meet the wants and needs of North American consumers.

In comparison, the first Japanese cars were small, underpowered and with styling that did not particularly appeal to North American consumers. The first car that Toyota first sold in the U.S> was the Toyopet Crown sedan in 1958. Sales totaled 288 vehicles.

Datsun’s first car sold in the U.S. was the Datsun 1200 sedan in 1958. That did not sell particularly well either. Only when the Japanese auto manufacturers adjusted their automotive designs to more readily reflect the tastes and needs of the

North American market, did their sales and desirability begin to take off — and boy, did they! The first popular Datsun was the 510. Two and four-door versions featured fully independent suspension. A roomy station wagon version (with rear leaf springs) was also offered.

To further stimulate sales, Datsun (now Nissan) and Toyota designed image cars. The Toyota 2000GT was legendary. It was even featured in a James Bond movie.

At first, Datsun took a somewhat more modest approach with their 1600 and 2000 roadsters. Think of **AutoMatters™ & More** by Jan Wagner



them as much more reliable competitors to the MGs and Triumphs from across the pond.

Next, in 1969, came the Datsun 240Z. This sports car that had it all: gorgeous two-door sports car styling with a long hood and sloping roof, reliability, the high-performance of a powerful six-cylinder overhead cam engine and fully independent suspension with front disc brakes, fuel economy, reliability, the comfort of reclining seatbacks, amenities that included a high-tech Hitachi signal-seeking radio, and the practicality of a hatchback — all for a very affordable price. The 240Z was so popular that the dealers could not keep them in stock and had long waiting lists for them.

The Japanese Classic Car show had an abundance of Datsun’s Z-cars. Among those, was a 1973 SCORE International BRE Baja 240Z. In celebration of 60 years of BRE (Brock Racing Enterprises), Pete Brock — the legendary founder of BRE — was there and signing autographs, along with racer John Morton and members of the original BRE racing team. Also on display was an unrestored 1969 SCORE International BRE Baja 510, owned by Gayle and Peter Brock.

Japanese automakers were there, including Toyota, Honda, Nissan and Mazda. Vendors sold a wide range of memorabilia, wheels, car parts, clothing and more. Food vendors even sold Japanese food! The Petersen Automotive Museum was represented, too, as was Yokohama Tire and Mothers High Performance Car Care (polishes, waxes and cleaners).

Scheduled special events were the Corolla “AE86 Unveil” at the Teddy’s Project booth, a meet & greet with John Lamber from the Lamley Group at the Tarmac & Diceast Talk booth, “Shutter of Speed Photo Book” by Larry Chen and “Cult of GT-R” by Ryan ZumMallen at the Carrara Media booth, and meet & greet novelist Sam Mitani at the JNC booth.

For more information, visit <https://japaneseclassiccarshow.com/20th-anniversary-japanese-classic-car-show-2/>.

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 © 2025 by Jan Wagner – AutoMatters & More #906

The Meat & Potatoes of Life



by Lisa Smith Molinari

Living overseas as a military family provided us with unique opportunities to learn about various cultures first hand. Sampling local cuisine was a necessary part of the experience, of course. But many Americans won’t take risks with food, and miss out on this this particular aspect of their overseas adventure.

The pervasiveness of McDonald’s provides a safe-haven for those whose taste buds are timid, and some only leave their flavor comfort zone for safe regional dishes like pizza margherita, crepes with Nutella, and schnitzel with pommes frites.

While our family certainly ducked into European McDonalds’ restaurants to hit the bathroom on occasion, my husband and I encouraged (well, forced) our family to taste the foods of Europe. This philosophy was not been without its drawbacks; however, and before long, we accumulated a host of interesting (well, nauseating) tales to tell from our experiences.

At a modern cafe just outside of Stuttgart, Germany, my meat-loving husband ordered the “wurst salat” envisioning a chef salad with savory sausages over fresh mixed greens. What he received was devoid of plant-based food, unless you count the thick rings of sliced raw onions, which were tossed with cold julienned meat similar to baloney.

During a spring break trip in Spain’s Costa Brava, I ordered fish at a restaurant overlooking the azure Mediterranean Sea. As the waiter set the dish before me, I could almost hear Billy the Big

The plusses and pitfalls of regional cuisine

Mouth Bass singing “Take Me to the River” as it stared at me from the plate.

On a fall excursion to Berchtesgaden, our friend visiting from the States ordered the “Leberknodelsuppe” simply because it was fun to say. We all giggled and repeated the tongue-twisting word until a bowl of the stuff was presented to the table. A lumpy gray dumpling sat in a hot broth bath, and although the color looked a bit sickly like the hide of a dead shark, we kept an open mind. Cutting into the doughy ball, its pungent metallic aroma clued us in on what should have been obvious from the start – “leber” is liver, and this little dumpling was full of that particularly unpopular organ meat.

