

ARMED FORCES DISPATCH



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SWIM ASSESSMENT Marine Corps Lance Cpl. Julius Stewart, a rifleman with 2nd Battalion, 5th Marine Regiment, 1st Marine Division, takes a swim assessment at in the waters off Naval Amphibious Base Coronado, May 29, 2026. This swim assessment certifies Marines to qualify for the boat raid course. U.S. Marine Corps photo by Sgt. Juan Torres

Washington Guard supports chemical spill response

from Washington National Guard

LONGVIEW, Wash. – Following a tank implosion and chemical spill at the Nippon Dynawave Packaging Co., May 26, the Washington National Guard mobilized Soldiers and Airmen to support first responders with air monitoring, decontamination and facility search-and-recovery operations.

A tank implosion at the facility here released an estimated 600,000 gallons of white liquor, a highly corrosive substance containing sodium hydroxide and sodium sulfide, creating a complex and hazardous environment for emergency responders.

“Elements of the Washington National Guard have deployed to the Longview area to assist local responders in the response and recovery of the large-scale mass casualty chemical spill,” said Maj. Gen. Gent Welsh, the adjutant general of the Washington National Guard, in a social media post May 27.

At the direction of Gov. Bob Ferguson and Welsh, the Washington National Guard deployed a 22-member team from the 10th Civil Support Team and 28 personnel from the 10th Homeland Response Force under state active duty orders to assist civilian authorities with life-saving operations and decontamination efforts at the site in Cowlitz County.

The Guard’s response included highly specialized units trained to operate in hazardous environments and support large-scale emergency operations. Within hours, the 10th Civil Support Team arrived on scene to provide technical expertise and advisory support, as well as assist the Washington Department of Ecology with air monitoring operations.

By the morning of May 27, Soldiers from the 10th Homeland Response Force established a Joint Task Force to provide command and control of Guard elements operating from the Longview Armory, while also supporting integration with civilian emergency management and response agencies.

The 420th Chemical Battalion, Washington Army National Guard, activated decontamination teams and deployed specialized equipment to assist with chemical hazard mitigation and mass decontamination operations for first responders exiting the incident area. Later that afternoon, eight Airmen from the 141st Air Refueling Wing, Washington Air National Guard, arrived with a fatality search and recovery team to support recovery operations with dignity and respect.

Additional Guard medical personnel and chaplains also mobilized to support responders and affected personnel, providing medical care, resiliency support and spiritual services throughout ongoing operations.

<https://www.nationalguard.mil/News/Article-View/Article/4505083/>

NASCAR SAN DIEGO WEEKEND'S NAVY COMMUNITY DAY

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

and a limited amount of Coronado residents and then culminate with the NASCAR CRAFTSMAN Truck Series race.

All Navy Community Day tickets have been claimed. If you secured tickets, you will be contacted directly with event

details—no need to reach out. For any additional questions, please contact nbcmwrnascarsd619@gmail.com.

The inaugural NASCAR San Diego Weekend will be a historic three-day event that will bring NASCAR racing to an active military base for the first time and celebrate the 250th anniversary of the United States Navy.

The NASCAR O’Reilly Auto Parts Series race will showcase many of the sport’s top rising stars competing on the 16-turn, 3.4-mile Qualcomm Circuit constructed aboard Naval Base Coronado.



Ticket holders from the general public will be welcomed aboard NAS North Island June 20-21. The Driven to Serve 250 will take center stage on Saturday, June 20, and the stars of the NASCAR Cup Series will compete in the Anduril 250 Race the Base on Sunday, June 21.

For ticket options, go to <https://www.nascarsandiego.com/events/nascar-cup-series/>.

Friday access will be open exclusively to members of the Navy at Naval Base Coronado



U.S. defends, disables threats in response to Iranian aggression

USCENTCOM

TAMPA, Fla. - U.S. Central Command (CENTCOM) conducted self-defense strikes on Iranian radar and command and control sites for drones in Goruk, Iran and Qeshm Island. The measured and deliberate strikes occurred on May 30-31 in response to aggressive Iranian actions that included the shutdown of a U.S. MQ-1 drone that was operating over international waters. U.S. fighter aircraft swiftly responded by eliminating Iranian air defenses, a ground control station, and two one-way attack drones that posed clear threats to ships transiting regional waters. No American service members were harmed. CENTCOM will continue to protect U.S. assets and interests in response to unwarranted Iranian aggression during the ongoing ceasefire.

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Double-amputee paratrooper trains for historic jump into Normandy

by Leslie Herlick

Fort Rucker Public Affairs Office

Fourteen years after an explosion in an Afghan village took both of his legs and nearly his life, former 82nd Airborne Division paratrooper Jon Harmon is preparing to step into the door of a World War II-era C-47 over Normandy, France, and jump again.

For Harmon, 32, the moment will mark more than a return to the sky. It will mark a return to himself.

“Normandy’s everything,” Harmon said. “That’s where our guys made their history, and to be able to jump in those drop zones, in front of the men who actually dropped there, is the greatest honor of my life.”

Joining the ranks

Harmon grew up in Cedarville, Calif., raised on stories of his grandfather’s service and inspired by the paratroopers of World War II.

“Band of Brothers’ came out, and then I learned who [Army Maj. Gen. Jim] Gavin was,” he said. “I started reading books and researching. I thought, ‘This is incredible.’”

Harmon enlisted in 2011 — a couple of months out of high school — as an airborne infantryman. He arrived at Fort Bragg, N.C., as a teenager with a beret still in the post exchange bag.

“I got immediately destroyed by one of the airborne females who picked me up because I didn’t have a beret yet,” he said with a laugh. “The next day, we were doing a 20K. It was everything I expected, and more.”

A year later, he deployed to Kandahar Province, Afghanistan, with the 4th Brigade Combat Team, 82nd Airborne Division.

Harmon was a 19-year-old private first class on his first deployment as part of Task Force Fury, when

his life changed in an instant, June 7, 2012.

He said the mission that day began as a routine patrol and key leader engagement with village elders, about a mile and a half from their strongpoint. Harmon was serving as a machine gun ammo bearer at the time. The platoon had been in a firefight in that exact location on a previous mission.

It was midafternoon when the maneuver element began moving into the village. Harmon and his gunner set up the support-by-fire position. He gave his gunner sectors of fire, checked his angles and stepped to the side of a low wall and berm, where the machine gun was positioned.

“And that’s when I stepped on it,” Harmon said.

“It” was an improvised explosive device; the blast threw Harmon into a cloud of dust and debris.

“It was a total brownout,” he said. “I kept trying to stand up. I didn’t understand why I couldn’t, until I looked down and saw my [tibia and fibula] sticking out.”

Army Pfc. Brandon Goodine, who was positioned near Harmon, stepped on a second device moments later.

As medics fought to save Harmon, Goodine and multiple other casualties, a stretcher team carrying Goodine triggered a third IED.

“They carried him right over me,” Harmon said. “And then, the stretcher team stepped on another plate. It was ... it was bad. It killed Brandon instantly.”

Harmon remained conscious throughout the evacuation, giving himself aid and applying his own tourniquets. His unit suffered nearly a dozen casualties during the mission.

“It was like something out of ‘Apocalypse Now’ — just a pile of guys in the Blackhawk. The last thing I remember was the American flag on the ceiling as they pushed me into the surgical unit,” he said.

Everything has changed

Harmon woke up days later in Germany. He had undergone surgeries in Afghanistan, Germany and finally, Walter Reed National Military Medical Center in Bethesda, Md., where doctors amputated his left leg above the knee.

His right leg was already gone.

At Walter Reed, Harmon found himself surrounded by soldiers who had survived similar wounds, including his former squad leader, Army Staff Sgt. Travis Mills, a quadruple amputee.

“He came bopping into my [intensive care unit] room on his little shorty prosthetics,” Harmon said. “Seeing him made it impossible to lose yourself.”

Another noncommissioned officer, a double below-knee amputee, showed Harmon what was possible.

“He lifted his pant leg and said, ‘It doesn’t end here.’ From that moment on, I wanted to be like him,” Harmon said.

Harmon not only recovered. He became the 82nd Airborne Division’s first double above-knee amputee soldier to return to active-duty service through the Army’s Continuation on Active Duty program.

“They actually gave me for that when I retired,” he said. “I was the first person to ever do it.”

He spent years at Walter Reed as the XVIII Airborne Corps liaison, helping wounded soldiers and their families navigate the hardest days of their lives.



Jon Harmon recreates his 2012 airborne school photo in Corsicana, Texas, March 27, 2026. Photo courtesy of Jon Harmon

“It was the greatest job I ever had,” he said. “I got to inspire and motivate my paratroopers every day.”

Harmon eventually left the Army to continue his education after nearly eight years of service.

Answering the call

He thought his static-line parachuting days were over. However, that changed when Dominic Mancuso, a fellow combat infantryman from his time in service, called with an unexpected question: “Would you want to jump into Normandy?”

Mancuso told Harmon that Army 1st Sgt. Ramon Alvarez was recruiting veteran paratroopers to take part in a commemorative event.

Alvarez and Mancuso had been deployed to Afghanistan together. Now stationed at Fort Benning, Ga., Alvarez is the cofounder and executive director of a nonprofit organization that provides resources, support programs and life-improving opportunities for vets and their families.

“Eight months ago, if someone said that was possible, I would’ve laughed them out of the building,” Harmon said. “But once it became a possibility, it was mission mode — how do we do this? What prosthetics? What padding? And then it

was off to the races.”

Harmon trained with the Liberty Jump Team, a veteran-led, all-volunteer commemorative parachute organization based in Corsicana, Texas. The team preserves airborne history by performing World War II-style, static-line jumps at historic sites and memorial events. Harmon tested short prosthetic legs, specialized feet and relearned the mechanics of parachuting.

He is believed to be the first double above-knee amputee to complete a static-line parachute jump. He has completed three jumps, bringing his total to 10, and said he has no plans to stop.

When Harmon stepped into the door of a C-47 Skytrain aircraft in March, for the first time since 2012, he said something clicked.

