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SIXTY-THIRD YEAR NO. 40
 MARCH 8, 2024



CAPSULE COMMITMENT | NASA astronaut Navy Capt. Victor Glover Jr., right, provides the oath of reenlistment to Petty Officer 2nd Class Gerald Castro in a test capsule aboard amphibious transport dock ship USS San Diego during recovery training for NASA's Artemis II mission in the Pacific Ocean, Feb. 26, 2024. U.S. Navy photo by Petty Officer 2nd Class Connor Burns

Keeping the Scout's history alive

by Lance Cpl. Adrian Estrada
 Marine Corps Base Camp Pendleton

CAMP PENDLETON - The fate of the Camp Pendleton Scout Newspaper's illustrious history hangs in the balance, teetering on the brink of obscurity, seeking to be seen. The vital documentation of past events and achievements the Scout once produced serves as a crucial link to our organization's legacy and overall identity. To keep this valuable piece of heritage alive, it must be properly archived.

The Scout ran from 1943 to 2009, reporting on the happenings here, with everything from historical events of the first female sergeant major of the base to Marilyn Monroe visiting the troops and everything in between. Every edition of the Scout preserved the history of the base.

Records of historical significance should be safeguarded for future generations. History links us to our past, providing insight into the rich tapestry of human experience and achievements. Protecting and properly archiving these precious documents, photographs, and artifacts, ensuring they are accessible for research, education, and inspiration for years to come.

William Murtagh, the first Keeper of the Records for the National Register for Historic Places, once said, "It has been said that, at its best, preservation engages the past in a conversation with the present over a mutual concern for the future."

Over 66 years of stories, events, and history within the Scout sit locked in the History and Museum Division archive at MCB Camp Pendleton, without much attention or fanfare. These articles hold the stories of MCB Camp Pendleton and the Marines stationed there throughout the years, and now the Camp Pendleton Historical Society is working to preserve those articles through the digitizing process.

The CPHS's goal is to have the Scout completely digitized and accessible online by 2025. Then, the public would be able to easily access the archives on the CPHS website.

Digitizing ensures physical content remains safe and easily accessible in case of any unforeseen circumstances, such as fire or see **Scout**, page 6

STATE LIAISONS ADVOCATE FOR MILITARY FAMILIES

by Joseph Clark, DOD News
 State-level policy decisions can have a truly meaningful impact on service members and their families, especially those with school-age children.

parent's military career, military children often face unique challenges throughout their academic careers that their civilian peers may not encounter.

average, than their non-military peers due to geographic moves, according to a 2013 study on military children demographics.

ment, through the Defense-State Liaison Office, engages policy and lawmakers at the state level to educate them on ways states can help ease the burdens placed on military families.

With frequent moves and deployments that accompany a

Children of service members, for example, change schools three times more frequently, on

With each move, military children could face issues ranging from gaps in curriculum from one school to the next, course placement challenges and varying graduation requirements.

For example, through the Defense-State Liaison Office's efforts, more than 40 states have passed legislation to adopt the Purple Star Schools program designed to recognize schools that assist military children with school transitions and develop programs that recognize the value of military service.



A smiling Sailor holds his young son as other family members look on and smile. Official U. S. Navy photo

Those moves can also pose significant stressors for children as they work to establish new social connections and adjust to new school environments.

Children of deployed parents also face added stressors that are more likely to require more frequent behavioral healthcare visits than their civilian counterparts, according to a 2020 study.

State-level advocates are pushing for even more states to adopt the program.

In recognition of these unique challenges that come with military life, the Defense Depart-

Earlier this month, Michelle Richart, a "regional liaison" with the Defense-State Liaison Office, testified before the Colorado House of Representatives' see **Liaisons**, page 2

USS Hershel "Woody" Williams (ESB 4) begins African deployment

The Blue military crew of expeditionary sea base USS Hershel "Woody" Williams (ESB 4) and the ship's Military Sealift Command Civilian Mariners recently departed Naval Station Rota, Spain, to begin a scheduled deployment in the U.S. Naval Forces Africa (NAVAF) and U.S. Sixth Fleet area of operations. Prior to arriving in Rota, the ship completed a Mid-Term Availability at the Viktor Lenac shipyard in Rijeka, Croatia. Maintenance work during the MTA included Safety of Life At Sea equipment such as communication, fire safety, and navigation, as well as upgrading decking and coatings to increase safety, especially in adverse operating conditions.

Air Force tests new agile aircraft power lightcart

The Department of the Air Force, or DAF, completed testing of the 400Hz Aircraft Power Lightcart, or 400 APL in January 2024. The tests, which were conducted with the 174th Attack Wing at Hancock Field Air National Guard Base in Syracuse, N.Y., saw the prototype successfully power an MQ-9, or Predator, through a series of technical orders. The 400 APL project, which was led by the Air Force Research Laboratory's, or AFRL's, Energy Office, promotes the Air Force's push toward the Agile Combat Employment, or ACE concept, which is to disperse aircraft and equipment between major hub bases and smaller airfields to improve resilience and survivability. ACE operations require aircraft, Airmen and equipment to rapidly relocate to the combat edge and generate combat sorties. Small, light, multi-capable equipment is critical to reducing logistics demands and increasing combat tempo and agility.

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Navy destroyer returns to Japan after 4 years of stateside upgrades

by Jennessa Davey and Alex Wilson

Stars and Stripes

YOKOSUKA NAVAL BASE, Japan - Guided-missile destroyer USS *McCampbell* returned to the 7th Fleet March 2 after nearly four years of maintenance and upgrades in Oregon.



Destroyer *McCampbell* returns to Yokosuka Naval Base, Japan, on March 2, 2024. Official photo

Taylor Pascual, wife of Chief John David Pascual, a hospital corpsman, was among the family members who stood in the cold and waited for the ship to dock.

"I'm very proud of him for being part of everything *McCampbell* is doing," she said.

McCampbell becomes the 10th warship in Destroyer Squadron 15, the principal surface force for 7th Fleet and routinely the escorts for the Ronald Reagan Carrier Strike Group.

The ship was assigned to Yokosuka from 2007 to 2020.

It left for Portland, Oregon, in July 2020 for its mid-life modernization, including upgrades that fortified its "warfighting capability," according to a news release Saturday from 7th Fleet.

"We are excited for the opportunity to rejoin 7th Fleet and the forward-deployed ships in Yokosuka," *McCampbell*'s skipper, Cmdr. James Pierce III, said in the release. "Our Sailors have trained diligently over the past four years since our departure to prepare for our return to Japan."

During its previous 13 years

in Japan, the destroyer regularly steamed through the Taiwan Strait and took part in freedom-of-navigation operations near the Paracel Islands in the South China Sea.

It also participated in disaster-relief efforts, including missions following a 2008 earthquake and tsunami off the coast of Indonesia and Operation Tomodachi after an earthquake and tsunami devastated northeastern Japan in 2011.

After a monthlong "acclimation period," *McCampbell* will be fully capable of taking on missions in the Western Pacific,

said Capt. Justin Harts, commander of Task Force 71 and Destroyer Squadron 15.

Jennessa Davey is a reporter and photographer at Yokosuka Naval Base, who enlisted in the Marine Corps in 2016. Jennessa was named the Marine Corps' videographer of the year in 2018 and photographer of the year in 2019.

