

DISPATCH

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FRANCHETTI TAKES THE HELM AS ACTING CHIEF OF NAVAL OPERATIONS

SIXTY-THIRD YEAR NO. 13
THURSDAY, AUGUST 17, 2023



Future Firefighter Senior Chief Logistics Specialist Yayah Sesay (left) assists his daughter during a firefighting capabilities demonstration conducted as part of a family day aboard submarine tender USS *Emory S. Land* Aug. 4. Friends and family were invited aboard to experience a day in the life of a Sailor first-hand. *Emory S. Land* is tasked to provide expeditionary intermediate-level maintenance, services, and logistics support to deployed submarines. U.S. Navy photo by MC2 Nikita Custer

USS MOBILE BAY DECOMMISSIONS, HONORS 36 YEARS OF SERVICE

by Julie Ann Ripley

Naval Surface Force, Pacific Fleet

SAN DIEGO - USS *Mobile Bay* (CG 53) honored more than

three decades of naval service during a decommissioning ceremony at Naval Base San Diego Aug. 10.



Capt. Brandon J. Burkett, commanding officer of cruiser USS *Mobile Bay*, right, and Command Master Chief Neal Olds, command master chief of *Mobile Bay*, display the commissioning pennant during the ship's decommissioning ceremony. *Mobile Bay* was decommissioned after more than 36 years of distinguished service. Commissioned Feb. 21, 1987, *Mobile Bay* served in the U.S. Atlantic, Seventh, and U.S. Pacific Fleet and supported Operation Desert Storm. U.S. Navy photo by MC2 Stevin C. Atkins

Vice Adm. Roy Kitchener, commander, Naval Surface Forces served as the ceremony's guest speaker and wished the current crew fair winds and following seas as they bid farewell to their ship.

"The Sailors of USS *Mobile Bay* demonstrated time and time again the resolve and readiness the Surface Force provides around the clock in support of our nation's interests," said Kitchener. "Everywhere this ship and crew deployed, *Mobile Bay* Sailors served their nation well, and lived up to the valor enshrined in the Battle of Mobile Bay."

Commanded by Capt. Brandon J. Burkett, *Mobile Bay* maintained a crew of 30 officers and 300 enlisted members.

"It's been an honor to be *Mobile Bay*'s last commanding officer," said Burkett. "It has been a distinct privilege to work

alongside some of the finest Sailors our Navy and our nation have to offer. Their persistence through adversity is commendable and truly represents the spirit of *Mobile Bay*'s motto, 'Full speed ahead.' They truly embody what it means to be a 'MOBster.' It is now my solemn responsibility as the ship's final captain to order hauling down the colors and disembarking the crew.

"Though to many of us 'MOBsters' past and present, the feeling is deeper than that. Those who've gone to sea know that a ship is more than a machine that floats. When you are away from home for months on end your ship becomes your home and your protection. We take care of her and she takes care of us. Simply put, she becomes family. It has been an honor to serve with my crew on this exemplary warship."

see *Mobile Bay*, page 2

Vietnam marks 1st stop for Pacific Partnership 2023

by Ensign Madison Kwok

PHU YEN, Vietnam - Pacific Partnership has returned to Tuy Hoa, Phu Yen Province, Vietnam, Aug. 9, to commence the largest annual multinational humanitarian assistance and disaster relief preparedness mission conducted in the Indo-Pacific.

Returning to Vietnam for the 12th time, Pacific Partnership enables participants, including U.S. and Vietnamese personnel, to work together to enhance disaster response capabilities and foster new and enduring friendships.

"This year, as we mark the 10-year anniversary of our Comprehensive Partnership, we rededicate ourselves to enhancing bilateral cooperation in humanitarian endeavors," said U.S. Ambassador to Vietnam, Marc E. Knapper.

"Over the last 18 years, Pacific Partnership has translated our leaders' commitments into tangible actions, fostering a safer and more secure future for our people. Our now 28-year bilateral relationship ensures that both current and future generations reap the benefits. Vietnam's role as a partner in the largest annual multinational humanitarian assistance and disaster relief preparedness mission in the Indo-Pacific underscores the vital importance of our partnership in shaping a brighter, safer, and more resilient future," said Knapper.

At the invitation of host nations, the Pacific Partnership's mission partners conduct tailored humanitarian civic action preparedness activities in areas such as engineering, disaster response, public health, and host nation outreach events. This year's mission will feature nearly 1,500 personnel from partner nations from Australia, Canada, Chile, Japan, Republic of Korea, New Zealand, and the U.K.

"The 2023 Pacific Partnership mission demonstrates our long-standing commitment to the Indo-Pacific while further strengthening enduring relationships and cooperation with partner-nations like Vietnam," said Rear Adm. Mark A. Melson, Commander, Task Force 73 and Executive Agent for this year's mission.

Connect with PP23 at <https://www.facebook.com/pacificpartnership/>.

Servicemembers answer aid call in Hawaii

(Aug. 14, 2023) The National Guard continues to provide support in Maui, Hawaii, after a devastating wildfire swept through part of the island. More than 130 troops have been activated - including Army National Guard and Air National Guard personnel - to assist in the ongoing local and federal response effort. The fast-moving blaze began Aug. 8, fueled by strong winds from a nearby hurricane. The wildfire has killed more than 90 people. Officials are preparing for a long recovery and are now warning residents that toxic materials and particles may be present in the air left behind by the fires. Federal Emergency Management Agency officials are now surveying the wildfire area for hazards. See page 4 for more

The National Aviation Day, August 19, is a United States national observance that celebrates the development of aviation. The holiday was established in 1939 by Franklin Delano Roosevelt, who issued a presidential proclamation which designated the anniversary of Orville Wright's birthday to be National Aviation Day



Career & Education

Get the latest career information and educational opportunities from all the services.

See page 5

Base Movie Schedule

Mission Impossible-Dead Reckoning Part One, Ruby Gillman, Teenage Kraken, Barbie, Oppenheimer. See page 10

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Marines make a wish come true



Cade Liles, a child with the Make-A-Wish foundation, poses for a group photo with personnel of Marine Corps Recruit Depot San Diego Aug. 3. U.S. Marine Corps photo by Lance Cpl. Francisco Angel

by Lance Cpl.
Francisco Angel

MARINE CORPS RECRUIT DEPOT SAN DIEGO - For the regular recruit, earning the title United States Marine takes 13 weeks, but for 13-year-old Louisiana native Cade Liles, this journey took 48-hours. With the support of organizations like Make-A-Wish, along with the personnel at Marine Corps Recruit Depot San Diego and Camp Pendleton, together, volunteers and Marines were able to make Cade's dream come true; experiencing what life is like to live and train as a Marine.

Cade's interest in the Marine Corps originated from his great uncle, a Marine Corps veteran who passed away from cancer. His admiration for his great-uncle's service ignited a passion in Cade that pushed him to study Marine Corps history. Cade wanted to experience the comradery and pride that comes from being a Marine.

"Cade was born with Cystic Fibrosis, a genetic condition that affects anywhere where there is mucus," said Holly Liles, Cade's mother. "For him, it mainly affects his sinuses and his gut, it's chronic, and incurable – but we're still rockin' it!"

Cade's Make-A-Wish journey took a big step forward when he arrived at MCRD San Diego, Aug. 3. Stepping onto the iconic yellow footprints, he embarked on an experience that every enlisted Marine has gone through. Upon making his phone call home, he read the script on the wall, letting

his mom know he arrived safely. Cade received his Marine Corps uniforms, kicking off what his mother called a series of unforgettable moments.