“I grabbed the door and thought, ‘This is so cool,’” he said. “When I landed and stood up, I just broke down crying. I couldn’t believe I walked away unscathed.”

His wife, Carmen, encouraged him to jump again.

He said, “As soon as my wife saw how insanely happy it made me, she said, ‘Yeah, you need to do this.’ And after I came back from [basic airborne refresher], she told me, ‘You need to keep doing this. I haven’t seen you this happy in years.’”

Reminding others

For Harmon, returning to jumping isn’t about proving something to himself; it’s about reminding other amputees who they are.

“If I can use what I’m doing to help my guys, so they’re not hurting themselves, I’ll do that for the rest of my life,” he said. “I want young paratroopers to know you can go into battle [and] get hurt, and life is not over; you can keep doing incredible things.”

On June 7 - 14 years after the day that changed his life - Harmon is scheduled to jump into Sainte-Mère-Église, the same drop zone where the 508th Parachute Infantry Regiment and the 82nd Airborne fought on D-Day.

“The fates always have an odd sense of irony in my life,” he said. “Jumping on my 14th alive day — into the drop zone [that] my 508 guys jumped — it’s surreal.”

During the jump, Harmon will carry Goodine’s necklace, lent to him by Goodine’s daughter and his original Army ID card. The grandfather who served in the Korean War and told him stories about this time as an infantryman died recently. Harmon will also carry some of his ashes.

“I’ll be jumping with all my guys,” Harmon said. “Every paratrooper who came before me.”

Harmon hopes his story reaches two distinct audiences: young paratroopers and fellow wounded warriors. To those currently serving, his message is a call to appreciate the unique nature of their mission.

“Stay airborne,” Harmon said. “It’s the greatest place on Earth.”

To his fellow wounded warriors, he offers a reminder of the identity that remains, regardless of injury. “Life isn’t over; you can still do insane things,” he said. “You just need someone to remind you who you are.”

Harmon is a paratrooper who refused to let the worst day of his life define the rest of it. As he looks back on his journey to the drop zone in Normandy, his thoughts return to the legacy of the 82nd Airborne Division and the predecessors who paved the way.

“I hope I’m making them proud,” he said. “General Gavin, the World War II guys — all of them.”

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Top 5

- White House proposes all federal employees sign non-disclosure agreements
- U.S. troops are reportedly being targeted using location data, Pentagon says
- Iran war needs an inspector general, senator notes
- 22nd MEU, *Iwo Jima* ARG head home after 10-month deployment
- NATO member Romania says Russian drone hit block of flats, injuring two
- Air Force**
- Air Force lifts operational pause Talon on T-38 training aircraft
- Space Force**
- Space Force plans nationwide network of 'resilient operations centers'
- National Guard**
- 45-year-old National Guard recruit arrested as 'international fugitive' at basic training
- Veterans**
- Double amputee paratrooper to jump into Normandy for 82nd anniversary of D-Day
- 'We worked in secrecy': Cold War-era veterans exposed to radiation demand easier access to VA benefits
- U.S., South Korea launch nationwide search for Korean War remains
- Veteran with rare muscle-wasting disease seeks VA recognition
- Cyber, Space & Unmanned**
- Army turns resupply drone into rocket launcher in new test
- Defense Industry**
- Ukraine to buy 20 new Gripen jets, Sweden to donate older jets sooner
- Lithuania to buy Patria armored vehicles, eyes local industry share
- Germany's defense minister makes rare personal pitch for submarine deal in Ottawa
- Canada wants Saab early-warning aircraft under push to retool defense suppliers

War Department signs \$9.7B technology deal with Dell for Microsoft Services

by C. Todd Lopez
Pentagon News

The War Department announced today a five-year agreement to purchase Microsoft Services — a move expected to save the department \$422 million annually.

"The Department of War is taking a definitive step forward to advance our digital infrastructure to deter near-peer adversaries by awarding a five-year, \$9.7 billion Core Enterprise Technology Agreement to Dell Federal Systems," said Kirsten A. Davies, DOW chief information officer. "This second-generation blanket purchase agreement will streamline and consolidate critical Microsoft software and services across the Department of War, the intelligence community and the U.S. Coast Guard."

The agreement provides the department with access to Microsoft 365, advanced cloud subscriptions and critical on-premises licensing; it's the department's largest to date.

"This CETA acts as part of the digital connective tissue essential for Combined Joint All-Domain Command and Control ... this ensures our warfighters have the tools for just-in-time data sharing, supports our pivot

to [artificial intelligence] and data analytics, and undergirds uninterrupted operational continuity for our most sensitive and disconnected environments," Davies said.

Previously, across the department, dozens of separate contracts provided services to the same groups who will now receive the services under a single enterprisewide contract. The consolidation of contracts ensures service members and department civilians continue to have access to the same services, but now those services will cost less and save taxpayer dollars.

"This enterprise approach is not just about capability, it's also about delivering on [Secretary of War Pete Hegseth's] promise to be responsible stewards of the American people's resources — taxpayer money," Davies said, noting that the new agreement is not new funding.

Because the new contract and old contracts are with the same vendor, the funding does not change; the transition will be seamless for those involved.

"We are achieving unprecedented scale and cost efficiency," Davies said. "This blanket purchase agreement is expected to save the department an initial \$422 million annually, a figure we actually expect to rise as we fully consolidate our IT services."

The new contract also allows warfighters to focus on what matters, she said.

"This puts the tools in a warfighter's hands, where they need them," Davies said. "They don't

need to worry about an enterprise software capability — they can worry about warfighting. They can focus on the mission, and we focus on the tools to support them in the mission."

The agreement is scheduled to begin June 1 and includes Microsoft products such as Windows Enterprise Operating System and Office Professional Plus, along with cloud and hybrid capabilities. It also provides the digital foundation for Combined Joint All-Domain Command and Control, the overarching concept to link sensors, weapons and decision-makers, as well as seamlessly share data across the armed forces and with coalition partners.



FALCON DEPARTURE



U.S. Air Force F-16 Fighting Falcons aircraft maneuver after receiving fuel from a KC-135 Stratotanker in the U.S. Central Command area of responsibility May 23, 2026. U.S. Air Force photo by Tech Sgt Tiffany A. Emery

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HEGSETH OUTLINES U.S. VISION FOR INDO-PACIFIC AT ANNUAL ASIA DEFENSE SUMMIT

by **Matthew Olay**
Pentagon News

During remarks May 29 at the annual International Institute for Strategic Studies Shangri-La Dialogue 2026 in Singapore, Secretary of War Pete Hegseth discussed the strategic vision for the Indo-Pacific region, as it relates to the new National Defense Strategy.

“We are charting a new course for our alliances and partnerships: one that is grounded in the realities of power and interests. It is a course that will leave America stronger, our allies and partners more capable, and the Pacific region more stable and secure,” Hegseth said near the top of his remarks.

During the 25-minute speech, the secretary outlined a strategy that embraces “true partnership” through the empowerment of partner and ally nations throughout the region, while at the same time, moving away from reliance on the United States.

“The era of the United States subsidizing the defense of wealthy nations is over. We need partners, not protectorates. We seek alliances built on shared responsibility, not dependency,” Hegseth said.

He added that such a strategy

is the “maturation of alliances in a new era,” which will put those alliances on a sustainable footing to ensure fitness for the challenges of the future.

Stating that the Indo-Pacific region has profound implications regarding U.S. security and prosperity, Hegseth next addressed concerns about China’s

and clear posture of measured and deliberate strength.

“What we seek — and what [President Donald J. Trump] has consistently articulated — is a genuinely stable equilibrium that works for Americans as well as for our allies. A favorable, but durable, balance of power in which no state — including

for stable peace, fair trade and respectful relations between the two countries, it is his and the War Department’s job to provide military strength to support the president’s visionary and realistic diplomacy.

“While a decent peace is our goal, make no mistake: America is a Pacific nation, and we insist that China respect our longstanding position in this region. And not just insist, but maintain, the manifest military strength to underwrite it,” Hegseth said.

To maintain peace through strength in the Indo-Pacific region, Hegseth explained that the U.S. will no longer rely on “performative outrage” from politicians who signal virtue but fail to protect capabilities.

Rather, the U.S. military will lead first and foremost through actions, rather than words.

“We will prioritize lethal capabilities, strategic discipline and businesslike cooperation over empty rhetoric and peacocking. Any potential opponent will be forced to judge us by our hard power, collective readiness and our steadfast resolve,” he said, adding that the U.S. military posture in the Pacific region

will be resilient, distributed and optimized to deny quick and decisive gains through military force.

“This is the logic of strategy, this is the essence of peace through strength, and this is the foundation of a durable peace in the Pacific that benefits all of us,” Hegseth said, adding, “We all benefit from this policy, because our quiet, but clear, strength will lead to stability and peace.”

The secretary then circled back to the National Defense Strategy

and the theme of partnership over dependency, emphasizing its call to increase burden-sharing with U.S. allies and partners while empowering them to contribute toward collective defense among all friendly nations.

He noted that Trump has been crystal clear from Day 1 that alliances only work when they are true partnerships.

“It’s a two-way street [and] you don’t have a strong alliance unless everyone has skin in the game,” Hegseth explained.

“The era of the United States subsidizing the defense of wealthy nations is over. We need partners, not protectorates. We seek alliances built on shared responsibility, not dependency.” - Pete Hegseth

historic military build-up and expansion of military activities both in the region and beyond it.

“This alignment is based on a clear-eyed assessment of the security environment. And a mutual understanding that a Pacific dominated by any hegemon would unravel the regional balance of power and undermine the equilibrium we all seek to preserve,” he said.

To prevent such an eventuality, Hegseth said the War Department is approaching the challenge not with confrontation, but with a strong, quiet

China — can impose its hegemony and hold the security or prosperity of our nation and our allies in question,” Hegseth explained.

He noted that the United States seeks to preserve the conditions that have long underwritten peace and prosperity in the region.

