

ARMED FORCES DISPATCH



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SIXTY-THIRD YEAR NO. 15
 SEPTEMBER 16-30, 2023

MCAS Miramar
Air Show

September 22-24

GENERAL ADMISSION IS FREE

THE UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS PRESENTS

AMERICA'S AIR SHOW

10 things to know about the Miramar Air show

The MCAS Miramar Air Show, America's Air Show is an exciting 3-day event that draws aviation enthusiasts from around the world. Held annually at the Marine Corps Air Station Miramar in San Diego, California, you'll see stunning aerial displays, thrilling performances, and make memories witnessing the capabilities of military and civilian aircraft. If you're planning to attend America's Air Show, here are 10 essential things you should know.

Event Dates and Times:

September 22-24

This is a 3-day features an exhilarating lineup of performers. Opening ceremonies start at 8:00am. You can visit the social media channels for important information about performers and what to expect! Plan your visit accordingly to ensure you don't miss any of the action.

General admission is FREE. However, if you're looking to enhance your view and elevate your Miramar Air Show experience, tickets will be available for sale now! We advise buying your tickets in advance to avoid long

queues and potential sold-out situations.

General Admission Parking and Transportation:

The air show is open and FREE to the public. We expect large crowds each day of the event, so it's important to plan your transportation in advance. While there is plenty of parking on the installation, we recommend arriving early for a closer parking spot and wearing comfortable shoes as you may have to walk a considerable distance from the parking lot to the security gate. Consider carpooling

to reach the venue conveniently. For more information about parking, visit our website as we will have more information closer to the event.

Seating Options are Available:

The air show provides various seating options including free blanket seating on both sides of the flight line, which is available with general admission (free with no registration necessary). We also offer enhanced viewing experiences where you can purchase tickets
See AIRSHOW page 2

Austin says Medal of Honor recipient's valor was extraordinary

by David Vergun

The valor that former Army 1st Lt. Larry L. Taylor displayed on the night of June 18, 1968, near the hamlet of Ap Go Cong, South Vietnam, was extraordinary, said Secretary of Defense Lloyd J. Austin III.

"He would never leave a man behind, now or ever," Austin said of Taylor at Sept. 6's Hall of Heroes induction ceremony at Joint Base Myer-Henderson Hall, Arlington, Va.

On Sept. 5, President Joe Biden presented Taylor with the Medal of Honor.

The secretary spoke of how Taylor, an AH1-G Cobra attack helicopter pilot, rescued four U.S. reconnaissance soldiers surrounded by at least 80 enemy forces who were rapidly closing in on them.

Taylor realized that the soldiers were in grave danger so he flew dangerously low over the treetops to find them in the darkness, Austin said.

Over the next 45 minutes, Taylor, co-pilot Army Chief Warrant Officer 2 James Ratliff, and the four U.S. soldiers on the ground fought with everything they had as the enemy poured rocket-propelled grenades and small-arms fire at them, he said.

Taylor drew enemy fire toward his helicopter to spare the men on the ground, he said, adding that the helicopter was also running low on fuel.

With no evacuation helicopter on the way, Taylor knew that leaving them behind would have meant certain death, Austin said.

"The Cobra was only designed to carry a pilot, a co-pilot
 see MOH, page 3



President Joseph R. Biden, Jr., presents the Medal of Honor to former Army Capt. Larry L. Taylor during a ceremony at the White House Sept. 5. U.S. Army photo by Henry Villarama

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Pacific Air Show roars into Huntington Beach Sept. 29-Oct. 1

Now in its seventh year, attracting 3 million live spectators, the three-day spectacle in the sky will feature over five hours of programming each day, showcasing a wide selection of aircrafts pushing the boundaries of speeds and skills. The U.S. Air Force Thunderbirds, F-22 Raptor Demonstration Team and Canadian Forces Snowbirds will be headlining alongside F-15 combat pilot Tom "Lark" Larkin and the 122d Fighter Squadron F-15s from the Louisiana Air National Guard. Additionally, the Red Bull Air Race World Champion Matt Hall will be joined by Australian aerobatic pilot Emma McDonald for her United States debut, flying their MX and Extra 300 aircrafts. The U.S. Army Golden Knights and U.S. Navy Parachute Teams will help kick-off the show followed by appearances by the Opener Blackfly and Red Bull Bo-105 Helicopter, flown by Aaron Fitzgerald. For tickets & info visit <https://pacificairshowusa.com>



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About Your Health
 Read about emerging research, new treatments, diet, exercise, and trending topics in your health and wellness.
See page 11

How veteran couple now at Chula Vista home sent 'Star Trek' back to the future for its vital 3rd season

by Jeff Jardine
MyCalVet

In the spring of 1967, the most futuristic television show of its time appeared headed into a black hole of oblivion.

Driving up Highway 99 through the Central Valley, in a Volkswagen Bug with two kids in the back seat and no air conditioning, John and Bjo Trimble vowed to go where no fans had gone before: they would mount a campaign to save the original "Star Trek" series from cancellation, or at least buy it a vital third season.

The Trimbles, now residents of the Veterans Home of California-Chula Vista, started a "Save Star Trek" letter-writing campaign aimed at prodding NBC executives into renewing the show for 1968-69. Had the Trimbles failed, "Star Trek" would have lacked the three seasons needed to send it into reruns and syndication, where it developed its real fan base. The franchise it begat included—"The Next Generation" (1987-1994), "Deep Space Nine" (1993-1999), "Voyager" (1995-2001), "Enterprise" (2001-2005), "Streaming Discovery" (2017-present), "Picard" (2020-2023), and "Strange New Worlds" (2022-present)—likely never would have materialized. Nor



Bjo Trimble (left) on the set of "Star Trek: The Motion Picture" with actor William Shatner (center) and writer David Gerrold.

would the shows have become fun fodder for "Saturday Night Live" skits.

How did the Trimbles become so deeply entrenched in a show that lasted only three seasons but developed a cult following that remains alive and thriving to this day?

"It really started with a friend who couldn't go to a convention to handle a futuristic fashion show in Cleveland," said Bjo Trimble, a longtime science fiction fan who stepped in to help with the 1966 event. Bjo—short for Betty Jo—celebrated her 90th birthday on August 15. "I was handed a bunch of notes. I had an hour to show 20 costumes."

She was told the show had
see Star Trek, page 5



2023 Miramar Air Show Schedule

The performer lineup and times will be the same for each day of the event. Please note that schedules are subject to change.

8am	Gates Open to the Public
9am	Precision Exotics Runway Races & Kent Pietsch Comedy
10am	USAF U-2 Dragonlady
10:15am	Opening Ceremonies / SOCOM Paracommandos
11am	USMC MV-22 Demo / Vicky Benzing 450 Stearman
11:30am	Hotstreak Jet Streak / Vicky Benzing Race / USMC F-35B Demo / Kent Pietsch Deadstick
12pm	Warbirds over Miramar
12:30pm	Redbull Air Force
1pm	PACAF C-17 Demo / USAF F-16 Viper Demo W/P-51 Heritage Flight
2pm	Kent Pietsch Trucktop
2:15pm	Marine Air Ground Task Force (MAGTF)
3pm	Mike Goulian / Hotstreak Jet Truck and Mike Goulian Race
3:20pm	US Navy Blue Angels with Fat Albert
4:30pm	End of Flying
5pm	Gates Close

AIRSHOW

Continued from page 1

that include amenities such as private toilets, shaded seating areas, and food and beverage packages. Tickets for these enhanced experiences go on sale July 14. For more information about the upgraded options available for purchase, visit our tickets page.