Following the first 30-minutes after arriving at boot camp known as receiving, Cade was given the honor of leading the motivational run for Alpha Company, the graduating company that week. After the run, he received a Senior Drill Instructor speech, reinforcing the values and principles that make Marines stand out as a distinct and respected group. He then went on to earn his Marine Corps Martial Arts tan belt, learning

his family continued their Make-A-Wish journey at Camp Pendleton. He was greeted by Staff Sgt. Francisco Rodriguez, a Primary Marksmanship Instructor with Weapons Field and Training Battalion. Rodriguez taught Cade the basics of shooting an M16-A4 service rifle, and gave him the opportunity to practice what he learned in an indoor marksmanship facility.

Cade's visit to Camp Pendleton was made even more special by the presence of Marines from many different occupational specialties. He learned about different jobs and their roles and responsibilities. He toured a static

HONOR GRADUATE
"My favorite part of both days was probably calling the chopper! And eating," said Cade Liles. "It was amazing, I loved it!"



the fundamentals of self-defense. Cade also toured the armory where he learned about multiple weapon systems used throughout the Marine Corps. The day ended in a ceremony where Cade was awarded his Eagle, Globe, and Anchor insignia, marking his successful completion of recruit training and his official transformation into a Marine. Leadership at MCRD San Diego also awarded Cade with a plaque, signifying his achievement as an Honor Graduate. Cade had the opportunity to experience a glimpse of what recruits go through over the 13-week period.

The following day Cade and

display at Weapons and Field Training Battalion of military vehicles, and air assets, inside and out - learning how to operate the different parts. Cade's most memorable moment was using a radio to communicate with the Helicopter pilots.

"My favorite part of both days was probably calling the chopper! And eating," said Cade. "It was amazing, I loved it!" His mother also expressed great gratitude for the Marines involved in making Cade's wish come true. "Words aren't enough to ever say thank you for everything I've gotten to watch him experience," said Liles. "It was completely a dream come true for him."



Cruiser Mobile Bay sits pier side during her decommissioning ceremony. U.S. Navy photo by MC2 Stevin C. Atkins

Mobile Bay

continued from page 1

Mobile Bay was built by Ingalls Shipbuilding in Pascagoula, Miss., and commissioned Feb. 21, 1987, Alabama State Docks in Mobile, Ala.

The ship's operational history includes the 1989 evacuation of U.S. Embassy in Beirut, Lebanon; launching 22 Tomahawk Land Attack Missiles (TLAMs) in support of Operation Desert Storm and evacuation of thousands of people displaced by the volcanic eruption of Mt. Pinatubo in the vicinity of Subic Bay, Republic of the Philippines during Operation Fiery Vigil in 1991.

Also, Coast Guard Law Enforcement Detachment (CGLED) seizure of 10.5 metric tons of cocaine approximately 800 miles southwest of Acapulco, Mexico, and launching Tomahawk Land Attack Missiles (TLAMs) in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom in 2003.

The ship's sponsor, Kathryn Jane Maury, helped organize the National League of Families of American Prisoners and Missing in Southeast Asia in the 1960s after her Navy pilot husband was shot down and captured in 1965.

She was married to U.S. Sen. Jeremiah Denton, a Vietnam War vet who was awarded the Navy Cross for his heroism while a prisoner of war. USS Jeremiah Denton (DDG 129), a Flight III Arleigh-Burke class destroyer is named for him. Mrs. Denton passed away on Nov. 22, 2007, at the age of 81.

The ship was the first named after and in honor of the Battle of Mobile Bay in August 1864. During the famous American Civil War naval battle between Union forces under the command of Adm. David Farragut and Confederate forces under Adm. Franklin Buchanan.

The ship's motto, "Full speed ahead," is based on Farragut's famous command issued during the battle and typifies the

admiral's key to success in war, straight thinking and determined action.

Mobile Bay carried on the tradition of patriotism and courage displayed by the ships and Sailors in the historic battle which concluded when Farragut's Union ships converged upon the Confederate ironclad CSS Tennessee firing broadsides and ramming it at full speed with their prows.

After two hours, Tennessee was dead in the water, it's steering gone and stack shot away, filling the gun deck with suffocating heat and flames. Only then did the wounded Buchanan give the order to surrender. Tennessee's colors came down, concluding one of the most important battles in the Civil War.

Mobile Bay will be inactivated and towed to the Navy's Inactive Ship's facility in Bremerton, Wash., where they will be in a Logistic Support Asset status.

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Prevention Assistance and Response program advances with recent training

by C. Todd Lopez
DOD News

Last week, more than two dozen prevention assistance and response professionals participated in training at Quantico, Va., to enhance their ability to prevent workplace violence at 17 military installations.

The 2009 active shooter event at Fort Hood, Texas - now known as Fort Cavazos - resulted in the deaths of 13 individuals. It was a devastating blow to the military community, and it raised questions about how better to prevent workplace violence and identify insider threats to military and national security.

Prompted in part by that event and others, the Defense Department last year stood up the Prevention Assistance and Response program, which falls under the Defense Counterintelligence and Security Agency headquartered at Quantico.

The PAR program puts trained professionals on military installations to assist commanders in preventing and addressing workplace violence and other types of insider threat concerns.

"On the prevention side, this

ranges from military community briefings and outreach, education and training on reporting and indicators of violence to help individuals understand when problems may be arising," said Dave Paravecchia, chief of the DOD PAR division.

Paravecchia said, PAR professionals are expected to work closely with prevention and human resources experts to ensure military and civilian leaders are aware of various services, such as financial planning, marriage counseling, and other employee assistance programs. These programs address some of the issues that, if left unaddressed, might lead some employees to act out with violence, he said.

"With response, if the PAR coordinators learn that an individual is beginning to escalate further down the path of violence, they will work closely with law enforcement, security, and leadership to better understand the risk and help develop potential mitigation measures to stop the threat," Paravecchia said.

At the military installations where DOD has placed a PAR professional, Paravecchia said commanders can expect those

individuals to be attuned to workplace violence issues within their organizations and communities.

"The PAR professional will also gather information, work with other stakeholders and members of the staff to develop a holistic assessment of what they know and make recommendations to raise awareness, assist with leader decision making, and help prevent and reduce risk," he said. "The end goal is

help stop people from making career-ending decisions, from hurting their fellow military community members, maintain unit readiness and enhance unit cohesion."

The DOD currently has 29 PAR personnel hired who are now assigned to 12 joint military installations along with five service-specific installations. Paravecchia said the program expects to hire 13 more PAR professionals this fiscal year and an additional 10 next fiscal year.



NAVAL ACADEMY (Aug. 14, 2023) Secretary of the Navy Carlos Del Toro, center, looks on as Adm. Lisa Franchetti, left, assumes responsibilities as acting chief of naval operations during a relinquishment of office ceremony for Adm. Michael M. Gilday.

DoD photo by Chad J. McNeely

actions, data aggregation, threat and risk assessment, subject professional judgement tools, coping mechanisms, available services and other mitigation measures that can be implemented by military and civilian leaders to help move someone off the path of violence," Paravecchia said.

The PAR program is relatively new, and Paravecchia said it will go through a yearlong assessment as it moves through the three phases of initial operating capability, implementing the tasks associated with each phase until it meets full operational capability in the first quarter of fiscal year 2025.

During the recent training at Quantico, Paravecchia said, the PAR professionals gathered to learn about various prevention, assistance and response programs and about partner requirements so they can be better equipped to work collaboratively at the installation level.

Specific to workplace violence, the PAR cadre are trained on indicators of violent behaviors, friction points in an individual's life which may be influencing their behaviors and

highlight the return on investment for this program, but also improve awareness for leaders where workplace violence issues may exist within different subordinate commands and organizations."

