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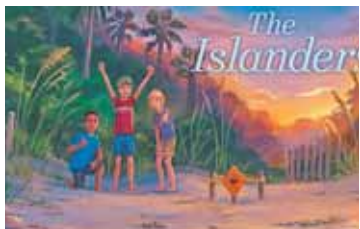
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THE HEAT IS ON!

Airmen, Marines team up for aircraft fire training

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Book review

‘Fly Safe’ will resonate with military families

BY TERRI BARNES,
SPECIAL TO STARS AND STRIPES

As the world marks the twentieth anniversary of 9/11 and the end of the war in Afghanistan, Vicki Cody’s new book, “Fly Safe: Letters from the Gulf War and Reflections from Back Home,” is timely — a reminder that the service of military families doesn’t end when one war is over. Cody’s experience of wars in the past bears resemblance and relevance to the present.

Families of military members deployed today will recognize the same emotions Cody felt decades ago, first as the spouse of a soldier and later as a mother. Both her sons became Army helicopter pilots and followed their father’s boot prints into combat. At one time, all three were on active duty. The words that became the title of her book were also the words she used to end every letter to her soldiers, “Fly Safe.”

Told through letters and journal entries, Cody’s narrative begins just before her husband’s deployment in 1991 and ends with her sons’ letters from deployments in 2003. Technology has changed, but the stark fears and home-front victories Cody reveals still resonate.

Some of Cody’s recollections may seem quaint through the lens of 2021. In the early nineties, deployment created pay issues for some troops who were still being paid in cash — yes, paper money and coins. Personal email was uncommon, and phone calls from deployment locations were rare before worldwide cell connectivity. Writing letters was the best and often the only way to stay in touch. Families checked actual mailboxes for the latest news from their loved ones or depended on news from the unit by phone or in person.

But these contrasts are only technology deep, while the personal and practical struggles of deployment are foundational.

Military spouses manage the home front and their own work responsibilities, lean on their friends, quell fears stoked by the rumor mill, and reassure their kids through it all. When deployment is over, they regroup and do their best to put life and the family back together again. It’s never as easy as they make it look.

Cody’s book is a reassuring reminder of the important contributions of military spouses, even in the mundane but essential task of caring for their families and for each other. At a time when military families may wonder whether any of their sacrifices make a difference, this book reminds us that they do. In war and in peace time, they always will.

.....

Terri Barnes is a military spouse, book editor, and the author of “Spouse Calls: Messages From a Military Life,” based on her long-running column in Stars and Stripes. You can contact her at www.terribarnesauthor.com.

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Book review

Authors capture military-kid magic in ‘The Islanders’

BY TERRI BARNES,
SPECIAL TO STARS AND STRIPES

Headed about the best-selling book about the adventures of an eleven-year-old named Potter? No, not that one — the one about the military kid. All the magic in this new book, “The Islanders,” by Mary Alice Monroe and Angela May, emanates from the bonds of family and friendship, and all the spells are cast by the natural beauty and wildlife of a Carolina barrier island.

Jake Potter is the son of dual-service parents — an Air Force C-17 pilot and an Army officer — stationed in New Jersey. When Jake’s soldier father is seriously injured in Afghanistan and is hospitalized state-side, Jake’s mom goes with him. With both his parents away, Jake has to spend the summer with his eccentric grandmother, known to everyone as Honey.

Honey lives on DeWees

Island, S.C. Soon Jake discovers that like Honey, her isolated island home has a few quirks—some more challenging than charming. Jake meets a couple of local kids, Lovie and Macon, and begins to find the brighter side of island life. Honey gives Jake the nature journal his father kept when he was an eleven-year-old, offering Jake a peek into his father’s childhood and a way to see the island through his dad’s eyes. Jake, Lovie and Macon help Honey with sea turtle rescues and of course manage to get into a little trouble. Along the way they learn more about themselves and each other.

The authors wisely avoid having the story turn too much on Jake’s military connection, creating a well-rounded narrative that rings true for all young readers. Though deeply affected by military life, Jake’s character has other dimensions, and his connection to his parents

is not based on their careers. The story also emphasizes the bond of friendship Jake shares with Lovie and Macon rather than what sets him apart. Each friend faces challenges unique to his or her life, and Jake’s trials are not portrayed as greater or less than his friends, only different.

The pleasure of reading a book with such a well-rounded military character as the protagonist outweighs the occasional misstep, as when Jake’s mom says, “You’re in charge now, Private,” before leaving him with his grandmother. Modern military families are

learning not to place adult expectations on their children during times of crisis, and few would expect them to bear military rank. However, the rest of the story clearly shows Jake has the support he needs to meet his challenges.

Against a backdrop of nature and conservation, The Islanders addresses themes of friendship, caring for family, facing fear, taking responsibility, and more. The story also touches on topics related to military life: moving, missing friends, family separation, injury, and recovery. All wrapped up in a gentle, encouraging story that middle schoolers can understand and

process.

The Islanders is already a best-seller, so perhaps readers can hope this is only the first in a series of books showcasing the life and adventures of a military kid. With a little island magic, Jake and his friends could fly even higher than that other Potter kid.

.....
Terri Barnes is a book editor and the author of “Spouse Calls: Messages from a Military Life,” based on her long-running column in Stars and Stripes. Her three military kids are now adults, but she still reads children’s books for fun. Contact her online at terribarnesauthor.com.



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Leave no witnesses: The Secret Life of Mom

“Did you have a good summer?” clusters of military moms in school parking lots asked each other last week. In response, we simultaneously gave the nurturing, motherly pat answer, “Yeah we had fun, but I only wish I had more time with the kids.” We waved goodbye to our children, then headed home, appearing ready for a full and productive day.

But once our minivan doors closed, back-to-school reality hit us like a runaway school bus.

“I’m free,” I muttered to myself, my eyes wide and unblinking, my caffeine-affected fingers trembling against the steering wheel. “Finally ... free.” In the time it took for me to round the circle and exit the school property, I’d thought of a million things I could do with my day now that there were no witnesses.

Over two decades of taking our three kids back to school at the end of each summer, I always found the feeling of being completely alone — unfettered by parental responsibilities, social mores, ethical codes and rules of human decency — quite liberating.

Seized with a pang of hunger in my minivan, I realized that there was no one to stop me

from opening the neglected bag of cheese curls in the center console and pouring them directly into my upturned mouth. I switched the radio from the pop music station my girls insisted on to my favorite — the ‘80s channel — and bellowed “Karma Chameleon” as I negotiated traffic. At one stop light, I flossed my teeth. At the next, I plucked my eyebrows. As I approached the Navy base gate guard, I flipped off the radio and wiped my cheese powder-stained mouth on my sleeve.

Leave no witnesses, I thought.

At home, I spent a good 20 minutes on the floor snuggling with our dog, Moby, before planning my day. There was no one home to hear me talking to Moby out loud or to see him licking my face. There was no one there to balk, demand my attention or roll their eyes. There was no one to embarrass, shame or disgust.

It was just me. And it was wonderful.

Sure, we moms feel pangs of guilt at deceiving our children in this way every year. Here they are, off at school, thinking that Mom is home jotting down new sandwich ideas, organizing their homework spaces, and thinking nothing but nurturing

The Meat and Potatoes of Life

Lisa Smith Molinari



With the freedom that the school year affords, we moms can mop our kitchen floors while singing the entire “Sound of Music” soundtrack, complete with “Lonely Goatherd” yodeling and “Climb Every Mountain” contralto vibrato.

thoughts. When in reality, we are leading a secret double life.

With the freedom that the school year affords, we moms can mop our kitchen floors while singing the entire “Sound of Music” soundtrack, complete with “Lonely Goatherd” yodeling and “Climb Every Mountain” contralto vibrato. We can fold laundry while binge-watching DVRed episodes of “Bachelor in Paradise.” We

can meet our work friends out for long lunches, or stay home and eat logs of cookie dough all alone. We can join base bowling leagues, or teach ourselves to play the ukulele from YouTube videos. We can take a yoga classes, or take a nap wearing yoga pants.

Whatever we moms decide to do with our time, it’s our little secret.

Our kids would be wise to

keep up our little charade, by the way. After all, there’s no sense in revealing that the fried chicken on the table was cooked by Colonel Sanders. Our intentions are good, but we may have run out of time to cook dinner between spin class and that sale at the outlet mall. So just say, “This meal is delicious, Mom!” and be thankful that we had time to hit the drive-thru. Also, don’t complain if Mom shows up late for practice pick-ups. You have no idea how hard it is to attend a friend’s jewelry party and “like” all the funny cat videos on Facebook in one afternoon. Lastly, don’t comment on new hairstyles, funky outfits or sudden tattoos. Mom may be finding herself, or recovering from a girls’ night out — either way, it’s her business.

Moms spend most of their time attending to their families’ and children’s needs. So, once the kids are back in school, they deserve alone time to do whatever they darned well please.

Shhhhh ... mum’s the word.

Read more of Lisa Smith Molinari’s columns at:

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Cmdr. Sean Welch passes through side boys during a change of command ceremony for USS Oklahoma City on Sept. 3. Photos by MC1 Jordyn Diomedes, U.S. Navy

USS Oklahoma City changes command

BY LT. MEAGAN MORRISON,
COMMANDER, SUBMARINE SQUADRON 15

SANTA RITA – Cmdr. Sean Welch relieved Cmdr. Steven Lawrence as commanding officer of the Los Angeles-class fast-attack submarine USS Oklahoma City (SSN 723) in a ceremony onboard Naval Base Guam, Sept. 3.

Rear Adm. Butch Dollaga, commander, Submarine Squadron Group 7, was the guest speaker for the ceremony. He praised Lawrence's leadership and his crew on an outstanding job during his tenure.

"Make no mistake," said Dollaga. "This is a seasoned group of submariners, and their success was shaped under the steadfast leadership of Cmdr. Lawrence. I would argue it was the very tenacity of the boat and the entire crew that enabled them to succeed during his time in command."

Dollaga went on to say the crew of Oklahoma City "answered the bell, steamed all ahead flank, and sailed into harm's way... ready, confident, and undeterred."

Following his speech, Dollaga presented Lawrence, a native of Bridgeport, Pennsylvania, with a Meritorious Service Medal for his tenure as commanding officer.

As he took the stage for the last time as the commanding officer of Oklahoma City, Lawrence addressed the crew and highlighted their success.

"The success of the Oklahoma City has been on the back of an extraordinary group of E-5 Sailors," said

Lawrence. "This group of first-tour Sailors showed up to Oklahoma City as their first boat and by the end of their tours they ran the boat from the deckplates. On this deployment, it was great to see the next generation of Sailors step-up and continue the Oklahoma City legacy."