“We are the power working to sustain equilibrium, not disrupt it, plain and simple,” he said.

Hegseth further stated that, while recent discussions with the Chinese government have helped to reinforce a foundation

Senate lawmakers renew military right to repair push

WASHINGTON, D.C.- In a report from Sen. Elizabeth Warren’s press office, her and Sen and Tim Sheehy wrote to the members of the House and Senate Armed Services Committees highlighting broad support from top military leaders in the Trump administration for codifying the military’s ability to repair its own equipment. The senators urged the committee leaders to pass their Warrior Right to Repair Act through the FY27 National Defense Authorization Act to protect military readiness and stop the government’s waste of taxpayer funds.

“We write with concern about the ability of our service members to repair their own equipment quickly and securely, and the impact that restricting the ‘right to repair’ has on our military’s readiness, our service members’ skills in a contested logistics environment, and growing maintenance costs that are borne by taxpayers,” wrote the senators.

Without right to repair provisions, the U.S. military has faced severe delays and massive overcharges by defense contractors, even for simple repairs. In 2021, the Government Accountability Office first revealed that providing the military the right to repair its own equipment “could save billions of (taxpayer) dollars.”

In their letter, the Senators highlighted strong support for right to repair from a broad spectrum of Trump administration military officials and national security analysts, including Gen. Dan Caine, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, who said the right to repair “would decrease reliance on external contractors, lower service fees, and allow for more efficient maintenance practices, ultimately leading to long-term cost savings.”

“Military leaders understand that the consequences of DoD’s inability to acquire the right to repair its own equipment have far-reaching implications for our military’s readiness... It is more urgent than ever that Congress act decisively to provide DoD with the right to repair,” concluded the senators.

Last year, the senators introduced the Warrior Right to Repair Act to require contractors to provide DoD with access to technical data and materials the military needs to repair and maintain its own equipment. Intellectual property law experts have noted that the bill is “consistent with longstanding law and presents no conflict with manufacturers’ IP rights” and merely requires DoD offices, “as market participants, to negotiate favorable terms that will save American taxpayer dollars and ensure the effectiveness and safety of the equipment relied upon by U.S. servicemembers.”

Monthly observances for June: Soul food, fresh fruit, humility

African-American Music Appreciation Month
Nat'l Safety Month
Nat'l Steakhouse Month
Nat'l Fireworks Safety Month
Nat'l Dairy Month
Nat'l Iced Tea Month
Country Cooking Month
Nati'l Soul Food Month
Nat'l Frozen Yogurt Month
Nat'l Lemon Month
Nat'l Fidelity Month
Nat'l Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Month
Alzheimer's and Brain Awareness Month
Idaho Wine Month

Christian Heritage Month
America First Month
Nat'l Papaya Month
Nat'l Dairy Alternative
Nat'l Homeownership Month
Nat'l Ocean Month
Rebuild Your Life Month
Nat'l DJ Month
Nat'l Defensive Gun Use Awareness Month
Nat'l Pet Preparedness
Fight the Filthy Fly Month
Audiobook Appreciation
Nat'l Portuguese Heritage
Women's Golf Month
Nat'l Myasthenia Gravis Awareness Month

Nat'l Migraine and Headache Awareness Month
Nat'l Veteran's Month
Jurassic June
Child Vision Awareness
Nat'l Accordion Awareness
Nat'l Child Safety Awareness
PTSD Awareness Month
Nat'l Rum Punch Month
Nat'l Scoliosis Awareness
Humility Month
Cancer Immunotherapy
Dravet Syndrome Awareness
Lipedema Awareness Month
Nat'l Adult Sex-Ed Month
Wound Healing Awareness
Loeys-Dietz Syndrome

Awareness Month
Nat'l Scleroderma Awareness
NPE Awareness Month
Int'l Cavemous Angioma Awareness Month
Toon June
Sacred Heart of Jesus Month
Nat'l Corn and Cucumber
California Avocado Month
That's A Shame Month
Nat'l Mango Month
Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Pride Month
Sorghum Month
Nat'l Sun Safety Month
Lane Courtesy Month
Adopt A Cat Month



Places of Worship



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Personal Property Activity expands PCS support across joint force

by Air Force Staff Sgt.
David Phaff

Personal Property Activity

For War Department personnel and their families, permanent change of station season can be one of the most stressful times of the year, as the moving process often comes with questions, uncertainty and unexpected challenges.

To better support service members across the joint force, the department established the Personal Property Activity to improve the military moving experience and ensure members have reliable support throughout every stage of their PCS.

One of the most important



Unfolded boxes are ready for packing during a permanent change of station move at Scott Air Force Base, Ill., July 17, 2025. U.S. Air Force photo by Staff Sgt. Stephanie Henry

things service members can do when preparing for a PCS is to start early and stay in touch with their local transportation management office.

The local offices serve as the first line of support for PCS moves and are ready to help:

- *Schedule household goods
- *Navigate the Defense Personal Property System.
- *Understand shipment entitlements.
- *Coordinate Personally Procured Moves.
- *Arrange vehicle shipments for eligible moves.
- *Receive guidance for overseas assignments.

The Personal Property Activity encourages service members to contact their installation transportation office as soon as they receive orders to improve predictability, flexibility and increase the likelihood of securing preferred moving dates during the busy summer moving season.

While transportation management offices remain a critical resource, the PPA also has a dedicated call center to help service members resolve issues quickly and provide real-time assistance throughout the moving process.

Now that peak PCS season is underway, the call center will operate 24/7 until Sept. 15, ensuring support is available when needed.

Whether service members need shipment updates, guidance on entitlements, assistance navigating the moving process or help resolving transportation issues, the PPA call center provides direct support and connects members with appropriate resources.

For PCS assistance, military families can call 833-MIL-MOVE (833-645-6683) or email PCScallcenter@mail.mil.

Armed Forces DISPATCH

Navy optimizes modern approach to health and fitness

by Scott Sutherland
Staff writer

Besides underway replenishments at sea, fueling the fleet now takes on a slightly modified meaning, what the Navy calls a new Food Service Transformation, or fueling the force.

Devised by the Navy's worldwide shore-based Navy Installations Command, the program is in two parts: first, it recalibrates physical fitness to enhance warfighter support, and it promotes the holistic wellness. In general terms, holistic wellness is an approach to healthcare and daily living that treats the mind, body, and spirit as interconnected systems rather than separate parts.

And second, the fit to fight concept deals with optimizing nutrition so Sailors focus on performance readiness through modern, campus-style dining with more of the primary nutrients - carbohydrates, protein and fat.

Called Human Performance Optimization, the first part of the program kicked off Feb. 2 at the fleet fitness center on the westside of Naval Base San Diego. In a Feb. 6 story by Lt. Drew Verbis, public affairs officer at the naval base, the program is designed to enhance an individual's physical, mental, emotional and nutritional capabilities in order to maximize effectiveness, productivity and overall well-being.

In the story, Capt. Brian Bun-



Navy galleys like Mercer Hall, shown here on NBSD, will soon have a diet of change under the Navy's Human Performance Optimization program. Armed Forces Dispatch photo by Scott Sutherland

gay, base commander, said, "We must treat our Sailors like world-class athletes, and the HPO initiative is a direct reflection of that vision."

The next step is using proper nutrition as fuel to fuel the warfighting requirements - sustaining long distance fitness endurance and muscle endurance. As of Jan. 21, the Pentagon changed body fat standards to 18-26 percent for men and between 26-36 percent for women. The same standards for the general population range from 15-20 percent for males and 25-30 percent for females.

The Navy Food Service Transformation (NFST) initiative is currently being piloted at Naval Base Kitsap, Wash., and Naval Construction Battalion Center Gulfport, Miss., and its hope is to shape the dining experience with high-quality, nutritious and customizable meal options. Navy

culinary specialists are at the head of the line, as some went through a weeklong session in Gulfport in aligning their skills to meet the new health standards.

In a recent story on the Navy Newsstand (navy.mil), Vice Adm. Scott Gray, commander of Navy Installations Command, said that by providing Sailors with high-quality, nutritious food and top-tier wellness resources, "we are directly investing in their physical and mental resilience. A well-supported, healthy, and focused Sailor is a more lethal warfighter, and these pilot programs are a critical step toward ensuring our force is always ready to meet any challenge."

In today's environment of technological changes and optimal health and fitness, troops need any edge they can get to stay on top.

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on the
street**

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"I need business funding, plus I'd hire more people and increase my merchandise stock."

Nina Pinidi
Soline Royal Hair, NBSD

"I'd give 50 percent to my fiancée and 50 percent for myself to pay off bills."

BM1 Cory Shields
Littoral Combat Ship Training Facility Pacific



"I'd buy a house in Massachusetts, where I'm from."

RP1 Elizabeth Hatten
NAS North Island
Chaplain's Office



"Give some to my mom and pay off some of my debt."

BM3 Asia Thomas
NAS North Island



"Donate it to a food bank. What comes around goes around."

Javier Fernandez
Pep Boys, NBSD





MARDIV CHANGE Marine Corps Brig. Gen. Andrew T. Priddy, left, the incoming commanding general of 1st Marine Division, and Maj. Gen. Savage, the outgoing commanding general, embrace during the 1st MARDIV change of command ceremony at Camp Pendleton May 29, 2026. U.S. Marine Corps photo by Sgt. Vincent Needham

Two decades of cooperation in the Indo-Pacific: Pacific Partnership 2026 mission begins

by Commander, Logistics Group Western Pacific

SAN DIEGO -- Pacific Partnership, the Navy's largest annual maritime humanitarian and civic assistance effort conducted in the Indo-Pacific, officially began with the departure of U.S. personnel from San Diego to the mission coordinating hub in the Philippines, May 27.

The Pacific Partnership 2026 (PP26) team, led by Navy Capt. Robert C. Reyes, mission commander, and Canadian Armed Forces Col. Alain Lafrenière, deputy mission commander, will conduct mission stops in Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Timor-Leste, and Vietnam.