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Navy

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- Global warfighting simulation puts the pressure on Navy, Marine Corps

Marine Corps

- Marine veteran killed while volunteering as a fighter in Ukraine
- Marine test pilot set to command NASA's SpaceX Crew
- Marine charged with sexual assault of girl found in California barracks

Air Force

- Can Tyndall's new tech keep airmen's dorms mold-free?
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- Ramstein C-130s get invasion stripes for D-Day commemoration next year

Space Force

- U.S. military and allies get a feel for the value of commercial satellite imagery

Coast Guard

- Coast Guard is searching for 4 divers who went missing south of Cape Fear

National Guard

- Nebraska to use pandemic funds for National Guard border trip

DoD committed to assisting Hawaii as wildfire recovery continues

by Joseph Clark
DOD News

The Defense Department is committed to supporting Hawaii in any way it can as state, local and federal officials respond to the devastating wildfire that swept through Maui, Pentagon Press Secretary Air Force Brig. Gen. Pat Ryder said Aug. 14.

Approximately 250 Hawaii National Guard personnel have been activated to assist in the ongoing wildfire response and recovery efforts, Ryder said, and Defense officials are ready to assist further at the request of state and federal emergency management professionals.

"WE ARE GOING TO SUPPORT THE STATE OF HAWAII WITH WHATEVER IT IS ASKED FOR IN ORDER TO ASSIST ON THE GROUND THERE."
Pentagon Press Secretary
Brig. Gen. Pat Ryder

Officially, Defense officials are ready to assist further at the request of state and federal emergency management professionals.

"We're going to continue to lean very far forward to assist the state of Hawaii, assist [the Federal Emergency Management Agency] and other supporting agencies to do everything we can to support the state and the people of Hawaii as we respond to this," he said.

The fast-moving blaze, which has been fueled by strong winds from a nearby hurricane, began last Tuesday, leaving more than 90 people dead and destroying hundreds of structures.

Officials are preparing for an extended recovery effort.

The National Guard began assisting soon after the fire broke out last week, initially activating 134 troops and assigning two Army National Guard CH-47 Chinook helicopters to support wildfire response and search-and-recovery efforts. Additional National Guard troops have been activated in recent days.

National Guard crews have dropped more than 189,000 gallons of water so far in support of wildfire efforts, Ryder said.

The National Guard personnel are also serving as liaison support to the Hawaiian Emergency Management Agency and are supporting local law enforcement.



(from top) Search and rescue Soldiers and Airmen assist Maui County and state officials in search and recovery efforts in Lahaina, Maui, Hawaii, Aug. 10. U.S. National Guard photos by Master Sgt. Andrew Jackson



♦ In addition to the National Guard support, the Army Reserve is providing the American Red Cross with space at the reserve center in Maui for supply distribution.

♦ The Army Corps of Engineers has sent debris removal personnel and temporary power experts to Maui to assist with response efforts.

♦ The Coast Guard has been conducting underwater surveys of the Lahaina harbor to identify any structural damage that may have occurred.

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



(below) A military aircraft participates in an aerial water bucket drop to fight the wildfire. U.S. National Guard photo by Master Sgt. Andrew Jackson

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Career and Education

Navy offers more free uniform options for pregnant Sailors

by Jennifer H. Svan
Stars and Stripes

The Navy is expanding a congressionally directed program that provides moms-to-be with free uniforms during pregnancy, a move made with the aim of doubling the number of participating Sailors.

Based on feedback, the service is adding four "sea bag component options" to its maternity uniform pilot program, Navy officials announced last week.

This will allow expectant Sailors to choose the best combination of uniforms for their work environment, according to the Navy Personnel Command.

More than 850 Sailors have received one set of each type of authorized maternity uniform since the program launched in January 2022, a Navy administrative message said last week.

Uniforms are delivered to the home of each participant ready to wear at no personal cost,



Command Master Chief Samira McBride wears the maternity Navy service khaki uniform at the Joint Women's Leadership Symposium at Norfolk, Va., in July 2022. U.S. Navy photo by Jeanette M. Mullinax

regardless of where they are stationed.

Sailors will still receive the standard maternity uniforms, but effective immediately, additional choices are available, the message said.

Those include a "waterfront option" that comes with two

sets of working uniforms, one service uniform, one dress blue or white uniform and a cardigan sweater.

One of two "ashore staff" options includes a Navy working uniform and two service uniforms; the other includes one or two dress uniforms.

Sailors can update their selection if their command directs a change in uniform requirements, the Navy said.

The Navy began issuing temporary uniforms to expectant officers and enlisted Sailors after Congress in 2021 directed DoD to provide free loaner uniforms.

The goal is to provide immediate savings to pregnant service members and evaluate the cost savings for the military.

Active-duty and reserve Sailors worldwide are eligible to apply through Sept. 30, 2026.

Command must verify the member's pregnancy status. Volunteers are not eligible for a maternity uniform allowance during their pregnancy.

Unlike the Navy, which ships tailored maternity uniforms directly to Sailors, the Air Force targeted 10 bases for its pilot program. Most of those are stateside.

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A tale of two Pryors: Family paths diverge in the field of medicine

by MC2 Levi Decker
Naval Medical Forces Atlantic

Hospital Corpsman 1st Class Timothy Pryor, assigned to 1st Medical Battalion, 1st Marine Logistics Group, left the enlisted ranks and became a commissioned officer in a ceremony held on the flight deck of USS Midway Museum last month.

Pryor, a San Diego native, spent more than eight years serving as a Navy hospital corpsman, providing medical care to service members while also working towards being a student doctor. He was commissioned as part of the Health Professions Scholarship Program, which provides educational and commission opportunities for service members and civilians.

"I want to serve my nation as a Navy physician," said Pryor. "It's been a dream I've had for years. As a future doctor I'm privileged to commission and start this new part of my career."

Ensign Pryor received his first salute from his father, Naval Medical Forces Atlantic (NMFL) Command Master Chief Zachary Pryor, who was also a hospital corpsman. Timothy Pryor is the second continuous generation of his family to serve in the military.

"It was ... amazing," said Command Master Chief Pryor after a moment of silence. "Just the pride of having raised a child and see them pursue a dream. It's just a marvelous journey to see him go through. My wife and I are extremely proud of him."

The change from enlisted to officer has yet to sink in for the younger Pryor.

"It's surreal; I don't think it's really hit me yet," said Ensign Pryor with a chuckle. "As an officer, I'll be able

to relate more to Sailors since we have gone through similar experiences."

Ensign Pryor's past assignments include the 31st Marine Expeditionary Unit (MEU) and

portunity to receive mentorship about my career, leading people, dealing with adversity and navigating obstacles. He's been the most influential person of my naval career, and I imagine I'll continue to go to



Kelcy Pryor attaches shoulder boards to the uniform of her husband, Ensign Timothy Pryor, assigned to 1st Medical Battalion, during his commissioning ceremony. U.S. Navy photo by Lt. Corey Smith

Surface Warfare Schools Command (SWSC) Learning Site San Diego.

It was during his tour with the 31st MEU that Ensign Pryor had another pinning ceremony with his father, who was serving as the command master chief of Naval Hospital Guam, for his Fleet Marine Force (FMF) warfare device.

NMFL, headquartered in Portsmouth, Va., delivers operationally focused medical expertise and capabilities to meet Fleet, Marine and Joint Force requirements by providing equipment, sustainment and maintenance of medical forces during combat operations and public health crises.