Lawrence went on to thank his family for their continued support during his tour aboard Oklahoma City.

"I want to thank my family, who made similar sacrifices as all Oklahoma City families have made over the last few years," said Lawrence. "To my Queen, Kristen, the smartest decision I have ever made was asking you to go on a date with me to the Jersey Shore 25 years ago. Ever since then you have been my rock. Your support enabled me to be a better commanding officer."

Lawrence is scheduled to report to Commander, Submarine Force Atlantic in Norfolk, Virginia, as a senior member of the combat readiness exam team.

Welch, a native of Colonie, New York, left a message for his crew as he assumed command of Oklahoma City.

"I am excited, and honored, to make this voyage on Oklahoma City with you," said Welch. "I have witnessed your expertise and professionalism over the last month, and am convinced we will succeed in safely and efficiently conducting operations. Thank you for welcoming me aboard with open arms as your newest crewmember. I can't wait to complete this journey with you."



Rear Adm. Butch Dollaga makes remarks.



Cmdr. Steven Lawrence addresses Command Master Chief Kevin Swanson.



Welch delivers remarks during ceremony.



This Tudor Rose is HMS Queen Elizabeth

STORY AND PHOTOS BY JOYCE MCCLURE

As the van passed the inspection points, signs began to appear pointing the way to Gab Gab beach, a fitting name for a press conference it seemed.

The small group of visitors was picked up at the T. Stell Newman Visitor Center outside the U.S. Naval Base in Guam at the beginning of the adventure. Members of the media had been invited to attend a press conference with a group of high-ranking officials including Gov. Lou Leon Guerrero and Lt. Gov. Josh Tenorio, aboard the HMS Queen Elizabeth, the Fleet Flagship of the Royal Navy.

Upon entering Guam's 38,000 square acre Navy base, the movie "The Truman Show" comes to mind as the manicured landscape rolls by, people jog on paths, a small car dealership offers new and used vehicles, a Wendy's offers Wendyfare, arrows show the way to the gym, PX, counseling, childhood development, and other services offered to the residents.

Only a massive gray warship that came into view soon after entering the compound reminded the visitors where they were.

When asked how this base compares to others she's lived on, the camo-clad van driver responded that it was one of the best. The only exception, she said, is the commissary. They don't always have as much of a selection as the bases on the mainland.

After several minutes of driving on smooth roads (a stark contrast to the roads outside), the van arrived at Kilo Wharf and the visitors were met by a group of young, British, uniformed men, the HMS Queen Elizabeth looming overhead.

The crest of the first Queen Elizabeth, after whom the ship is named, is prominently displayed on the side of the bridge high above the dock and features the Tudor Rose, the heraldic emblem of England that takes its name and origins from the House of Tudor.

The tall, lean, uniformed man in charge provided the dos and don'ts of ship entry, then called the roll, checking off the visitors' names. Stepping onto the swaying gangplank, the group headed into the ship past more tall, lean men, their bright white uniforms competing with the sun outside.

If you've never been onboard a large workhorse ship, the interior is a maze of twisting hallways, tightly wound fire hoses and other emergency gear, control panels, narrow, steep stairways the width of a very small foot, and heavy watertight doors.

Following and being followed by the white-garbed sailors to prevent anyone from getting lost or wandering away, the group was led through those hallways and doors, past all of that equipment and signs of famous streets in London attached to the steel walls – Haymarket, Piccadilly, Oxford among them – given to the different



Gov. Lou Leon Guerrero and Lt. Gov. Josh Tenorio



no wilting flower as a stem made of steel

areas of the grey interior.

Passing a line of Americans wearing drab, khaki uniforms that contrasted with the brilliant white of the Brits', the visitors moved on with their hosts, up several flights of stairs to a theater-style room. Posters promoting the ship and its purpose were placed behind and to the sides of a podium to create a background for the press conference.

After several minutes of setting up video cameras and microphones, finding seats

where photos could be easily taken, and general settling down, Commodore Steve Moorhouse of the United Kingdom Carrier Strike Group welcomed everyone aboard and gave an update on the Covid-19 cases on the ship that were top-of-mind to the visitors.

With assurances that the outbreak was fully under control, he then provided an overview of where the ship had been, where it was going and why it was in Guam. More speeches followed with Governor Guerrero and Lt. Governor Tenorio and Guam's Commanding Officer, Capt. Michael Luckett, welcoming the ship and its crew to Guam.

After asking questions of the presenters, the group was led through more passages and stairs to the flight deck above.

Lined with neatly positioned V/STOL – “vertical and/or short take-off and landing” airplanes that can take off and land vertically or on short runways – there are no catapults or arrestor wires to catch the planes as they land.

Among the most modern in operation

today, the HMS QE is the lead ship of the Queen Elizabeth class of aircraft carriers with room for 250 Royal Marines that are supported with attack helicopters and large troop transports such as Chinooks.

There is also no elevator on the flight deck to raise and lower the planes into the deck below for repair and maintenance. An insert has been carved into the side of the deck and a dock-side crane is used to lift the aircraft over the side and onto the lower deck, eliminating interference with the main deck.

After approximately 15 minutes on the flight deck spent learning about the operations from their hosts, the visitors were led back to terra firma via the hallways, nearly vertical stairs (it's easier to go down backward, they were advised), past more crew members, and finally to the gangplank exit where the commander and his officers stood to see everyone off.

A sailor holding a small silver pipe also stood beside the door but, to my regret, did not pipe the visitors off.

As the group descended, several dozen sailors in work uniforms were seen standing on the dock in two lines facing each other, passing bags of garbage hand-to-hand from the ship to large garbage containers. Five weeks at sea produces a lot of garbage.

– Re-published with permission of the Pacific Island Times



o greet officials of the visiting HMS Queen Elizabeth.



Joint fire training heats up on Andersen

BY SGT. DIVINE COX,
U.S. AIR FORCE

ANDERSEN AIR FORCE BASE – U.S. Air Force and U.S. Marine firefighters from Marine Corps Air Station Iwakuni, Japan teamed up to participate in joint aircraft fire training at Andersen Air Force Base, Guam.

The purpose of the joint training was to ensure the Marines maintained their airport certification to meet National Fire Protection Association, military, and Department of Defense standards.

The 36th Civil Engineer Squadron instructors have been providing this training to the Marines for the last five years.

“Over these past three months, we had the unique opportunity to train jointly with our Andersen brothers, said Cpl. John Whaley, firefighter assigned to Marine Wing Support Squadron 171. “Even though we are all firefighters and have the same job, when you take two different branches and you put them together, you can optimize training due to the fact that we each see and view techniques and tactics differently.”

Not only did the Marines take this opportunity to focus on familiarization training, they also leaned heavily on 36 CES firefighters to train them on the unfamiliar aspects of the job.

“We were able to do a lot of structural training that we normally don't get back home,” said Whaley. “In Japan, we do a lot of aircraft rescue firefighting, so the structural training we were able to accomplish here gave us more hands on experience in case we have to do any structural firefighting in the future. The training Andersen provided helps

us prepare for any situation that may arise.”

Part of the mission here at the 36th Wing is to strengthen regional and local partnerships, and the 36 CES instructors continues to make that happen throughout the Indo-Pacific.

“We typically conduct regional training monthly or upon request,” said Chris Pacificar, assistant fire chief assigned to the 36 CES. “We were doing joint training to help us share mutual operational knowledge and experiences with each other and sharpen our skills as firefighters. This training helped them accomplish and showcase their skills in a realistic environment.”

Pacificar stated that out of all the other years of training, this year offered the perfect scenario for joint fire training.

“Although the live fire training was for a day, the Marines did participate in other training scenarios throughout their time here,” said Pacificar. “While here, they were able to get familiarization training on the MQ-4 Triton, RQ-4 Global Hawk, KC-135 Stratotanker, and the B-52 Stratofortress. With all the exercises that were going on at the time, this was the perfect opportunity for them to train alongside us.”

Training is an ongoing practice in the military, but in today's environment, it can also be challenging to accomplish.

“Obviously, COVID-19 does slow everything down, but at the end of the day, we all have one job to do,” said Whaley. “For us to continue to get the proper training that we need, we are taking the proper COVID-19 precautions to make sure we get the training to perform our job efficiently.”



U.S. Marines with Marine Wing Support Squadron 171 and Airmen with the Andersen Air Force Base Fire and Emergency Services, 36th Civil Engineer Squadron and Guam International Airport Fire Department crash fire rescue personnel. Photos by Lance Cpl. Tyler Harmon, U.S. Marine Corps



Ancient Environment. Photo by I Tinituhon, Guampedia Collection

Ancient Guam's Environment

Natural surroundings shape culture

BY JOHN A. PETERSON, PHD AND ROBERT W. WESCOM,
GUAMPEDIA

In addition to analyzing artifacts, archeologists often study ancient environments to understand how pre-historic societies both shaped, and were shaped by, their natural surroundings. For example, an archeologist might be interested in learning how an ancient population managed to live in a particular environment, such as a desert. They might ask, how did people use available natural resources? What strategies were humans using to face the challenges of their natural environment, such as protection from intense heat, or finding access to fresh water? How did they modify the environment to suit their needs for growing or acquiring food?

By analyzing recovered artifacts as well as the environmental landscape, archeologists can determine specific ways in which culture and environment relate to each other, especially regarding change. When an environment changes, the ways in which a population interacts with that environment may change as well. Activities may be altered; new tools and technology may develop; or different rituals and customs may be established.

In the Marianas, archeologists have tried to examine how environmental changes may have impacted the early ancestral CHamorus, who began occupying these islands 4,000 years ago. These ancient people adapted to a tropical environment while facing frequent typhoons, periods of drought and occasional earthquakes and tsunamis. Based on research of the climate and geology of the region, the Marianas archipelago also experienced significant changes in sea level and landscape topography that affected not only the kinds of plants and animals that thrived there, but also human settlement patterns.



Photo by Leslie Reynolds, Guampedia

Tropical forest

Guam's position on planet Earth near the equator ensures that there is no winter period and a consistent length of day. Guam's tropical climate is almost uniformly warm and humid throughout the year. The seasonality of rainfall is influenced by Guam's isolation from continental masses, seasonal shifts of the Inter-tropical Convergence Zone from north to south, and sea-currents.