"This year marks the 20th anniversary of Pacific Partnership, and the 22nd time embarking on this critical mission alongside our allies and partners," said Reyes. "With our unified commitment to a free and open Indo-Pacific, we strengthen regional security by building host nation capacity to prepare for and overcome crises, deepen cooperation, and deliver an enduring impact across the region."

U.S. personnel will work alongside personnel from participating nations including Australia, Canada, Germany, Japan, New Zealand, Republic of Korea, Singapore, and the United Kingdom to bolster host nation capacity to administer critical humanitarian services and support efforts to prepare and respond to disaster emergencies in the region.

"Our team has worked hard to plan this mission and we are excited

to visit new countries, experience new cultures, and integrate with our allies and partners to see first-hand, the positive impact we can have together, said Master Chief Air Traffic Controller Eric Zimmerman, senior enlisted leader for PP26.

During the deployment, the PP26 mission team will work alongside host nation partners to conduct medical exchanges, engineering projects, community outreach, and disaster preparedness engagements. The first stop is scheduled to take place in Vietnam in mid-June.

PP26 will focus on enhancing multilateral cooperation, strengthening national capacities for disaster and emergency response, and deepening strategic partnerships throughout the region.

The U.S. Pacific Fleet, along with its allies and partners, remains steadfast in advancing the shared vision of a free, open, and secure Indo-Pacific.

Pacific Partnership works collaboratively with host and partner nations to enhance regional interoperability and disaster response capabilities, increase security in the region, and foster new and enduring friendships in the Indo-Pacific.

For updates and multimedia from Pacific Partnership 2026, follow #PacificPartnership, #PP26, and #PacificPartnership26 on social media or visit <https://www.dvidshub.net/feature/PacificPartnership>

Nimitz hosts Caribbean leaders during Southern Seas deployment

ATLANTIC OCEAN – The Navy's oldest, active aircraft carrier, USS *Nimitz*, hosted several delegations from Caribbean nations during the latest leg of

Naval Forces Southern Command U.S. 4th Fleet's Southern Seas 2026 deployment in the Atlantic Ocean.

were hosted aboard the deployed carrier, and given the opportunity to observe shipboard operations and capabilities, including flight operations.

of Carrier Strike Group 11 and Capt. Joseph Furco, skipper of *Nimitz*, to discuss the Southern Seas 2026 mission and the strong security partnerships between their respective countries and the U.S.

Delegations, consisting of government and military leaders, from Suriname, Guyana, Trinidad and Tobago, and Grenada

While on board, each delegation met with Rear Adm. Cassidy Norman, commander

Visitors were also able to observe flight demonstrations from *Nimitz*' flight deck.

The delegations were led by Suriname Minister of Defense Uraiqit Ramsara, President of the Cooperative Republic of Guyana Mohamed Irfaan Ali, Trinidad and Tobago Minister of Defense Wayne Sturge, and Grenada Prime Minister Dickon Mitchell.

Nimitz Carrier Strike Group Sailors of Caribbean heritage also joined the tours, proudly representing the U.S. Navy as the ship hosted leaders from their nations of origin.

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Treating four-legged warfighters: Navy corpsmen train in canine Tactical Combat Casualty Care

by Christopher Jones

TWENTYNINE PALMS - Hospital corpsmen assigned to Navy Medicine Readiness and Training Command Twentynine Palms strengthened their operational medical capabilities in May 2026 through a Canine Tactical Combat Casualty Care (K9 TCCC) course taught by Army veterinary personnel, providing participants with specialized training designed to help save the lives of military working dogs in combat and field environments.



Hospitalman Brianna Ochoa (left) and Hospital Apprentice Halima Stewart (right) receive instruction from Army Spc. Amelia Knosp, an animal care specialist assigned to the installation veterinary clinic, during a Canine Tactical Combat Casualty Care training course at Navy Medicine Readiness and Training Command Twentynine Palms. U.S. Navy photo by Christopher Jones

The course introduced corpsmen to the principles of canine battlefield medicine, including trauma assessment, hemorrhage control, airway management, heat injury recognition, patient stabilization and casualty evacuation considerations for military working dogs. The training marked the first time the course had been broadly offered to corpsmen across the command.

Military working dogs serve alongside service members throughout the Department of War, supporting missions ranging from explosives detection and force protection to law en-

forcement and patrol operations. Like their human counterparts, military working dogs can suffer injuries during training exercises, operational missions and emergency situations. When those incidents occur in austere environments, corpsmen may be the first medical providers available to render aid.

According to Army Spc. Amelia Knosp, an animal care specialist assigned to the combat center veterinary clinic here, providing corpsmen with canine trauma care skills helps bridge a critical gap between injury and definitive veterinary treatment.

"I think that it's very beneficial for hospital corpsmen to train in K9 TCCC because it is a great expansion of their skills and allows them the opportunity to learn something new," said Knosp. "In a field environment, they will often be the first line of medical care. Animal care specialists and veterinarians are spread thin and are not usually going to be out in the field."

Knosp said that military working dog handlers and corpsmen may become the most important resource available to stabilize an injured canine until evacuation to a facility where veterinary personnel can assume care.

"The corpsmen and the dog handlers together will be the most valuable resource to save the canines' lives until they can be evacuated to a field hospital, where there will more likely be veterinary staff to assist in their care," she said.

The training itself grew from grassroots interest among NMRTC Twentynine Palms corpsmen seeking opportunities to expand their tactical medicine knowledge. What began as a proposed small-group session quickly evolved into a larger course after additional corpsmen expressed interest in participat-



CAMP PENDLETON (May 27, 2026) Marine Corps Staff Sgt. Jakob D. Stark, right, a combat instructor, demonstrates how to use a Mk 22 Advanced Sniper Rifle to Paul S. Atkins, chairman of the Securities and Exchange Commission here. The tour featured static displays, financial literacy classes and a town hall meeting designed to educate and empower service members to better manage their finances. U.S. Marine Corps photo by Sgt. Haley Fourmet Gustavsen



AT SEA (May 25, 2026) Trinidad and Tobago government and military distinguished visitors observe from aircraft carrier USS Nimitz as destroyer USS Gridley fires her five-inch gun during a naval power demonstration. Nimitz is deployed as part of Southern Seas 2026. U.S. Navy photo by MC3 Gilecia Dias



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Echoes of Montford Point

by Staff Sgt.
Ryanne Williams

8th Marine Corps District

SAN DIEGO - Legacy is often thought of as something grand—monuments, medals, names etched into history. But more often, legacy lives in quieter places: in old photographs tucked away in boxes, in lessons passed across generations, in the unshakable belief that one person's sacrifices can shape lives they may never meet.

For Staff Sgt. Ryan Hill, legacy began long before he ever wore the uniform.

It began with Sgt. Francis Leroy Hopkins.

Born in 1919, Hopkins was among the first African Americans to break barriers as a Montford Point Marine, training at a segregated camp during a time when even the opportunity to serve in the Marine Corps was denied to many who looked like him. A drummer by trade and a Marine by identity, Hopkins carried himself with unmistakable pride. His clothes were always crisp, sharply pressed. A Marine Corps lapel pin never left his jacket. Even years after his service, the Corps remained stitched into his identity.

But Hopkins' true legacy was not in appearances or accolades. It was in how he treated others.

His family remembers a man who always thought of his fellow man before himself—a quiet kind of leadership rooted in service, humility, and compassion.

In January 2022, decades after his passing in 1982, Hopkins was posthumously awarded the Congressional Gold Medal alongside fellow Montford Point Marines, formal recognition of a legacy his family had understood all along.

For Hill, that legacy first took shape in fragments.

At 10 years old, he watched his Uncle Kenny move through the world in uniform. Kenneth Leon Hopkins was a Gunnery Sergeant in the Marine Corps Reserve at the time but had previously served on active duty and ultimately retired as a Master Sergeant. Hill saw him in his desert camouflage utility uniform, and there was something magnetic about it. Something larger than the man himself.

"Marine blood runs deep in our family," his uncle told him.

Later, while digging through forgotten boxes in the family garage, Hill uncovered two small Eagle, Globe, and Anchor insignias. They had belonged to his grandfather. That discovery changed everything.

Soon after, his mother showed him a photograph he had never seen before—Hopkins in his boot camp portrait, young, sharp, and unmistakably Marine. What had once been abstract suddenly became personal.

Hill joined the Young Marines, drawn toward the institution that had helped define his family. By the time he arrived at recruit training, the challenges were real, but the sense of belonging came naturally. Marine Corps values were not foreign concepts—they were already woven into the household that raised him. Whenever training tested him, Hill leaned on a simple truth:

If they can do it, I can do it.

Upon graduating boot camp, those same EGA insignias he had discovered years earlier were presented to Hill and his cousin, then Corporal Kenneth Leon Hopkins Jr. What had once been history became inheritance. But the deepest connection came later.

While attending Military Occupational Specialty school at Camp Johnson, Hill saw the sign: Home of the Montford Point Marines.

Suddenly, every step across that base carried weight. He couldn't help but wonder whether

er his grandfather had once walked that same ground more than 80 years earlier. Whether those same roads had carried the same uncertainty, ambition, and determination.

For Hill, the connection transformed something in him. The question was no longer whether he belonged. It became: How far can I go?

How could he keep beating the odds? What else was possible?

Hopkins may never have understood the full impact of his own service. To him, becoming a Marine may simply have been the path in front of him—a job, a duty, an opportunity.

But history rarely reveals its significance in the moment. What Hopkins built became a blueprint, not just for the Marine Corps, but for his son and grandsons.

Now serving as a Senior Drill Instructor at Marine Corps Recruit Depot San Diego, Staff Sgt. Hill understands the legacy from the other side.

Every cycle of recruits that steps onto the yellow footprints represents possibility. Some arrive with confidence. Others arrive with very little at all. But Hill sees potential in every one of them.

"A lot of the recruits come from nothing," Hill said. "And I know I have the power to help them become something more.