Aerial and Ground Performances:

Prepare to be amazed by the incredible aerial displays at the Miramar Air Show. The event features breathtaking aerobatic maneuvers, formation flying, high-speed passes, and demonstrations by both military and civilian aircraft. From fighter jets to helicopters, you'll witness a wide range of captivating performances. The Marine Air Ground Task Force demonstration is sure to be a highlight of your experience!

Static Displays:

In addition to the aerial performances, the air show offers static displays of aircraft on the ground. This gives visitors an opportunity to get up close and personal with military planes, helicopters, and other fascinating aircraft. Take your time to explore these static displays and learn more about their capabilities.

Food and Refreshments:

Throughout the air show, you'll find a variety of food and beverage options available for purchase. From local vendors to food trucks, there's something to satisfy every palate. Remember to stay hydrated during the event, as San Diego is very warm during September.

Family-Friendly Activities:

The MCAS Miramar Air Show is a family-friendly event with activities for visitors of all ages. Alongside the thrilling aerial displays, you can expect interactive exhibits, kid-friendly attractions, and a heavy STEM component inside our Innovation and Tech Expo. It's a great opportunity for children and adults alike to learn about aviation and the military.

Safety Guidelines:

As with any large-scale event, the air show has certain safety guidelines in place, including the clear bag policy. Please note that all attendees will be screened at security prior to entering the gates. Follow the instructions of event staff and adhere to any signage or announcements. Pay attention to designated areas, avoid prohibited zones, and be aware of your surroundings at all times. For prohibited items and to learn what is permitted at the event, visit our post on the items you can bring.

Plan Accordingly:

San Diego's weather can be unpredictable, so it's wise to prepare for various conditions. Bring sunscreen, hats, sunglasses, and comfortable clothing, especially if you're planning to spend the entire day at the air show. You may want to bring hearing protection if you are sensitive to noise. The Miramar Air Show is rain or shine.

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Matching China means letting U.S. industry iterate, develop technologies

by C. Todd Lopez
DOD News

The best way for the U.S. to meet the pacing challenge posed by China is to let U.S. industry do what it does best: develop new technologies. The government's role there, said the deputy under secretary of defense for acquisition and sustainment, is to create the best conditions possible to allow those technologies to scale.

"To counter China's whole-of-nation approach, what we need to do is what only the American system can do, which is let industry iterate and develop while we in the government create the conditions to rapidly scale those key technologies — that's the secret sauce," said Radha Iyengar Plumb during a discussion Sept. 6 with Center for Strategic and International Studies in Washington, D.C.

Plumb laid out three things the Defense Department is doing to advance its ability to deliver capabilities more quickly to warfighters and at scale. First, Plumb said, the department must do more to make use of the acquisition tools and authorities it already has.

"The Adaptive Acquisition Framework, which folks might be familiar with, was a good step," she said. "And building on that at the individual program level, we're employing everything from [middle tier of acquisition] and other transaction authorities to the software acquisition pathway to create a range of hybrid strategies that enable scale."

One approach the department is taking is with the Competitive Advantage Pathfinders initiative, or CAP, within acquisition and sustainment.

The Competitive Advantage Pathfinders initiative demonstrates common challenges and solutions to barriers in capability fielding. By bringing together cross-department teams, each CAP identifies any disconnects among the three legs of delivering warfighter advantage: requirements, resourcing and program management.

"We identify high-tech-ready capabilities that meet a warfighter[s] need, and then, we see where the sticking points are when we try to just rapidly push it to scale," Plumb said. "We develop a solution for that



Deputy Under Secretary of Defense for Acquisition and Sustainment, Dr. Radha Iyengar Plumb, poses for her official portrait in the Army portrait studio May 5, 2023. Photo by Department of Defense

problem and keep going and solve the next issue and the next issue and the next issue."

With CAP, Plumb said, the department can not only accelerate a specific technology, but it can also identify where improvements are needed to speed scale, more generally.

Second, she said the department is working to figure out where it can reduce barriers to integration.

"Inside of [acquisition and sustainment], we set up this acquisition integration interoperability team, and their job is to align service-specific systems acquisition to meet joint requirements," Plumb said.

The office runs an "integrated acquisition portfolio review," she said, which takes a capability and a mission thread and looks at underlying service-specific programs, identifies gaps, seams and areas where investment for integration is needed, and focuses on identifying resources for that integration with a focus on year-of-execution funding.

"The idea here is to establish faster, better processes to connect prototype contracts to production contracts to scale integration to ensure that our joint requirements are met," she said.

Finally, Plumb said, there must be an increased focus on the acquisition workforce.

"None of this happens without the right people in the right places," she said. "We're looking at expanding recruitment through programs like our Defense Civil-

ian Training Course, on building more modular innovation-focused training — that's work going on at DAU — and how

we can create the right kind of incentives to do that innovative work, encouraging the right kind of risk-taking."

MOH

continued from page 1

and ammunition," Austin said. "Evacuating soldiers with this kind of helicopter was absolutely unheard of. And most would never think to even try it. But after making it through an intense firefight and miraculously meeting up with the patrol team on the ground, Lt. Taylor was willing to improvise," Austin said.

Once they were back on the ground, the four soldiers gave Taylor a salute and a grateful thumbs up, Austin said.

Over the years, Taylor has met with and corresponded with the men whose lives he saved, as well as with their families, Austin said.

Army Secretary Christine E. Wormuth also spoke about Taylor's time in the Army and his life in later years.

As a helicopter pilot, Taylor flew over 2,000 combat missions, came under enemy fire

340 times, and was forced down on five occasions, she said.

"Even after he left the service, he would continue to put others before himself," she said, noting that he taught at the Tennessee's School for the Deaf, was active in supporting his local Vietnam Veterans of America chapter, and made donations to the Boy Scouts and the Habitat for Humanity," she said.

Wormuth said Taylor's legacy continues to reverberate within the United States Army and motivate Americans from all walks of life. "Your dedication to service shown in the single act that we honor today has inspired many," she said.

"You have reminded us that when facing any problem, there is always a solution. And you should never give up. You have even said that if transported back in time and given the chance you would go back to Vietnam tomorrow and save those men all over again," she said.



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No tall tales here: 4-foot-7 recruit makes it into Marines, likely sets record

by John Vandiver
Stars and Stripe

At a height of 4 feet, 7 inches, Pfc. Nathaniel Laprade could be the shortest Marine in the Corps' nearly 250-year history.

But after making it through the Corps' grueling boot camp at Parris Island, S.C., on Sept. 1, he is standing tall. Laprade said his stature helped galvanize fellow recruits during 13 weeks of basic training.

"I think they kind of looked up to me in a way," Laprade said in a statement Sept. 5. "I had one recruit, now a Marine, who told me that I was his motivation."

While there aren't any official records on who was the shortest man to ever serve in the military, Laprade is likely in the running.

