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Pages 6-7

A Pedacito of Yap Micronesia

VOLUME 16 NO. 35 DECEMBER 10 – DECEMBER 23, 2021

FREE GUAM

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COLONEL’S
12 PIECE HOLIDAY FEAST

KFC
B eing stationed overseas in the military has its perks. No, I’m not talking about sightseeing and travel. I’m not referring to exposure to history and culture. I’m not discussing foreign language immersion. What I mean is this: when you PCS overseas, you won’t have to endure as many visits from relatives.

There, I said it. 

Unless you’ve been stationed in Hawaii — in which case your home has probably become a revolving door of freeloaders and friends — living overseas affords you a layer of protection against unwanted company, and gives you the ultimate excuse to enjoy the holidays however you wish. As in, “The airline tickets cost $700 each, darn it ... Looks like we’ll be Zooming you on Thanksgiving again this year, Aunt Millie.”

When our family was stationed overseas, we couldn’t afford to fly home for the holidays, and our relatives couldn’t afford to visit us often either. At first, it seemed strange celebrating Thanksgiving and Christmas overseas without visits to and from extended family members. But ultimately, we enjoyed some of our most memorable holidays skiing in the Alps, roaming around Italy. Left to our own devices, we managed to create grand family adventures.

Enjoy the freedom living overseas affords while you can, because you will, one day, receive orders back to the continental U.S. And as they say, “Payback’s a ...” Well, you know. Your other relatives have been covering for you during your overseas tours. 

Aunt Millie.

More of Lisa Smith Molinari's columns at: themeatandpotatoesoflife.com and in Lisa's book, The Meat and Potatoes of Life: My True Lit Com. Email: meatandpotatoesoflife@gmail.com
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DEDEDO – Marine Corps Base (MCB) Camp Blaz leadership along with the Honorable Lourdes Leon Guerrero, governor of Guam, in coordination with the Guam State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO), participated in a cultural ritual at the Sabånan Fadang burial site Nov. 23. The burial site includes seven grave pits comprised of multiple individuals, with the final overall number of individuals still pending analysis.

The ritual is the first of its kind as the ceremonies are typically held later, as required under Guam law, when monuments are erected for reburial ceremonies. Four grave pits were originally found in 2020, with an additional three grave pits found between Oct. 29 and Nov. 2 during monument construction.

The monument under construction was proposed by the Guam SHPO at the governor’s request and supports MCB Camp Blaz’s commitment to preserving the rich cultural heritage of Guam. In addition to the monument, MCB Camp Blaz will build a reinternment crypt for the reburial of any potential fragmentary remains discovered during future development, and a marker to be installed at the Mågua’ settlement site about half a mile away from the monument.

“Our administration is encouraged that our military partners recognize the necessity of paying our respects to our ancestors and the land they cared for and cultivated, and where they were eventually laid to rest,” said Leon Guerrero. “Symbolic acts such as this represent a sacred and traditional obligation of the CHamoru people and we stand committed to ensuring that our people have the opportunity to honor our heritage and our ancestors wherever possible.”

The ritual began with a traditional CHamoru chant, followed by a symbolic procession around the burial grounds. The burial grounds were adorned with limestone rock borders and arrangements of medicinal native ferns that would have been used in the late-Latte period. Each participant honored the ancestral remains by placing a handful of soil originally from the site upon each grave, followed by a MCB Camp Blaz cultural resources staff member who ensured complete coverage.

“This is a truly special event for our CHamoru people since it’s the first time we will be able to cover up our ancestors with our native hands and our native soil,” said Patrick Lujan, Guam State Historic Preservation Officer. “Never before has this ritual been done. We have disturbed their resting place that has been there for a thousand years and we hope this solemn ritual will be the final time our ancestors of Sabånan Fadang will be interrupted from their resting place.”

BY STANLEY JAMES,
MARINE CORPS BASE CAMP BLAZ

Photos by Cpl. Andrew King, Marine Corps Base Camp Blaz

Toni ‘Malia’ Ramírez, Guam historian, performs a CHamoru dedication.