Marine Corps Sgt. Francis Leroy Hopkins enlisted in the era of the Montford Point Marines. He served as a drummer and carried his Marine Corps values with him into civilian life. His legacy is carried on through his son and grandsons, namely Staff Sgt. Ryan Hill, who is currently serving as a senior drill instructor at Marine Corps Recruit Depot San Diego. Photo courtesy of the Hopkins family

And maybe everything I teach them can be passed on to their children and through the next generations as it was to me."

That is how legacy survives. Not in medals alone. Not in photographs. Not even in names remembered by history. It survives in what we pass forward.

A grandfather breaks barriers at Montford Point.

A grandson walks the same ground decades later.

And now, through the Marines he shapes, Staff Sgt. Ryan Hill ensures those echoes will continue long after his own footsteps fade.



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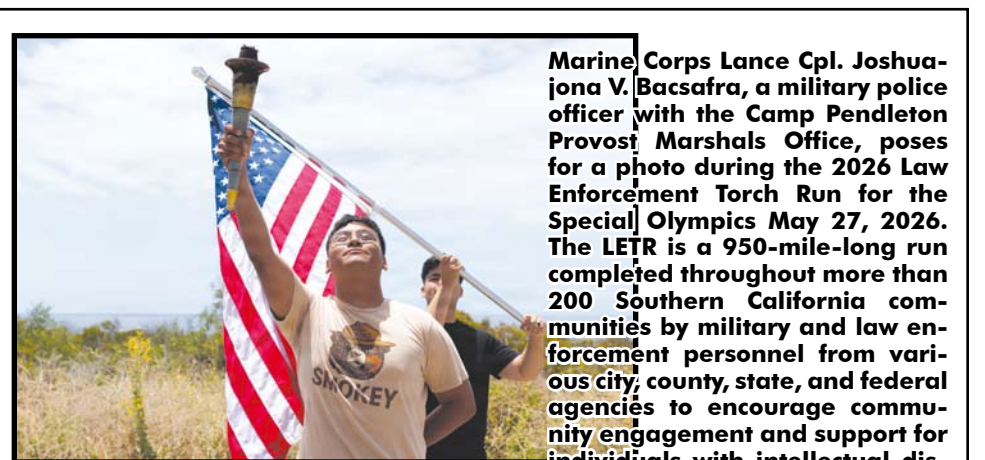
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Sun., April 26, 4:30pm	Tucson Sugar Skulls at San Diego Strike Force*
Sat., May 23, 7pm	NAZ Wranglers at San Diego Strike Force*
Fri., June 19, 7pm	Vegas Knight Hawks at San Diego Strike Force*
Mon., July 6, 6pm	Arizona Rattlers at San Diego Strike Force*
Sat., July 18, 8pm	New Mexico Chupacabras at San Diego Strike Force*
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Marine Corps Lance Cpl. Joshua V. Bacsafrá, a military police officer with the Camp Pendleton Provost Marshals Office, poses for a photo during the 2026 Law Enforcement Torch Run for the Special Olympics May 27, 2026. The LETR is a 950-mile-long run completed throughout more than 200 Southern California communities by military and law enforcement personnel from various city, county, state, and federal agencies to encourage community engagement and support for individuals with intellectual disabilities. U.S. Marine Corps photo by Pfc. Joseph Cantu



Marine Corps Aircraft Rescue and Fire Fighting firefighters stationed on Marine Corps Air Station Miramar suppress a burn pit during a simulated aircraft burn training exercise May 30, 2026. The mock aircraft burn pit provides realistic training for firefighters to reinforce emergency response procedures for potential aircraft incidents. U.S. Marine Corps photo by Lance Cpl. Zoey Williams



The Meat & Potatoes of Life



by
Lisa
Smith
Molinari

I'm far too old to be using terms like "Bestie," "Ride-or-die," "Homegirl," or "BFF," but the fact remains that I've been lucky enough in life to have something everyone wants — a best friend. Not just any best friend, but a best friend I've had since ninth grade.

Even though we haven't lived in the same location since we graduated from high school in 1984, we've maintained our friendship no matter where life took us. We are still playmates, confidants, partners in crime, loyal guardians, and number one fans for each other, forty-six years later. With each passing year, I realize just how precious our relationship is and am so grateful for it.

However, I'm also a Navy wife who struggled to create new friendships after each move. For two decades, I felt like the kid who gets picked last for kickball. With important exceptions like my Bunco group in Virginia Beach and a few rare individuals I connected with along the way, I always thought I was precariously hanging on the last rung of the social ladder, ready to fall off into a lonely abyss with one tiny kick.

In desperation, I made mistakes like agreeing to be the Parliamentarian of the Molesworth Combined Spouses Club where board

The surprising importance of friendships

meetings mimicked MMA fights, and joining the Stuttgart Army Wives Bowling League where I displayed no skill and complete ignorance of the rules. Countless times, I pathetically asked myself, "Does anyone here like me?"

Even after my Navy husband retired, and we settled in Rhode Island, it took me years to find local friends I could be myself around. I joined the local Rotary Club, took exercise classes, signed up for the ladies golf league, and became a member of the Ladies Ancient Order of Hibernians just to meet new people. It was awkward shopping myself around town like a door to door saleswoman, "Hi! Might you be interested in a new friend? Act now and you'll receive a free set of Ginsu knives!"

Why was I so desperate to make friends after each move? According to science, friendships don't just rescue us from feeling like losers. These important relationships actually protect us from social isolation that can significantly impact our health and well-being.

In a meta-analysis of over 308,000 people, scientists found that people lacking good quality friendships are twice as likely to die prematurely, a risk factor equivalent to smoking 20 cigarettes per day and higher than other risk factors such as obesity. Unfortunately, technology and globalization have not helped us foster social connections. To the contrary, three times more Americans report having no "confidant" today than 30 years ago.

With the rise in screen time over the last two decades, in-person social interactions have decreased, isolating humans from each other. Forty percent of adult Americans report having online-only friendships today. And teenagers, who need peer interactions for healthy development, spend an average of only 40 minutes per day engaging with friends in person, a huge decrease from 140 minutes per day twenty years ago.

The good news is that social isolation is easy to avoid. There's no need for a whole sorority houseful of besties to hang out on weekends. Even good conversations with strangers have a positive effect on one's well-being. One study showed that in-person interactions of just once per week protected well-being, more than calls and texts. Even "weak" friendship ties are beneficial. Research shows that people who have more weak-tie interactions are happier than those with less.

It took about seven years for me to make local friends after our last move, but I now have an abundance of folks that protect my health and well-being, like my lifelong best friend Patrice, my husband, the special people I connected with during my husband's active duty career, the sweet worker who chats with me at the post office, my sailing buddies, the fun ladies in my Boot Camp classes at the Rec. Center, the strangers I find myself talking to in waiting rooms and restaurants, and many, many more.

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AutoMatters™ & More



by Jan Wagner

A truly incomparable entertainment value, with so much to see, do and EAT, is the annual San Diego County Fair, at the Del Mar Fairgrounds. Its origin can be traced all the way back to 1880, when it was first established as an agricultural fair, to bring farmers together to share ideas, see who had the best citrus fruit, who baked the best pie and who had the fastest horse! Modern-day Fairgoers eagerly await its annual arrival, and we enthusiastically return multiple days, year after year.

Fair themes began in 1980. This year's immersive, storybook-inspired theme is "Once Upon a Fair." It celebrates imaginative, inspiring and magical storytelling and books.

Competitive and other exhibits include agricultural displays, including livestock, floral; fruits and vegetables, gardens — including my favorite, the scale model trains diorama; original fine art, photography, crafts, wood-working, quilts, baked goods; gems, minerals and jewelry; craft brews, wine, collections, student showcases and much more.

Another of my favorite things to see — and photograph — are several days of motorsports, including monster trucks (with the "Glow Show"), Junior Mini Sprints, Junior Outlaw, Lawn Mower Racing and — yes it is back — the free with Fair admission Fire & Safety Expo, featuring the ever-

Lots to see, do and EAT - at the 2026 San Diego County Fair

popular Firefighter Demolition Derby on June 28th. Be there!

As always, you'll find plenty of opportunities to shop.

Fair food is a reason all by itself to visit the Fair. Bring an appetite. You'll need it! At the Media preview for this year's Fair, I liked Chicken Charlie's chicken Shawarma wrap so much that I had two.

The Fair offers daily musical entertainment, much of it offered at no extra charge. The purchase of tickets for the 2026 Toyota Summer Concert Series tickets includes same-day Fair admission. The wide variety of paid concerts include Chicago (June 10), Los Tucanes De Tijuana (June 14), Gabriel "Fluffy" Iglesias (June 18) and Demi Lovato (June 24).

Daily concerts at no extra charge, presented by Chevrolet on the Chevrolet Paddock Stage, includes one at 8pm on June 27th that I am extremely looking forward to. "Top of the World" is a tribute to the music of The Carpenters (1965 to 1983) — one of my all-time favorite groups, which sadly came to an end forever with Karen Carpenter's tragic death on Feb. 4, 1983.

I have the Top Of The World Carpenter Tribute Band's signature CD. These talented professional musicians, with lead vocalist Debbie Taylor, absolutely nail The Carpenters' sound. Together, they will take you back in time, to "Yesterday Once More" (1973). You will find me there taking photos and enjoying this entire concert.

Celebrate the 250th Anniversary of the United States with the Marine Band San Diego, followed with a fireworks spectacular on the Fourth of July.

Discounted tickets for the Fair are available in advance at Albertsons, Vons, Pavilions, other retailers and online at the Fair's website. Discounts are available for members of the military, first responders, teachers, government employees and other groups. There are Kids Days, Value Meal deals, Foodie Fridays; Pepsi Pay-One-Price Ride Days — unlimited rides for one single-day price on Wednesdays and Thursdays from 11 a.m. to 8 p.m. (buy online before June 10 to save the most); BlastPass Early Bird Savings on rides and games, (save by purchasing online by June 9), Game On Fridays, as well as discounted bundles that include Fair admission and Paddock Concert Series admission, Legoland 2-for-1 tickets on Fridays (while supplies last), the valuable Passport to Savings coupon book and more. On Opening Day, admission is only \$5 before 5 p.m. Parking is available for a fee nearby, or for free offsite, with complimentary transportation from there to the Fair by shuttle buses. Also, the North County Transit District has partnered with the San Diego Metropolitan Transit System to offer "Fair Tripper" combined ticket and round-trip transportation aboard the COASTER train, with free shuttle buses between the Solana Beach COASTER train station and the Fairgrounds. Visit: <https://www.sdfair.com>.