In general the Marianas experiences two primary seasons and two secondary seasons. Between the months of January through April Guam's climate is relatively dry, though it receives about 35 cm (nearly 14 inches) of rainfall during this four month period. From mid-July through mid-October Guam's climate is wet with approximately 120 cm (just over 47 inches) of rainfall during this four month rainy season. The other months of the year are transition periods, which may be either wet or dry. The equatorial western Pacific is also subject to the periodic effects of El Niño and La Niña (ENSO) weather patterns. Changing sea surface water temperature, in

addition, greatly influences the amount and intensity of rainfall. Tropical typhoons are generally more frequent and intense when sea surface water temperatures are warmer.



Ritidian Overlook. Photo courtesy of Dr. Mike Carson, Guampedia

Mariana soil

This tropical pattern greatly affects the weathering of the soil, decomposition of organic material, and leaching of nutrients. Prior to the arrival of humans, the dominant vegetation on Guam was tropical forest, with a strong affinity with the Malaysian tropics. Floristics, or the distribution of plant species, of Guam's tropical forest was influenced by the parent material of the soil. Soils derived from volcanic parent materials are generally acid and are found largely in southern Guam, while soils derived from limestone are generally found in northern Guam. Central Guam has soils in varying mixtures of the two types of parent material.

Limestone soils are well drained and not very deep. The northern elevated hard limestone soils supported a more diverse community of the forest species, including *Artocarpus mariannensis* (breadfruit), *Pandanus fragrans*, *Elaeocarpus joga* (yoga or blue marble tree), *Intsia bijuga* (ift or ifil), *Ficus prolix* (banyan) with *Neisosperma oppositifolia* (fagot), *Guamia mariannae* (paipai) dominated along with other species as understory.

Less is known about the original composition of plant communities on the upland volcanic soils in southern Guam since the remaining forested areas are limited to lower valleys. These forests are often referred to as ravine forests. The ravine forests are generally lower in stature and are dominated by *Hibiscus tiliaceus*, *Pandanus* species, and *Ficus prolix*. *Barringtonia racemosa* (langasat) is a common native species found in riparian (or riverbank) forests along rivers and streams.

Along the coastal strands and sandy beaches, where salt spray affects the species composition *Mammea odorata* (chopak), pigo, and *Casuarina* can be found, among others, and in marshy or brackish water mangroves and wetland shrubs, sedges, and grasses such as *phragmites* are found.

Climate change effects

Climate change throughout the last several thousand years has played a role in changing vegetation in the Marianas, but it has also had other impacts. Sea level was about 375 feet below the present sea level 22,000 years ago during the last full glacial climate cycle. Over the next 16,000 years the sea level gradually rose and then rapidly climbed until about 5,500 years ago when it topped out about 2.0 meters (6.6 feet) higher than it is now.

Some climatologists argue that about 8,000 years ago climate kicked into a warming cycle caused by the emergence of rice paddy agriculture and forest clearing

in Southeast Asia and China. These practices led to increased methane and carbon dioxide, respectively, in the atmosphere. Otherwise the Earth was in a cooling trend that by this time would have been pronounced and distinctly arctic. The warming trend peaked again about AD 1000 to 1200 during a period known globally as the Little Climatic Optimum (LCO), but then cooled dramatically over the next 500-600 years during a period called the Little Ice Age (LIA). Since 1850, however, carbon dioxide from industrial pollution has contributed dramatically once again to global warming and increasing average temperature.

The sea level remained 2.0 meters above modern shorelines until about 3,000 years ago, then dropped one meter. By 2,000 years ago the sea level dropped again dramatically by another meter to present levels.

Scientists know this on Guam by measuring the elevation of wave-cut notches that formed about 2.0 meters above the present beaches. Other, higher notches were formed more than 130,000 years ago about 6.0 meters above today when climate was warmer by more than 1.0 degree centigrade as compared to today; lower notches would have formed during periods of shoreline stability that are presently underwater.

Archeologists can also document these changes in the landscape from examining sandy beach terrain and the types of sand that are found. Coarse, unbroken coralline and foraminiferal sands would have formed in calm lagoons within ancient reefs. If covered over and undisturbed they provide carbonate tests from which radio-carbon ages can be obtained that can date the period of formation and burial.

Climate change is a very complex and interactive process that is poorly understood, but recent data from ice cores, lakebed cores, isotopic studies of ancient coral reefs, and other proxy data sources have contributed major new data toward modeling climate change over the last 160,000 years. Cycles of orbital wobble, for example, are on cycles of 22,000 years with the size of the cycles varying every 100,000 years. These account for glacial and interglacial periods on a grand scale. Smaller cycles may be caused by changes in solar flares or other changes in solar radiation; they may also be occasioned by earth process like major episodes of volcanism such as the eruption of Krakatoa in Indonesia that led to the "year without a summer" following the eruption in 1883. Global temperature dropped by 1.2 degrees Celsius and remained cooler until 1888. This range of warming is expected within the next few decades.

Decadal scale shifts in climate like the ENSO patterns, where warm water pools in the eastern Pacific and farther northward toward North America, influence Pacific Ocean climate and the distribution of marine life. Conditions in the Pacific may be more arid and droughty. La Nina conditions emerge as water is pushed to the west by prevailing winds, leading to a warm pool in the western Pacific. Warmer areas of the Pacific spawn typhoons and wetter than normal conditions.

These climatic patterns are interactive and synergistic, and can lead to rapid climate change once threshold states are crossed. For example, the melting of glacial ice in Greenland floods the North Sea with fresh water that eventually disrupts the conveyor belt of warm salty water from the Gulf Stream and the North Atlantic current. Climate theorists think that this could have actually

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ENVIRONMENT: Humans affect surroundings

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 8

induced rapid cooling and glaciation. Current trends toward increasing CO₂ and other greenhouse gases appear to be driving climate increasingly warmer, and it is feared that this could lead to another sea level rise of as much as 2.0 meters by the year 2100. Furthermore, increasing aridity in the northern hemisphere in areas with continental climate patterns could be massively disruptive to agricultural production. The rise in sea level would impact as much as one-third of the world population that currently lives near coasts.

Contrary to these calamitous predictions, oceanic islands may be refuges from extreme climate change. Small islands are buffered by oceanic weather, perhaps promoting sustained rainfall and less extreme temperatures. Islands in the northern hemisphere like Taiwan and in the far south like New Zealand could become climate havens.

The scars in the landscape like wave-cut notches and the paleo-evidence of previous and changing vegetation communities demonstrate that climate is dynamic and that islands in the western Pacific are constantly adjusting and adapting. The human impacts of new vegetation, forest clearing, habitation and farming, along with later effects of urban development interleave with these natural cycles, and ultimately introduce human-induced climate change from increasing greenhouse gases. The earth has buffered many of these cyclical adjustments for millennia and longer periods. Whether humans can adjust as well remains to be seen.

animals), forest clearing and logging, burning, grazing, and loss of native wildlife. Forests in southern Guam are limited to lower valleys where higher humidity prevents the encroachment of wildland fire. Much of the volcanic soils in southern Guam supports only grasses on sloped hillsides.

Now that most of the natural environment of Guam has been degraded from centuries of grazing; bombed and burned by warfare; and graded and developed for both military and civilian expansion, there are very few areas of pristine forest on Guam. In fact, much of the south of Guam is now covered with swordgrass savannah with casuarina in protected areas. This was not the natural vegetation, however. Pollen and phytolith identification from coring studies show that before people came to Guam around 3,500 years ago the island was uniformly forested, with possibly small savannah clearings caused by natural disturbances.

Human settlement brought new plants that now appear to be natural. Coconut palms, seedless breadfruit, mango, bananas, yams, and sweet potatoes required human agency to invade Guam. In the earliest periods of settlement these were useful plants that were part of a "transported landscape" that ensured productive year-round food resources. Some inadvertent species hitched a ride, and even some creatures like rats and mosquitoes were probably introduced by people to Guam.

In recent years notable invasive species have become pests, including the brown treesnake, many savannah grasses, false rattan, limonchina, and other species that are often mistakenly considered native.

Plant communities

Since the arrival of humans, native plant communities have been greatly altered by introduced species (both plant and

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G.A.I.N. Pet of the Week



Didi

This beautiful female cat is estimated to be about 22 weeks old. She is litter box trained. She is great with other cats and loves kids. This beautiful cat is looking for her FURever home and family. Don't miss out on making her a part of your family.

Call G.A.I.N. (Guam Animals In Need) Animal Shelter in Yigo at 653-4246 or visit <www.guamanimals.org> for more information on adopting this pet. G.A.I.N. is a shelter-based humane society with a mission to prevent cruelty to animals, educate the public and promote good animal laws. Under Water World will donate one adult admission for every Pet of the Week adopted.



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Boonie Stomps Guam

INFORMATION PROVIDED BY
GUAM BOONIE STOMPERS

Oct. 2
Imong Falls

Very Difficult
6 hours for 5 miles

We trek to a waterfall we haven't been to in decades. Heading up the rain gauge trail, we'll turn south on the Southern mountains trail. Turning east, we'll head steadily downhill through open savannah and sword grass to a long river cascade and an impressive two step falls.

Bring: 4 quarts water, hiking shoes, gloves, swim suit, sun screen, lunch and snacks, and camera.

Special conditions: Possible mud, sword grass, steep slopes up and down, and a long hike.

Oct. 9
Talef Falls

Medium
3 hours for 1.5 miles

We visit a tall waterfall in Southwest Guam with it's nice views, head to the old Japanese dam hidden in the jungle, stop at a nice cascade and swim hole, then circle back to our cars. A longer option will visit a new waterfall.

Bring: 2 quarts water, hiking shoes that can get wet, swimsuit, gloves, sun screen, insect repellent, lunch, and camera.

Special conditions: Steep slopes, sword grass, walking in water, and climbing down the falls with the assistance of ropes.

Oct. 16
Bubulao Falls

Difficult
5 hours for 4 miles

We hike down the Ugum River to a side stream to Bubulao Falls, then continue on to the top of Talofof Falls, passing many falls, rapids, cascades, and swim holes on the way.

Bring: 2 quarts water, get wet shoes, gloves, sun screen, lunch and snacks, and camera.

Special conditions: Steep slopes, extensive walking in water, sometimes deep water, slippery rocks, sword grass, and a long hike.

Every Saturday, Guam Boonie Stompers offers public hikes to a variety of destinations such as beaches, snorkeling sites, waterfalls, mountains, caves, latte sites, and World War II sites. We meet at 9:00 AM in the Center Court of Chamorro Village in Hagatna. The cost is \$5.00 for hikers over 17. Children must be accompanied by a responsible adult. Hikers should provide their own transportation. Guam's trails are not developed. Weather conditions can make the hikes more difficult than described. No reservations required.