Alex Wilson covers the Navy and other services from Yokosuka Naval Base. Originally from Knoxville, Tenn., he previously covered crime and the military in Key West, Fla., and business in Jacksonville, Fla.

Liaisons

continued from page 1

Education Committee on how establishing the Purple Star Schools Program in the state could mitigate challenges faced by military children.

Colorado is home to 46,403 children of the nearly 67,000 active duty, National Guard and reserve members stationed in the state.

Colorado Purple Star School is not only a badge of honor for the school and district, it is a recognition of effort that signals to incoming families that they will be welcomed and well-supported," Richart, herself a Colorado military spouse, said in her testimony to the committee.

Richart was joined in testifying before the committee by school liaisons from Buckley Space Force Base and the U.S. Air Force Academy, a fellow military spouse and students whose parents are stationed in the area.

"It was a very positive experience, and the House Education Committee members were incredibly receptive to the Purple Star Schools program," Richart said after testifying.

She said the testimony from the students themselves was especially impactful.

"My biggest takeaway was how much lawmakers appreciated hearing directly from the high schoolers about their lived experiences as military-connected students," she said. "It was also wonderful to see the outpouring of support from mili-

tary leadership and community organizations."

A bill to institute the Purple Star Schools Program in the state subsequently passed unanimously in the House Education Committee. It is now headed for consideration by the Appropriations Committee and a floor vote by the full Colorado House if approved.

Educating about the challenges military children face and the benefits of the Purple Star Schools Program is one of many priorities undertaken by Richart, who covers six states as a regional liaison.

"I like to joke that I'm a one-woman show covering six states," she said. "There is no typical day, which is one of the things I enjoy most."

She said her responsibilities are many and range from giving testimony at a state capitol to briefing a governor's task force on the top DOD policy priorities impacting military families stationed in the state.

"The next day, I may connect with community leaders in South Dakota or the Department of Education in Iowa to understand their positions and explore where we can work together," Richart said. "I may spend an entire afternoon researching school open enrollment policies in Kansas or juvenile jurisdiction laws in Nebraska."

<https://www.defense.gov/News/News-Stories/Article/Article/3690717/state-liaisons-advocate-for-military-families-throughout-us/>.

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U.S. military aircraft airdrop thousands of meals into Gaza in emergency humanitarian aid operation

STARS AND STRIPES - U.S. military C-130 cargo planes dropped food in pallets over Gaza on March 2 in the opening stage of an emergency humanitarian assistance authorized by President Joe Biden after more than 100 Palestinians who had surged to pull goods off an aid convoy were killed during a chaotic encounter with Israeli troops.

Three planes from Air Forces Central dropped 66 bundles containing about 38,000 meals into Gaza at 3:30 p.m. local time. The bundles were dropped in southwest Gaza, on the beach along the territory's Mediterranean coast.

The airdrop was coordinated with the Royal Jordanian Air Force, which said it had two food airdrops Saturday in northern Gaza and has conducted several rounds in recent months.

"The amount of aid flowing to Gaza is not nearly enough and we will continue to pull out every stop we can to get more aid in," President Joe Biden said Saturday in a post on the social

media site X, formerly known as Twitter. U.S. Central Command said on X that "the combined operation included U.S. Air Force and RJAF C-130 aircraft and respective Army Soldiers specialized in aerial delivery of supplies, built bundles and ensured the safe drop of food aid."

The U.S. airdrop is expected to be the first of many. Three Biden administration officials said the planes dropped the military Meals Ready to Eat (MREs) — shelf-stable meals that contain a day's worth of calories in each sealed package — in locations that were thought would provide civilians with the greatest level of safety to access aid. Afterward, the U.S. monitored the sites and was able to see civilians approach and distribute food among themselves, according to the officials, who spoke on the condition of anonymity to provide additional details that had not been made public.

Biden on March 1 announced the U.S. would begin air dropping food to starving Gazans after at least 115 Palestinians

were killed and hundreds more wounded in the Feb. 29 attack as they scrambled for aid, the Health Ministry in Hamas-ruled Gaza said. Hundreds of people had rushed about 30 trucks bringing a pre-dawn delivery of aid to the north. Palestinians said nearby Israeli troops shot into the crowds. Israel said they fired warning shots toward the crowd and insisted many of the dead were trampled.

White House national security spokesperson John Kirby said March 1 that the airdrops were being planned to deliver emergency humanitarian assistance in a safe way to people on the ground.

The United States believes the airdrops will help address the dire situation in Gaza, but they are no replacement for trucks, which can transport far more aid more effectively, though Feb. 29's events also showed the risks with ground transport.

Kirby said the airdrops have an advantage over trucks because planes can move aid to a particular location very quickly. But in terms of volume, the airdrops will be "a supplement to, not a replacement for moving things in by ground."

The C-130 is widely used to deliver aid to remote places because of its ability to land in austere environments. A C-130 can airlift as much as 42,000 pounds of cargo and its crews know how to rig the cargo, which sometimes can include even vehicles, onto massive pallets that can be safely dropped out of the back of the aircraft. Air Force loadmasters secure the bundles onto pallets with netting that is rigged for release in the back of a C-130, and then crews release it with a parachute when the aircraft reaches the intended delivery zone.

Find related stories at <https://www.stripes.com/>.



AT EASE | Navy Petty Officer 3rd Class Kylie Odea commands military working dog Astra while Petty Officer 1st Class Anthony Guglielmo performs an assessment at Souda Bay, Greece, Feb. 15, 2024. U.S. Navy photo by Petty Officer 1st Class Delaney S. Jensen

Total Battle Force	Deployed	Underway
293 (USS 233, USNS 60)	97 (USS 65, USNS 32)	65 (47 Deployed, 18 Local)

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Top 5

- Austin says he expected his staff would notify of hospitalization
- Congress passes fourth stopgap funding bill as 1% sequester looms
- Accused Pentagon leaker Jack Teixeira plans to plead guilty
- Allies probe accidental targeting of U.S. drone by German navy frigate
- Soldiers test Next Generation Squad Weapon in extreme cold weather

Army

- Army is going all-in on food kiosks as base dining facilities struggle
- Poland stint lengthened for Army air defense unit from Texas
- We salute the Army crew that named their tank 'Animaniacs'
- Army advisers conclude 2nd iteration of Operation Combined Victory information environment exercise
- Gucci Goddess Janet Mello agrees to plead guilty to stealing \$108 million from Army

Navy

- Navy expeditionary forces eye counter-drone, offensive unmanned ops
- Virginia-class submarine New Jersey completes first set of sea trials
- In South Korea, Del Toro courts major shipbuilders to set up shop in US
- Attack sub Boise overhaul at risk under one-year continuing resolution

Marine Corps

- Marine corporal gets medal for saving drowning teen while on leave
- Marine Corps seeks anti-drone tool to defend bases

Air Force

- Pilot training brings noise to MacDill Air Force Base
- Can biocement help the Air Force build new runways in the Pacific?

DOD takes steps to restore stability in Red Sea area

by David Vergun, DOD News

While the Defense Department supports the overall aim of de-escalating tensions and restoring stability in the Red Sea, it will not hesitate to defend civilians and protect the free flow of commerce in one of the world's most critical waterways, said the deputy assistant secretary of defense for Middle East policy.