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This is a truly special event for our CHamoru people since it’s the first time we will be able to cover up our ancestors with our native hands and our native soil”

– Patrick Lujan, Guam State Historic Preservation Officer
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Yap? Where’s that? In Micronesia. No, Micro….Micronesia…in the far western Pacific Ocean just above the equator.

This was the typical exchange with friends and strangers alike when I announced in 2016 that I had applied to be a Peace Corps Response Volunteer in one of the most remote and smallest islands in the Pacific Ocean. Although the Peace Corps gig only lasted a few months, I stayed on for five years living in Colonia, the sole town on the 38 ½ square mile main island. Actually, it’s more of a two-road commercial and government crossroads set in the middle of the eastern side of the four contiguous islands overlooking the surrounding reef.

The day I arrived I was walking down the road when two women, one old, one young, appeared walking toward me. The older woman was bare-breasted, the younger one wore a secondhand T-shirt promoting a rock band and both wore lava lavas, the colorful, hand-woven knee-length wrap skirts that women from the distant outer islands favored.

I had read that women’s breasts were not considered erotic on this ancient island – thighs were, but not breasts -- but it was still a shock to this American woman’s sense of propriety. Nonetheless, I soon became accustomed to nodding hello to bare-breasted women in the small grocery stores, the hospital, the bank, even among my neighbors.

Well, it wasn’t really nodding. I learned, too, that a quick, subtle snap of the head upwards was the correct greeting between women. And if you didn’t have time to stop and say hello, it was proper to say “goodbye” as you passed by each other. Time to chat? Say “hello” instead.

My cultural learning curve continued when I saw massive donut-shaped wheels of limestone called “rai” leaning against shops and homes.

It was the island’s unique-in-all-the-world hand-carved stone money that was brought from Palau, 250 miles distant, beginning hundreds of years ago on bamboo rafts towed behind traditional hand-carved canoes to be used as currency. The largest is 12 feet in diameter and 20 inches thick. The hole in the middle of each one is where a strong bamboo stick is placed for several young men to more easily carry the heavy discs on their shoulders. Most villages also have a stone money “bank” where the currency is lined up along a path.

Although American money has replaced stone money as daily currency, they’re still used to settle certain social debts, the value is not in the size but in the effort it took -- the lives threatened by the ocean-passing and those lost -- to bring the money across the open ocean.

The stones are too heavy to move but their history and who owns each one are said to still be known despite changing hands many times over the years.

And then there are the dances. Men and women slather coconut oil mixed with turmeric on their bodies for a golden sheen, don colorful green, red, and yellow grass skirts for the women, and multi-layered thu’us, or loincloths, for the men, and add on flower crowns, leis, and other natural adornments.

They then line up to perform in fast-paced dances, chanting ancient songs that set up the rhythm, each one telling a tale of a long ocean
A Pedacito of the sweet-smelling flower crowns and garlands of Yap

When I first arrived at Yap International Airport, after midnight on one of only two weekly flights from Guam, the air was hot and humid. My glasses fogged up as I emerged from the airplane’s air conditioned interior.

Descending down a flight of steep metal rolling stairs onto the tarmac, I followed the line of travelers queuing up at the entrance to the small terminal that’s shaped like a traditional, steep-roofed Yap building. Chatting quietly, we inched forward – foreigners on one side, citizens of the Federated States of Micronesia on the other – for a passport check.

Once inside the terminal’s cramped one-size-fits-all luggage retrieval/customs area, a young woman wearing a rustling grass skirt placed a fragrant flower garland called a “marmar” around my neck and welcomed me to this remote island in the far western Pacific Ocean. Several marmars, woven of white, pink, red and yellow tropical flowers spilled down her bare chest and a crown of fresh flowers, called a “nunu”, encircled her head.

During the five years that I lived in Yap, I received many more nunus and marmars, each one unique. Given to men and women alike, both guests and participants, for celebrations ranging from birthdays and graduations to airport goodbyes and welcoming back tourists, a person who comments on its beauty is the custom to give one’s nunu to a person who comments on its beauty. From then on, I admired them silently, not wanting to deprive the recipient of his or her flower gift.