For more information:
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Stripes Sports Trivia

When it comes to college football mascots, Huskies are one of the most common in the country. These majestic dogs, known for their unique eyes and thick, furry coats, can often be seen patrolling the sideline of the teams they represent. On New Year's Day 2013, one Huskies program fell in the Orange Bowl to a Florida State squad that had a not-quite-yet 'Famous Jameis' riding the pine. Can you name the underdog program?

Answer Northern Illinois University

SUDOKU

Difficulty: Medium

Edited by Margie E. Burke

HOW TO SOLVE:
Each row must contain the numbers 1 to 9; each column must contain the numbers 1 to 9; and each set of 3 by 3 boxes must contain the numbers 1 to 9.

Answers to Previous Sudoku:

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

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DESTINATION PARADISE

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Crossword

by Margie E. Burke

ACROSS

- Karate blow
- "Roots," e.g.
- Carrots' partner
- Part of BYOB
- Give a nudge to
- Leader of the pack
- Start to freeze?
- Yarn spinner
- Out in the sticks
- Periodical seller
- Roadwork marker
- Prayer's end
- Oscar hopeful
- Place for a pint
- Type of guess
- Like some muscles
- Birth-related
- With skill
- Legendary Bette
- Mosaic piece
- Assurance
- Revolutionary War figure
- Lacking a melody
- Draw to a close
- Party provisioner
- It may be checkered
- _____ and above
- Kind of parade
- Pole-lowering dance
- Slot feeder
- Ridesharing service
- Become narrower
- "Hamlet" has five
- Plumber's job
- Junction point
- _____ the Great (boy detective)
- Bingo relative

DOWN

- Ink cartridge color
- Improve
- On the surface
- Rainbow maker
- Magnificent
- Operatic piece
- Hockey score
- It may give you a rush
- Links standard
- Explain fully
- Cook's wear
- Classic Alan Ladd western
- Sheltered, nautically
- Consider to be
- Decompose
- Restroom sign
- Sounds from the meadow
- Palindromic pop group
- Part of HUAC
- Trivial objection
- Pearl diver's destination
- Schedule
- Arkin or Alda
- Do banker's work
- Fiction genre

Answers to Previous Crossword:

C	A	B	S	H	A	T	E	O	L	A	F
M	A	C	R	O	U	F	O	S	V	A	N
U	L	C	E	R	S	T	A	T	U	E	T
F	L	O	W	E	R	B	E	D	P	R	E
F	A	M	E	E	A	R	S	H	O	T	
		P	R	E	E	N		E	N	I	G
I	L	L		O	L	D	M	A	N	M	E
C	A	I	R	N	R	A	N	T	E	N	S
O	N	C	E	D	Y	N	A	M	O	E	K
N	E	E	D	L	E		L	E	M	U	R
		C	O	N	S	I	G	N	G	A	L
M	E	T	R	O		P	N	E	U	M	A
E	R	R	O	N	E	O	U	S	A	N	I
A	G	E	S		R	I	R	I	I	D	O
T	O	S		A	L	E	C		M	A	N

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4-page pullout

How to Roast a Fresh Pumpkin

A Pedro "PoP" Aguon Tutorial



Pedro "PoP" Aguon was a chef in the Navy. PoP passed down to his family his extensive knowledge of cooking, and his daughter, Arlene Sablan Aguon, is kind enough to share some of PoP's recipes and cooking tips with us. That was PoP's way, sharing with the younger generations in order to keep the knowledge of our Chamorro culture and heritage alive. Rest in peace, PoP...your family and friends miss you terribly.

From Arlene:

"My PoP's taught me how to roast a fresh pumpkin. It makes the best pies, Buchi Buchi & Turnovers. It makes the home smell like Thanksgiving too. ENJOY." ~ @untie R

Freshly roasted pumpkin tastes better than any canned pumpkin you buy in stores. Try roasting pumpkins PoP's way. You'll be glad you did.

Instructions:

1. Wash you pumpkin in warm water and salt, then pat dry.

2. Cut around the stem area to remove.



3. Remove the stem. Your pumpkin flesh should be firm and orange. If it smells sour or the flesh is mushy, discard the pumpkin.



4. Cut your pumpkin in half, starting from stem to the bottom. Everything should be moist.

5. Remove the pith and seeds. I use a large metal spoon or small bowl to scrape it out.



6. Line a cookie sheet with foil. Place the pumpkin halves outside down.



7. Cover the tops of the pumpkin halves with foil. Roast in oven at 350 degrees for about an hour. At 45 min., check to see if pumpkin flesh is tender when pierced by a fork.



8. Soak you pumpkin seed and pith in cold water.



9. Gently rub the pith away from the seeds. The seeds will float to the top.



10. Drain the seeds in strainer. Pat dry and refrigerate overnight.

11. Remove pumpkin from foil. Let the pumpkin completely cool (for about an hour).



12. Once cool, cut into 4 sections. Gently scoop the pumpkin pulp away from the skin. Use a ice cream scoop or spoon.



13. Scoop as close to the skin as you can get.

14. Place in air-tight container. I save the skin for the squirrels or birds. They love it.



15. Refrigerate overnight.



16. The next day, add spices and puree in food processor.



PUMPKIN PIE

STORY AND PHOTOS BY ANNETTE
WWW.ANNIESCHAMROCK.COM



"My name is Annie. Food and I get along better than a hobby for me – they're a passion. I live in Guam, U.S.A. The recipes you'll find here are from people who are also budding foodies. I hope you like how you like our island and other delicious things."

Pumpkin Spice



Why buy gourmet when you can make your own kitchen spice creamer. It takes minutes. My recipe makes about 1 cup. It can be refrigerated and it will last for weeks. You add to your coffee. You don't have to add any other spices. Give my recipe a try. I like this.

Ingredients:


- 1 cup sweetened condensed milk
- 1 cup milk
- 3 tablespoons pure pumpkin purée
- 1 teaspoon pumpkin pie spice
- 4 tablespoons maple syrup
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract

Instructions:

1. Place all of the ingredients in a small mixing bowl.

2. Whisk to combine.

3. Add a few drops of coffee, s...



PUMPKIN PARTY



Step into Annie's Chamorro Kitchen via Facebook. Search for: "Annie's Chamorro Kitchen"

...long so well! Cooking and baking are more on. I come from the beautiful island of ... here are my creations, or those of my children, ... you like them. Drop me a comment or two to let me know ... icacies. Enjoy!"


- Annette Merfalen

Pumpkin Pie Coffee Creamer

...flavored coffee creamer when you can make it right in ... n for half the cost? ... es to whisk up a batch of my rich and creamy pumpkin ... are you already have most of these ingredients on hand. ... ut 2 & 1/2 cups of creamer. Keep the mixture ... ast for about a week, depending on how much creamer ... Because this mixture is already sweetened, you shouldn't ... eetener (hey, I just saved you more money!). ... If you like the flavor of pumpkin pie, I guarantee you'll ...



...w spoonfuls to your favorite ... tir and ENJOY!



Incredible Pumpkin Cake Donuts

I love the fall season, mainly because it means pumpkins are in season and I can make some of my most favorite desserts, among them these delicious and moist pumpkin cake donuts. But why wait for fall to enjoy these sweet treats? With canned pumpkin puree readily available, you can make these donuts whenever you like. Why not bake up a batch today? I think you'll like it.

This recipe makes about 4 dozen donuts. The ingredients below can easily be cut in half. I usually don't, however. Half of my family likes cinnamon sugar coated donuts, the other half likes chocolate glaze. This way, there's enough donuts to please everyone.

Donut Ingredients:

- 1 cup vegetable oil • 6 large eggs • 3 cups sugar
- 2 cans (15-oz) pure pumpkin puree (do not use pumpkin pie filling)
- 1 tablespoon pumpkin pie spice
- 2 teaspoons cinnamon • 1 tablespoon salt
- 1 tablespoon baking powder
- 3 & 1/2 cups all purpose flour


Coating Ingredients:

- 1/2 cup white sugar
- 1 tablespoon cinnamon

Frosting Ingredients:

- 1 cup semisweet chocolate chips
- 4 tablespoons heavy cream


Instructions:




1. Preheat your donut maker.

2. Place all of the donut ingredients together in a large mixing bowl.


Add the oil...




Add the eggs... (The photo below shows only 5 eggs; I only had 2 large eggs and the rest were extra large, so I used 3 extra large and 2 large eggs instead of 6 large eggs.)




Add the pumpkin...




Add the cinnamon, pumpkin pie spice, salt and baking powder...




Add the sugar...





And finally, add the flour to the bowl.






3. Mix with a whisk until you create a smooth batter.

4. Spoon the batter into the wells of your donut maker, filling according to manufacturer's instructions. I use a small cookie scoop to fill my donut maker with about 2 tablespoons of batter. (Hey, look! I captured my reflection in the cookie scoop!)






5. Bake per your donut maker's instructions, or until the donuts feel slightly firm to the touch, about 5 minutes. Remove the donuts from the donut maker.



6. Coat the donuts:




To coat with Cinnamon Sugar:

Place the coating ingredients in a ziplock bag; shake to mix. While the donuts are still warm, place each donut (one at a time) the bag of cinnamon sugar; shake gently to coat. Repeat until all donuts are coated.



To coat with Chocolate Glaze:

Place the chocolate chips and heavy cream in a small, microwave-safe bowl. Microwave for 45 seconds. Stir until the mixture is completely smooth. Dip the top half of each donut into the chocolate glaze. Place on a wire rack to allow excess chocolate to drip off.





*"it's finger
lickin' good"*

The KFC Chicken Sandwich is Back!

Howdy folks! KFC's Colonel Sanders here! When making our famous Kentucky Fried Chicken Sandwich, people asked how I felt about burger places selling fried chicken. I'd say that's none of my business! Just like making fried chicken is none of theirs. So, if you are looking for tasty chicken, we have you covered. Get the Kentucky Fried Chicken Sandwich at your favorite KFC location. Follow KFC Guam on Facebook and Instagram and let us cater your next family meal and have it delivered to you directly from one of our restaurants! KFC, It's Finger Lickin' Good!

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GUAM EDITION

OCTOBER 1, 2021



KALEB SARTEN/U.S. Navy

Boots representing fallen sailors are displayed during a Bells Across America ceremony at Yokosuka Naval Base, Japan.

‘Remember them’

Yokosuka honors 2017 collision victims along with sailors who died in past year
Page 2

COVER STORY

Yokosuka holds memorial service for fallen sailors

By ALEX WILSON
Stars and Stripes

YOKOSUKA NAVAL BASE, Japan — The names of more than 200 sailors who lost their lives over the past year, along with those who died in the destroyer collisions of 2017, were read aloud during a memorial service here.