Daniel B. Shapiro testified Feb. 27 before the Senate Foreign Relations Subcommittee on Near East, South Asia, Central Asia and Counterterrorism.

Since Nov. 19, the Houthis have conducted at least 48 attacks against commercial shipping and naval vessels in and around the Red Sea through which 15 percent of all global trade flows, he said.

They have used antiship ballistic missiles, antiship cruise

missiles, unmanned aerial systems on surface vessels, and in one instance a helicopter-borne seizure, he said.

"Despite the Houthis' claims, these attacks are almost entirely unrelated to Israel and Israeli affiliated shipping, and to be clear, any such attacks would be entirely illegitimate anyway. These are indiscriminate attacks that are as much an affront to maritime commerce as is piracy," Shapiro said.

They've affected the interests of more than 55 nations and threatened the free flow of commerce through the Red Sea, a bedrock of the global economy. These attacks have prompted more than a dozen major shipping operators to suspend transit of the Red Sea, causing a spike in insurance rates for vessels in the region and, more importantly,

putting the lives of innocent mariners and U.S. service members at risk, he said.

These attacks are also driving up prices and causing delivery delays in critical humanitarian items, such as food and medicine, in places where they're needed most. This is adversely affecting people in need of assistance around the world, including residents of Sudan, Ethiopia and in Yemen itself, he said.

"It's clear that these Houthi attacks represent an international problem that affects all nations committed to the exercise of navigational freedoms and the free flow of commerce. These attacks, which affect the entire region and nations across the globe, cannot go unchallenged. And this problem demands a broad-based and collective response," Shapiro said.

The U.S., in coordination with allies and partners, is taking military, diplomatic and economic steps to impose costs on the Houthi leadership and degrade their ability to conduct attacks on commercial shipping, he said.

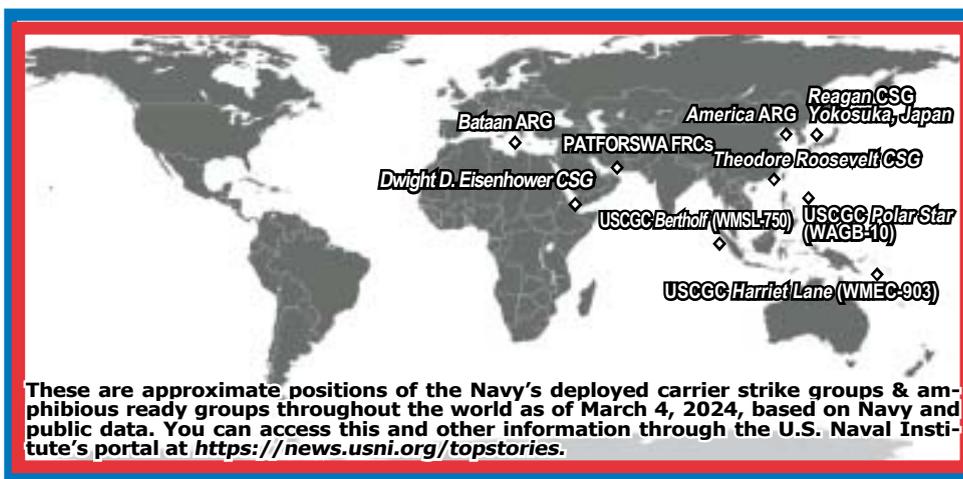
Since December, more than 20 countries have joined increased maritime patrols in the area to safeguard commercial shipping, he said.

On Saturday, U.S. strikes hit Houthi targets that include underground weapons storage facilities, missile storage facilities, unmanned aerial systems, air defense systems, radars and a helicopter, he said.

Over the past few weeks, U.S. forces have struck over 230 targets in Houthi-controlled Yemen through both deliberate and self-defense strikes, likely destroying hundreds of Houthi weapons. That's not including the dozens of Houthi missiles and unmanned aerial systems that U.S. and partner naval vessels have intercepted and shot down over the Red Sea, he said.

In addition to DOD's efforts to degrade and destroy Houthi capabilities, U.S. forces have interdicted Iranian vessels carrying lethal aid to Yemen, he said.

"We've made it very clear to Iran that we hold it accountable for attacks by its partners and proxies and believe Iranian leaders are aware of the consequences should these attacks result in U.S. casualties," he said.



These are approximate positions of the Navy's deployed carrier strike groups & amphibious ready groups throughout the world as of March 4, 2024, based on Navy and public data. You can access this and other information through the U.S. Naval Institute's portal at <https://news.usni.org/topstories>.



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Army awards college students cash for innovations

by Jonathan Austin
Army News Service

If you were asked to guess how technological development is accelerated for the Army, your first answer might not involve listening to 20 college students talk about ideas they've dreamed up.

However, that is exactly what happened at the xTech-Historically Black Colleges and Universities Student Competition at the Baltimore Convention Center this month.

As part of the 38th Annual Black Engineer of the Year Awards conference, or 'Becoming Everything You Are' (BEYA), 20 students from HCBUs pitched ideas for the opportunity to potentially develop a prototype of their technological solution.

"We have 400 positions that we are trying to fill with the great minds that we have as you look across this forum today," said Col. Ronnie Anderson, commander of the Army's Joint Munitions Command at Rock Island, Illinois.

Anderson was on the lookout for engineering students who might want civilian jobs with the Army.

"There are at least 15 engineering types of jobs that we're hiring. It's been really inspiring to get to meet and talk with some young people and hear about their experiences and their desires, where they want to be; what they want to achieve," he said.

The 20 finalists were selected

from proposals submitted beginning last September, each to address either Army areas of autonomy, biological and chemical sciences, or health.

The students participated in the xTech-HBCU Student Accelerator Program, which provided educational guidance and mentorships leading up to the final event held Feb. 16-17, where four of the ideas were selected for further consideration.

Uncovering transformative technology solutions to solve Army problems is exactly what the xTech Program is intended to do. The program hosts prize competitions, connecting businesses – and STEM students wanting to take an idea from the classroom to the start-up - with Army and Department of Defense experts to build solutions for current problems.

The program, led by the Assistant Secretary of the Army for Acquisition, Logistics and Technology, allows those with ideas to compete for cash prizes and potential follow-up contracts to accelerate and transition their transformative solutions into the Army.

For students of Science, Technology, Engineering or Math, the program can provide education, mentorship and networking opportunities to help integrate into the Army sciences and technology ecosystem.

Over the two days in Baltimore, the 20 students made their pitches. Four of those students received cash prizes from \$4,500 to \$10,500.

One proposal from a computer



Gayna Malcolm-Packnett, right, from the Army Office of Small Business Programs, speaks with two students during the BEYA Conference in Baltimore. U.S. Army photo by Jonathan Austin

science major at Howard University was to leverage blockchain technology for data security, to identify vulnerabilities and detect external threats.

Another, from a computer engineering major at Jackson State University, was a spybot the size of a pencil, designed to autonomously fly surveillance, giving commanders better information about friendly and enemy troop movements.

Each student had 15 minutes to present their idea. Some appeared on a video link while others took to the xTech stage at BEYA to face an audience of onlookers and judges.

"We have some 19- and 20-year-olds up here who are tackling some very incredible topics," Anderson said admiringly.