"Tim's unit was on deployment and happened to stop in Guam, and I was able to pin on his FMF device," said Command Master Chief Pryor. "So, at least twice in my career I've been able to do something pretty unique for him, and it's very humbling as a father and as a master chief to be able to do that with your children."

Having a father as a command master chief throughout Ensign Pryor's enlisted career held a special experience for him.

"Having someone like Dad in my corner is like living next door to your chief," joked Ensign Pryor. "I got a rare op-

him for advice along the way for many years to come."

Ensign Pryor holds an associate degree in human biology, as well as a bachelor's degree in clinical lab science.

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Local Military

Liebold takes over as skipper of Essex

by Petty Officer 2nd Class
Christina Himes

SAN DIEGO - Amphibious assault ship *Essex* held a change of command below *Essex* in the Pride of California Dry Dock at BAE Systems Aug. 10.

Capt. Wayne Liebold relieved Capt. Aaron Taylor as the ship's commanding officer.

"Commanding *Essex* has exceeded every expectation I had for this assignment," said Taylor. "I'm extremely optimistic about the future of *Essex*, and Capt. Liebold will lead this crew to new levels of greatness."

Under Taylor's leadership, *Essex* participated in Los Angeles Fleet Week and the Rim of the Pacific 2022 Exercise. During RIMPAC, *Essex* trained with 26 nations, 38 ships, four submarines, more than 170 aircraft and 25,000 personnel, including embarked members from Republic of South Korea, Republic of Singapore, Columbian and Chilean navies. Most recently, Taylor oversaw *Essex* through a drydock period where critical maintenance and system updates took place.

"I'm truly grateful to have had the opportunity to conduct amphibious operations at sea, ex-



From left to right, Cmdr. Jeffrey Parks, USS Essex chaplain, Capt. Wayne Liebold, Capt. Aaron Taylor, and Rear Adm. Randall Peck, commander of Expeditionary Strike Group 3, salute colors during change of command on Essex. U.S. Navy photo by MC3 Isaak Martinez

pand appreciation for our Navy at LA Fleet Week, and ultimately bring *Essex* into the maintenance phase," said Taylor. "I have been astounded by the willingness of our Sailors to grind through discomfort and fatigue, achieving superb results on every major assessment, inspection and certification event."

During the ceremony, Rear Adm. Randall Peck, commander of Expeditionary Strike Group 3, presented Taylor the legion of merit award for his performance as commanding officer.

"One might wonder, given the accountability and pressure

that comes with command, why one would accept that call," said Peck. "For people like Capt. Taylor and Capt. Liebold, responsibility is not something to be avoided, it is something to be sought out and embraced, and without a doubt Capt. Taylor has done exactly that."

Liebold had tours with USS *Tarawa*, USS *Fitzgerald*, USS *Gary*, Naval Surface Force, Pacific Fleet headquarters, and the office of the secretary of defense. Liebold commanded MCM *Crew Reaper* and USS *Montgomery* (LCS 8), Blue Crew. Most recently, he served as executive officer on *Essex*.



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Photo Gallery



CAMP PENDLETON (Aug. 4, 2023) Marine Corps Maj. Gen. (Ret.) Austin Renforth presents Col. Pete Farnum, deputy commander of Marine Corps Installations West, Camp Pendleton, with a Legion of Merit award during his retirement ceremony at Helicopter Landing Zone San Mateo here. Farnum retired after 34 years of military service. Courtesy photo by Tessa Bailey



MARINE CORPS RECRUIT DEPOT SAN DIEGO (Aug. 11, 2023) Pfc. Jaskirat Singh becomes the first Sikh Marine assigned to Golf Company, 2nd Recruit Training Battalion, Recruit Training Regiment to graduate with his articles of faith after completing the 13-week transformation. U.S. Marine Corps photo



CORONADO (Aug. 4, 2023) Rear Adm. Keith Davids, Commander, Naval Special Warfare Command, right, and Naval Special Warfare Force Master Chief Walter Dittmar, lay a wreath at the base of the Extortion 17 Memorial at Naval Special Warfare Command here. The Extortion 17 helicopter crash claimed the lives of 38 people, including 22 NSW personnel in Afghanistan Aug. 6, 2011. U.S. Navy photo by MC1 Felicito Rustique



SAN DIEGO (Aug. 5, 2023) Capt. (Ret.) Joe Quincannon, SEAL Team THREE's first skipper, speaks during the team's 40th anniversary commemoration on board Silver Strand Training Complex. In January 1962, President John Kennedy established the first SEAL teams at Naval Amphibious Bases in Coronado and Little Creek, Va. U.S. Navy photo by MC1 Chelsea D. Meiller



NAS NORTH ISLAND (July 25, 2023) Navy Petty Officer 1st Class Richard Alvarez moves pallets of supplies aboard aircraft carrier *Theodore Roosevelt*. U.S. Navy photo by Seaman Ikiia Walker

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FRCSW artisan's meticulous hand-work breathes new life into an MQ-8C with a flawless paint transformation.
Photo by Janina Lamoglia

Fleet Readiness Center's first full paint scheme on unmanned helicopter

by Janina Lamoglia

The MQ-8C Fire Scout is an unmanned aerial vehicle used for expeditionary operations aboard ships. The Navy's only unmanned helicopter, which can be deployable from land or sea, provides target-acquisition, real-time intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance to the men and women of the Navy and Marine Corps.

In 2015, Naval Air Systems Command designated Fleet Readiness Center Southwest (FRCSW) as the location for all maintenance and repair workload on the MQ-8 airframe. This year, FRCSW became the first depot to do a full paint scheme for an MQ-8C. The paint and strip process was meticulously completed by FRCSW artisans and is crucial for the aircraft's longevity and operational readiness.

Surface preparation is key. First the aircraft's surface is cleaned and stripped of any existing paint or coatings using methods like sanding or media blasting. Another option for cleaning the surface is to use a chemical stripping process, however, this method can be environmentally hazardous and pose risks to the health of the employee. In order to avoid those concerns, FRCSW artisans use a hand sanding method. The hand sanding method also lowers the likelihood for rework and damage including corrosion and is a healthier method for the aircraft. After surface preparation is completed, a primer coat is applied to enhance adhesion and corrosion resistance.

The base coat is then applied, which includes the color and any markings or insignias desired by the

squadron. This can be done using spray guns or specialized painting techniques. A clear protected layer is applied over the base coat to provide additional durability. Throughout the process, masking techniques are used to ensure precise application and prevent paint from reaching areas where it shouldn't be.

The strip and paint process is not solely for aesthetics. It is essential to the MQ-8C's longevity and operational readiness for several reasons. It helps maintain the aircraft's structural integrity, allows for detailed inspections, repairs, and maintenance of the aircraft's surfaces. It also contributes to the overall longevity and serviceability of the aircraft. In addition, MQ-8C aircraft operate in various environments, including high humidity, saltwater exposure, and extreme temperatures.

ings or heat-reflective paints can be applied to aircraft surfaces to manage heat absorption, particularly for areas exposed to high temperatures from engines, exhaust, or other sources. This helps prevent excessive heat buildup and potential damage to sensitive components. By ensuring proper strip and paint procedures, military aircraft can maintain their operational readiness, protect against corrosion, enhance camouflage, facilitate identification, manage heat, and extend their service life—all crucial factors for military effectiveness and safety.

In charge of the process for planning, labor estimates, material and tooling requirements, Jay Noblin and Jeremy Gates, are two key leaders that spearheaded the successful enhancement and preservation of the MQ-8C at FRCSW.

"It was a good team effort between engineers and artisans to complete the MQ-8C in what we all believe is a very timely manner," says Gates.