Richard James Flaherty, a Green Beret who served in Vietnam, had been regarded as the shortest man in U.S. armed forces history, though proving

that is probably impossible. At 4 feet 9 inches tall, Flaherty was known as the "the Giant Killer" for his exploits.

Laprade was regaled with stories of Flaherty by recruiters while he was still in high school. Joining the Marines would be a way to one-up him, Laprade said.

"The main part that inspired me was that he was Army and 4 foot, 9 inches," he said. "If I go Marines when I'm 4 foot, 7 inches, I will beat him in two ways."

During boot camp, Laprade faced obstacles that literally towered over him as he worked through the array of physical challenges, but he overcame them with little to no trouble, according to the Corps.

"It showed me that mounting the obstacles wasn't really a challenge because of my height. It just meant I needed to push myself to jump a little higher,"



Marine Pfc. Nathaniel Laprade speaks to commanding officer Lt. Col. Christopher Kearny at Marine Corps Recruit Depot Parris Island, S.C., on Aug. 25, 2023. At 4-foot-7, Laprade could be the shortest member of the Marine Corps in its history. U.S. Marine Corps photo by William Horsley

Laprade said, adding that he had come into the Parris Island training with a fear of failure.

Leading his formation on long ruck marches proved to be the most challenging test for him,

Laprade said.

"Little legs with a little body weight, a lot of weight in the pack and a lot of miles in the hikes," he said. "That was the hardest part for me, the hikes."

USS *Shiloh* departs Yokosuka, Japan after 17 years of forward-deployed service

by MC2 Askia Collins

YOKOSUKA, Japan - Cruiser USS *Shiloh* (CG 67) departed Yokosuka, Japan, on Sept. 5 to transit to its new homeport of Pearl Harbor, Hawaii, as part of a planned rotation of forces in the Pacific.

Shiloh arrived on station at Yokosuka Naval Base in August 2006 to fulfill the obligations of the U.S.-Japanese ballistic missile defense program and to support operations within the U.S. 7th Fleet area of operations.

"For nearly two decades, USS *Shiloh* provided our Forward-Deployed Naval Forces the agility and firepower to support our carrier operations, protect sea lanes, deter aggression, and reassure allies and partners across the Indo-Pacific," said Capt. Adam Cheatham, commanding officer of *Shiloh*. "We've built long-lasting personal and professional relationships here in Japan that will stay with us forever. *Shiloh*'s contributions were significant, reinforcing valuable connections over shared visions of a free and open Indo-Pacific.

"It's sad to be leaving this place that means so much to us, but we believe USS *Shiloh* made a difference during her time forward-deployed to Yokosuka, and we are proud of that," he continued. "On behalf of the crew, I want to offer my deep gratitude to the people of Japan and this community for their friendship over the years. It will never be forgotten."

In addition to serving in the 7th Fleet AOO, *Shiloh* deployed to the 5th Fleet AOO in support of operations Allies Refuge and Freedom Sentinel in 2021.

Top 5

- Military pay could be a casualty of looming government shutdown
- Navy gets new (acting) Air Boss
- Marines draw inspiration from drug runners for unmanned resupply boat
- Army approves next phase for augmented reality device
- British forces to get new rifles designed in the U.S.



Army

- Army recruiters at two-thirds of contract goals as fiscal year closes
- Virginia lawsuit over Army officer's traffic stop will be settled
- Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson Soldier dies after fall during hike in Chugach State Park

Navy

- Fentanyl-linked deaths rock Naval Station Great Lakes
- U.S. Navy cruiser leaves Japan on regular rotation after nearly two decades
- By court order, Department of Navy begins process to reconsider 3,770 medical discharges for retirement upgrades
- They won't tell me: Manalapan mom gets no details on punishment for Navy SEALs death

Marine Corps

- The new Marine infantry battalion is slimmer, saltier and more techy
- A Marine tragedy and a 200-year-old time capsule
- Marine tactical vehicle burns after apparent artillery misfire
- Marines to test out first stern landing vessel at Project Convergence
- Marine Corps leader eyes drone swarm launched from above, beneath waves

Air Force

- Air Force test-launches unarmed nuclear missile with 3 warheads
- U.S.A.F., DoD working on new target drones to simulate 5th-Gen threats
- F-15E maintainers ready to 'show why we are the best' at William Tell fighter meet

Space Force

- U.S. Space Force eyes partnerships for tactical satellite communications
- After criticism from its top commander, Space Force adopts new mission statement
- New report recommends Space Force change how it buys commercial satellite services

National Guard

- Did the Texas guard act as an illegal intel branch?

Your Military

- U.S., Australia should use civil aid, not military, to woo Pacific Island states from China: Wargame

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Star Trek continued from page 2

promised a big-time Hollywood producer could enter three costumes into her show.

“I told him I couldn’t do three more in the time they’d given me,” she replied,

Moments later, “Star Trek” producer Gene Roddenberry himself approached her and introduced himself.

“I’d never heard of ‘Star Trek,’” Bjo said. Of course not. It hadn’t premiered at that point. Roddenberry wanted to showcase the costumes to promote his new TV show. “The next thing I knew, he’d talked his way into the fashion show.”

The costumes—used in Episodes 6 and 7 of Season 1—were “very revealing,” Bjo Trimble said. “As much as you could get away with then.”

While Roddenberry voiced his appreciation, she was skeptical when he told her, “When you get to Hollywood, give me a call and we’ll do lunch,” she said.

When the Trimbles did make it to Hollywood, she called. Roddenberry took the call personally. They had lunch and became



John and Bjo Trimble doing the Star Trek Vulcan hand salute. Photo courtesy of John and Bjo Trimble.

friends. Roddenberry invited them to watch the filming of the show at the old Desilu Studios created by “I Love Lucy” stars Lucille Ball and Desi Arnaz.

“We had carte blanche,” John Trimble said. “We could visit the set whenever they were filming.”

As the 1967-68 (second) season filming neared its end, the Trimbles noticed that members of the cast and crew seemed glum once the cameras stopped rolling. They sensed something was wrong, and asked questions until they learned what caused all of the long faces: the network planned to cancel the show after its second season due to its low Nielsen ratings.

“The Nielsens were the holy grail of TV,” Bjo Trimble said. But, she said, the agency’s surveys were weighted to favor family shows, and not science fiction or crime dramas. NBC, which aired “Star Trek,” intended to yank the show from the 1968-69 lineup.

Talking in the car while heading back home to the Bay Area and Oakland, where John’s employer had reassigned him to work, the Trimbles became determined to save the show, and decided they would bombard the network with letters from anyone they could recruit to help.

“We got a friend who was a book dealer to send us their

mailing list,” John Trimble said. Friends provided Christmas card mailing lists and business lists and any other list they could get their hands on—legally and ethically, of course. Then, they sent letters asking each person to write letters to the network, and what to include, and to do the same with their friends, customers, and acquaintances.

“What to say and what not to say,” John Trimble said. “Don’t threaten anybody.”

They have no idea how many people actually wrote letters to NBC. They only know their letter-writing campaign approach worked. The network aired an assurance to “Star Trek” fans the show would live to see a third season in 1968-69.

“And to please stop writing letters,” Bjo said. “Then they got several thousand ‘thank-you’ letters.”