About 60 sailors and civilians gathered at Ombudsman Park on Sept. 23 to pay their respects. Part of the Navy Gold Star Program's Bells Across America for Fallen Service Members, the hourlong memorial was mirrored at bases across the world.

"This ceremony is very important, as it sets time aside for us all to recognize the contributions that the fallen have made in our community and throughout our great Navy," said Yokosuka's commander, Capt. Rich Jarrett, during the ceremony.

After a prayer and Jarrett's remarks, sailors in dress whites gathered in front of the small crowd to read off the names of the sailors being remembered. A ship's bell was rung as each finished reading their list of names.

The event also featured a display of dozens of pairs of boots, representing the sailors who lost their lives, along with photos of those sailors affiliated with Yokosuka.

This year marked the sixth annual Bells Across America



KALEB SARTEN/U.S. Navy

A sailor rings a bell to honor the fallen during the first Bells Across America ceremony at Yokosuka Naval Base, Japan, on Sept. 23.

service, but the first commemoration at Yokosuka. It honored not only those who died in the past year, but 17 sailors lost four years ago in two collisions involving the Yokosuka-based guided-missile destroyers USS Fitzgerald and the USS John S. McCain.

In June 2017, the Fitzgerald collided with a Philippine-flagged container vessel, killing

seven sailors in Japanese waters. Just a month later, 10 sailors died aboard the McCain after the ship collided with a Liberian-flagged tanker near Singapore.

"We've not done this ceremony before. As we look back at years past, we've not had the opportunity to reflect and to remember," Jarrett told Stars and Stripes after the ceremony. "We wanted to make sure we did

that in this initial event, so that it could be recognized, at least for the first time."

Of the more than 200 sailors honored, two were stationed at Yokosuka at the time of their death: Cmdr. Charles Harris and Petty Officer 2nd Class Adam Thomas.

Harris, the former commander of the destroyer USS Howard, died in August from health com-

plications. Thomas, a mass communications specialist, was killed in a July vehicle accident, according to base spokesman Randall Baucom.

Harris' family, as well as the families of three other sailors who died while stationed at Yokosuka in past years — Cmdr. Frank Bivins, Chief Petty Officer Abraham Lopez and Chief Petty Officer Demond Walker — were also present Thursday.

"It's sometimes difficult to remember, but it's important for us to remember those that have given the ultimate sacrifice — particularly while serving on active duty — and then recognize that there are families left behind," Jarrett told Stars and Stripes.

Two of the fallen sailors' spouses, Makiko Walker and Yuko Bivins, described the service as "emotional," but said it served a dual purpose in helping with the grieving process and honoring their husbands' memory.

"After I lost my husband, I've received a lot of support from the military and that helped a lot with the grieving," Walker told Stars and Stripes after the ceremony. "To me it's very important to participate and attend these [ceremonies] to remember them."

wilson.alex@stripes.com
Twitter: @AlexMNWilson

Marines on Okinawa bring Big Ideas to operational challenges in the Indo-Pacific

By MATTHEW M. BURKE
Stars and Stripes

CAMP COURTNEY, Okinawa — Marine Maj. Jenkyn Kittrell's experience providing water to thousands of Filipinos in the aftermath of Super Typhoon Haiyan in 2013 yielded innovation from necessity.



Kittrell

"One of the vital things we tried to get in there was water," the 32-year-old from Baltimore recently told Stars and Stripes at Camp Courtney. "We had a lot of water purification and a lot of bulk water sites but then we couldn't really distribute that to the populace."

Kittrell's simple, cost-effective way to solve that problem earned him the Navy and Marine Corps Achievement Medal from Lt. Gen. Stacy Clardy, commander of III Marine Expeditionary

Force. His invention is also being developed for use by the force.

Kittrell's was one of several proposals highlighted Sept. 15 at an award ceremony for III MEF's second annual Big Ideas Challenge. Winners, this year, focused on solving problems in humanitarian and expeditionary advanced base operations, a new warfare concept in the Indo-Pacific region.

The challenge was open to U.S. military affiliates in Japan and this year accepted 94 submissions between April 28 and June 6, III MEF spokesman 1st Lt. Kazuma Engelkemier said. Clardy presented awards to 11 finalists, including a civilian, at the ceremony at III MEF headquarters aboard Camp Courtney.

The Marines select dozens of innovations each year to further develop, Lt. Col. Matthew Neely, the force logistics innovation officer, said at Courtney. He said some are sent to higher headquarters and some are developed within III MEF on Okinawa,

depending on cost and scale.

Kittrell, at the time a III MEF operations officer, supervised deploying Marines on a relief mission to the Philippines in Haiyan's wake.

His Marines kept reporting bottlenecks at distribution sites, where thousands of people lined up for water at five or 10 access points. Debris prevented trucks from moving water around.

The problem stayed with Kittrell, and in 2020 he built his own solution at Camp Hansen using two-by-fours, PVC pipe and garden hoses.

"We took this A-frame and we essentially put this PVC pipe on top of it with 10 garden hoses hanging down," he said. The field-expedient water distribution system was born.

The system plugs into an already established, recirculating bulk water site, Kittrell said. Hoses are laid around the city and the system is positioned at intervals.

"That allows people to walk up



U.S. Marine Corps

Marine Maj. Jenkyn Kittrell's simple, cost-effective way of distributing water in the wake of a natural disaster recently earned him a Navy and Marine Corps Achievement Medal.

and go directly underneath the garden hose, turn it on and fill up their water bottle," he said. "If I have a hose that runs a quarter of a mile, I can set these up continuously all the way down there, and now, at one go, you can have 1,000 people come up and get water."

The idea may have withered on the vine if not for the Big Ideas Challenge, Neely said.

He said the challenge allows Marines like Kittrell to put good

ideas in front of a three-star general, who can act quickly.

"It's a great way to just pitch the idea and see if it even makes sense, if it's feasible, if it is a good idea," Kittrell said.

Other proposals this year included a cloud-based supply program and fuel trucks built for the Pacific that fit aboard the Corps' C-130 fleet, Neely said.

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MILITARY

Commissaries in Japan roll out online shopping

DeCA: CLICK2GO program expected to be released in Guam, S. Korea in the future

BY ERICA EARL
Stars and Stripes

The Defense Commissary Agency rolled out online grocery shopping and scheduled pickup at 11 military bases in Japan on Sept. 27.

The CLICK2GO program is available at Naval Air Facility Atsugi, Camp Zama, Sasebo Naval Base, Misawa Air Base, Yokosuka Naval Base, Marine Corps Air Station Iwakuni, Yokota Air Base and, on Okinawa, Kadena Air Base and Camps Kinser, Foster and Courtney.

While DeCA said in a news release it also expects to release the program in South Korea and Guam, it did not list bases or dates.

The program has one shortcoming, a commissary manager at Yokota Air Base in western Tokyo told Stars and Stripes. Shoppers will not be able to pay online ahead of time, Gene Davis said. Instead, they must go inside the store to pay at a design-

nated register.

"It still saves time, because you reserve a designated pickup time and families can skip going up and down 12 aisles with small children in tow," Davis said.

"We are trying to emulate what other stores are doing, especially for overseas families who may not be able to use Amazon or other grocery delivery services."

Davis said DeCA plans to roll out the full online pay system for CLICK2GO at commissaries worldwide by spring.

A designated register will manage all CLICK2GO orders and ensure no one with a pickup time will have to wait, he said.

Pickup times will be set by each installation's commissary, according to DeCA's news release. At Yokota, pickup times will be available from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday, Davis said.

DeCA launched CLICK2GO through the New York-based e-commerce company Freshop



ERICA EARL/Stars and Stripes

The commissary at Yokota Air Base and other installations in Japan rolled out their online shopping and curbside pickup service Sept. 27.

at stateside commissaries earlier this summer, and on installations in Europe on Sept. 20.

Over 200 stores have the program, according to the news release. A \$4.95 service fee is being indefinitely waived as a program incentive.

Another drawback is that the CLICK2GO website does not list every item in the store, Davis said, although this will depend on each commissary's shipments. It does list a wide variety of items, including 40 produce

and 60 deli and bakery selections.

Also, until customers at Pacific commissaries can pay online, they may see a price change in items they reserve in their cart by the time they pick them up and pay for them, Davis said.

CLICK2GO also features recipe ideas, a kosher section and dropdown menus for dietary needs, such as dairy alternatives, although stock may be limited, Davis said. Customers may choose a substitute if their pre-

ferred items become unavailable.

"DeCA's e-commerce growth comes at a time when consumers around the world are navigating the uncertainties of the COVID pandemic by turning more and more to the safety and convenience of internet shopping for food and other daily necessities," DeCA director and CEO Bill Moore said in the release.

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US, Philippines set to restart work on shared military facilities

BY SETH ROBSON
Stars and Stripes

Plans to build facilities for U.S. troops in the Philippines, which had stalled for years amid wrangling over rules for visiting forces, are back on track, officials from both countries said.

"We plan to move fairly quickly," Philippine Ambassador to the United States Jose Manuel Romualdez said during an online conference sponsored by Pacific Forum. The Hawaii-based think tank organized the event to discuss the allies' 70-year-old Mutual Defense Treaty.

Facilities for U.S. forces at five bases were authorized by the Philippines government under the 2014 Enhanced Defense Cooperation Agreement.

The pact allows U.S. troops and contractors to operate at agreed-upon locations in the Philippines. Although the revised Philippine constitution bans permanent U.S. bases, the agreement hands U.S. forces operational control of the shared facilities and allows them to stockpile defense equipment and supplies.

Doubts were raised about the program in February 2020 after Philippine President Rodrigo Duterte began a process to terminate the Visiting Forces Agreement



TRYSTAN JORDAN/U.S. Marine Corps

U.S. and Philippine marines land on a beach in an assault amphibious vehicle during an Exercise Balikatan drill in Zambales, Philippines, in 2019. Officials from both countries said plans to build facilities for U.S. troops in the Philippines are back on track.

that permits U.S. troops to train in the country. The maverick leader canceled the plan after meeting with U.S. Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin in July.

One shared basing project, a humanitarian assistance and disaster relief warehouse at Cesar Basa Air Base on the

Philippines' main island of Luzon, opened in January 2019.

However, the allies are looking at projects at all five sites specified under the shared basing agreement, according to Lindsey Ford, the U.S. deputy assistant secretary of defense for South and South-

east Asia.

"We are working through various projects now," she said during the Sept. 23 online conference.

Philippine Defense Secretary Delfin Lorenzana in January 2019 identified Palawan island as the site of another planned shared facility.

The Palawan site is significant because of its proximity to the South China Sea, Carl Baker, then executive director of the Pacific Forum, said at the time.