"We have been lucky to have good leadership that knows about this process and they're taking what they learned from one aircraft variant to the next," Noblin says.

Described by Noblin as being "leaders in this rework", the command successfully completed the full paint scheme of the MQ-8C in just two weeks and at a cost lower than any other organization. As the first depot to complete the full paint scheme for the MQ-8C, FRCSW set the standard and is looking forward to completing future naval aviation advancements and solutions.

Coast Guard responds to signal fire at Otay Mountain

from Coast Guard Sector San Diego

SAN DIEGO - The Coast Guard responded to a signal fire made by three men at the Otay Mountain Wilderness Area approximately one and a half miles north of the San Diego border last Wednesday.

A Coast Guard Air Station MH-60 Jayhawk helicopter crew contacted Coast Guard Sector San Diego Joint Harbor Operations Center watchstanders after spotting a small signal fire at Otay Mountain. The crew landed safely in the vicinity of the fire and located the three men responsible for the help signal.

The men were safely transported to an improvised landing area before being handed over to Border Patrol Field Agents. The men were not injured.

Watchstanders from the Guard Sector San Diego Joint Harbor Operations Center notified California Fire Dispatch, who responded to the fire.

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4th Fleet - 3
5th Fleet - 14
6th Fleet - 19
7th Fleet - 61
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Biden marks anniversary of law aiding veterans exposed to toxic substances

by David Vergun
DOD News

One year ago, President Joe Biden signed a law that expands Department of Veterans Affairs health care and benefits for veterans exposed to burn pits, Agent Orange and other toxic substances.

On Aug. 10, Biden marked the one-year anniversary of the signing of the Promise to Address Comprehensive Toxics Act, or PACT Act, in a speech to veterans and their families, state leaders and members of veteran and military service organizations at the Salt Lake City VA in Utah.

"The PACT Act is one of the most significant laws ever signed to help veterans exposed to toxic materials," the president said.

"We have many obligations as a nation. We only have one truly sacred obligation, and that's to equip those we send into harm's way and care for them and their families when they come home — and when

they don't," Biden said.

According to the VA, the PACT Act:

- Expands and extends eligibility for VA health care for veterans with toxic exposures and veterans of the Vietnam, Gulf War and post-9/11 eras.
- Adds 20 more presumptive conditions for burn pits, Agent Orange and other toxic exposures.
- Adds more presumptive-

exposure locations for Agent Orange and radiation.

• Requires the VA to provide a toxic exposure screening to every veteran enrolled in VA health care.

• Helps the VA improve research, staff education and treatment related to toxic exposures.

What does it mean to have a presumptive condition for toxic exposure?

Helping vets cope with PTSD through music



Veterans shouldn't have to face the challenges of PTSD in silence or alone. Through the teamwork and camaraderie of Guitars for Vets, they can join a community where they learn to play the guitar and find solace in the songs they love as well as the songs they have yet to write. Many are finding hope in an unlikely place - behind the wood and strings of an acoustic guitar. The healing power of music helps servicemembers cope.



Change, as inevitable as parents' resistance to it

Digital Age every day, but it still scares me a little. As a military spouse, I have been thankful for modern advancements that have made deployments and frequent moving so much easier, such as emails, videoconferencing, and remote work; as well as new technologies making service members' jobs safer and missions more successful such as robotics, drones, artificial intelligence, directed energy, hypersonics, and biotechnology.

However, I find it frightening that one small thing that we can't even see has so rapidly changed life as we know it, forever. Information and communications have become instantly accessible, flooding our previously manageable lives and drowning the built-in protections we once had.

Previously, we had to wait for the six o'clock news or the morning paper to find out what was going on in the world. Back then, home used to be the safe place kids were sheltered from social pressures and bad influences. Forty years ago, there was no need to go "off the grid" to disconnect, because the grid didn't even exist.

Nowadays, humans must make a conscious effort to shield themselves from the constant barrage of uncensored news, information, politics, chatter, advertisements, social media, messages, jargon, video games, algorithms, imagery, videos, and e-commerce — every minute of every day. Will we be forever trapped in this rapid-paced hamster wheel, never to enjoy the simplicity of our pre-Internet lives again?

I'll admit that I take advantage of the incredible benefits of the

Alas, my opinions are aging me.

My father voiced similar concerns in my youth, such as, "When I was a teenager, we had Elvis, not this gibberish you kids have on that moronic MTV." And his father probably said to him, "Hey lazybones, back in the 1930s, we walked uphill to and from school everyday." Abraham Lincoln likely told his son, Tad, "Two score and seven years ago, we had more respect for our elders." Ann Boleyn probably admonished Elizabeth I, "Young lady, when I was your age, we listened to the lute, not that awful harpsichord you insist on dancing to in court these days." And Genghis Khan might've told his son, Chagatai Khan, "You pipsqueaks have no common sense! When I was a teenager, my father was poisoned and I was forced into slavery, but I still had the gumption to escape, kill my half-brother, amass a brutal army, conquer Mongolia and become one of the most influential barbarians in history!"

Heck, Adam probably sat his and Eve's 33 sons and 23 daughters down and scolded, "When your mother and I grew up 900 years ago, we wore bigger fig leaves than you whippersnappers do today. Good Lord, have some decency!"

Despite my old-fashioned views on this newfangled world, *sigh* ... I must accept that I can't go back to 1980. Darwin foiled my plans when he said, "It is not the strongest of the species that survive, nor the most intelligent, but the one most responsive to change."

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Veterans can file claims to apply for PACT Act-related benefits.

For more information, visit <https://www.va.gov/resources/the-pact-act-and-your-vabenefits> or call 800-698-2411.

Retired Army major general who writes about unheralded women wins historian of the year award

STARS AND STRIPES - A retired Army major general with at least seven books to her name is receiving an honorific as a historian, based on her post-military work aimed at increasing awareness about notable women.

Mari K. Eder was announced recently as the winner of the historian of the year award presented annually by Historic Hotels of America, an affiliate of the National Trust for Historic Preservation. Eder will receive the award at a ceremony in October.

The honor recognizes people whose work "has encouraged a wide, if not provocative, discussion and greater understanding of the history and the diverse heritages and cultures of our nation and the world," the organization said in a statement Wednesday.

Eder wrote "The Girls Who Stepped Out of Line: Untold Stories of the Women Who Changed the Course of World War II," a compilation published in 2021 that shines light on over a dozen little-known women, in and out of uniform.

Blurbs for the book were given by actor Gary Sinise and Adm. (Ret.) James Stavridis, former NATO supreme allied commander in Europe. He called it "a fascinating page-turner."

Eder's latest book, "The Girls Who Fought Crime: The Untold True Story of the Country's First Female Investigator and Her Crime Fighting Squad," was published this month.

In her nearly four decades as an active-duty soldier or reservist, Eder served as deputy chief of the Army Reserve and deputy chief of Army public affairs.



Mari K. Eder. Photo courtesy of Laura Hatcher Photography

The Meat & Potatoes of Life



by
Lisa
Smith
Molinari

At the risk of sounding like an old bag, I must say: The world is completely different than it was when I was a kid.

I know, I know, that isn't exactly a shocking revelation. Pretty much every generation has been saying that since the Earth cooled. Still, I can't help but be alarmed at how drastically life has changed in the past 40 years, thanks to the veritable tidal wave of technology that swept over the world since 1983.

Anyone like me, who grew up before the global network referred to as the "Internet" came along, was accustomed to living simply, without instant 24/7 information and connectivity. When we wanted information, we looked it up in books or asked others. Even after telecommunication was introduced — first with the telegraph in 1837 and then the telephone in 1876 — it still took considerable time and effort to send and receive information.