No matter how touristy, one cannot escape getting caught up in the festive atmosphere at the Hofbrauhaus in Munich. Part of the experience is ordering the giant liter of beer and a heaping



Image of a German wurst salat.

helping of hearty Bavarian food. Swinging my stein to and fro, I thought nothing of ordering “Schweinshaxe,” a Bavarian specialty. With no idea that I’d be served a huge roasted pig’s knuckle, I soon learned that it would take significant effort to extract the morsels of pork that were tangled among cartilage, skin and bone.

On a day trip to Strasbourg,

France, our family stopped at an outdoor restaurant on a lovely cobblestone square. Interested in the mix of German and French cultures, I ordered “Sûrkrût Royale,” an Alsatian sauerkraut dish.

Twenty minutes later, I was presented with a steaming heap of sauerkraut, with at least seven different varieties of pork cuts, as well as potatoes, onions and dumplings nested among its pickled strands. Wursts and slices of loin were among the few meats I could recognize, but the rest of the pieces were unidentifiable chunks intertwined with plentiful amounts of fat and sinew.

Despite my initial squeamishness over the gelatinous fat, the scent of bacon and white wine gave me the courage to give it a try, and I found it to be quite a delectable treat as long as I kept my eyes closed.

The list of our family stories goes on, and includes tales of local foods we discovered while stationed in Florida (boiled peanuts, sweet tea, alligator) and Rhode Island (stuffies, coffee cabinets, johnnycakes). Despite the queasiness that springs forth when we recall these tales, we will always try indigenous cuisines.

Why? Because we discovered Belgian-style mussels in creamy beer broth, spicy Croatian cevapi, hearty Portuguese sopas, and many more culinary treats. Every delicious regional dish we stumbled upon made it worth every fish head, slab of fat and organ meat that made its way to our table.

So, Buen Provecho, Smaczno, and Bon Appetit! But don’t forget to pack the Alka Seltzer, just in case.

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CROSSWORD PUZZLE

- Across
- 1 Ones who usually know what to do with their hands
 - 11 She taught Butch and Sundance Spanish for their Bolivian robberies
 - 15 Turn yellow
 - 16 Level
 - 17 Italian menu word meaning "hunter"
 - 18 Rig
 - 19 Spot about being green, for short
 - 20 Earthquakes or Fire, briefly
 - 22 Kind of engine
 - 23 Lhasa ____
 - 24 Snack chip
 - 26 Row houses?
 - 29 Agamemnon pair
 - 32 In again
 - 33 Only
 - 34 Social science classic
 - 36 DEA employee
 - 37 Research Triangle city
 - 38 Green of "Casino Royale"
 - 39 French archipelago
 - 41 Cello's lack
 - 42 City with a Cleveland Browns training facility
 - 43 Network operated by the U.S. Space Force
 - 44 Hosiery thread
 - 45 Theater company?
 - 47 Vet school subj.
 - 49 DIRECTV parent
 - 50 Hotel convenience
 - 53 Get rid of
 - 56 "Kills bugs dead" brand
 - 58 It doesn't affect a starting pitcher's win-loss record
 - 60 Permanently mark
 - 61 Hard to follow, face-tiously
 - 62 True
 - 63 Trials with blindfolds, perhaps
- Down
- 1 Soyuz initials
 - 2 Revelations
 - 3 Like una heredera
 - 4 XXV x XXVIII
 - 5 Cuts corners
 - 6 Recovers
 - 7 Snack with an unappetizing name
 - 8 Square ____
 - 9 Unmitigated
 - 10 Place
 - 11 Start at the beginning?
 - 12 Nerves
 - 13 Cause of many fictional paradoxes
 - 14 "Did it start already?"
 - 21 Transmute
 - 23 Put away the dishes?
 - 25 Portuguese royal
 - 26 Olympics opening ceremony VIP
 - 27 Threat to world peace
 - 28 Ross Sea locale
 - 30 Exhaust
 - 31 Flutters with excitement
 - 34 Indian lentil stew
 - 35 Spend time in a cellar, perhaps
 - 37 Provide new pieces for?
 - 40 ____juvante: with God's help
 - 41 Honda subcompact
 - 44 Roundup tool
 - 46 Bit of color
 - 48 Mother-of-pearl
 - 51 Pelican St. city
 - 52 Shakespearean warning word
 - 53 Designs
 - 54 Cancel
 - 55 The odds are with them
 - 57 UPS alternative
 - 59 Seattle-to-Reno dir.

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TRICARE Open Season is underway it's time to review your plan

Compare plans and keep or change your current coverage. If you're eligible, you may enroll in dental and vision coverage during Federal Benefits Open Season. Changes take effect Jan. 1, 2026. If you're satisfied with your current plan, you don't need to do anything. Your coverage will continue automatically for 2026.