A proposal titled "IntelliDefend AI: Integrated Multi-Agent

Defense and Augmented Reality Interface for Precision Urban Warfare and Civilian Protection," by Sambridhi Deo, a computer science major at Fisk University, was the first-place winner, taking home the \$10,500 prize.

In the presentation, Deo said the autonomous IntelliDefend leverages advance science and technology to overcome challenges in urban warfare and for civilian protection, using AI-driven surveillance drones.

In second place, receiving \$8,500, was Fisk University computer science major Rohan Ray Yadav, with the SafeScout: Autonomous Landmine Detection System.

Yadav said SafeScout uses an autonomous drone equipped with a ground penetrating radar and magnetometer for efficient and rapid detection of landmines or IEDs.

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Wednesday, March 20 | 1-3 p.m. | NBPL (IP)

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Friday, March 15 | 8-11:30 a.m. | KMB (IP)

Job Search Strategies

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Wednesday, March 13 | 9-10:30 a.m. | NBSD (IP)

Thursday, March 14 | 9-11 a.m. | BVH (IP)

Monday, March 25 | 9-11 a.m. | KMB (IP)

Tuesday, March 26 | 1:30-3:30 p.m. | GVB (IP)

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Make sure your resume stands out! Get the latest tips and techniques to wow employers with an organized, effective and winning resume.

Wednesday, March 13 | 1-3 p.m. | NBPL (IP)

Monday, March 18 | 9-11 a.m. | KMB (IP)

Wednesday, March 20 | 9-10:30 a.m. | NBSD (IP)

Tuesday, March 26 | 9-11 a.m. | BVH (IP)

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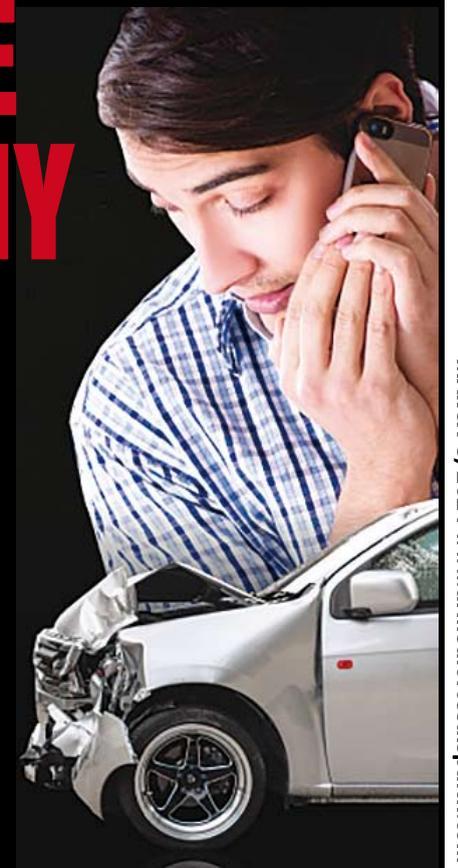
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USS *Halsey* joins U.S. forces in Indian Navy-led Exercise MILAN

DESTROYER *HALSEY* (DDG 97) JOINED SHIPS, AIRCRAFT AND PERSONNEL FROM INDIA AND NUMEROUS OTHER NAVIES TO BEGIN EXERCISE MILAN 2024 IN THE BAY OF BENGAL, FEB. 19.

This year marks the second time the U.S. has participated in the biennial exercise in order to build combined interoperability with regional allies and partners. MILAN in Hindi means "meeting."

MILAN 2024 includes forces from more than 50 countries, the largest partici-

pation in the exercise. This year's exercise focuses on strengthening military-to-military ties to contribute toward a free, open, inclusive, and resilient Indo-Pacific.

MILAN 2024 will include a harbor phase followed by a sea phase where ships will focus on high-end tactical training, maneuvering drills, air-defense exercises, submarine familiarization, multinational replenishment-at-sea, communications drills, gunnery exercises, and joint warfighting scenarios.

"We are grateful for the leadership of our Indian Navy

partners in putting together exercise MILAN and providing us the opportunity to advance multilateral interoperability," said Capt. Ryan Leary, commanding officer, USS *Halsey*. "India is a like-minded partner and leader in South Asia and the Indian Ocean, active in and connected to Southeast Asia, a driving force of regional fora, and an engine for regional growth and development."

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



Lt. j.g. Ezra Haddock, from San Diego, waves in forward tug while pulling into port in support of Exercise Milan 2024 aboard destroyer USS *Halsey* (DDG-97), Feb. 18, 2024. Official Navy photo

Scout from page 1

flood. By using digital preservation methods, you are not only protecting valuable information from physical harm but also guaranteeing it will remain intact for future reference or retrieval purposes.

"For one, it would preserve [the Scout], if anything ever happened, we would have a

digital copy of it," said Robert "Bo" Hellman, a board member of the CPHS.

However, the process of digitizing years of information is more challenging than it might seem. One of the difficulties for the MCB Camp Pendleton History and Museum Division is storing some of the oldest products, which are extremely sensitive. The History and Museum Division also stores microfilm,

and if stored properly, it has a shelf life of about 500 years.

Microfilm is a highly reliable long-term storage solution, particularly when it comes to things like historical records, but there are precise storage requirements to achieve this. The storing of microfilm requires a climate-controlled area at all times and be inspected every 2 to 5 years, depending on the year produced, according to the

National Archives.

"Another challenge that comes is the process of microfilm," said Hellman. "Some of the films the Camp Pendleton History and Museum Division have are skewed because they did not come in flat film."

Hellman described how his wife, Deb, used to be a photojournalism instructor and worked on a tedious and meticulous newspaper digitizing project for Palomar

College. During the project she had to cut the bindings of bound newspapers to separate individual issues so she could lay each page flat on a flatbed scanner for a high-quality scan allowing optical character recognition to become keyword searchable later.

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workflow. By digitizing these documents, it can eliminate the need for physical storage space and reduce the risk of lost or misplaced files. Advanced scanning technology ensures high-quality digital copies with precise image capture and text recognition capabilities, allowing the document to be keyword-searchable. Read more at <https://www.dvidshub.net/news/463325/>.

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Local flag officer announcements

(March 1, 2024) The secretary of the Navy and chief of naval operations announced the following assignments:

•Rear Adm. (lower half)

William R. Daly, selected for promotion to rear admiral, will be assigned as director, Surface Warfare Division, N96, Office of the Chief of Naval Operations, Washington, D.C. Daly is currently serving as commander, Carrier Strike Group Fifteen, San Diego.

•Rear Adm. (lower half) **Carlos A. Sardiello**, selected for promotion to rear admiral, will be assigned as commander, U.S. Naval Forces, Southern Command; and commander, U.S. Fourth Fleet, Jacksonville, Fla. Sardiello is currently serving as commander, Carrier Strike Group One, San Diego.

•Rear Adm. (lower half) **Kevin M. Kennedy** will be assigned as commander, Carrier Strike Group Fifteen, San Diego. Kennedy is currently serving as assistant commander for Career Management, PERS-4, Navy Personnel Command, Millington, Tenn.

•Rear Adm. (lower half)

Michael S. Wosje will be assigned as commander, Carrier Strike Group One, San Diego. Wosje is currently serving as chief of staff, Strike Force NATO, Lisbon, Portugal.