Then, quite suddenly, we were connected to everyone else in the world with the touch of a button. With the advent of the Internet, the human race was suddenly flooded with a deluge of constant information, as everything from research to socializing, from bill-paying to shopping, from watching movies to communicating became instantaneous.

I'll admit that I take advantage of the incredible benefits of the

AutoMatters™ & More
by Jan Wagner



What is Tiki Oasis? The organizers tell us that "Tiki Oasis is the original and largest Tiki event in the world. Tiki Oasis proudly brings to San Diego five nights and four days of live music, dancing, pool lounging, sunset dinners, disc jockeys, educational seminars, a bustling Marketplace of over 150 artists and makers, tropical cocktails curated by top mixologists, art exhibit, book signing and so much more."

While that is accurate and pretty much describes what this wonderful event is, you really need to delve into the details to get a good sense for what it is like to experience it. Using the organizers' overview as a guide, I'll expand upon some specifics here, to better share that experience with you, including a few of the over 4,000 pictures that I shot!

Tiki Oasis has settled nicely into its new venue in San Diego, and it has really found its stride. While the previous venue did have its own site-related history, as the years have passed that has become an increasingly distant memory, replaced by the here and now. To get a sense of that history, search for TIKI OASIS on the Home Page of the AutoMatters.net website to see my photos and read about past celebrations of Tiki Oasis in San Diego — especially pre-COVID 19.

This year, rather than searching for and trying to relive past fond memories of Tiki Oasis, I approached my task more from the perspective

Tiki Oasis 2023 in San Diego

of someone for whom this may have been their very first Tiki Oasis. Attending with that perspective, I tried to see and do as much as possible. I even saw significant aspects of Tiki Oasis that I had never experienced before — including the Midnight Burlesque on Saturday night!

The Polynesian atmosphere was established right from the beginning, with swaying palm trees at the entrance to the Town and Country Resort. Several classic cars were parked curbside at the entrance.

For those who are even the least bit interested in tiki memorabilia, the temptation of finding something to buy in the large and well-stocked Marketplace was too hard to resist. The unique, hand-crafted items in the art show and sale sold quickly, as they always do.

To quench your thirst with delicious concoctions, numerous tastings were offered to do just that — of both alcoholic and non-alcoholic beverages. One seminar — entitled "Tiki Without Tipsy" — was about the growing non-alcoholic cocktail movement. Hosted by Kyle Rioux, this informative seminar also included tastings and giveaways.

High on my list of recommendations is the annual audio/visual presentation by pop culture expert Charles Phoenix. This year's adventure was aptly entitled "Catalinaland." He captivated us with his stories and photos about Catalina that included its history, unique architecture, the Wrigley family, the 1929 Art Deco Casino (it is not really a casino), shopping, dining and much more. I highly recommend his illustrated books.

Robert Short took us behind the scenes to show us the mak-

ing of two classic Disney films: "20,000 Leagues Under the Sea" and "SPLASH."

"The Jungle" was a live, fun-filled podcast taping by David "Dr. Skipper" Marley and Trevor Kelly. We were treated to their hilarious accounts of what it had been like to work at Disneyland — especially as a skipper on the Jungle cruise. Let's just say that it might be just as well for their employment prospects that they no longer work there, and leave it at that.

Participatory activities included one in which people in a swimming pool were taught how to model for underwater photography.

The last ballroom event of the year for Tiki Oasis is the annual Bartender Battle, in which a few of the best bartenders in San Diego compete to see who will be the year's Tiki Oasis bartending champion. In addition to the cocktails that they prepared for the judges, the large number of attendees also sampled their entries.

Next year Tiki Oasis will again be celebrated at the Town and Country Resort in San Diego. The dates will be July 31 to August 4, 2024. For more information about this event as it becomes available, and to find out about tickets and reserving a room at the event hotel, be sure to visit tikioasis.com.

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619-424-8600

Movies & times subject to change. * Indicates last showing

Visit www.navydispatch.com/entertainment_03movies.htm to find base theatre information

Naval Base Theater - NBSD,
619-556-5568, Bldg. 71
3465 Senn Rd.

FREE entry to the first 300 customers
(per showing), no outside food,
concessions will be available.

Thursday, August 17
Ruby Gillman, Teenage Kraken pg
7:50pm Sound of Freedom pg13

Friday, August 18
6:30pm Barbie pg13

Saturday, August 19
3pm Barbie pg13

Sunday, August 20
6pm Oppenheimer r

Updates: navylifesw.com

Lowry Theater - NASNI,
619-545-8479
Bldg. 650

Outside food and beverage are NOT
permitted. Debit/credit cards only.

Friday, August 18
6pm Oppenheimer r

Saturday, August 19
1pm Barbie pg13

3:30pm Sound of Freedom pg13

Sunday, August 20
1pm Ruby Gillman, Teenage Kraken pg

3pm Oppenheimer r

Updates: navylifesw.com

**Pendleton Theater
and Training Center**
Bldg 1330 Mainside (Across
from Mainside Center)

PRICE INCREASE: Effective August
12, a \$1 increase on ticket prices for
all groups except children 5 and under.
Concession prices also increased

Saturday, August 19
1:30pm Ruby Gillman, Teenage Kraken (PG)

Saturday, August 26
1:30pm Sound of Freedom (PG13)

THINGS TO DO AROUND TOWN

Sunset Market in Oceanside
Thursdays year round. Jan.-March:
4-8pm; April through Dec. 5-9pm.
Tremont & Pier View Way.

Cruisin' Grand Escondido. Escondido's Grand Ave from Orange St to Ivy St. Friday nights through September. Parade of pre-1970s. Vintage autos – from American Hot Rods, Classics, Antiques, and Customs – span seven blocks of the city's downtown. Great pubs, restaurants, breweries, stores, boutiques, and live performance venues. www.cruisinggrand.net

Catfish stocked at Lake Jennings. Night fishing Fri & Sat til midnight. Shoreline fishing 8am-5pm every day at campground. \$4-\$12. lakejennings.org/

Compost Workshop, Sat, Aug 19, 8:30-10am. Free. instruction and demonstration in the building and maintenance of a backyard compost pile and worm bin. Escondido Community Garden, Centre City Parkway at Decatur Way, Escondido.

Community Music Day: Sing! Sing! Sing! Sat, Aug 19, 10am-2pm. Free. make and decorate your very own arts and crafts microphone. Grab a quick snack bag and return to the Museum's concert stage for Live Band Karaoke from 12-2pm. Pick a song you would like to sing, then join a professional band on stage as they play along. Museum of Making Music, 5790 Armada Dr, Carlsbad, 92008.

Twainfest, Sat, Aug 19, 11am-5pm. FREE celebration of the literature, culture and history of 19th Century America, has become a tradition for many San Diego families and provides something for everyone! Games, performances, more! Heritage County Park, 2454 Heritage Park Row, San D, 92110

The Friendship Foot Festival, Sat, Aug 19, 3-7pm. Age 18+. Free. Enjoy a restorative afternoon with food, live music featuring Fast Heart Mart, shop local artisans, get a foot massage, and soak your feet. Avocado House, 1523 Avocado Way, Escondido.