The Trimbles also played a role in getting NASA to change the name of the first Space Shuttle from the Constitution to Enterprise, the latter being the name of the starship in the original Star Trek series. She attended the rollout of the Enterprise shuttle in 1976 in Palmdale. She couldn’t score a VIP pass, but did finagle a press badge that provided a much

closer view of the spacecraft “and all the neat stuff,” she said, referring to bling that came with the press kit.

Bjo Trimble published a memoir titled “On the Good Ship Enterprise: My 15 Years with Star Trek” and the “Star Trek Concordance.” The latter included endorsements from “Star Trek” stars William Shatner and George Takei on the back cover.

Shatner, in fact, wrote “Nobody knows more about Star Trek than Bjo Trimble. She’s taught me a thing or two, and I love that.”

It’s been quite a voyage, indeed.

“We’re part of the ‘Star Trek’ legacy,” she said. “We hope to see that last.”

The Veterans Home of California-Chula Vista is one of eight Veterans Homes of California across the state. The homes offer affordable long-term care to older and disabled veterans as well as their eligible spouses and domestic partners. The services offered at each of the eight homes varies and range from assisted living programs with minimal support to 24-hour skilled nursing care for veterans with significant clinical needs including memory care.

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Wikoff takes the reigns as acting commander, Naval Air Forces

by Petty Officer 2nd Class
Aron Montano
Commander, Naval Air Forces

Rear Adm. George Wikoff relieved Vice Adm. Kenneth Whitesell to become the acting Commander, Naval Air Forces and Commander, Naval Air Force, U.S. Pacific Fleet, during a change of charge ceremony on Naval Air Station North Island, Sept. 7.

"It has been my honor to serve among the men and women who give Naval Aviation its reputation of excellence, professionalism, and quality," said Whitesell. "Our community's legacy, and the legacy of our greater Navy, continues with you. I'm proud of all that we've done, and even more proud of what's to come."

Whitesell served as the ninth Commander, Naval Air Forces after taking command in Oct. 2020. His time as 'Air Boss' saw many milestones in Naval Aviation, including the initial deployment of the 'Air Wing

of the Future' consisting of the F-35C Lightning II, CMV-22B Osprey, and MQ-8C Fire Scout. The Air Wing of the Future provides unprecedented capabilities with both its flexibility and maneuverability.

Throughout the next decade, Naval Aviation is adding a number of new platforms and capabilities to the air wings, making forces more lethal and survivable. This will allow Naval Aviation to meet future goals of delivering capability and capacity to win in the Great Power Competition, generate future readiness across the force, and achieve revolutionary training.

By integrating sea-based and land-based aircraft—both manned and unmanned—Naval Aviation will provide a persistent, agile, and tailorable force.

During his remarks, Whitesell emphasized the importance of "standing on the shoulders of giants," referring to building off of the accomplishments and legacies of Naval Aviation history.



Rear Adm. George Wikoff, Navy photo

"Those who have gone before us have carried a torch that lit the way for us," said Whitesell. "Now it is more important than ever that we carry the torch by getting ready and staying ready to meet all challenges that face Naval Aviation."

Whitesell simultaneously marked his retirement following 39 years of distinguished Naval service. During the retirement portion of the ceremony, he

conveyed his confidence in the future of Naval Aviation as he turned over to Wikoff.

"To my Navy teammates, Vice Adm. Whitesell's priority remains your order moving forward," said Wikoff. "Naval Aviation will continue to sharpen our focus on capabilities, capacity, readiness, and training to sustain our warfighting advantage against our increasingly advanced adver-



MARINE CORPS RECRUIT DEPOT SAN DIEGO (Sept. 8, 2023) Marines with Charlie Company, 1st Recruit Training Battalion, march in formation during a graduation ceremony here. Graduation took place at the completion of the 13-week transformation, which included training for drill, marksmanship, and basic combat skills. U.S. Marine Corps photo by Lance Cpl. Jacob B. Hutchinson

Flag officer assignment

The secretary of the Navy and acting chief of naval operations announced Sept. 7 that Rear Adm. Larry D. Watkins will be assigned as vice commander, U.S. Naval Forces Europe; vice commander, U.S. Naval Forces Africa; and Joint Forces Maritime Component Commander Europe, Naples, Italy. Watkins is currently serving as deputy commander, Third Fleet, San Diego.

saries. I will relentlessly focus on supporting you to meet this imperative." Wikoff previously

served as vice director, Joint Staff, where he assumed duties in May 2021.

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Vandenberg commemorates 100th anniversary of Honda Point shipwreck tragedy

by 2nd Lt. Teah Gibson, Space Launch Delta 30 Public Affairs

VANDENBERG AFB - On Sept. 8, the base commemorated the 100th anniversary of the tragic Honda Point disaster. This devastating incident unfolded off the base's coastline where seven Navy destroyers ran aground at Honda Point, resulting in the tragic loss of 23 sailors' lives.

Flags across the base were flown at half-staff, and Taps played at 9:05 p.m., aligning with the precise moment of the disaster.

During a presentation held at the base library on Sept. 7, Dr. Scott Bailey, deputy command historian for Space Operations Command, and former Space Launch Delta 30 historian, shed light on the historical context and significance of this event.

"The Honda Point shipwreck incident is a turning point in maritime history as it represents the largest peacetime loss of naval ships in American history and occurred on the coastline of present-day Vandenberg. More ships were lost at Honda Point than at the attack on Pearl Harbor in 1941," said Bailey.

Spanish explorers nicknamed the waters surrounding Honda Point "Devil's Jaw" to explain the unforgiving rocky terrain and relentless currents therein, as stated by local author Maury Hoag in the book called "Jaws of Honda."

Even experienced locals in the area knowingly avoided the dangerous waters. However, caught in the intense and all too familiar "Vandenberg Fog," stuck between thrashing waters, and suffering from navigation errors, sailors aboard U.S. Navy destroyers navigated directly into the tragedy, as described by Hoag.

Just one week prior to the disaster, the Great Kanto earthquake in Japan struck, sending powerful currents through the Pacific Ocean and the California coastline. The disruption of ocean currents by the earthquake contributed to the navigational challenges experienced by the Naval task force that wrecked at Honda Point. Without knowing the increasingly dangerous conditions, the Navy deployed 14 Clemson-class ships belonging to Destroyer Squadron 11 for high-speed maneuvering training exercises simulating combat conditions. The squadron embarked from San Francisco Bay destined for San Diego Bay on Sept. 8, 1923, as noted by Charles A. Lockwood and Hans Christian Adamson in the book titled "Tragedy at Honda."

In total, seven destroyers and 23 sailors were lost, while 745 sailors were saved.

Arrive Alive Program, ensuring safety of Marines

by Cpl. Daniel Medina, Camp Pendleton

Marines are known for their resilience and tenacity to push beyond their feasible limits to complete the mission. It's what they're molded for. However, this hard-headed spirit can easily be misplaced.

Marines are known to work hard and play hard. When alcohol becomes involved, well-deserved recreation can quickly turn into senseless tragedy.

Marine Corps Installations West is doubling down their efforts to reduce incidents from driving under the influence. The Arrive Alive Program is a Marine Corps Community Services effort working with local taxi services ensuring Marines who have consumed alcohol return home safely, without getting behind the wheel.