TRICARE OPEN SEASON runs Nov. 10–Dec. 9, 2025

Federal Benefits Open Season: Nov. 10–Dec. 8, 2025

TRICARE Open Season applies to you if you have or are eligible for:

- TRICARE Prime options (including the US Family Health Plan and the TRICARE Prime Demo)
- TRICARE Select

TRICARE Open Season doesn't apply to you if you're:

- An active duty service member
- A TRICARE For Life beneficiary
- Enrolled in TRICARE Reserve Select, TRICARE Retired Reserve, or TRICARE Young Adult

If you're eligible for TRICARE Open Season, you can:

- Stay in your plan. If you want to stay in your current TRICARE health plan, you don't have to reenroll. You'll continue in your current health plan as long as you're eligible
- Enroll in a plan. If you're eligible for a TRICARE Prime option or TRICARE Select but not enrolled, you can enroll in a plan.
- Change plans. If you're already enrolled in a TRICARE Prime option or TRICARE Select, you can switch plans. You can also switch between individual and family enrollment.

Your plan options depend on who you are and where you live. If you have multiple options, think about how you prefer to get care and how this affects your out-of-pocket costs.

Here's how to learn more about your options and decide which plan is right for you.

- Check the TRICARE Plan Finder to see which plans you may be eligible for. <https://tricare.mil/planfinder>
- Use the Compare Plans Tool to compare plans side by side. <https://tricare.mil/Plans/ComparePlans>
- Go to Copayments & Cost-shares to learn more about each plan's out-of-pocket costs. <https://tricare.mil/comparecosts>
- Use the Find a Doctor Tool to find military hospitals and clinics and TRICARE network providers near you. <https://tricare.mil/finddoctor>

Discovering VEXAS: Insights into a new disease

newsinhealth.nih.gov

Scientists recently discovered a new disease, called VEXAS, which can appear suddenly in midlife. It's characterized by repeated attacks of inflammation, often without a clear cause. The inflammation, researchers found, is caused by the body's disease defense system, or immune system, attacking its own cells. Studies are now uncovering what leads to the onset of this newly discovered disease.

People with VEXAS can have different symptoms. Some get fevers, rashes, or fatigue. Others may have inflammation of different organs. VEXAS often affects the blood and bone marrow. It can also affect the lungs and cause coughing and shortness of breath. (See the Wise Choices box for more symptoms.)

Scientists recently discovered that VEXAS is caused by mutations, or changes, to a gene called UBA1 in blood cells. This gene is located on the X chromosome. Women have two X chromosomes, whereas men only have one. That means women have two copies of the gene, but men only have one. In men, mutations to their only copy of the gene can be enough to get the disease. But in women, mutations would have to occur in both copies. So VEXAS typically affects men.



The UBA1 gene has instructions for the body to make a protein called the ubiquitin-activating enzyme 1, or E1 enzyme. This enzyme identifies and marks damaged or unneeded proteins so they can be removed from the body. Mutations to the UBA1 gene can make the E1 enzyme stop working properly. This leads to the buildup of damaged or unneeded proteins inside cells. The buildup of defective proteins appears to activate the body's disease defense system, leading to inflammation.

The genetic mutations that cause VEXAS aren't inherited from your parents. Instead, they're acquired during your life. Genes can become mutated when your DNA is being copied to make new cells. Exposure to certain types of radiation or chem-

icals can also cause mutations.

"Part of normal aging is that all our cells develop mutations," explains Dr. David Beck, a geneticist at New York University who was on the team that first discovered VEXAS. "It's just normal wear and tear on our cells as we get older."

Most mutations don't have any health consequences. But a mutation in the UBA1 gene does. Beck and his team estimated that about 1 in 13,600 people have mutations that can cause VEXAS. Among people older than 50, the prevalence is 1 in 8,000. For men over 50, it's almost 1 in 4,000. Because the symptoms are so variable, the best way to know if you have VEXAS is through genetic testing for muta-

tions in UBA1.

Since VEXAS was only recently identified, researchers are still figuring out the best ways to treat it. Steroids or other drugs that stop the body's immune system response can calm inflammation. Drugs that treat certain blood cancers are being tested for treating the effects of VEXAS on blood and bone marrow.

NIH is currently recruiting participants for a clinical trial to see if bone marrow transplants can treat VEXAS syndrome. Find more about this trial.

"We're still learning about this disease," Beck says. "It's only been recognized for the last few years. So a lot more work needs to be done."

Symptoms of VEXAS

- Recurring skin rashes, which may be painful.
- Pain, swelling, and redness of the ears and nose.
- Lung inflammation, including cough and shortness of breath.
- Inflammation of blood vessels and blood clots.
- Fevers.
- Extreme fatigue.
- Low red blood cell count or low hemoglobin (anemia).
- Low platelet levels. Platelets are tiny pieces of cells that clump together to form blood clots.
- Low white blood cell counts.
- Abnormal findings on bone marrow biopsy.

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