•Capt. **Justin A. Kubu**, selected for promotion to rear admiral (lower half), will be assigned as deputy commander, Joint Task Force, Horn of Africa, U.S. Africa Command. Kubu is currently serving as commander, Amphibious Squadron Seven, San Diego.

(Feb. 29, 2024) Secretary of Defense Lloyd J. Austin III announced that the president has made the following nominations:

•Navy Rear Adm. (lower half) **Bradley D. Dunham** for appointment to the grade of rear admiral. Dunham is currently serving as reserve commander, Naval Air Force Reserve, San Diego.

•Navy Capt. **Katie F. Sheldon** for appointment to the grade of rear admiral (lower half). Sheldon is currently serving as commanding officer, Navy Reserve Third Fleet Headquarters, San Diego.

'Gunsmoke' veterans reunite to remember Vigilant Resolve 20 years later

by 1st Lt. Noah Richardson
1st Marine Division

Around 150 veterans and active members of 2nd Battalion, 1st Marine Regiment, 1st Marine Division, reunited at Camp Pendleton Feb. 29 to honor the 20th anniversary of Operation Vigilant Resolve.

The battalion, also called "Gunsmoke," served as one of the lead units in the first Battle of Fallujah, known as Operation Vigilant Resolve, in April 2004. Marines like Lt. Gen. (Ret.) John A. Toolan Jr. and Sgt. Maj. (Ret.) Bill Skiles joined the memorial event for the battle. The reunion consisted of a handful of memorial events, including a hike up First Sergeant's Hill in Camp Horno, weapons displays for the vets, and a memorial dinner for the group. Skiles, who served as the first sergeant for Echo Company, 2nd Bn., 1st Marines, in 2004, couldn't hide his excitement to see his Marines again.

"It's just so great to be here and see all these Marines and Sailors and remember the sacrifice of not only them, but the families too," said Skiles, who continues supporting the Marine Corps through his work at the Marine Corps Center for Lessons Learned. "We're going to hike up this mountain and carry heavy things with us to symbolize what these veterans and families carry with them every day. There are some great memo-

ries with these guys, including memories with our company commander, Doug Zembiec, who can't be here today."

Maj. Doug Zembiec, nicknamed the "Lion of Fallujah" for his actions as a company commander during Vigilant Resolve, earned the Bronze Star after braving small arms fire and jumping onto a tank to direct its fire during one engagement. He was killed in Iraq in 2007, but earned the Silver Star for saving the lives of those he led in the moments leading up to his death. Zembiec is still honored and loved by his Marines today.

In addition to the active-duty service members, veterans, and their families in attendance, ex-NFL linebacker and San Diego Charger, Donnie Edwards, was present. Edwards established a great connection with the battalion in the early 2000's when he and other Chargers came aboard Camp Pendleton to meet with Marines and Sailors.

"Events like this are so special and I really enjoy supporting and being an ally to service members and veterans," said Edwards.

The event took on a special meaning to vets of the battle still in uniform today.

"This is so special, so special to me. I grew up in 2/1 so I share a lot of the memories of everyone

here," said Master Gunnery Sgt. Mateo Camargo, the operations chief for 2nd Bn., 1st Marines, who served as a TOW gunner with the battalion in 2004. "All of these events just mean a lot, and doing it now in the position I am in here just further fuels the fire I have for this unit and these Marines."

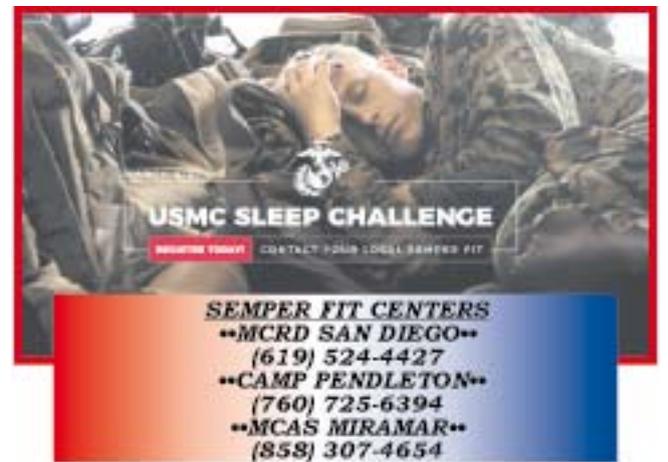
The emotion and passion of the participants was readily apparent as the veterans and their families filed onto the battalion's parade deck. Hugs, laughs, and even tears demonstrated the love for each other across the group, especially for the Gold Star families in attendance.

"Being here today and hopefully making it to the top of that mountain means everything to me," said De'on Miller, the mother of Silver Star recipient

Lance Cpl. Aaron Austin. "I had Aaron for 21 years, but I've had these guys around me for 20, so they're my family now."

Austin was posthumously awarded the Silver Star for reinforcing a suppressed rooftop position and saving multiple Marines during an enemy attack. Austin is just one example of the selfless sacrifice the Marines of Gunsmoke displayed 20 years ago. Among the group Austin saved was Rick Loomis, an embedded journalist who reported on the battle, who also attended the reunion.

"It was so intense there, I will never forget it and I respect the hell out of everyone who lived it and lives it now," said Loomis, who named his son after Austin. "I helped carry Aaron off the battlefield and now try to help veterans wherever I can."



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PHOTO GALLERY

Office of Naval Intelligence highlights priorities, new cloud-based capabilities at WEST 2024

SAN DIEGO - The Office of Naval Intelligence highlighted its maritime expertise and new cloud-based capabilities during the WEST 2024 conference held recently here. WEST draws tens of thousands of military, government, and industry partners together each year to discuss technological challenges and solutions. WEST 2024's theme, "Are Acquisition and Readiness on Pace to Meet Global Security Demands?" focused discussions on the Navy's readiness to address future challenges. The commander of Office of Naval Intelligence, Rear Adm. Mike Brookes, delivered remarks in the Navy Information Warfare Pavilion Theater that addressed the importance of ONI's expertise in the maritime domain and how ONI is prepared to deliver decision advantage in times of peace and crisis.

Carl Vinson Carrier Strike Group returns home

SAN DIEGO - Aircraft carrier *Carl Vinson* returned to its homeport of NAS North Island, Feb. 23, following a four-month deployment to the Western Pacific. *Carl Vinson* was joined by two other CSG-1 ships, cruiser *Princeton* and destroyer *Sterett* (DDG 104), which returned to their homeport at Naval Base San Diego. "This carrier strike group and our Sailors' deployment accomplishments demonstrate our unwavering contribution to the Navy's global engagement strategy," said Rear Adm. Carlos Sardiello, CSG-1 commander. "During the past four months, we routinely flew and sailed anywhere international law allows to assure Americans, allies and partners of our commitment to bolstering regional security and stability in the Indo-Pacific. With the unwavering support of our families and friends, we were proud to sail and fly forward as a symbol and the promise of America's advantage at sea."

Operation Seawolf: Air Force/Navy team

CORONADO - 114th Fighter Wing Airmen traveled to Naval Base North Island for Operation Sea Wolf recently. The main objective of the training exercise is to execute joint agile maritime operations. "This training with the Navy, Marines, and other Air Force units allows us to train on things we really can't do back in South Dakota," said Lt. Col. Eric Cleveringa, 175th Fighter Squadron commander. Operation Seawolf benefited pilots, maintainers, and other 114th Airmen by implementing Multicapable Airman training. It allowed Airmen to work in an unfamiliar and austere environment to put their skills to the test by accomplishing the flying mission with a smaller team.