China has built its own military bases and placed missiles on artificial islands in the contested waters that are subject to claims by several neighboring states, including the Philippines.

The Palawan base includes a 9,000-foot World War II-era runway, Baker said.

"That warehouse could be used to store equipment for surveillance flights," he said.

The U.S. is also working with the Philippine government on projects at Fort Magsaysay Military Reservation, Lumbia Airfield and Mactan-Benito Ebuen Air Base, according to a U.S. Embassy report posted online in 2019.

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MILITARY

Air Force efforts to reduce pilot shortage slowed

By ROSE L. THAYER
Stars and Stripes

The Air Force once again fell short of its annual goal to train 1,500 new pilots, though service leaders believe more civilian instructors and the final rollout of new technology-driven training could be instrumental in helping end the shortage of enough qualified pilots.

Lt. Gen. Brad Webb, commander of the service's Air Education Training Command, said he anticipates those barriers could be cleared by next year. Meanwhile, the Air Force is looking to increase the pool of qualified candidates who apply to become pilots through free outreach training programs and an overhaul of the selection process so it's more modern and equitable.

Each year, Air Education Training Command, known as AETC, is tasked with sending 1,500 pilots into the service — the number the Air Force has said it needs to retain about 21,000 pilots within its active, Guard and Reserve forces to meet the requirements of the 2018 National Defense Strategy.

In fiscal 2020, AETC trained 1,263 pilots, and Webb anticipated that when fiscal 2021 closes at the end of the month, it will be up by about 100 pilots. That should put the service back to levels of training attained before the coronavirus pandemic caused a drop.

The Air Force has continuously struggled to keep pilots in the service, with many leaving for more lucrative careers in the civilian sector that put less strain on family life. While it has remained about 2,000 pilots short for several years, Gen. Charles Q. Brown, the Air Force chief of staff, said in May that they've closed that gap by about 200 pilots.

As of this month, the Air Force had about 13,160 active-duty pilots, according to the Air Force Personnel Center. That's about 700 more than six months ago, when AETC leadership provided an update on pilot training.

Training program tests

Part of the solution is creating a more efficient training process to get those pilots into units faster, but without a drop in quality, Webb said recently in a call with reporters. Two factors

— hiring civilians to help with training and incorporating program changes — have slowed progress for now, he said.

While technology will take time to implement, the service is working through a plan to get more civilian personnel hired.

AETC employs civilians to run training flight simulators, but only about 80% of the jobs are filled, Webb said. Part of the hiring challenge is finding people willing to live in the remote locations of the training bases, such as Vance Air Force Base, Okla., Columbus Air Force Base, Miss., and Laughlin Air Force Base, Texas.

To alleviate that need to move, AETC is mapping out how to hire civilians to virtually lead simulator instruction. This could allow commercial pilots living near major airport hubs to teach on the side, Webb said.

In the interim, AETC pulls instructor pilots to fill gaps as needed.

"That hurts production, obviously, because that [instructor pilot] should otherwise be out on a jet, doing a turn on the runway," Webb said.

He also said he anticipates a plan to hire civilians to run simulators virtually to be operational within the "next year or so."

He expects a new training program, known as Undergraduate Pilot Training 2.5, to be implemented across the board at about the same time. UPT 2.5 incorporates virtual reality and artificial intelligence platforms into a self-paced syllabus. It also uses just one training airplane, the T-6A Texan II, as the in-air training platform. These changes have allowed students to graduate and move into their next phase of training in seven months, instead of a full year.

Nearly 200 pilots have graduated through the new program since it began in July 2020, according to AETC. Once undergraduate training is complete, the future pilots move into training for the specific type of aircraft that they will fly.

Regardless of the new technology used in UPT 2.5, the need for a simulated cockpit environment is still important, Webb said.

"I think what we've learned over the course of time is, we're not going to be able to cut away from [simulators] ... but aug-



ANNE MCCREADY/U.S. Air Force

Capt. Natalie Rambish, 47th Operations Support Squadron aircrew and flight equipment commander and instructor pilot, climbs into a seat in a T-38C Talon as she prepares to fly with a student pilot in August 2020 at Laughlin Air Force Base, Texas.



SARAYUTH PINTHONG/U.S. Air Force

Student pilots train on a virtual reality flight simulator as part of the Pilot Training Next program in March 2020 at Joint Base San Antonio-Randolph, Texas. The program is part of Air Education and Training Command's initiative to "reimagine" how learning is delivered to airmen.

menting that with [virtual reality] and live [flights] is really what's going to be successful for us in the methodology of 2.5," Webb said.

Increasing candidate pool

Implementing the new program, however, "carries with it some drag," he said.

So far, only Vance Air Force Base has fully transitioned to the new training program and one squadron at Randolph Air Force Base has adopted the new method. It will launch this fall at Columbus Air Force Base and then Lackland Air Force Base in the spring, Webb said.

The program will be "the way

we do pilot training lock, stock and barrel, by this time next year," he said.

With those changes expected to allow for more students to train, the Air Force is looking to increase the pool of candidates. It began a full review of its selection process for pilots, which hasn't been assessed "with any rigor" since the 1970s, Webb said.

With changes projected sometime next summer, a related policy change removed some barriers that might have blocked people without prior flying experience from getting accepted into pilot training. The Air Force now only considers up to 60

hours of flight time when scoring pilot candidates. In the past, it considered up to 200 hours, which is now seen as giving an unfair advantage to wealthier applicants.

"There is no evidence that more than 61 hours of flight experience poses a significant benefit to pilot training success," said Katie Gunther, chief of strategic research and assessment at the Air Force Personnel Center. "The probability of success in flight training increases substantially from 0 hours to 60 hours, then relatively plateaus."

Other programs, such as the Flight Academy, which takes ROTC cadets who might not have considered aviation and provides them free air and ground experience, target the same problem.

"It's to hopefully inspire a larger pool of candidates and potentially a much more diverse pool of candidates to apply for aviation duty in the first place," Webb said.

Overall, he said it's about "the aptitude to be able to learn, and not necessarily already have the skill."

Other initiatives to get more pilots through training faster are still in early stages, such as fast-tracking people with previous flying experience or nonmilitary training. So far, AETC has put 35 pilots through this program, known as Civil Path to Wings.

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MILITARY

USSF unveils enlisted rank insignia designs

By CHAD GARLAND
Stars and Stripes

The Space Force unveiled its enlisted rank designs and a prototype service dress uniform as the newest military service looks to set itself apart from the Air Force while drawing on its heritage.

The service's top officer, Gen. John W. Raymond, appeared alongside two service members wearing the new uniform Sept. 21 at the Air Force Association's Space Force Air, Space and Cyber Conference.

The service billed it in a Twitter post as "modern, distinctive, professional." Some users reacted to similarities between the uniform coat and the costumes used in various science fiction series set in space, such as Star Trek and Battlestar Galactica. It features a standing collar and an angular overlapping front flap that buttons up the right side.

Chief Master Sgt. of the Space Force Roger A. Towberman revealed the ranks for specialist through chief master sergeant in a social media post that included graphics and information sheets explaining the symbolism of the designs.

All of the ranks feature a "foundational Delta," the triangular shape reminiscent of Star Trek. The shape was adopted as the Space Force emblem last year, drawing on its use in military emblems related to space since 1961, years before the science fiction show first aired.

As service members progress up the ranks, they move from earth into orbit, at least symbolically. Three junior ranks feature horizontal stripes representing "terra firma" on which the service is built, and the three senior-most ranks feature curving chevrons named after increasingly higher strata of orbit.

Unlike the Star Fleet of television and the silver screen, however, Space Force



CHIEF MASTER SGT. OF THE SPACE FORCE/Facebook

The newly revealed enlisted rank insignia for the Space Force appear on the Facebook page for the Chief Master Sgt. of the Space Force.

troops are still earthbound.

The first enlisted rank, specialist 1, features only the delta inside a hexagonal border, the number of sides representing the service as the military's sixth. For each of the next three ranks, specialists 2 through 4, a horizontal "Vandenberg Stripe" is added across the delta.

The stripes are a nod to a design Gen. Hoyt Vandenberg proposed for the Air Force ranks, but which was never used, the service said. The namesake of Vandenberg Space Force Base was the second chief of staff of the Air Force.

Sergeants and up will see those stripes transformed into upward bent chevrons, representing them as upholding and serving those they are charged with caring

for under their leadership.

A globe and an orbital path are also added above the chevrons — something the service calls the Delta, Globe and Orbit, in a moniker reminiscent of the Marine Corps' Eagle, Globe and Anchor. This formation represents the "values, people and mission" upheld by the chevrons, a service fact sheet says.

At the three most senior ranks, the Delta departs the Globe and rises above it onto chevrons arcing over top of the Globe and Orbit. Each of the three arcs is named to correspond to a higher altitude above Earth as Guardians progress to master sergeant, senior master sergeant and chief master sergeant.

"The placement of the Delta above the

Globe further signifies the higher level of responsibility while the Delta breaking through the orbits shows their willingness to explore and innovate," the information sheet explains.

The overall look with downward pointing chevrons and arcing orbits gives an appearance something like Navy chief ranks, rather than those of the Air Force, where the upper chevrons culminate in points. Last year, many had unsuccessfully argued for the service to adopt Navy rank names, including Star Trek star William Shatner, who played Capt. James Kirk.

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Super-sized airlifters provide rare training opportunity at Tokyo base

By JUAN KING
Stars and Stripes

YOKOTA AIR BASE, Japan — The largest aircraft in the U.S. Air Force is a rare enough sight at this airlift hub in western Tokyo, but two together will turn heads.

A pair of C-5M Super Galaxies parked on Yokota's ramp for about a week served up training opportunities for maintenance airmen who don't often get to turn a wrench on the 200-ton behemoths.

One arrived as a "quarterly ground trainer," a regularly scheduled chance for airmen to train up on the aircraft. It happened to land here with a cracked windshield needing repair.

The second arrived on an undisclosed mission but served as another training platform while its crew rested, said Master Sgt. Robert Maughan, production

superintendent for the 730th Air Mobility Squadron at Yokota.

"We don't have that opportunity for an extended ground time, so for the wing to send us these C-5 aircraft, logistically it's a big deal to get this aircraft out over here," said Maughan during an interview with Stars and Stripes last month.

About four times per year, the 515th Air Mobility Operation Wing at Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam, Hawaii, tries to send a C-5 ground trainer to bases in the Pacific region to get maintainers familiar with the aircraft.

Maughan's squadron is a tenant unit with the 374th Maintenance Squadron and takes care of transient aircraft, including the C-17 Globemaster III and the C-5M. The technicians under Maughan's supervision are qualified to work on either aircraft.