On Yap Day, an annual by-Yapese-for-Yapese cultural celebration held on or around March 1st, I watched as two women sat on woven mats and demonstrated how to split the green fronds and leaves for Yapean grass skirts. Out of the women’s house to make dozens of the head wreaths that are strung on bamboo poles to carry to the event unharmed.

Walking down the road one day, I passed by a woman and complimented her on her nunu. She immediately took it off and began to place it on my head. Surprised at the gesture, I tried to decline but she told me that it was the custom to give one’s nunu to a person who comments on its beauty. From then on, I admired them silently, not wanting to deprive the recipient of his or her flower gift.

For graduations, family members pile marmars and nunus high around each graduate’s neck and head, interspersed with brightly-colored crocheted yarn leis and strings of candy. Traditional nunus and marmars are made by hand of all-natural materials with the skill passed down through the generations from mother to daughter. For larger occasions, a group of village women come together in the women’s house to make dozens of the head wreaths that are strung on bamboo poles to carry to the event unharmed.

A Pedacito of the sweet-smelling flower crowns and garlands of Yap

Yap

Yap is one of a handful of places on the earth that is still covid-free. The border closed in April 2020 and is still closed to tourists. But once it opens again, hopefully in 2022, put Yap on your bucket list, pack your t-shirts and zoris, and get ready for one of the most unusual travel experiences of your life.

And for all you women out there, be sure to cover your thighs.
Operation Christmas Drop returned to Micronesia, which opted out of the Defense Department’s longest running humanitarian-assistance mission last year due to concerns about the coronavirus.

During the annual, week-long operation — now in its 70th year — C-130J Super Hercules cargo planes drop large bundles of donated food, tools, clothing, toiletries, toys and other supplies to thousands of people living on tiny South Pacific islands.

Airmen in Santa hats flew the season’s first sorties on Dec. 5 out of Andersen Air Force Base, Guam.

The Federated States of Micronesia — Yap, Chuuk, Pohnpei and Kosrae — along with the Republic of Palau are among more than 55 remote islands that will receive 400- to 600-pound bundles during this year’s drops, which run through Dec. 13, Pacific Air Forces said in a recent statement.

Palau received extra aid last year when Micronesia decided not to participate due to COVID-19.

The primary participants are the 36th Wing at Andersen, the 374th Airlift Wing out of Yokota Air Base, Japan, and the 15th Wing from Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam, Hawaii.

The statement said.

They are joined by the Japan Air Self-Defense Force, which is participating for the seventh time, and the South Korean air force, which is joining for the first time, Staff Sgt. Juan Torres, a spokesman for the 374th Airlift Wing, said in an email Wednesday.

Four Super Hercules from Yokota will deliver 200 bundles of aid, Torres said.

Operation Christmas Drop began unofficially during yuletide season in 1951 when the crew of a B-29 Superfortress bomber noticed people waving at them from Kapingamarangi in Micronesia. They parachuted a bundle of supplies to the denizens of the isolated island, and a tradition was born.

The mission inspired the 2020 Netflix love story “Operation Christmas Drop,” which is centered on the annual military tradition and was filmed at Andersen. Shots from the 2019 operation were used in the film, and its Hollywood crew volunteered to sort donations on their days off.

The aerial deliveries also enable aircrews to develop and maintain combat readiness while delivering items provided by private donors, charitable organizations and the University of Guam to more than 22,000 residents across the remote islands, the statement said.

“This training mission is not only a tradition but provides relevant and real training necessary for our Airmen and partner nations in the Indo-Pacific region,” PACAF commander Gen. Ken Wilsbach said in the statement.

Email: meatandpotatoesoflife@theeatandpotatoesoflife.com and in Lisa’s book, The Meat and Potatoes of Life: My True Lit Com. Email: meatandpotatoesoflife@gmail.com

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Finding goodness and light amid a hectic season

BY LISA SMITH MOLINARI, SPECIAL TO STARS AND STRIPES

I t’s December, and we haven’t managed to snap a decent picture for our annual family photo cards. I haven’t even started buying gifts for my various relatives, friends, family, neighbors and pets. I haven’t baked Francis’ favorite Cranberry Pinwheels or Hayden’s favorite Onion Swiss Bread or Grammy’s favorite Cheese Ball. I haven’t moved the Elf on the Shelf from his box in our basement. And I’m embarrassed to say, we haven’t even bought a tree yet.