PACIFIC OCEAN (Feb. 25, 2024) Navy Divers assigned to Explosive Ordnance Disposal Mobile Unit 1 help NASA Astronaut Navy Capt. Victor J. Glover Jr., out of a crew module test article during Underway Recovery Test 11. In preparation for NASA's Artemis II crewed mission, which will send four astronauts in Orion beyond the Moon, NASA and the Department of Defense will conduct a series of tests to demonstrate and evaluate the processes, procedures and hardware used in recovery operations for crewed lunar missions. Amphibious transport docks, like USS *San Diego*, have unique capabilities that make it an ideal partner to support NASA. U.S. Navy photo by MC2 Connor Burns



CAMP PENDLETON (Feb. 29, 2024) Donnie Edwards, a former NFL linebacker, speaks with veterans of 2nd Battalion, 1st Marine Regiment, 1st Marine Division, and their family members at the Camp Horno memorial crosses as part of a reunion hike for the 20th anniversary of Operation Vigilant Resolve, also known as the first Battle of Fallujah, here. U.S. Marine Corps photo by Sgt. Ezekieljay Correa (see story page 7)



CAMP PENDLETON (Feb. 25, 2024) - A Marine conducts experimentation utilizing the Tactical Resupply Vehicle-150 during Project Convergence - Capstone 4 here. Civilians with the Army Combat Capabilities Development Command and Marine Corps War Fighting Lab, continue experimenting with the TRV-150 which is designed to provide rapid and assured highly automated aerial distribution of supply packages to small units operating in contested environments. U.S. Army photo by Sgt. Nathan Smith

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by
Lisa
Smith
Molinari

In the Broadway musical version of Robert Louis Stevenson's 1886 novella, *The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*, Dr. Jekyll has a romantic partner named Lisa, who he marries near the end of the story. [Spoiler alert: Lisa becomes a victim of Mr. Hyde, who nearly strangles her at their wedding reception.]

Not only do I have the same name as Jekyll's ill-fated bride, I'm also romantically linked to someone with a dual personality — my husband, Francis. He's never tried to strangle me, thank goodness, but he sometimes morphs from a hard-working, retired Navy Captain, into someone else altogether.

Francis' Mr. Hyde is not violent or evil. To the contrary, he's a helpless, broken down man with a severe limp, who emits an endless series of moans and groans while hobbling around our house. Francis is in his 50s, but mysteriously, his alter ego has the physical capabilities of a man twenty years his senior. Francis' decrepit doppelgänger demands and feels entitled to frequent help from others. Namely, me.

To be fair, Francis's helpless twin reveals himself mostly when he is tired, sick or injured. Lately, Mr. Hyde has been overstaying his welcome.

Hyde and seeking attention

Francis had knee replacement surgery eight weeks ago. During his brief hospital stay, he was Dr. Jekyll — charming and agreeable, enduring pain with a positive attitude. But as soon we crossed the threshold of our house, Mr. Hyde made his appearance.

"The anesthetic has worn off," he moaned, "I need ice!" During the first two weeks, Mr. Hyde required constant ministrations — pillows, ice packs, drinks, medication, TV clickers, books, blankets, snacks, help with this, that and the other. While managing my work and household responsibilities, I was Hyde's primary caregiver. Despite his reputation for dramatics, I knew he truly needed my assistance in those early days, and I was happy to help.

But soon, physical therapists showed up for home visits, and strange phenomena began occurring. When outsiders weren't around, Francis loudly verbalized his pain. "Heee, heee, heee, ungh, oohph," Francis whimpered, grimacing histrionically while stooped over his crutches. The theatrical racket sounded vaguely similar to the Lamaze breathing method I was taught during my first pregnancy.

But as soon as the therapists set foot in our house, Francis' contractions seemed to stop. In an instant, he stood up straight, smoothed his furrowed brow, adopted a positive attitude, and stopped fussing. Mr. Hyde had taken his leave. Captain Molinari was back!

"Great work today, Francis. I'll see you Thursday," the

therapist said while walking out the front door after a session. I waved good-bye, and as I closed the door, I turned to see Hyde, back again. Slouched and grimacing, he hee-ed, hoo-ed, and ungh-ed as if the baby's head was crowning.

"Ohhh, I'm gonna be really sore after that session," he grumbled.

In the weeks that followed, Francis continued to exhibit his dual personalities. Pessimistic Mr. Hyde presented himself only to close family and friends to garner maximum sympathy and assistance. Capable Captain Molinari took over during medical appointments and work calls, the epitome of strength and positivity.

"It's all about attention," said Marty, Francis' college buddy, when Francis noisily hobbled off to the bathroom during Marty's recent visit. Sensing my frustration, Marty felt the need to distill our situation down to one core human motivation — attention.

Marty was right. Ever since Francis grew up in a big Irish-Italian family with five kids, he's wanted more attention. Francis has worked hard, in the military and in the civilian workplace after retirement. Is it so much to ask for a little extra care every once in a while?

As much as I'd like to permanently evict Mr. Hyde, I get it. Attention-seeking was the reason I was elected 1984 Indiana High School Class Clown, after all. It's my primary motivation for being a writer, and it's what induced me to dance like an idiot during a recent drag queen show at a local bar.

As humans, we long to be seen, heard and fussed over. Naturally, social beings want positive recognition, because it's an indication of belonging. In our own ways, we all Hyde and seek.

AutoMatters™ & More



by Jan Wagner

Note: This review contains spoilers.

"DUNE: Part Two," a film by award-winning director Denis Villeneuve, follows the six-time Academy Award-winning 2021 film "DUNE," and is based upon Frank Herbert's novel. The stellar cast includes many Oscar-nominees and winners.

Christopher Walken, who plays the key role of Padishah Emperor Shaddam IV, tells us that "This film is about power, about families, vengeance, rivalries. And love, it's a love story."

This chapter begins shortly after the end of "DUNE," and is set thousands of years in the future on the remote planet Arrakis — mostly in a vast desert where the Fremen people must somehow survive despite a near-complete lack of water.

In stark contrast is the life enjoyed by the ruthlessly oppressive Harkonnen, "a manifestation of corruption, violence and greed," who dispatch heavily armed, flying machines to plunder precious spice in the desert, and face fierce opposition from the Fremen people.

This is a dark, brutal story of revenge and retribution, set in a truly inhospitable, violent world and centered around Paul Atreides (Timothée Chalamet), who patiently and methodically seeks revenge against the conspirators who destroyed his family. "Facing a choice between the love of his life and the fate of the known universe, he endeavors to prevent a terrible future only he can foresee." The conflict has been raging on for centuries. The stakes could not be higher, as the fate of not only this world but others hangs in the balance.

Villeneuve tells us that this chapter is about "the integration of Paul and his mother, Jessica, into the Fremen culture, into the Fremen tribes." Paul falls in love, as he begins a campaign against the oppressors and foresees a holy war. "Paul is torn between his desire of vengeance and the fact that he has a strong intuition that the path he is on could bring him to catastrophe; that by trying to avenge his father, he could bring his friends, the Fremen, chaos and war."