This year's Fair runs through July 5 (closed Mondays and Tuesdays).

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Veterans News

Medal of Honor Spotlight: Army Pfc. Charles N. DeGlopper

by David Vergun
Pentagon News

Army Pfc. Charles N. DeGlopper served as a paratrooper during World War II in North Africa and Italy. However, it was for his selfless actions in France, three days after D-Day, that earned him the Medal of Honor posthumously.

DeGlopper was born in Grand Island, New York, Nov. 30, 1921, to Charles and Mary DeGlopper. He grew up on a cattle farm and was the youngest of his siblings: John, Robert and Lillias. DeGlopper attended a one-room school until eighth grade, then graduated from Tonawanda High School in 1941.

He didn't play sports in high school; instead, he joined a bachelors' club for cooking and sewing with his childhood friend Harold Long, according to Long during a 2022 interview with Niagara Frontier Publications.

"We had a great time. The teacher always said, 'We've got to teach you sewing.' But we wanted to cook. That's how I got

to know Charlie," Long recalled.

DeGlopper enlisted in the Army in November 1942 when he received his draft notice. It was difficult to fit the 6-foot-7-inch-240-pound private in uniform, since he wore size 15 boots. Following basic training at Camp Croft, South Carolina, he boarded a ship in April 1943, serving with Company C, 325th Glider Infantry Regiment, 82nd Airborne Division.

On June 9, 1944, after crash-landing his glider near the Normandy town of Sainte-Mère-Église, France, he was advanced with the forward platoon to secure a bridgehead across the Merderet River at La Fièvre, France.

"At dawn, the platoon had penetrated an outer line of ma-



Army Pfc. Charles N. DeGlopper poses for a photo. Photo courtesy of U.S. Army

chine guns and riflemen, but in so doing had become cut off from the rest of the company. Vastly superior forces began a decimation of the stricken unit and put in motion a flanking maneuver, which would have completely exposed the American platoon in a shallow roadside ditch where it had taken cover," his Medal of Honor citation reads.

Detecting this danger, DeGlopper volunteered to support

his comrades by firing his automatic rifle while they attempted a withdrawal through a break in a hedgerow.

With disregard for his own safety in a concentration of enemy automatic weapons fire, he walked from the ditch onto the road in full view of the Germans. He sprayed the hostile positions with assault fire.

"He volunteered to cover the movement of his buddies to more advantageous terrain. Standing at 6'7" tall, it was hard for him not to be conspicuous. He certainly knew that he would be an easy target for the Germans, for the Nazis. Yet, with remarkable bravery, he acted above and beyond the call of duty to protect his fellow soldiers and accomplish the mission," said Army Maj. Gen. David Conboy, who served as the guest speaker during a 2024 ceremony to dedicate a park to DeGlopper in his hometown.

Although wounded twice, DeGlopper continued firing. Kneeling in the roadway, weak-

ened by his wounds, he leveled his weapon against the enemy and fired burst after burst until he was killed.

He was successful in drawing the enemy action away from his fellow soldiers, who continued the fight from a more advantageous position and established the first bridgehead over the river.

In the area where he made his intrepid stand, his comrades later found the ground strewn with dead Germans and many machine guns and automatic weapons.

On March 10, 1946, DeGlopper's father received the Medal of Honor from Army Maj. Gen. Leland S. Hobbs at Trinity Evangelical United Brethren Church in Grand Island.

Hobbs had commanded the 30th Infantry Division at Normandy.

"He did all he could. We did all we could. Nothing more could be done. Charles DeGlopper did not fear fear. He admitted it. It should be a lesson to all of us," said Hobbs at the ceremony, ac-

ording to the March 11, 1946, newspaper The Buffalo News.

His legacy lives on in his hometown and throughout the Army.

On Dec. 3, 1947, the Army Transport Englin Victory was renamed the Pvt. Charles N. DeGlopper at the Brooklyn Army Base in Brooklyn, New York. A road at Fort Bragg, North Carolina, is named for him, and in January 2015, the Fort Bragg Air Assault School was dedicated and renamed the DeGlopper Air Assault School.

The Army Reserve Training Center in Tonawanda, New York, is named the Charles DeGlopper Center. On June 9, 2024, 80 years after he paid the ultimate sacrifice, his hometown dedicated the DeGlopper Memorial Park with a rifle salute and a military helicopter flyover.

DeGlopper is buried in Maple Grove Cemetery in Grand Island.

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SOCIAL SECURITY MATTERS

I'm being released from incarceration. what are my Social Security options?

Dear Rusty: In a previous column, you wrote about people who filed for Social Security late in life. I am currently incarcerated and will be filing for Social Security in the fall of 2029. I will be 74 years old in the first week of January 2029. Unless I read it wrong, could I be eligible to collect the previous 6 months? If this is so, how would that work? Would I get that all at once or incrementally? According to the chart we once got in the mail, I should be collecting the maximum amount. I've worked all of my life and never collected Social Security before. Also, my ex-wife remarried and has since passed away. Do I qualify for part of her Social Security? Signed, "D" in Danbury

Dear "D" in Danbury: I'm afraid you cannot receive Social Security benefits while you are incarcerated, even if you are eligible for them prior to your release. Thus, you cannot get retroactive Social Security benefits for any period you were still incarcerated. For clarity, although most who apply at a later age (e.g., in their 70s) do have the option to claim retroactive benefits, you cannot get any SS benefits for any month you were still incarcerated. Further, you will not get credit for delaying your application for SS benefits while you are incarcerated (you won't earn Delayed Retirement Credits (DRCs) during your incarceration).

Assuming (from what you shared) that you expect to be released from incarceration in the fall of 2029, you can apply for your SS benefits to start upon your release. Be aware, however, that it usually takes several months for your application for SS benefits to be processed, and you can specify the month you wish your benefits start. Your benefit amount will be based upon your average monthly earnings for the 35 highest earning years over your lifetime. But you cannot get retroactive SS benefits for time prior to your release from incarceration. Since Social Security does not pay benefits for partial months, you can file for your SS benefits to start effective with the month following the month in which your incarceration ends. Be sure you have your official prison release documentation (parole or discharge papers) in hand when you apply for your Social Security benefits.

FYI, some correctional facilities have a "Prerelease Agreement" with Social Security, which may enable you to file for your SS benefits three to four months prior to your release from incarceration. Be sure to check with your facility to see if they have such an agreement with Social Security and, if so, use it to apply for your benefits in advance of your release. This will facilitate your SS benefits starting more quickly upon your release.

You did not ask about healthcare coverage, but since you will be eligible for Social Security, you will also be eligible for Medicare upon your release. When you apply for your Social Security benefits, you can also apply for Medicare Part B (coverage for outpatient medical services), the premium for which will be deducted from your Social Security payment. FYI, Medicare Part A (coverage for inpatient hospitalization services) is free and automatic because you are also eligible for Social Security.

Finally, regarding survivor benefits from your ex-wife, you can only get a surviving ex-spouse benefit if you were married for more than 10 years and your own SS retirement amount is less than your ex-wife was receiving at her death. In other words, you can only get one SS benefit - either your own or your deceased ex-wife's amount, whichever is higher.

Visit our military museums

The Veterans Museum at Balboa Park. The Veterans Museum and Memorial Center is a museum located in historic Balboa Park of San Diego, California. Founded in 1989, it is dedicated to create, maintain, and operate an institution to honor and perpetuate the memories of all men and women who have served in the Armed Forces of the United States of America. <http://www.veteranmuseum.org/>
Active duty military, Museum Member, Children under 12: Free
Veterans/Seniors: \$4 • Adults: \$5 • Student ID: \$2
2115 Park Blvd, San Diego (Balboa Park) • (619) 239-2300
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MCRD Command Museum & Historical Society. Museum focusing on Marine Corps history from the 19th century to today is also a research library. <https://www.mcrdmuseum.org/>
Free admission • The Pass and ID Center may issue day passes to visitors who wish to visit the museum and do not possess military ID-call (619) 524-4200 for information on base access.
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Hours: Mon 8am-3pm, Tue-Fri 8-4; Family day 8-5:45; Sat 10:30-5, • Closed Sunday

USS Midway Museum. The USS Midway Museum is a maritime museum located in downtown San Diego at Navy Pier. The museum consists of the aircraft carrier Midway. The ship houses an extensive collection of aircraft, many of which were built in So Cal. FREE for children 3 & under and Active Duty military including reservists (w/valid ID). Adult \$39 (ages 13+). Youth \$26 (ages 4-12). Veterans (w/ID) \$26*Must show ID at entrance. Open daily 10-5, last admission 4pm. <https://www.midway.org/>

The Ranch House Complex at Camp Pendleton. Listed as the Santa Margarita Ranch House Nat'l Historic Site and as a California State Historical Landmark. Docent-led tours are available by appointment; masks required. Please email your request to: MCBCAMPEN_history@usmc.mil or phone (760)725-5758 The Camp Pendleton Historical Society is a 501(c)3 organization in support of the base's History and Museum's programs. Go to: www.camppendletonhistoricalsociety.org/ for information. Hours: Open Mondays 10am-2pm

Marine Corps Mechanized Museum Camp Pendleton. Managed under the auspices of Camp Pendleton's Museum Division Office, the collection of over 50 vehicles ranges from World War I to the first Gulf War. It includes Patton tanks, armored wheeled and tracked vehicles, trucks, jeeps and amphibious vehicles. When coming aboard Camp Pendleton, please ensure that you have a valid photo ID for every vehicle occupant along with current registration and proof of insurance. <https://www.themech.org/> 24194 Vandegrift Blvd, Oceanside, CA 92058. (760) 725-5758. Mon-Thur 8am-4pm, Fri 8am-1pm, Closed Saturday & Sunday

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THINGS TO DO!