"It comes down to giving Marines another way to get back to their residence whether on-base or off-base safely, so we can avoid any incidents that may come from a bad decision," said Master Gunnery Sgt. Michael Huff, the MCCS operations chief for Marine Corps Logistics Base Barstow, Camp Pendleton and MCAS Yuma.

The recently published and updated order for the AAP explains all units from Barstow, Yuma and Camp Pendleton will be able to receive Arrive Alive cards from their unit readiness or deployment readiness coordinators to keep with them on liberty. This card will carry the Marines name and logo of their respective unit, and will include a number to contact a participating local taxi service. The card serves as initial payment to the cab service for a ride to the Marine's home.

After using the Arrive Alive service, the service member has a designated window of time to inform their unit and re-pay half the of amount accrued for the fare. The program is a shared responsibility between MCCS, the service member's unit and the service member.

The usage of the AAP does not reflect negatively on the Marine who uses it and, is instead encouraged as an emergency tool. The Marine Corps does not condone excessive drinking or failure to plan properly, however situations do occur where Marines find themselves unfit to drive and without a designated driver, or in an unsafe situation requiring them to make immediate, but safe, decisions. It's times like these the AAP can help save lives.

"I'm hoping it's a highly utilized program, or just utilized at all, so it can keep Marines safe and keep them going," said Huff.

USS Mobile Blue Crew conducts change of command

by Petty Officer 2nd Class Vance Hand

SAN DIEGO - Cmdr. Richard Skinnell was relieved by Cmdr. Matthew Shaw as commanding officer of Independence-variant littoral combat ship USS *Mobile* (LCS 26) Blue crew during a ceremony at Naval Base San Diego, Sept. 8.

During Skinnell's 14 months of command, *Mobile* completed its maiden deployment to the U.S. 3rd and 7th Fleet areas of operations, participating in multiple exercises and operations to include the Oceana Maritime Initiative, International Maritime Defense Exhibition, Cooperative Afloat Readiness, and Training (CARAT) Thailand Exercise.

"The strength of *Mobile* comes from the amazing service members that make up her crew," said Skinnell. "I am proud to serve with such a talented wardroom, chief petty officer mess, and enlisted crew. Continue to create the environment that facilitates the development of people to their maximum potential, this will unleash the power individual ownership and leadership."

Other significant events during Skinnell's time in command include Bridge Resource Management and Crew Certification, LCS Surface Warfare Advanced Tactical Training, USS *Abraham Lincoln* Carrier Strike Group Sustainment Exercise and Integrated Training, and a U.S. Coast Guard District 14 embark.

"*Mobile* Blue's accomplishments over the past 14 months are nothing short of spectacular," said Skinnell. "The crew truly embodies the ship's motto of Victory through Perseverance."

Skinnell was awarded the Meritorious Service Award for his superior accomplishments and will report to USS *George Washington* for his next tour of duty.

A time-honored naval tradition, the ceremony allows the crew to formally acknowledge the passing of command from the current commanding officer to the next.

"Cmdr. Skinnell's leadership was critical in establishing an early framework for enduring success through not only the integrated and advanced phases of training, but also *Mobile*'s maiden deployment earlier this year," said Cmdr. Matthew Shaw, *Mobile* Blue's executive officer. "His commitment to continuously win by developing Sailors both personally and professionally is absolutely remarkable. We will continue to build upon his hard work to hold *Mobile* and her crew in the highest regard."

Shaw takes command of *Mobile* after serving as *Mobile*'s XO. He enlisted in the Navy in 1994 as a builder in the Seabees before commissioning in 2005 through the Seaman to Admiral-21 program.

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LOCAL PHOTO GALLERY



SAN DIEGO (Sep. 7, 2023) Cryptologic Technician (Technical) 3rd Class Antonia Pavon, from Lakeland, Fla., lays down nonskid on a weather deck aboard amphibious assault carrier *Tripoli* during the ship's maintenance availability. *Tripoli* is an America-class amphibious assault ship homeported in San Diego. U.S. Navy photo by MC3 Olivia Rucker



PORT HUENEME, Calif. (Aug. 31, 2023) Cmdr. Justin Spinks, commanding officer of Naval Mobile Construction Battalion (NMCB) 4, addresses Seabees during morning quarters. NMCB 4 is implementing a robust construction skill training plan to prepare for a dynamic mission set throughout the U.S. Indo-Pacific Command in support of Commander, 7th Fleet objectives. U.S. Navy photo by MC1 Dakota Rayburn



CAMP PENDLETON (July 25, 2023) - A Marine assigned to Reconnaissance Company, 15th Marine Expeditionary Unit, rides an MMX motorcycle enroute to a raid site during the ground interoperability exercise here. The ground interoperability training integrates the Reconnaissance Company and supporting elements into a raid force. U.S. Marine Corps photo by Cpl. Joseph Helms



Fall Family Festival
October 20-21, 4-8 p.m., Naval Base Point Loma Community Recreation Center

Ghouls and goblins of all ages can enjoy the Pumpkin Patch Swim, Costume Run/Walk, Trick or Treat Trail, and more. If you're feeling brave, venture into The Haunt...if you dare! This curiosity-themed attraction is sure to test even the toughest adults, and is recommended for ages 13+.

Friday, Oct. 20

Dinner Options Available for Purchase: Bldg. 546 | 4-6:30 p.m.

Pumpkin Patch Swim: NBPL Pool, Bldg. 2 | 4-5 p.m.

The Haunt: NBPL Community Recreation Center, Bldg. 546 | 4-8 p.m.

Saturday, Oct. 21

Dinner Options Available for Purchase: Community Recreation Center, Bldg. 546 | 4-6:30 p.m.

Costume Run: Smuggler's Cove, Pavilion D | Registration, 4 pm | Run/Walk, 5 p.m.

Trick or Treat Trail: Community Recreation Center, Bldg. 546, Parking Lot | 4-8 p.m.

The Haunt: Community Recreation Center, Bldg. 546 | 4-8 p.m.

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Review of LE MANS 100 A Century at the World's Greatest Endurance Race by Glen Smale

Tom Kristensen (among dozens others)."

There is a description (but thankfully no photos) of that fateful, terrible accident in 1955, which "remains to this day as the worst accident in motor racing history," tragically taking 84 lives and injuring around 120 more.

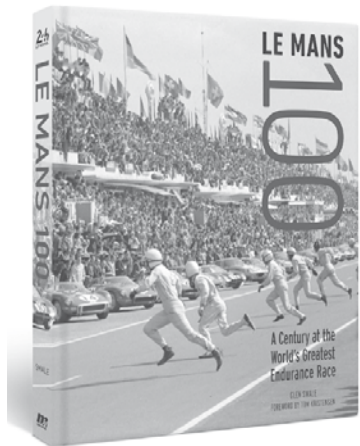
We read about the delayed (Sept. 19-20), "against all the odds" and heavily attendance-restricted (just officials, teams and a greatly reduced press contingent) race of 2020, due to COVID-19.

I was particularly curious to read about the race in the year of my birth (1953). The description was representative of the descriptions of every year's races. I learned that 1953 was the year that, "in an effort to reduce the possible fatigue of any one driver, the ACO introduced a rule that limited each driver to no more than a continuous stint of 80 laps, with a maximum time behind the wheel in the race of 18 hours."