"Think of us as a gas station; we are a highly qualified Jiffy

Lube," Maughan said.

The C-5M is an improvement over previous C-5 models and entered service in December 2013. The Super Galaxy has less than half the failure rate and maintenance hours required by the C-5 Galaxy, and more than 70 improvements, according to its manufacturer, Lockheed Martin.

The Air Force has 52 of all models of the big airlifters, which can carry as much as 142 tons aloft at 518 mph, according to the Air Force. The C-5M has an 11-person crew, including two crew chiefs. It's expected to be around past 2040.

The two that stopped at Yokota are based at Travis Air Force Base, Calif., Maughan said.

While they were here, airmen could qualify on towing, refueling and defueling them, as well as overall servicing, he said.

Senior Airman Hunter Dunn,



JUAN KING/Stars and Stripes

Airmen take part in aircraft recovery training next to a C-5M Super Galaxy visiting Yokota Air Base, Japan.

730th Air Mobility Squadron maintenance crew chief, helps keep track of qualifications that maintainers receive while being trained on the C-5M. He also gets hands-on as a supervisor.

"I really like it; I like getting out there and getting involved," Dunn said. "It's a really awe-

some feeling, especially when something comes down broken and you fix it, and then that plane flies, and you know that that mission was because you helped [it] continue."

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MILITARY

Vet's book plays up hockey as sports rehab

By SETH ROBSON
Stars and Stripes

The role of sports in rehabilitating wounded warriors is explored in a new novel that combines a former paratrooper's love of ice hockey with his experiences in a U.S. military community in the German state of Bavaria.

"Ahab: A Hockey Story," by Brad Huestis, tells the tale of a U.S. soldier who loses his leg in an accident parachuting into Poland with the 173rd Airborne Brigade during an exercise.

The book gives readers a taste of what troops go through when they recover from a serious injury and the important role that sports can play in their treatment.

Members of the Bavarian military community will find a lot of familiar scenes in the book, such as Grafenwoehr Training Area's iconic water tower and Oktoberfest, which Huestis, 54, of Spring Hill, Fla., based on his own experience.

The retired lieutenant colonel served as a paratrooper, artilleryman and judge advocate and received the Bronze Star in Iraq before moving to a civilian role providing legal services to troops at Grafenwoehr.

"The story is 100% fictional but the background is 100% real," he said in a recent phone interview about the book.

The novel is set in 2013 and talks about real-life events, such as the Boston Marathon bombing, that happened that spring.

The book's protagonist, Cpl. Will Foley, has a love of hockey that reflects Huestis' passion for the sport.

When he arrived at Grafenwoehr in 2009, he started a base team that he coached and played on for a decade.



Brad Huestis

When he arrived at Grafenwoehr Training Area, Germany, in 2009, author and Army veteran Brad Huestis started a base hockey team that he coached and played on for a decade.

"There is still a team there called the Bayern Rangers," he said. "I called them the BMC Rangers in the book."

Many of the soldiers playing hockey in Germany were wounded warriors going through Army medical boards, Huestis said.

"I had several players going through boards at any one time and at the JAG office we would help soldiers go through that process," he said. "Some soldiers were fighting to stay in and others were fighting for benefits when they got out."

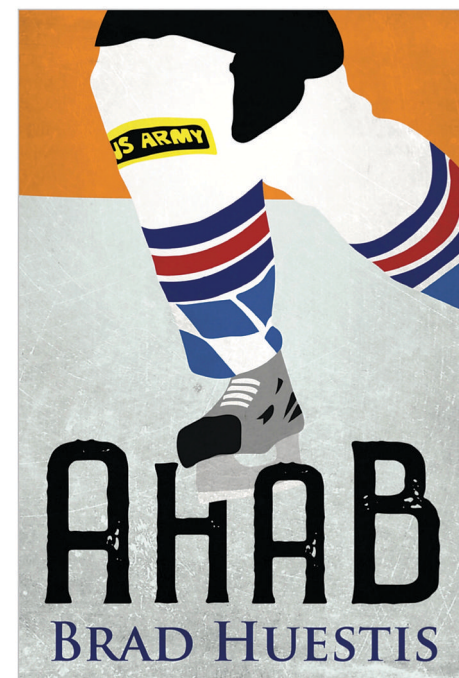
Foley has his own challenges. He crashlands during a parachute jump, has a leg amputated and the Army sends him a bill for his damaged gear.

It's not something that happens in real life to that extent, but Huestis said he knew troops who'd been charged for damaged gear after being injured in training.

"That's one of the things about military life," he said. "When you're in good graces with the chain of command you get awards and promotions and get sent to school, and when you are in their bad graces, they will lock you down and make life really hard."

Foley's prosthetic leg, which enables him to excel as a member of the hockey team, wasn't inspired by Huestis' real life.

"I found one person skating with a prosthesis on YouTube," he said. "It looked like really rough going. He didn't have a



"Ahab: A Hockey Story," aims to show how sports helps troops recover from serious injury.

lot of stability."

However, Huestis said, that doesn't mean there won't be amputees who can skate well with the aid of advanced technology.

"It raises ethical issues about once we have the technology that allows this," he said, noting that some disabled athletes might have an advantage with the right prosthesis.

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Sesame Street's Elmo helps military children cope with family separation

By MATTHEW M. BURKE
Stars and Stripes

The Defense Department has enlisted a familiar, furry red monster to help ease the sting that military families feel during a service member's temporary duty assignment.

Elmo from Sesame Street has taken on the role of a military child in a series of videos, printable activities and articles designed to teach children how to cope when a parent leaves for a temporary assignment, according to a statement from Sesame Workshop, the educational non-profit behind the popular children's television show.

The digital products were released Sept. 23 on the Sesame Street for Military Families website and are the latest collaboration between the Pentagon and the award-winning program.

"When a parent serves, the whole family serves — that's something military kids can be proud of," Jeanette Betancourt, Sesame Workshop's senior vice president of U.S. social impact, said in the statement. "At Sesame

Workshop, we appreciate that service, and, with these new materials, we hope to help military families feel strong and connected whether they're near or far."

Air Force Capt. Robert Walden, a licensed clinical social worker and family advocacy element chief at Misawa Air Base in Japan, said he doesn't see a lot of issues stemming from temporary assignments. However, behavioral problems can result from changing a child's routine, especially when it comes to restricting parental access, he told Stars and Stripes via phone.

Walden recommends families have a plan in place for temporary assignments.

"It's always good to bring more awareness and information to families who may be challenged with a TDY," he said, adding that children could react positively to Elmo and characters they know.

This material "could be really helpful if they're able to help a child gain some insight and feel like they're being understood," he said.

The series follows child-favor-

ite Elmo and his parents, as his dad, Louie, goes off on a short-term National Guard assignment, the statement said. The materials provide a roadmap through the experience that focuses on three main areas: preparing for a temporary duty assignment, staying connected while a parent is away and adjusting when the parent returns.

Temporary assignments outside the continental United States are often shorter than most longer-term deployments; however, they can begin abruptly and occur more frequently, the statement said. A service member can be temporarily assigned for days or even months for any number of reasons, from training or schooling to a short-term humanitarian assistance mission or special event.

In the series, Elmo shares many of the feelings and experiences often felt by military children when a parent leaves on temporary duty, like separation anxiety and the disruption of routines, the statement said.

Elmo is disappointed when his



Sesame Workshop

Elmo, right, from Sesame Street has taken on the role of a military child in a series of videos, printable activities and articles designed to teach kids how to cope when a parent leaves for a temporary assignment.

dad can't come to his first T-ball game, but aided by fellow military child Rosita and technology, he finds solace in videos and calls. His family celebrates with a song when Louie returns.

Articles for parents feature activities and language to help small children understand the "temporary nature" and "importance" of the mission, the statement said. Printable coloring pages and lyric sheets are designed to spark family conversation.

The new temporary duty materials join other Sesame Street content for military families about deployments, homecomings, long-term family caregiving and transitions in health care, the statement said. The resources are free and available in English and Spanish.

For more information, visit sesamestreetformilitaryfamilies.org.

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MILITARY

USS John McCain leaves Japan for new homeport

By ALEX WILSON

Stars and Stripes

YOKOSUKA NAVAL BASE, Japan — The USS John S. McCain sailed out of Tokyo Bay on Sept. 17, leaving Japan after 24 years with 7th Fleet and the heartbreaking loss of 10 crew members from a collision in 2017.

The guided missile destroyer is named for three generations of naval officers bearing the same name, including the late Sen. John McCain, an Arizona Republican who was his party's nominee for president in 2008.

The McCain is headed for Naval Station Everett, Wash., its new homeport, according to the Navy. While stationed at Yokosuka, the destroyer and its crew landed in the heart of unsought controversy.

The ship collided with a Liberian-flagged tanker, the Alnic MC, in the Strait of Malacca near Singapore, on Aug. 12, 2017. The collision killed 10 sailors and heavily damaged the destroyer.

The incident was one of two collisions by 7th Fleet destroyers that summer. On June 17, 2017, seven sailors died aboard the USS Fitzgerald when it collided with a Philippine-flagged container ship, ACX Crystal, about 80 miles southwest of Tokyo.

The McCain was sidelined for repairs until June 2020. The

destroyer bears a memorial plaque engraved with the names of the 10 sailors who lost their lives on the ship.

"John S. McCain and her Sailors have proven time and time again our Navy's resolve to answer the call in support of our nation and our allies," the ship's skipper, Cmdr. Tin Tran, said in a Navy news release. "After 24 years of faithful overseas service, we are ready to head back home to America, back to Washington State. Our sailors will forever remember the bonds of friendship and hospitality Japan has shown us."

The McCain will join 3rd Fleet, which operates in the Eastern Pacific.

The McCain will be replaced by the USS Ralph Johnson, which is en route to Japan, said 7th Fleet spokesman Lt. Mark Langford.

"It is definitely a changing of the guard with USS John S. McCain and her crew departing the 7th Fleet after over 24 years in Japan," the commander of Destroyer Squadron 15, Capt. Chase Sargeant, said in the release. "The contributions of the current and all previous crews in defending peace and stability in the Indo-Pacific cannot be overstated."

The McCain arrived at Yokosuka



Ryo ISOBE/U.S. Navy

The USS John S. McCain departs Yokosuka Naval Base on Sept. 17 after 24 years in Japan.

ka in summer 1997 and took part in numerous operations and exercises over the years.

In 1998, it deployed to support the USS Independence battle group as part of operations Southern Watch and Desert Thunder. During the beginning of the War on Terror, the McCain supported the USS Kitty Hawk strike group in 2002 and 2003 as part of operations Enduring and Iraqi Freedom.