The fighting and battle scenes are brutally realistic. According to Denis Villeneuve, "Roger Yuan ... has tre-

Review of 'DUNE: Part Two'

mendous knowledge of all different kinds of fighting and combat. His choreography defines the different ways of fighting for the Fremen, the Harkonnens, the Atreides and the Sardaukar. Everybody has their own way of using swords or daggers, and Roger was able to help us define what the combat shields are and the very precise way of fighting with them."

The world of "DUNE" has been meticulously crafted for unquestionable realism, shot 100% for IMAX and with incredible special effects. "We made so much effort to bring all the tiny details of the desert and what it is to be walking on Arrakis."

It is a world in which the natural and technological blend together seamlessly. In experimental, especially complex and realistic sequences, gigantic creatures called sandworms — upon which individual Fremen ride over vast distances, are summoned from the depths of the desert by devices that rhythmically pound the sand. "For a sequence with a baby sandworm ... to see the worm traveling under the sand, we decided to do it for real, and Gerd (SFX supervisor Gerd Nefzer) used a very sophisticated tracking system with carpets under the sand that created the illusion that the worm was traveling

under the sand. He also had to create the worm, creating a platform on gimbals that were designed to bring the specific movement I was looking for. It was quite tricky."

Hans Zimmer orchestrated the exquisite musical score. "Hans and I have shared the same passion, the same history with the book from when we were young. ... Hans started to build instruments again, do research, go deeper into the world of the Harkonnens. ... I wanted him to write something unforgettable for Chani. A love theme. ... I wanted something heartbreaking, and the most beautiful love theme ever written, and honestly I think he did it."

"DUNE: Part Two" is a film that you must see in a large, state-of-the-art IMAX theater, enveloped in immersive sound to truly experience the grandeur, epic scale and proportions of the fantasy world of "DUNE." It is in theaters now.

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

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Saturday - March 9
 1:00 PM The Beekeeper (2024) r
 3:30 PM Lisa Frankenstein pg13
 6:00 PM Land of Bad r
Sunday - March 10
 1:00 PM Lisa Frankenstein pg13
 3:00 PM Argyle pg13

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 8:00 PM Land of Bad r
Saturday - March 9
 2:10 PM Argyle pg13
 6:00 PM Arthur the King (ADVANCE SCREENING) pg13
Sunday - March 10
 1:00 PM Lisa Frankenstein pg13
 3:10 PM Land of Bad r
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Sunday, March 10
 12:00PM - Lisa Frankenstein (PG-13)
 3:00PM - Land of the Bad (R)
Friday, March 15
 6:00PM - Bob Marley: One Love (PG-13)
Saturday, March 16
 3:00 M - Lisa Frankenstein (PG-13)
 6:30PM - Bob Marley: One Love (PG-13)
Sunday, March 17
 12:00 PM - Argyle (PG-13)
 3:00 PM - Land of Bad (R)



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SOCIAL SECURITY MATTERS

Should I claim Social Security at 68, or wait until I'm 70?

Dear Rusty: I have a question regarding my SS benefits. I turned 68 this month and work part time. I earned \$28,000 last year but will probably gross \$36,000 to \$38,000 this year. My husband collects his SS, and he earned \$25,000 last year. I was told by a financial planner that I should apply for my benefits now, instead of waiting until I'm 70. I would collect \$1700/month at 68 and \$1944/month if I wait. Which is the smarter move?

Signed: Seeking Answers

Dear Seeking: I'm sure your financial advisor would agree that your decision on when to claim your Social Security comes down to just a few basic things - 1) how badly you need the money, 2) your life expectancy, and 3) whether you will receive a spousal boost from your husband when you claim.

Because you have already passed your full retirement age (FRA) of 66 years and 4 months, your work earnings won't negatively affect your monthly SS benefit amount. If you claim now, however, your work earnings will affect how much of your SS benefits will be subject to income tax. Assuming you file your income tax as "married/filing jointly," up to 85% of the Social Security benefits you receive during the tax year will become part of your income taxable by the IRS. If you do not urgently need the extra money that your SS will provide, then waiting longer to claim will also postpone paying income tax on your received benefits, and that may be a consideration.

Your life expectancy is key in making your decision on when to claim. You already know that your benefit will be \$244 per month more if you wait until you are 70 to claim. If you claim at 68 (e.g., this month), you will collect about \$40,800 by the time you reach 70. If you, instead, wait until age 70 to get that extra \$244/month benefit, it will take you about 14 years collecting at the higher rate to offset the \$40,800 you would have received had you claimed now (in other words, you would break even moneywise at about age 84). If your life expectancy is longer, then waiting to claim may be the better choice. Of course, no one knows how long they will live but, for general guidance, average life expectancy for a woman your current age is about 87. Family history and your current health are obviously influencing factors as well. If you wish to get a more personal estimate of your life expectancy, I suggest using this tool:

www.socialsecurityreport.org/tools/life-expectancy-calculator/

In the end, if you believe you will attain at least average life expectancy and you don't urgently need the money now, waiting longer will not only give you a higher monthly benefit in your later years, but also the most in cumulative lifetime benefits. If, however, you have reason to suspect you won't achieve at least average life expectancy, or you need the SS money sooner, claiming before age 70 is likely the better move.

One other thing to consider: If your benefit as your husband's spouse will be more than your own earned maximum SS retirement benefit, then you should claim your SS benefit now. Your maximum benefit as a spouse would be 50% of your husband's full retirement age entitlement and, if that is more than your own benefit will be at age 70, then claiming now to get your maximum spousal benefit would be your best choice. To get a spousal benefit from your husband, your personal FRA entitlement (not your age 68 amount) would need to be less than half of his FRA entitlement. If that isn't the case, then you should make your decision based only on your own Social Security entitlement, as described above.

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Largest military film festival in U.S. returns to Balboa Park May 6-11

The GI Film Festival San Diego, the largest military film festival in the U.S., has selected the 21 films that will screen at the Museum of Photographic Arts at the San Diego Museum of Art (MOPA @ SDMA) in Balboa Park from May 6-11, 2024.

After reviewing about 100 submissions, festival organizers, with the assistance of a community

advisory committee, selected this year's film lineup which includes full-length documentaries, student films, comedies, and more that are for, by, and about the military. A complete list of this year's lineup with descriptions, runtimes, and directorial credits is at the end of this news release.

Local military film festival presents unique stories about heal-

ing, homelessness, historic events, and the diverse military experience

In selecting the lineup each year, the festival organizers search for films that showcase military experiences that are often overlooked on the big screen. Festival-goers won't see action-packed Hollywood blockbusters, but stories that highlight personal accomplishments, the transition home from war, post-trau-

matic stress, military homelessness, resilience, and healing invisible wounds that occur after service. Also planned are creative and experimental films that celebrate humor, wit, and romance.

The GI Film Festival San Diego tackles challenging topics to give festival attendees a glimpse into the unrecognized experiences of service members, veterans, their families, and caregivers. The festival aspires to bridge the military-civilian divide to allow civilians and military allies to celebrate the accomplishments of current and former service members and better understand the difficulties and struggles they face each day. Ultimately, the festival is a safe space to connect with other veterans, speak about their experiences, and recognize their fallen brothers and sisters.