60 cars started that race, including three 5.4-liter Chrysler-engined Cunninghams, two 5.4-liter Allards, four 4.5-liter Talbot-Lagos and two 4-liter Nash-Healeys, as well as Ferraris, Jaguars, Lancias and Porsches (they introduced their new 550 Spyder).

Stirling Moss took the early lead but became hobbled with carburetor trouble. The Ferrari 375 MM of Ascarari/Villoresi diced with the Duncan Hamilton and Tony Rolt Jaguar, nose-to-tail for hours. That Jaguar ultimately took the checkered flag first, followed by the Jaguar of Stirling Moss and Peter Walker, and the Cunningham C-5R of Phil Walters and John Fitch (US). Just imagine seeing those cars raced in anger, instead of with a reasonable amount of care — in mindful consideration their current value — in historic racing today!

Author and award-winning



Courtesy of Quarto and Motorbooks

Le Mans historian Glen Smale "details touchstone events such as the late-1960s battles between Ford and Ferrari popularized in the film 'Ford vs Ferrari,'" and chronicles "the exploits of both factory-sponsored cars and privateer entries, from the early open-cockpit racers right through to today's hybrid era."

Smale "is a lifelong motorsport enthusiast who has covered the Le Mans 24 Hour race numerous times and authored 14 books on sports cars and motor racing, including 'Porsche at Le Mans: 70 Years.' His 2012 book, 'Porsche at Le Mans: 60 Years of Porsche Participation in the World's Greatest Motor Race,' was shortlisted in the British Sports Book Awards. He lives in Carmarthenshire, Wales."

"LE MANS 100: A Century at the World's Greatest Endurance Race" by Glen Smale is available from Barnes and Noble, and Amazon.

To explore a wide variety of content dating back to 2002, with the most photos and the latest text, visit "AutoMatters & More" at <https://automatters.net>. Search by title or topic in the Search Bar in the middle of the Home Page, or click on the blue 'years' boxes and browse. Copyright © 2023 by Jan Wagner - AutoMatters & More #807

Modern slang parents should know but never use

Read any parenting book today, and it will likely recommend that, "communication is key" in building a relationship with one's teenagers. It's great advice, but what if you and your teens don't speak the same language?

Consider this: Your daughter walks into the kitchen, looks at your outfit and says, "Yo Mamma, you bussin', no cap. Slay Queen!" Should you feel insulted? You overhear your son say into his phone, "Dawg, shahti been livin' rent-free in my head. Perioduh." Should you be concerned?

I would've loved to have had an interpreter on retainer when my kids were teenagers, but instead, I bumbled through parenting by the seat of my double-digit-sized pants, being ridiculed by my offspring when I used old-timey phrases such as "For Criminy's sake!" and "What in the H-E-double hockey sticks?" Now that my three children are in their 20s, they still make fun of me, but I've managed to learn a thing or two despite today's parenting challenges.

Comparatively, child-rearing was a cake-walk for my parents, who gave my brother and I free-reign to run the neighborhood in cut off jean shorts and tube socks while they smoked Pall Mall cigarettes and drank vodka gimlets in their gabardine slacks. Other than awkward talks about the "birds and the bees" while referencing the Life Cycle Series for Young Adults, our parents lived on easy street, laughing with mouths packed with fillings at reruns of "All In The Family" from the comfort of their barcaloungers.

With the only means of distance communication anchored to the wall-

papered kitchen wall by a tangled spiral cord, and the nearest source of information located in the Encyclopedia Britannicas in the neighbor's rumpus room, slang terms took much longer to stick than today. The slower

The Meat & Potatoes of Life



by
Lisa
Smith
Molinari

pace of change gave our parents plenty of time to master the meaning of colloquialisms such as "Gag me with a spoon," "Like, totally," and "No big whoop."

Like my parents, I didn't grow up with the Internet, but unlike my parents, I've been forced to raise children during the Internet era, when social media and 24/7 online communication have fostered the rapid development of slang terminology.

Prior to the Internet, words such as "cloud," "tablet," "scroll," "footprint," "follow," and "fire" were used to tell the story of Moses' trek to the burning bush. "Swipe," "tag," "pin," "poke," and "troll" might have been used to report a street fight with a man living under a bridge. And "spam" was (and still is) a brand of strangely delicious yet visually revolting canned pork product.

However, in today's technological world, a viral tweet could change our vocabulary in an instant. It's almost impossible to keep up, but by learning a few Millennial and

Gen Z terms, you'll avoid becoming as obsolete as the phrase, "Zounds! Thine wench quoth pure tommyrot and 'tis but a blatherskite!"

As counter-intuitive as it seems, words that mean "good" to today's youth include "sick," "dank," "bad," "hella cool," "lit," "dope," "bussin'," "trill," "savage," and "fire." Likewise, "phat," "thick," "ride or die," "fam," "on fleek," "snatched," "represent," and the ultimate compliment, "G.O.A.T." (Greatest of All Time), are terms with positive sentiments.

On the other hand, descriptors that imply bad character include "shady," "poser," "salty," "bougie," "thirsty," "ghosting," "diss," "suss," "extra," "random," "ratchet," and "out of pocket." Proceed with caution when overhearing confrontational expressions such as "don't @ me," "wig snatch," "spill the tea," "put on blast," "talk to the hand," "bruh, seriously," "throwing shade," and "bye, Felicia!"

Parents should "chill" when their children utter harmless words of positive affirmation such as "yaaaaas," "bet," "I'm down," "no cap," "slay, queen," and "hundo p." However, Mom and Dad may suspect "sussery" if their teens speak of "getting turnt" after the football game or "kickin' it with bae" on Saturday night.

No matter what terms your children use — take it from me — it's never a good idea for Mom to adopt her kids' slang in an attempt to bond with them. Unless she wants her children to post an embarrassing recording of her on TikTok with the caption, "I'm dead!" which, I've learned the hard way, means, "My mom is hilarious!"

Far more than just a magnificent coffee table book (which it most certainly is), "LE MANS 100: A Century at the World's Greatest Endurance Race" by Glen Smale is truly the definitive book on the hundred-year history of that iconic racing event.

Its 240 pages are filled with a spectacular mix of 250 photos: black & white and vivid color. Interspersed are foldouts containing groups of LE MANS posters, and racing photos that span two full pages.

"Held on the Circuit de la Sarthe comprising closed public roads and dedicated racecourse, Le Mans features cars and two-driver teams that can cover more than 3,000 miles during the race."

As Tom Kristensen — who has made 18 starts at LE MANS over three decades — says in his forward: "The 24 hours of intense fighting fascinates fans, teams, manufacturers, and drivers from around the globe, and the more it knocks you down, the harder you work throughout the next 12 months to be able to take revenge."

Year by year — from 1923 to 2022 — we learn about each and every race, with results for the top three cars and an overview for each decade (recall that the race was suspended between 1940-48, due to World War II).

All of the legendary marques and models are covered, "including Porsche, Ferrari, Ford, Corvette, Cobra, Mercedes-Benz, Aston Martin, Jaguar, Audi, Toyota, BMW, McLaren, and more," and with classes that ran in each year's event, "including the top LMP1 and LMP2 (Le Mans Prototype) categories and GT (grand tourer)."