Cajon Cruise Nights, Wednesdays, through July 22, 5-7:30pm, Main Street and Prescott Promenade. Live music, great food, and a welcoming community vibe. www.downtownelcajon.com/do/cajon-cruise
Encinitas Cruise Night Third Thursdays thru Sept, 5:30-7:30pm. Live music, hotrods, classics, woodies, Hwy 101. encinitas101.com
G2025 USA Surfing Championships. June 7-12. Includes Para Surf, Longboard, Adult Divisions Shortboard, SUP Surf, SUP, Prone Distance, Tech & Age Group Races. Oceanside Harbor North Jetty. usasurfing.org
6/9 **Paul Simon at Rady Shell,** San Diego www.theshell.org
6/10 **Chicago - Summer Concert Series** - www.sdfair.com
San Diego County Fair. June 10-July 5, Del Mar Fairgrounds. "ONCE UPON A FAIR" in a land not-so-far-away, the story of your San Diego summer begins. Food, fun, friends, family, laughter, tradition, music. See website for schedule www.sdfair.com

Annual Switchfoot BRO-AM June 13, 7am-5pm@ Moonlight Beach, Encinitas. 15,000+ beach lovers for a free, all ages, family friendly, community giving event: surf contests, live concerts on the beach with Grammy award-winning rock band Switchfoot, food and drinks, vendor booths, green initiatives, and more. www.broam.org

FIFA World Cup in Los Angeles. June 12-July 10 - opening match.
Rod Stewart June 12, North Island Credit Union Amphitheatre
Crusin' Grand Escondido, June 12 every Friday night down Grand Avenue www.cruisingrand.net

Summer Fun on the 101, June 13, with live music and art, feat: Peter Sprague and Rebecca

26th Annual Pacific Beach Surfing Championship (PBSC) Summer Longboard Classic, June 13, pacificbeachsurfclub.com/club-events

San Diego Smooth Jazz Festival June 13-14, at Rady Shell, San Diego www.theshell.org

6/19-21 **NASCAR San Diego Weekend,** Naval Base Coronado www.nascar-sandiego.com/events/nascar-cup-series/

Scottish Highland Games, June 20-21. Competitions, vendors, live music, whiskey, herding dogs. SDSU Mission Valley River Park. sdhighlandgames.org

46th Annual Ocean Beach Street Fair & Chili Cook-Off Sat, June 27, 10am-8pm, Free. 4800-5000 blocks of Newport Ave & along the waterfront. Live music, local artists, food vendors, family activities, community art projects. OceanBeachSanDiego.com

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2026 MHS conference keynote speaker thanks Military Medicine for his recovery

by Andrew Ortuzar,
MHS Communications

Before sharing his story May 27 at the 2026 Military Health System Conference in Dallas, retired Army Capt. Florent Groberg named those he served with who were killed in action: Army Command Sgt. Maj. Kevin Griffin, Army Maj. Walter Gray, Army Maj. Thomas Kennedy and Ragaeb Abdelfattah.

“Why does that matter?” he asked. “That matters because I’m alive. That matters because I get to spend Memorial Days, Fourth of July, Thanksgivings and Christmases with my two kids and my wife — and their families do not.”

Delivering a spirited and powerful keynote address to an audience of thousands of service members, War Department personnel, government and industry healthcare professionals, Medal of Honor recipient Groberg wove a story of selfless heroism and the subsequent long road to recovery through Military Health System care.

His remarks painted a portrait of warfighter resilience and hope.

Groberg’s split-second decision under attack in Afghanistan saved many lives but resulted in the loss of half of his left calf muscle, significant nerve damage and a traumatic brain injury. He spent nearly three years recovering at Walter Reed National Medical Center, undergoing dozens of surgeries.

For his extraordinary bravery, Groberg was awarded the Medal of Honor by President Barack Obama in 2015.

Heroism Knows No Rank

Born in France and naturalized as a U.S. citizen in 2001, he was commissioned as an Army infantry officer in 2008. On Aug. 8, 2012, while serving as a personal security detachment commander in Asadabad, Af-



Retired Army Capt. Florent Groberg, a Medal of Honor recipient, delivers the keynote address at the 2026 Military Health System Conference in Dallas, May 27, 2026. He survived and recovered from injuries sustained in Afghanistan in 2012 thanks to the care he received through the Military Health System. He emphasized that strong teams are built by leaders who listen to their people and recognize the value of every team member’s contribution and experience, regardless of rank, age or position. Photo credit: Robert Hammer, Office of the Assistant Secretary of War for Health Affairs/Military Health System

ghanistan, Groberg’s patrol was targeted by two suicide bombers. Recognizing the threat, Groberg, along with Army Sgt. Andrew Mahoney, immediately rushed one attacker, physically pushing him away from the formation, diverting the eventual detonation from the others.

Throughout his address, Groberg framed leadership not as authority or status, but as responsibility to the people around you — and as a willingness to listen.

“The biggest dilemma I’ve ever had as an officer, as a warrior, was this concept of mission or people first,” he said. “I started thinking, ‘Why are we separating these two?’ They’re together. Intertwined. They have to be.”

“I can’t do my mission without my people, and I don’t have a mission without my people.”

Groberg emphasized that effective teams are built not on hierarchy alone, but on mutual

trust and humility. Some of the most important lessons of his career, he said, came from junior enlisted soldiers and wounded warriors around him.

“Every single one of you in this room has something important to teach me,” he said. “So why is it that I shouldn’t be able to listen to you? What makes me better than you?”

Recalling his first deployment to Afghanistan, Groberg described a moment in combat when an enlisted soldier stepped in after he froze during a firefight.

“That was the biggest lesson I ever took from combat,” he said. “It doesn’t matter who you are. It doesn’t matter where you come from. It doesn’t matter what your work experience is. Your title does not matter. You are a human being.”

Later in the speech, he credited wounded service members at Walter Reed National Military Medical Center with reshaping his understanding of leadership and strength.

Shifting Mindset to Seeking Help

Groberg spoke candidly about the mental health challenges that followed his physical recovery. He described months of insomnia, narcotics, survivor’s guilt and replaying the attack “over and over and over” in his head.

“I hated myself for not being able to cry,” he said. “I had demons in my head.”

He acknowledged that before his injuries, he had dismissed mental health struggles.

“I used to think therapy was weakness,” he said. “I could not have been more wrong.”

For Groberg, recovery began not with a breakthrough moment, but with people willing to remain present through his anger, grief and guilt — nurses, doctors and fellow wounded veterans who listened without judgment.

“The word suicide, to me, is a healthy word to talk about, because it’s a reality,” he said. “Trauma is a real thing. But trauma doesn’t have to dictate who you are.”

He singled out Walter Reed nurse Haley Willis and fellow Medal of Honor recipient retired Army Staff Sgt. Travis Mills as pivotal figures during his recovery. Mills, a quadruple amputee, entered his hospital room with what Groberg described as “the biggest grin I’ve ever seen” and reframed the meaning of survival itself.

“He reminded me of my purpose, reminded me of my mission, reminded me of my oath,” Groberg said. “He said, ‘You’ve got a voice. Utilize it. You’ve got a story. Amplify it. Help others

but always listen.”

That advice became central to Groberg’s message — wounded warriors are not defined by trauma, and survival creates a responsibility to continue serving others.

MHS Care Matters

Concluding his speech at the conference, Groberg returned to the people around him — not just service members, but nurses, doctors, planners, support staff and families.

“You matter to us more than you’ll ever understand,” he told the audience. “We will never say thank you enough.”

Even discussing the action that earned him the Medal of Honor, Groberg resisted framing it as extraordinary.

“People ask me, ‘What were you thinking when you tackled a suicide bomber?’” he said. “First of all, folks, you don’t think.”

“I saw a threat. I was the closest to the threat.”

For Groberg, the act was not about fearlessness or instinctive heroism, but about commitment to the people beside him.

“If I died while protecting them and they lived,” he said, “That’s a good day at work.”



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THE
TAWY
TEAM



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We are one of a small group of lenders that partner with the USO and their USO Pathfinder® program.

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We waive the lender fee (\$1,440) and have loan options for credit scores of 550 and up.

FREE appraisal on home purchase or refinance

In honor of your service and to show our gratitude, we are offering a FREE Appraisal on a home purchase or refinance through June 30, 2026.

A dedicated team of VA loan experts

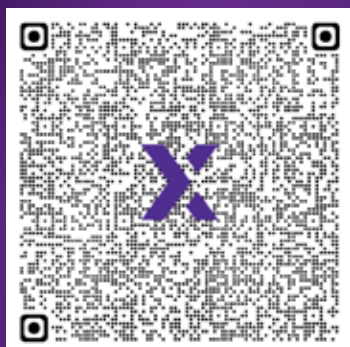
Our VA specialist team includes 55 Vets and has processed more than \$12 billion in VA loans.