The GI Film Festival San Diego welcomes all to attend its six-day event. Ticket sales begin March 1, 2024, at the festival's online box office. There, attendees can secure individual tickets or multi-ticket packs to attend multiple screenings. Tickets for most screenings start at \$10 each or \$8 for military and veterans.

For up-to-date information on this year's film festival, how to attend, and ways to get involved, visit GIFilmFestivalSD.org.

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Seeing wavy lines/missing parts of your vision? Could be Age-Related Macular Degeneration

by Janet A. Aker

MHS Communications

Age-related macular degeneration may cause a gradual reduction in your central vision over time, so you might not recognize AMD at first.

According to U.S. Air Force Col. (Dr.) Kristine Pierce, with the 96th Medical Group at Eglin AFB, “The change can also be immediate. You can go to sleep one night and wake up with blurry vision or loss

of vision.”

Another symptom of AMD is that “the perfectly straight edges of a doorframe may appear distorted and wavy, and you have missing areas of vision such as a blind spot or spots. These signs can happen equally,” she said.

Pierce, a vitreoretinal surgeon, sees a number of retirees and beneficiaries at Eglin Air Force Base Hospital opens TRICARE.mil, Florida. Roughly 50% of her patients have AMD, she said, adding, “I’m a retina specialist, so I see it every day.”

According to the National Eye Institute opens NIH.gov, damage from aging to the macula—“the part of the eye that controls sharp, straight-ahead vision”—is the cause of AMD. “The macula is part of the retina (the light-sensitive tissue at the back of the eye),” NEI stated.

It’s the leading cause of permanent impairment of reading or close-up vision. AMD doesn’t usually cause complete blindness, but losing your central vision can make it harder to see faces, read, drive, or do close-up work like cooking, needlework, or fixing things around the house.

The Defense Health Agency’s Vision Center of Excellence opens VCE on Health.mil recommends watching out for these signs of AMD:

- Blurry or fuzzy vision
- Difficulty recognizing familiar faces
- Bumping into walls, steps, or other obstacles
- Straight lines appear wavy or missing areas
- A grayed out, dark, or missing area in your central vision
- Definitive areas (blind spots) of missing vision
- Decrease or loss of central vision

Monitor Your Eyesight Regularly and Amsler Grids

Because of the differences in when AMD shows up, it’s important to get your eyesight checked on a regular basis by an optometrist to see if you have or are developing the disease.

“If concerned, talk to your health



Navy Lt. Joseph Jeskie, an optometrist at Naval Branch Health Clinic Kings Bay, Georgia, performs an eye exam on a patient. “As part of our overall health, everyone requires a comprehensive eye exam from an optometrist or ophthalmologist on a regular basis,” Jeskie said. “In the early stages, many eye diseases like glaucoma, macular degeneration, and diabetic retinopathy have virtually no symptoms.” Photo by Deidre Smith, Naval Hospital Jacksonville

care provider and have a routine eye exam with an optometrist. TRICARE covers optometry/routine eye exams every two years. No referral is required to see a local optometrist who takes TRICARE—opens TRICARE.mil,” Pierce said. You can also see an ophthalmologist for diagnosis or treatment if they are covered by TRICARE.

If you’re already concerned about changes in your eyesight, your doctor most likely will give you an Amsler grid to test your vision loss every day at home. You look at the grid—heavy paper stock with black-and-white,

equally spaced, horizontal and vertical lines printed on it—to see if the lines are becoming wavy, distorted, or have spaces missing.

Diagnosing AMD is a combination of examining the retina and optical coherence tomography imaging, Pierce said.

To examine the retina for AMD, the eye specialist will dilate the pupils with eye drops, which may take 15-20 minutes to work fully. Dilation allows the eye doctor to obtain a wider and more detailed view of the retina and the internal eye structures.

Also, necessary diagnostic testing is easier to accomplish.

Testing the back of the retina takes a few minutes per eye. The eye specialist will also perform a test called optical coherence tomography, or OCT, to observe the layers of the retina a direct examination cannot see.

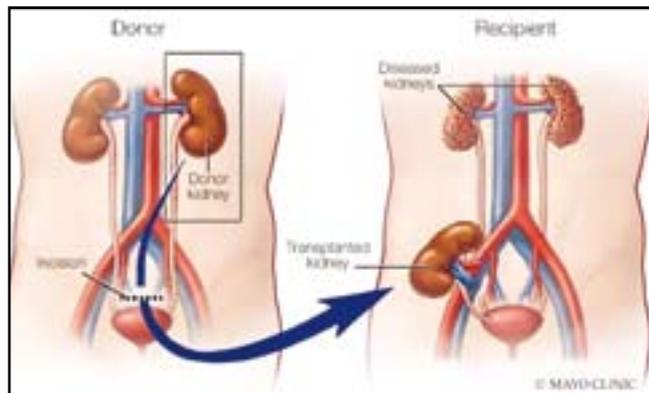
It’s non-invasive and uses light waves to take cross-sectional maps of the retina’s thickness and layers. It’s like putting a dye in your eye (fluorescein angiography) but without the dye and, it’s quicker. OCT can identify the earliest changes in AMD and can help to diagnose and monitor for small progressive changes.

Lifestyle and Other Risk Factors for AMD

Age-related macular degeneration can develop at any time, even as early as your 50s, Pierce said.

Dr. David Eliason, an ophthalmologist and deputy chief for the VCE, cautioned about these lifestyle and other risk factors for AMD:

- Older age
- Presence of AMD in the other eye
- Family history of AMD
- Smoking
- UV light exposure
- High blood pressure
- Body mass index of 30 kg/m² or higher (overweight or obese)
- Diet low in omega 3 and 6, vitamins, carotenoid, and minerals
- Diet high in fat
- Lack of exercise



Mayo Clinic Minute: Expanding the living kidney donor pool to those with Type 2 diabetes

by Deb Balzer

With more than 90,000 people in the U.S. awaiting kidney transplants, the demand exceeds the available supply — emphasizing the critical importance of identifying safe ways to broaden the kidney donor pool.

Dr. Naim Issa, a Mayo Clinic transplant nephrologist, says, until recently, patients with Type 2 diabetes have been ruled out as potential living kidney donors. Now, following strict criteria, some patients may be eligible to help close the gap on this ever-growing need for living kidney donors.

Every eight minutes, a person is added to the national kidney transplant waiting list.

“Unfortunately, in this country, there is a large gap between the demand for kidney transplantation and the supply of organs from deceased donors,” says Dr. Issa. Dialysis is an option for patients with end-stage kidney disease. Though Dr. Issa says a transplant is preferred — and having a living donor is best.

“Kidney transplantation offers greater survival benefits and increases the lifespan of people in need of kidney transplant,” he says.

And that’s a reason why it’s important to expand the eligible kidney donor pool.

“Allowing people with Type 2 diabetes mellitus may open the door for some people who have not been eligible before to be potential living kidney donors,” Dr. Issa says.

Those eligible must be older than 60, have well-controlled Type 2 diabetes, not on insulin and have no family history of kidney disease.

“Any potential individual who would like to be a candidate for living kidney donation should undergo a very thorough health assessment and very thorough examination to ensure they are healthy enough,” says Dr. Issa.

It’s about safeguarding the potential donor’s overall health — while helping close the gap.

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