Included is a "who's-who of motorsport legends like Juan Manuel Fangio, Stirling Moss, Carroll Shelby, Dan Gurney, Ken Miles, Jackie Ickx, Derek Bell, and

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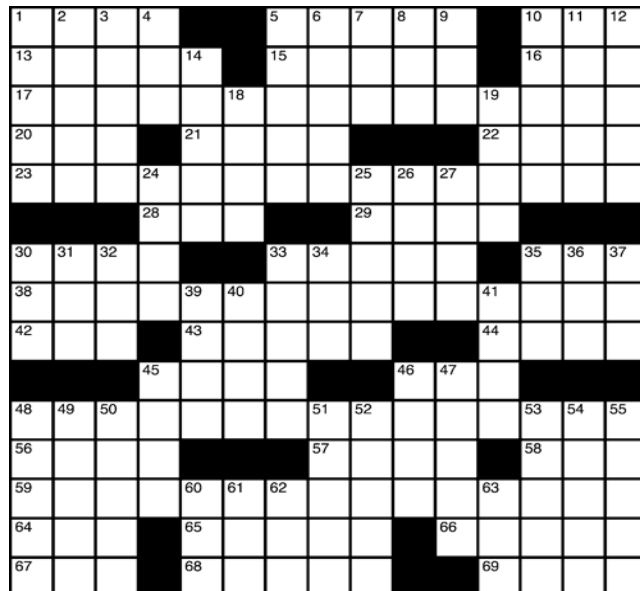
Courage: The quality of mind or spirit that enables a person to face difficulty, danger, pain, etc., without fear; bravery.

CROSSWORD PUZZLE

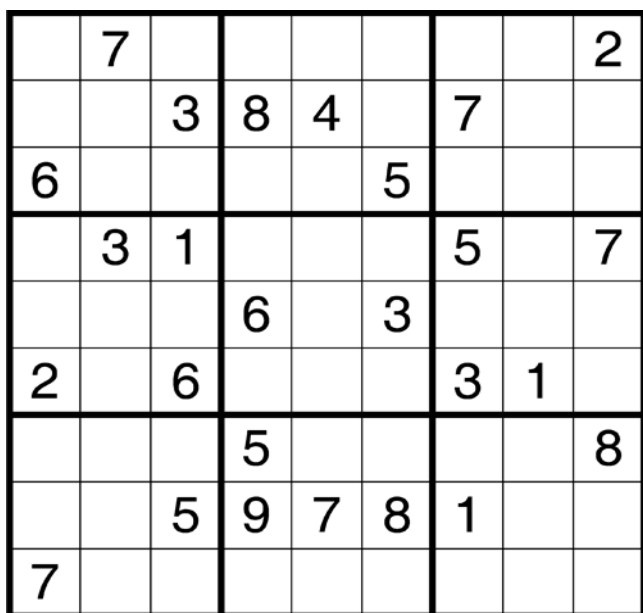
Across
1 Prepared, as a bed
5 Scuttlebutt
10 Col. Sanders's chain
13 Soft palate feature that translates to "little grape"
15 Battery terminal
16 Right-angle shape
17 Where Alcatraz sits
20 Towel embroidery word
21 Like many meds
22 "A ___ Day's Night": Beatles song
23 Disc sport popular on college campuses
28 Shakespearean fairy queen
29 Jay of late-night TV
30 Lady's man
33 "A Room of One's Own" author
35 Admirer
38 Give-it-a-test-run advice
42 Kiki, Sandra or Ruby
43 Brainiacs, maybe
44 Mass ___: an I-90 nickname
45 Fair
46 "Dude!"
48 Storied pot-of-gold spot
56 Achy
57 What a slob makes
58 Nitrogen-based dye
59 Hiding-your-eyes parent-baby game
64 Veer off course
65 Vegan and Paleo regimens
66 Roadside hot dog seller
67 NBC staple for 45 years
68 Daisy variety
69 Three in a deck

Down
1 ___ pork: Chinese menu item
2 To no ___: in vain
3 Kirsten of Spider-Man films
4 Toymaker for Santa

5 Charged
6 Mom's brother
7 "Surely you don't mean me?"
8 Has too much, briefly
9 ___ center
10 Skewered dish
11 Bell-bottom bottom
12 Only non-rhyming Pac-Man ghost
14 Roastery draw
18 Many a Mideast native
19 Very, very
24 Website for film buffs
25 Polar bear hangouts
26 Bank (on)
27 Inside scoop
30 Inc., in England
31 Underground find
32 Pastrami holder
33 Value
34 Chicago airport code
35 "The X-Files" org.
36 Arctic seabird
37 TV's "Science Guy"
39 Plenty, in texts
40 Gala
41 "Once ___ ..."
45 Kangaroo kid
46 Diamond bag
47 Daredevil dangers
48 TV sports awards
49 Hall of Fame pitcher Ryan
50 Southern twang
51 E, on a gauge
52 Peanut Butter Cup creator
53 Storybook elephant
54 Layer with a hole
55 "Toy Story" cowboy
60 "Yes, indeed!"
61 Give a thumbs-down
62 "___ whiz!"
63 Law firm fig.



ROY'S SUDOKU



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www.afdispatch.com

MOVIES AT THE BASES

Schedules subject to change. Check for updates on line at: <https://sandiego.navylifew.com/> select movies from dropdown menu on left <https://miramar.usmc-mccs.org/dining-entertainment/movies> <https://pendleton.usmc-mccs.org/dining-entertainment/theater>

Bob Hope Theater 577-4143

MCAS Miramar Bldg 2242
Friday, Sept 15
6pm Blue Beetle (PG-13)
Saturday, Sept 16
4pm Expend4bles (R)
Sunday, Sept 17
12pm Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles: Mutant Mayhem (PG)
3pm The Equalizer 3 (R)
Friday, Sept 11-Sunday, Sept 24
Closed in support of the Air Show

Pendleton Theater and Training Center

Bldg 1330 Mainside (Across from Mainside Center)
Saturday, September 16
FREE ADVANCED SCREENING
2pm *Expend4bles (R)
Saturday, September 23
1:30pm Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles: Mutant Mayhem (PG)
Saturday, September 30
1:30pm Blue Beetle (PG13)

Naval Base Theater - NBSD,

619-556-5568, Bldg. 71
3465 Senn Rd.
No outside food, concessions available.
Saturday, September 16
6pm Advance Screening: Expend4bles R
Sunday - September 17
1pm Ninja Turtles: Mutant Mayhem pg
3:40 PM The Equalizer 3 r
Thursday - September 21
6:30 PM Blue Beetle pg13
Friday - September 22
6:00 PM The Hill pg
Saturday - September 23
3:00 PM The Hill pg
6:00 PM Blue Beetle pg13
Sunday - September 24
1:00 PM The Hill pg
4pm Ninja Turtles: Mutant Mayhem pg
Thursday - September 28
6:30 PM The Hill pg

Lowry Theater - NASNI,

619-545-8479
Bldg. 650
Outside food and beverage are NOT permitted. Debit/credit cards only.
Saturday, September 16
1pm Blue Beetle pg13
6pm Expend4bles r (ADVANCE SCREENING)
Sunday, September 17
1pm Blue Beetle pg13
4pm The Equalizer 3 r
Friday - September 22
6:00 PM The Hill pg
Saturday - September 23
1:00 PM The Hill pg
3:30 PM Meg 2: The Trench pg13
6:00 PM Blue Beetle pg13
Sunday, September 24
1pm Ninja Turtles: Mutant Mayhem pg
3:30 PM The Hill pg
Updates: navylifew.com

SOCIAL SECURITY MATTERS

Why is my age 70 benefit not higher than my January amount?