Fireside at the Lake! Sat, Aug 19, 6-9pm. Cozy under the stars – fire pit rentals right on the lake in Hermit Cove. Rentals include wood, firestarter, and Adirondack chairs! Rangers will help lighting/extinguishing fires as needed. Advance reservations required. Call (619) 596-1306. Lake Jennings, 10108 Bass Rd. Lakeside. <https://lakejennings.org/>

SD Loyal SC vs. New Mexico United, Sat, Aug 19, 7-9pm. \$15-\$70. Torero Stadium, 5998 Alcala Park, 92111 www.sdloyal.com

San Diego Wave FC VS. NJ/NY Gotham FC, Sat, Aug 19, 7pm. Snapdragon Stadium, 2101 Stadium Way, Mission Valley.

Guided Nature Walk, Saturdays & Sundays, 9:30-11am. Free. Guided nature walk-learn about plants, animals, geology, history of park. San Carlos. mtrp.org

America's Finest City Half Marathon & 5k, Sun, Aug 20. San Diego's fastest and most scenic half marathon. Run from the Cabrillo National Monument atop the tip of Point Loma, along San Diego Bay, Harbor Island, Embarcadero, past the Star of India, through downtown San Diego to a rousing finish in historic Balboa Park. <https://in-motionevents.com/event/afc-half/>

Gaslamp Skate Sunday Series, Sundays: Aug 20, 27, Sept 1. 5-8pm. Free. The Sunset Roller Club is a diverse group of skaters at every level. Gaslamp Quarter, Fifth Ave, between Broadway Harbor Dr.

Del Mar Thoroughbred Racing Season, Thru Sept 10. Where the Turf Meets the Surf. Del Mar Thoroughbred Club, Del Mar.

Embarcadero Waterfront Ghost Tour \$15/pp. Ongoing Sat 7-8pm, Sun 8-9. Schedule subject to change. Verify at murdermayhem.com

Escondido Cars & Coffee. Every Sunday Morning, 8-11am. Free. Kit Carson Park, 333 Bear Valley Parkway, Escondido. Cars, trucks, bikes!

Waterski & Wakeboard on Mission Bay, Sundays 8-11am; Thursdays 5-8pm. Convair Waterski Club active year-round on Mission Bay. Club provides two ski boats for waterskiing/wakeboarding, w/free instruction and equipment available on request. Meet: south end Crown Point Beach. Any skill level welcome. Info: convairwaterskiclub@gmail.com. Crown Point, 3700 Crown Point Dr, SD, 92109

San Diego International Summer Organ Festival, Mondays, 7:30pm through Labor Day. Free. Spreckels Organ Pavilion in Balboa Park. www.spreckelsorgan.org

Pageant of the Masters, through Sept 1. Irvine Bowl, Laguna Beach. www.fpapom.com

Ramona Rodeo Thur-Sat, Aug 24-26. Top notch PRCA rodeo. Fred Grand Arena, Ramona Outdoor Community Center, 421 Aqua Lane, Ramona. ramonarodeo.com/

MOVIES AT THE BASES

Movies & times subject to change. * Indicates last showing

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CROSSWORD PUZZLE

Across

1 "___ Secretary"

6 First Negro League electee to Cooperstown

11 Radical '70s org.

14 Durance who plays Lois on "Smallville"

15 Per ___

16 Comparative suffix

17 Grim

18 Removes with a putty knife

20 Out

22 Where hauls may be divided

23 Pouchlike shoulder bag

25 Nearly straight-horned antelope

26 Going up

29 Tender

32 Warning to a meddler

34 Cote sounds

35 Pilot's place

36 442 or 88, e.g.

37 Guideline when something is dropped
from one's diet?

40 Eclair filling

41 Stylish filmmakers

42 Shepherd's pie

Pediatric nearsightedness (myopia) cases on the rise

by Robbie Hammer,
MHS Communications

Myopia opens NIH.gov, otherwise known as nearsightedness, is the leading cause of visual impairment in children worldwide, according to the National Institutes of Health opens NIH.gov.

"Myopia is the ability to see things up close but not far away," said Dr. Michael D. Pattison, readiness, and operations optometry program manager for the Defense Health Agency's Vision Center of Excellence opens VCE. "Myopia is often diagnosed early in childhood, frequently a result of reported difficulty seeing at a distance in the classroom."

Pediatric Myopia on the Rise

Nearsightedness affects one in three people ages 12 to 54 in the United States. Its prevalence has been rising worldwide according to the World Health Organization. Experts predicted that nearly 50% of the world's population will become myopic by 2050, and about 10% of these near-sighted people have severe cases.

Juvenile-onset myopia, the most common type, typically starts during elementary school and the late-onset type is frequently showing up in teens.

In a recent U.S. study, it's estimated that 36% of youth have myopia, with 41% of those located in urban areas and almost 16% in rural areas, according to the National Institutes of Health.

"The exact cause of myopia remains unclear, but experts found that genetic predisposition and environmental causes contribute significantly to the development and progression of near-sightedness in children," said U.S. Navy Cmdr. (Dr.) Hong Gao, aerospace op-

tometrist with the Medical Service Corps opens Navy.mil

Pattison said that myopic parents are more likely to have nearsighted children. Kids with two myopic parents have three times or more higher risk of becoming near-sighted in comparison to kids without myopic parents.

According to Gao, an increase in screen time, lack of exposure to sunlight, and excessive near activity are significant risk factors.

Near work is considered work that requires close visual focus to a worker's eyes, like heavy use of computer screens, working on a puzzle, or even reading.

She said preventive measures for myopia can vary.

"Some interventions are shown to be effective in delaying the onset or controlling progression of myopia in children. For instance, increasing time spent outdoors and decreasing the duration of near work may prevent against developing myopia or myopia progression," she said.

"Some studies opens NIH.gov show there is an association between physical activity and outdoor activity to the point that a lot of eye care providers are now recommending that children try to spend at least two hours a day outside doing something other than looking at devices," said Pattison. "It's good for children to play outside when possible."

Why This Matters to the U.S. Military

"Warfighters with a functional unaided vision have significant advantage on the battlefield or in other operational environments," said Gao.

Service members with better vision have "less dependence on

visual aids and better marksmanship performance," Gao said.

Determining why these rates are trending upwards is important to the Department of Defense to ensure its future pool of warfighters are mission ready.

During calendar year 2019, approximately 20% of the active duty

service members had substantial refractive errors that require fulltime spectacle correction, according to an article published in a DHA Medical Surveillance Monthly Report opens Health.mil article.

According to this report, 24% of U.S. armed forces active duty service members required some sort of spec-

VA launches mobile medical units to increase access to health care for homeless Veterans

The Department of Veterans Affairs announced that it will deploy 25 mobile medical units across the country during the next six months to provide health care and support to homeless and at-risk Veterans. The first MMU arrived Aug. 3 at the VA Orlando Healthcare System.

Mobile medical units are vans or trucks that move from one location to another to provide a private space for eligible Veterans to meet with medical providers, including mental health clinicians, social workers, and other staff that provide primary care, women's health, audiology, laboratory, and telehealth services to those who may not have access to a local VA medical center.

Projected Delivery Date	HPACT Location
8/1/23	V08 (675) Orlando, FL
9/1/23	V19 (635) Oklahoma City, OK
9/8/23	V22 (691) Los Angeles, CA
9/8/23	V23 (618) Minneapolis, MN
9/15/23	V07 (508) Atlanta, GA
9/15/23	V22 (664) San Diego, CA
9/22/23	V10 (539) Cincinnati, OH
9/22/23	V07 (619) Montgomery, AL
9/29/23	V19 (660) Salt Lake City, UT
9/29/23	V01 (689) West Haven, CT
9/29/23	V20 (663) Tacoma, WA
10/2/23	V20 (663) Seattle, WA
10/16/23	V06 (590) Hampton, VA
10/16/23	V12 (537) Chicago, IL
11/6/23	V07 (534) Charleston, SC
11/6/23	V08 (516) Bay Pines, FL
11/13/23	V09 (596) Lexington, KY
11/13/23	V10 (541) Cleveland, OH
11/20/23	V23 (636) Omaha, NE
11/20/23	V07 (521) Birmingham, AL
12/18/23	V21 (654) Reno, NV
12/22/23	V21 (593) Las Vegas, NV
1/22/24	V16 (629) New Orleans, LA
1/29/24	V22 (678) Tucson, AZ
2/26/24	V21 (662) San Francisco, CA

tacle correction, with almost 15% in the U.S. Coast Guard.