In 2011, the ship took part in Operation Tomodachi, which provided humanitarian assistance following the Tohoku earthquake and tsunami.

The ship made headlines again in May 2019, when multiple media outlets reported that the White House had asked the Navy

to keep the destroyer "out of sight" during then-President Donald Trump's visit to Yokosuka.

Trump did not deny the report, which first appeared in The Wall Street Journal.

"I would never do a thing like that," he told reporters at the time. "Now, someone did it because they thought I didn't like him. OK? And, they were well meaning, I will say ... they thought they were doing me a favor because they know I'm not a fan of John McCain."

On Feb. 4, the McCain steamed past the Paracel Islands in the South China Sea, islands built up by China with military installations, in a demonstration of freedom of navigation, according to

the Navy. The next day, the destroyer transited the Taiwan Strait, another routine Navy exercise that challenges China's claims in the region. In April, the McCain made another pass through the strait.

The McCain's homeport shift follows the departures of other Arleigh Burke-class destroyers in recent years. The USS McCampbell and USS Stethem left Yokosuka in 2019 and 2020, respectively. In August, the USS Curtis Wilbur left.

The destroyers USS Higgins, USS Stethem and USS Dewey arrived in August and September to replace them.

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HMS Queen Elizabeth stops in Guam for a second time

By ALEX WILSON

Stars and Stripes

The HMS Queen Elizabeth steamed into Naval Base Guam earlier this month for the British aircraft carrier's second visit to the U.S. island territory in about a month.

The carrier, through its official Twitter account, announced the stop Sept. 13 and said it would undergo scheduled maintenance while in port.

The carrier and its strike group also visited Guam on Aug. 6 as it makes its way through the Indo-Pacific region.

Naval Base Guam is offering a variety of support to the Queen Elizabeth, base spokeswoman Theresa Cepeda told Stars and Stripes in an email.

"These support services include but are not limited to Port Operations, Security, Morale, Welfare, and Recreation, Base Communications, Fleet Logistics and Supply, and Navy Exchange Guam," she wrote.

Cepeda said she could not confirm whether the carrier's sailors would be given liberty on base.



U.S. Navy

The HMS Queen Elizabeth, a Royal Navy aircraft carrier, has made two stops in Guam during its maiden deployment to the Indo-Pacific region.

However, Cepeda said Royal Navy sailors were expected to follow coronavirus mitigation measures, which include wear-

ing a face mask and social distancing.

A spokesman for the Queen Elizabeth did not respond to requests for comment.

Royal Navy sailors were granted shore leave during the Queen Elizabeth's August visit. Two from the strike group were arrested during an incident at a Guam nightclub.

The ship's second stop in Guam came soon after it departed Yokosuka Naval Base in Japan, where it stayed five days after arriving Sept. 4.

While in Japan, Queen Elizabeth sailors were not allowed to leave the ship in an effort to prevent the spread of COVID-19.

While Japan's coronavirus cases are now in decline after the peak of a fifth wave, the country reported nearly 16,000 new infections the day the Queen Elizabeth pulled into Yokosuka. Guam, which is also coming off another coronavirus wave, reported 174 cases on Sept. 20.

The Queen Elizabeth is on its first operational deployment, which started in May and is expected to cover approximately 26,000 nautical miles.

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VETERANS

Event honored POWs, those still missing

By WYATT OLSON
Stars and Stripes

JOINT BASE PEARL HARBOR-HICKAM, Hawaii — On April 26, 1966, Col. Warren Anderson and copilot Maj. James Hale Tucker took off in their Air Force RF-4C reconnaissance jet for a routine scouting mission over North Vietnam.

They went off the radar and were never heard from again.

Anderson's daughter, Natalie Rauch, was just 8 when he went missing. Her mother never remarried and raised Rauch and three younger children by herself.



Rauch

Rauch, who has lived in Honolulu since 2014, has over the years come to accept the reality that her father's remains

will likely never be found, because so little is known about where the jet went down.

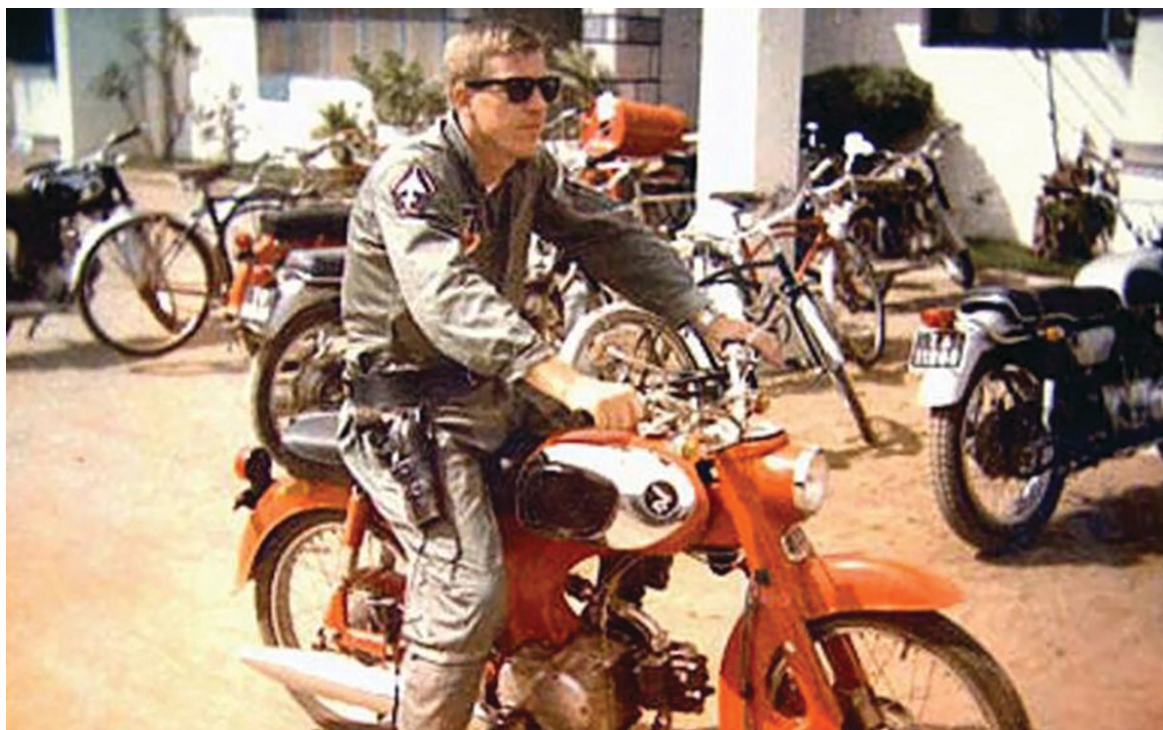
That is a big part of why the annual National POW/MIA Recognition Day is of towering importance to her and the thousands of other family members whose lives were forever changed by the unresolved loss of someone in uniform.

Rauch was the keynote speaker last month at a ceremony at the Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency on the joint base marking the day, which is intended to honor those held as prisoners of war and those who remain missing.

"I feel like every time I have the opportunity to represent my dad, I hope I come across as composed," she said during a media roundtable at DPAA's headquarters. "But then, at the end of it all, I feel like I'm still that 8-year-old kid waiting for her dad to come home."

DPAA is the agency tasked with finding, retrieving and identifying the missing dead from World War II, the Korean War and the Vietnam War — and the mission is vast.

"Today, more than 81,900 U.S.



Natalie Rauch

Air Force Col. Warren Anderson sits on a motorcycle in South Vietnam in this photo taken in 1965. He went missing about a year later when his RF-4C reconnaissance jet went off radar during a scouting mission over North Vietnam.



JOHN MILLER/U.S. Army

A National POW/MIA Recognition Day ceremony was held Sept. 17 at the Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency facility on Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam, Hawaii.

personnel remain unaccounted for — including more than 72,000 from World War II, more than 7,500 from the Korean War, and more than 1,500 from the Vietnam War," Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin said during a ceremony in the Pentagon. "Many of the missing are

lost deep at sea, but our experts estimate that some 38,000 may be recoverable. So we still have a lot of work to do."

Precautions over the coronavirus have curtailed the number of missions DPAA has been able to send into Southeast Asia since the spring of 2020, said

Johnnie Webb, the agency's deputy director for outreach, during the roundtable.

DPAA, however, has helped stand up six teams in Vietnam staffed by locals that have continued work during the pandemic, Webb said.

"I wish we could do more, and I wish we could do it quicker, but we have to work within the limitations that we face on a daily basis," said Webb, a veteran of the Vietnam War.

The agency's previous iteration, the Joint POW/MIA Accounting Command, came under fire for mismanagement and a sluggish pace in making identifications, and the accounting effort was reorganized into the DPAA in 2015.

The agency had slightly surpassed its annual target of 200 identifications in fiscal years

2018 and 2019, but the total plummeted to 120 for the fiscal year that ended Sept. 30, 2020. It has projected making 200 identifications by the close of this fiscal year.

DPAA is now winding down a yearslong effort to identify the disinterred remains of sailors and Marines who died aboard the USS Oklahoma at Pearl Harbor on Dec. 7, 1941, and then buried as unknowns in the National Memorial Cemetery of the Pacific in Honolulu.

As of Sept. 15, DPAA had identified 346 of the 394 crew members who had been buried as unknowns.

The agency is "doing more with less" because advances in DNA capabilities can be used on ever tinier and decayed bone samples, Debra Prince Zinni, deputy director of DPAA's laboratory, said at the roundtable.

The agency was recently accredited to use isotope analysis, she said. Isotopes found in bones reveal, among other things, an individual's diet and whether it is particular to a given geographical location.

However, no amount of technology is useful if remains cannot be found, and that is the sort of limbo that Rauch and others like her learn to live with.

Acceptance comes in waves.

When the Vietnam War was over and Hanoi released the U.S. prisoners they had held for years, hope Rauch held that her father would be among them was dashed.

In 1978, the status of her father and Tucker was changed to Killed in Action/Body Not Recovered.

Anderson's name is on a gravestone at Arlington National Cemetery, etched into the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Wall near the National Mall and engraved on the Courts of the Missing at the National Memorial Cemetery of the Pacific.

But no part of him has come home, and Rauch has spent her life gathering remembrances, like pieces of a puzzle, from people who knew him.

"I've had to make my own peace," she said. "Because I don't want to run around being angry. I don't want to run around being distraught, bitter. It would be a waste of my time, and no one's going to want to spend time with me."

"So, I've made my own peace that if I don't find an answer, it's OK," she said, pausing a moment. "But I still want DPAA to keep working."

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