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[maximus.com/defense](https://www.maximus.com/defense)

July 17: Toad The Wet Sprocket
Nov 13: X and Los Lobo

Del Mar Fairgrounds
June 11: Live and Collective Soul
June 11: Ozomatli
June 12: Foreigner
June 12: Strait Country
June 13: Maxwell
June 13: Jesse Royal
June 14: Zedd
June 14: 24K Magic
June 15: Los Tigres Del Norte
June 15: Sure Fire Soul Ensemble
June 18: Jordan Davis
June 18: That Arena Rock Show
June 19: Xscape
June 19: No Duh

Frontwave Arena
June 7: Eden Munoz
June 14: All American Summer Concert
July 10: Dwight Yoakam and The Mavericks
July 19: Mi Mundo by Evo Tour Featuring Marca Registrada
Aug 3: Rick Springfield and John Waite
Aug 9: Channel 93.3 Sunset Sounds Featuring Alex Warren
Oct 11: Zach Williams Revival Nights
Nov 8: 40th Anniversary Take You Home Tour

Harrah's Resort Southern California
May 25: Seether and Nonpoint
June 6: Charley Crockett
July 4: Clint Black

Humphreys by the Bay
May 23: Thievery Corporation
May 29: Caitlin Cannon
June 3: Trevor Hall
June 7: Stephen Marley
June 8: Boney James
June 12: The California Honeydrops
June 13: The California Honeydrops
June 19: Mary Chapin Carpenter and Brandy Clark
June 24: Elvis Costello & Charlie Sexton
Aug 18: Tennis and Alice Phoebe Lou
Aug 24: Pink Martini
Aug 26: Burton Cummings
Sept 1: Hiatus Kaiyote
Sept 9: MJ Lenderman & The Wind and Nap Eyes
Sept 27: Stereophonics
Nov 2: Little River Band
Nov 5: Aly & AJ

Magnolia
May 21: David Bisbal
June 27: Prince Again: A Tribute to Prince
July 12: Bruno & the Hooligans
Aug 7: Caloncho and Daniel Me Estás Matando
Aug 15: Macy Gray
Aug 23: Buena Vista Orchestra
Aug 24: Béla Fleck & the Flecktones
Aug 29: Will Wood
Aug 30: Alicia Villarreal
Sept 11: Steven Wilson
Sept 29: Sparks
Oct 16: John 5 and Richie Kotzen
Oct 19: Choir! Choir! Choir!
Oct 24: Black Jacket Symphony: AC/DC Back in Black

Moonlight Amphitheatre in Bregle Terrace Park
May 22: Tusk: Fleetwood Mac Tribute
May 23: The Sixties Show
May 24: Michael W. Smith
July 31: Mick Adams & the Stones
Aug 1: Uptown Motown Celebration
Aug 2: Leann Rimes
Oct 2: Anything for Salinas: A Tribute to Selena
Oct 3: 24k Magic: Bruno Mars Tribute
Oct 4: Pop 2000 Tour

North Island Credit Union Amphitheatre
May 22: Hardy and Koe Wetzel
May 24: Simple Minds, Soft Cell, Modern English
June 19: Dierks Bentley
June 21: Jorge Medina & Josi Cuén
July 19: Incubus and Manchester Orchestra
Aug 6: Creed and Mammoth WVH
Aug 24: Big Time Rush
Aug 27: Nelly and Ja Rule
Sept 5: Little Big Town
Sept 6: \$uicideboy\$
Sept 23: Billy Idol and Joan Jett & the Blackhearts
Oct 4: Luis R. Conriquez

Oct 18: Alice Cooper and Judas Priest

Old Poway Park
June 7: Sam Hinton Folk Heritage Festival

Open Air Theatre
May 30: James Arthur
June 4: The Black Keys
June 20: Barenaked Ladies and Guster
June 22: 90s Pop Tour
July 12: Brit Floyd and Alan Parsons
July 23: Father John Misty
July 24: Dispatch and John Butler
Aug 2: Primus and MonoNeon
Aug 10: Alabama Shakes
Aug 16: Michael Franti and Allen Stone
Aug 17: The Australian Pink Floyd Show
Aug 20: Japanese Breakfast
Aug 21: Lost 80s Live
Sept 3: The Flaming Lips and Modest Mouse
Sept 9: Lucy Dacus
Sept 13: Gregory Alan Isakov
Sept 18: Kidz Bop
Sept 23: Chevelle and Asking Alexandria
Sept 24: Air
Sept 26: Eladio Carrión
Oct 4: UB40
Nov 7: Miguel Bosé
Nov 10: Avatar: The Last Airbender In Concert
Nov 15: José María Napoleón

Pechanga Arena San Diego
June 14: Ivan Cornejo
June 21: Wu-Tang Clan
Aug 1: Phil Wickham & Brandon Lake
Aug 13: Heart and Todd Rundgren
Aug 24: Kali Uchis and Thee Sacred Souls
Sept 27: Benson Boone

Pechanga Resort & Casino
July 13: Oak Ridge Boys
Aug 22: Burton Cummings
Oct 30: Daryl Hall and Glenn Tilbrook

Petco Park
May 29: Hippie Sabotage and Two Feet
June 5: Brand New
June 7: Brad Paisley and Walker Hayes
June 13: Peach Pit and Briston Maroney
June 27: Purple Disco Machine
July 2: Summer of Loud Tour
July 16: The Driver Era: Obsession Tour
July 19: Billy Currington and Kip Moore
July 20: Iration and Inner Circle
July 31: Teddy Swims
Aug 6: Kevin Kaarl
Aug 7: Counting Crows
Aug 16: Blues Traveler and Gin Blossoms
Aug 27: Pixies
Aug 30: Holo Holo Music Festival
Aug 31: Holo Holo Music Festival
Sept 3: Ken Carson
Sept 4: Bomba Estéreo & Rawayana: Astropical
Sept 15: Coheed & Cambria and Taking Back Sunday
Sept 17: Chris Brown
Sept 19: Kolohe Kai
Sept 20: Kolohe Kai
Sept 29: The Head and the Heart
Oct 17: Rilo Kiley and Waxahatchee
Nov 8: Diplo's Run Club

The Rady Shell at Jacobs Park
May 29: Hauser
June 5: Ludacris
June 7: Trombone Shorty
June 10: Tash Sultana
June 14: Mariachi USA
July 6: Earth, Wind & Fire
July 12: Alison Krauss & Union Station
July 18: MAOLI
July 29: Beck & San Diego Symphony
Aug 1: Shaggy
Aug 9: The Beach Boys
Aug 10: The Gipsy Kings featuring Nicolas Reyes,
Aug 11: King Gizzard & The Lizard Wizard
Aug 17: Cynthia Erivo & San Diego Symphony
Aug 24: Boyz II Men
Aug 26: Mt. Joy
Aug 29: Weird Al Yankovic
Sept 10: Chicago
Sept 13: Tribal Seeds and The Movement
Sept 19: Jon Batiste
Sept 28: Big Thief
Oct 2: Above & Beyond
Oct 10: HAIM

Nov 23: John Legend

Snapdragon Stadium
June 26: Shakira

Sycuan Casino Resort
July 18: Queensrÿche
Aug 23: Cash After Dark

Viejas Arena
May 25: Chelo and Lorenzo de Monteclaro
July 5: TLC
Aug 10: Ghost
Sept 21: Alejandro Fernández
Sept 27: Ice Cube
Nov 16: Bryan Adams and Pat Benatar & Neil Giraldo
Viejas Casino
May 24: Cheap Trick

Waterfront Park
Aug 2: Chris Lake
June 20: 2 Chainz and Lil John
June 20: Jake Shimabukuro
June 21: Sammy Johnson
June 21: Matthew Phillips
June 22: Banda MS
June 22: The Evolution Of Pop
June 25: Chelsea Cutler and Quinn XCII
June 25: The Long Run
June 26: Yeah Yeah Yeahs
June 26: Jared Rogerson
June 27: Jon Pardi
June 27: The Expendables
June 28: Jessie Murph
June 28: Forever Ray
June 29: Banda El Recodo
June 29: Dead Man's Party
July 2: Third Eye Blind
July 2: Michael Minelli
July 3: The Como La Flor Band
July 5: Ziggy Marley
July 5: Long Beach Dub Allstars
July 6: Los Tucanes De Tijuana
July 6: Devotional

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Your Local USO Wants You!

Volunteers are our greatest asset and the backbone of the USO. Whether helping a Sailor or Marine with a connecting flight, distributing a Care Package, serving snacks with a smile, providing local information, or "welcoming home" ships and troops from deployment, volunteers are vital to the success of the USO's mission.

While the duties of a volunteer may vary, the goal is always the same – to improve the quality of life of service members, boost their morale, and serve as the link between service members and the American people.

Ready to apply to be a USO San Diego volunteer?

Visit <https://volunteers.uso.org>

Neil Ash Airport Center

Camp Pendleton USO Center

San Diego MEPS Center

Special Events



WE WANT YOU!

Come Pitch With Us!

Southern California Horseshoe Pitchers Association (SCHPA), a charter of the National Horseshoe Pitchers Association (NHPA), has clubs all over the southern half of California. These clubs all have first class horseshoe courts built to official specifications.

- Organized tournaments most weekends year around
- All skill levels and ages welcome. When you enter a tournament, you will be seeded with other players with similar skill levels for fair, enjoyable and friendly competition.
- Local clubs located at Balboa Park, Carlsbad, Encinitas, Ramona
- For info visit <https://socalhorseshoes.weebly.com/>
- Join today and we'll see you at the pits!



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San Diego Outreach
Neil Ash Airport
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Camp Pendleton



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Once you navigate to the page, scroll down and look at the right side of the page to find information about volunteering.

Camp Pendleton USO Programs Include:

USO Transitions: <http://www.uso.org/programs/usos-transition-program>
Want to be better prepared for future success before transitioning from the military? Are you a military spouse looking for new opportunities? The USO Pathfinder® Transition Program extends the USO experience to active duty, Reserve, National Guard and military spouses by offering professional development services throughout the duration of military service as well as in preparation for life post-military.

MilSpouse Connect: Monthly events bringing military spouses together to connect and thrive.
Craft & Coffee: USO Camp Pendleton provides creative outlets for adults and children to create fun, whimsical or serious works of art through a variety of mediums. Signs up happen online and are usually advertised through the USO Camp Pendleton Facebook page.

Command Support: USO is here to support! We often help support command events across Camp Pendleton such as Family days and Morale Days. Commands can request support in a number of different ways, from outdoor games, a kids craft, or even our mobile photo booth. We also can help provide small refreshments. To request support, please email our Center Operations and Programs Manager, Crystal Gates at cgates@uso.org. All requests must be submitted within 30 days and although we try our best, not all requests can be granted.

<https://california.uso.org/>

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See page 10

Difficult page to turn in Afghanistan

“...the greatest gift I have received from service are the bonds and friendships of those who have served alongside me.”

See page 11

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