Gao said that the "vision standard for appointment, enlistment, or induction into the military services has not changed for decades. Medical waiver for higher nearsightedness is available for some military duties."

"If a candidate's vision can be corrected with glasses to a level at which they can read regularly sized print, then their vision will likely not prevent their enlistment or commission," said Pattison.

Most cases of myopia fall within the acceptable range of military vision standards," he said. "Even with the increase in the incidence of myopia in this country, it is unlikely to be an issue in terms of future numbers of individuals meeting the vision requirements to enlist in the military."

There are a few specific occupations in the military, principally those dealing with aircraft and ships, that require a higher standard of visual function.

Tips for Protecting Your Child's Vision

- Eat well: Eating a healthy diet rich in fruits and vegetables can help

protect your child's vision.

- Limit screen time: Increased screen time can make uncorrected vision problems worse. Taking frequent breaks is also a good habit to have when doing other kinds of near-vision activities, such as reading, writing, or drawing.

- Get enough sleep: Not getting enough sleep can affect how well your child's eyes heal from everyday eye strain and irritants in the environment—like dry air, allergens, and pollutants.

- Spend time outdoors: Just like other muscles in the body, the muscles in the eyes need time to relax. Going outdoors allows their eyes to look at objects in the distance, which gives their eyes a chance to recover from eye strain and fatigue.

- Wear sunglasses: Exposure to the sun's ultraviolet rays over time can be harmful to the eyes. For the best protection, make sure your child wears sunglasses that have 100% UV protection.

- Use protective eyewear: About 90% of eye injuries can be prevented with protective eyewear. If your child is involved in sports or other activities, make sure they wear protective eyewear to avoid serious eye injuries.

SOCIAL SECURITY MATTERS

Why is Social Security withholding my monthly payments?

Dear Rusty: I have been working since I started collecting Social Security when I turned 62. Last year I was apparently overpaid because of my job. I made \$37,000 and now the Social Security Administration says I owe them \$8,800 dollars because I made too much, and they have withheld my \$2000 monthly SS payment. I am close to the maximum allowable again already this year. So, I am looking at quitting my job so I don't go over, but they are holding my payments so then I would have no money. Any help would be appreciated. Signed: Frustrated by Social Security

Dear Frustrated: You are being affected by Social Security's "earnings test" which applies to everyone who collects early Social Security and also works before reaching their full retirement age (FRA). If your earned income exceeds the annual limit (which was \$19,560 for 2022), Social Security will withhold \$1 in benefits for every \$2 you are over the limit. If you earned \$37,000 in 2022 you were more than \$17,000 over the limit and owe half of that back to Social Security. They usually recover what you owe by withholding your future benefit payments, so they won't pay you benefits until they have recovered that \$8,800, after which your benefits will resume - but only for a while.

If you are working full time and also collecting early Social Security benefits, the earnings test lasts until you reach your full retirement age, which for you is 66 years and 8 months. The earnings limit goes up a bit each year – for 2023 it is \$21,240 – but if you continue to work full time, you'll receive another overpayment notice and have more benefits withheld. A better approach might be to contact Social Security in advance and tell them what your 2023 earnings are expected to be, thus permitting them to suspend your benefits in advance and avoid overpaying you. I'm afraid there is no way around this – collecting early benefits while working full time means the "earnings test" will affect your benefit payments.

The "good news" in all of this is that when you reach your full retirement age, you will get time-credit for all months your benefits were withheld. By that I mean they will, at your FRA, recalculate your benefit entitlement as though you had claimed later (later by the number of months you had benefits withheld), which will result in a higher monthly payment after your FRA. In that way, you may eventually recover some or all of the benefits withheld by receiving a higher monthly amount for the rest of your life, starting at your full retirement age.

I suggest you contact Social Security at 1.800.772.1213 (or at your local office) and tell them you want to provide them with an estimate of your 2023 earnings because you are working and collecting early Social Security benefits. They will work with you to suspend your benefits for an appropriate number of (additional) months to avoid another overpayment situation. Note, you'll likely need to do this each year you continue to work full time, until the year you reach your full retirement age when the earnings limit more than doubles. The earnings limit goes away when you reach your full retirement age.



TUY HOA, Vietnam (Aug. 11, 2023) - Pacific Partnership 2023 gathers on stage at Phu Yen University, Aug. 11 to celebrate the end of a successful music exchange with the students at the university. Now in its 18th year, Pacific Partnership is the largest annual multinational humanitarian assistance and disaster relief preparedness mission conducted in the Indo-Pacific. U.S. Army photo by Public Affairs Noncommissioned Officer in Charge Sgt. 1st Class Amy Elker.

PERRY

CHRYSLER DODGE Jeep RAM

New 2023 Dodge **CHALLENGER** SXT

Lease for **\$348/month**
for 36 months

For well-qualified buyers. MSRP of \$35,195. Down payment \$4,995. Residual \$19,709. Tax, title, license acquisition fee not included. 10,000 miles per year. 2 at this price. VIN: 2C3CDZAG1PH553784, 2C3CDZAG0PH507637

New 2023 Jeep **GLADIATOR** SPORT

Lease for **\$488/month**
for 48 months

For well-qualified buyers. MSRP of \$49,325. Down payment \$4,995. Residual \$26,635. Tax, title, license acquisition fee not included. 10,000 miles per year. VIN: 1C6HJTAG8PL540399

New 2023 **GRAND CHEROKEE** Laredo 4X4

Lease for **\$488/month**
for 36 months

For well-qualified buyers. MSRP of \$61,660. Down payment \$4,995. Residual \$33,914. Tax, title, license acquisition fee not included. 10,000 miles per year. #588710, 786605, 791357

New 2023 **WRANGLER** Willy's 4xe

Lease for **\$388/month**
for 36 months

For well-qualified buyers. MSRP of \$60,810. Down payment \$4,995. Residual \$34,661. Tax, title, license acquisition fee not included. 10,000 miles per year. 1 at this price. VIN: 1C4JJXN6XPW690239

LABOR DAY SALES EVENT

MAKE THIS THE
SUMMER EVENT

CHRYSLER DODGE FIAT Jeep RAM



New 2023 Ram **1500** Big Horn Crew Cab 4X2

Lease for **\$488/month**
for 42 months

For well-qualified buyers. MSRP of \$56,250. Down payment \$4,995. Residual \$28,585. Tax, title, license acquisition fee not included. 10,000 miles per year. VIN: 1C6RREFT2PN604018, 1C6RREFT9PN604016

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#113032

2019 JEEP GRAND CHEROKEE
\$25,695
#776065

2022 JEEP WRANGLER
CERTIFIED
#113087

2017 DODGE DURANGO
\$21,995
#723127

2021 JEEP GRAND CHEROKEE
\$31,555
#844243

2022 RAM 1500
LIKE NEW
#321252

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\$23,897
#543670

2021 JEEP WRANGLER
\$34,785
#562021

2021 JEEP GRAND CHEROKEE
CERTIFIED
#111571

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