Dear Rusty: I plan to retire in 2025 (the year I turn 70). Given that I'm still working, I'm delaying my Social Security until that year. I noticed on my Social Security statement that my payment in January of 2025 will not be much different than my age 70 amount in October of 2025. If that is truly the case, would it not be better for me to start taking Social Security payments starting in January of 2025. Am I missing anything here?

Signed: Uncertain Senior

Dear Uncertain Senior: Your benefit in October 2025 at age 70 will be about 6% more than it will be in January 2025. If that isn't shown on your Statement of Estimated Benefits, it may be due to a particular nuance in Social Security's rules relating to Delayed Retirement Credits (DRCs). When benefits are claimed mid-year after full retirement age (FRA), the DRCs earned in that year aren't applied until the following January. Thus, someone who claims benefits to start mid-year will initially get the DRCs they've earned through the end of the previous year, but not immediately get credit for the additional DRCs earned during the claim-year. Those extra DRCs earned between January and the month benefits started will be applied the following January.

By way of example, if someone beyond FRA claims benefits to start in October 2024, their initial SS retirement benefit will be what they were entitled to at the end of 2023 and would not include DRCs earned between January 2024 and September 2024. They will collect that initial January 2024 benefit until January 2025 when the DRCs earned in 2024 are applied, at which point their benefit would increase by 6%. There is, however, one exception to this rule, which is that all DRCs are immediately credited when benefits are claimed to start in the month age 70 is reached, so despite what your Statement of Estimated Benefits might reflect, if you claim for benefits to start in the month you turn 70 (October 2025) you will get your maximum age 70 benefit immediately and won't need to wait until January 2026 for those extra DRCs to be applied.

Unfortunately, Social Security's benefit estimator doesn't explain how this nuance works and may show someone claiming mid-year receiving the same benefit as for the preceding January, without further explanation. That is, in my opinion, a flaw in the estimator which may result in people making a wrong decision on when to claim their Social Security benefit. Nevertheless, rest assured that your benefit in October 2025 (the month you turn 70) will be your maximum amount - 6% more than it would be if you claimed benefits to start in January 2025, and you won't need to wait until the following January to get the DRCs earned earlier in 2025.

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Hicks underscores DOD's commitment to suicide prevention

by Joseph Clark, DOD News

The Defense Department remains relentlessly committed to the health and welfare of the total force, Deputy Defense Secretary Kathleen Hicks said today as she recognized the people behind DOD's suicide prevention efforts.

Providing supportive and protective environments is a top priority at the highest reaches of the Pentagon, Hicks said as she underscored the dedication of those who have worked tirelessly to "spread hope, address stigma and other barriers to care, and drive a healthier culture."

"It takes devoted teams to tackle the difficult subject of suicide prevention," she said. "Over the years, we've understood that we cannot go about this work with a one-size-fits-all approach. Suicide has no single root cause or solution. That's why the department is taking a public health approach — because this problem requires a range of prevention methods and treatment options to get after it."

Hicks joined several top officials — including Gilbert Cisneros, undersecretary of defense for personnel and readiness; Elizabeth B. Foster, executive director of the Office of Force Resiliency; Jeffrey R. Register, director of Defense Human Resources Activity; and Liz Clark, director of the Defense Suicide Prevention Office — in recognizing several units that demonstrated innovation

and excellence in suicide prevention during fiscal 2021-2022.

"Today's recipients have been working tirelessly to implement that approach," Hicks said. "They've taken major steps to promote connectedness, belonging and community ... to find creative ways to promote new and available health care options."

Col. Daniel Voorhies, 341st Missile Wing vice commander, holds a sign reading, "You Matter" for Airmen entering the installation Sept. 9, 2022 at Malmstrom Air Force Base, Mont.

Those units receiving the recognition include U.S. Army Garrison Rheinland-Pfalz in Kaiserslautern, Germany; Guam Army National Guard in Barrigada, Guam; Marine Aircraft Group 12 in Iwakuni, Japan; **Naval Special Warfare U.S. Special Operations Command in San Diego**; and Air Force Air Combat Command jointly with Joint Base Langley-Eustis in Hampton and Newport News, Virginia.

"Our honorees' work on suicide prevention has been more than conceptual," Hicks said. "They've launched campaigns to get the word out on life-changing information. They've organized outreach events to increase awareness. They've helped match people to the community support systems that best suit their needs. And they've nur-



Col. Daniel Voorhies, 341st Missile Wing vice commander, holds a sign reading, "You Matter" for Airmen entering the installation Sept. 9, 2022 at Malmstrom Air Force Base, Mont. This was part of the third annual Signs of Hope event during Suicide Prevention Month. U.S. Air Force photo by Heather Heiney

tured connectedness at every level — from individuals to the squadron, command, and battalion levels — to help save lives.

"These programs, and the people who implement and manage them, have made the fight against suicide a top priority," she said.

In recognition of September as National Suicide Prevention and Awareness Month, DOD has launched its 2023-2024 annual campaign, titled "Connect to Protect: Support is within Reach."

In his remarks during the recognition ceremony, Cisneros emphasized the importance of establishing

healthy connections and relationships in suicide prevention.

"There is often a sense among the military community and among service members that they need to be strong and fully capable at all times," he said. "They believe strength is

5	3	4	2	9	1	8	9	7
6	2	1	8	7	6	5	4	3
8	7	6	5	4	3	2	9	1
9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
4	3	2	1	8	7	6	5	4
7	6	5	4	3	2	1	8	9
3	2	1	8	7	6	5	4	3
1	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2
2	1	8	7	6	5	4	3	2

enduring their lowest moments, and darkest thoughts alone. But nothing could be further from the truth.

"We recognize that asking for help is challenging, but we are making it easier to get help in the military community by creating connections through local programming," he said. "We help by saying we are here for you. We help by creating supportive and protective environments. That is our goal and one which we must continue to strive towards."

While stationed in the 48 contiguous states, service members, veterans and family members in crisis can seek help through the veterans/military crisis line by:

- Calling 988 and accessing option 1.
- Texting to 838255.
- Chatting at VeteransCrisisLine.net/Chat.

net/Chat.

Those stationed outside of the U.S. can access the crisis line by:

- Calling 00800 1273 8255 or DSN 118 in Europe.
- Calling 080-855-5118 or DSN 118 in Japan and Korea.
- Dialing 1-800-273-8255 or DSN 111 in Afghanistan.

To access noncrisis support, service members and their immediate family members can connect with Military OneSource for free access to confidential counseling.

Mental health and counseling services are also available through Tricare.

DOD civilian employees can access resources, information and confidential help by calling 1-866-580-9046.

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