The stress is beginning to build, but I won’t panic because I already did the one thing that keeps me grounded through the holidays. No, I didn’t put a shot of Jameson in my morning coffee. I didn’t book a flight to Cancun to hide out from my family. And I didn’t convert to Buddhism to avoid the holiday altogether.

All I did was plug in my old ceramic Christmas tree.

If you were born before 1990, you know what I’m talking about. Our mothers, aunts and grandmothers made them at local ceramic shops back in the day. When I was a kid, it seemed there was a ceramic Christmas tree glowing in the window of every split-level, doublewide and brick ranch in town.

Problem was, we didn’t have one in our brick ranch. Why? My mother thought they were tacky.

Sigh ...

Sometimes, we visited our friend’s house who had a huge ceramic tree in the front window. I couldn’t stop staring at it. The vivid colors of the plastic pegs, glowing from the light bulb within, seemed impossibly pure. Cobalt blue, emerald green, golden yellow, ruby red and hot magenta. It was an irresistible feast for my ceramic-tree-deprived eyes.

To me, that lighted tree somehow symbolized everything good about the holiday season.

Twenty years later, I was pushing our stroller through a seedy indoor flea market in an abandoned strip mall in Virginia Beach when I saw it.

Francis was deployed and I had three kids under the age of 5. Needless to say, I was stressed. I have no idea what possessed me to wander into the flea market, but three aisles in, past the creepy dolls, the handbag knockoffs and the suspicious electronics, there it was — a beautiful 1971 ceramic Christmas tree gleaming like a beacon in that broken-down strip mall.

“Eleven dallas?” the sweet Filipino vendor suggested from behind a table heaped with old Pilipino vendor suggested from behind a table heaped with old junk. I counted out the paltry sum and took my prize home. There on my kitchen counter, radiating precious jewel tones beside my toaster, was my sanity.

The mesmerizing sight of the vintage tree transported me away from the mayhem. Away from the obligation to spend hundreds on meaningless gift cards for people we hardly know. Away from the photo cards mailed out to so many recipients, there’s no time to even sign our names. Away from the minute-by-minute distraction of cell phones. Away from the 24-hour lineup of holiday television programming clogging our DVRs.

Instantly, the lighted tree catapulted me back to childhood. To a time before the Internet, digital photos, virtual reality, Black Friday, Cyber Monday and Throwback Thursday.

When we scratched the frost off of our windows with grubby fingernails, and couldn’t wait to get outside. When we ate all our peas at dinner because “A Charlie Brown Christmas” was airing soon. When Christmas cards were special because we only got 10. When candy canes were a pretty big deal. When we called to thank our aunt for the crocheted hat from the rotary phone on the kitchen wall. When we lounged under the tree in footed pajamas, gazing into the saturated colors of the dangerous, hot incandescent bulbs, our bellies full of chocolate chip cookies.

When the holidays, and life in general, were simple and sweet.

Nowadays, the first thing I do to prepare for the holiday is plug in my ceramic Christmas tree to remind me of the simple joys of the season. But there’s no need to run out to a seedy indoor flea market in search of a handmade relic like mine. Just find the simple things that bring goodness and light to your holiday.

Read more of Lisa Smith Molinari’s columns at: theeatandpotatoesoflife.com and in Lisa’s book, The Meat and Potatoes of Life: My True Lit Com. Email: meatandpotatoesoflife@gmail.com
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**Watch Santa come to town**

**NORAD tradition continues despite COVID-19**

NORAD is busy preparing for its annual tradition of tracking Santa’s journey delivering gifts around the world. Despite the challenges presented by the on-going pandemic, the NORAD Tracks Santa program is on schedule and NORAD will track Santa on Dec. 24, as has been done every year since 1955.

As we move forward in our preparations for this year’s NORAD Tracks Santa program, some adjustments are being made to safely carry out our special mission of tracking Santa.

The NORAD Tracks Santa website, social media pages, a new mobile app and partner platforms will again be an important part of the program allowing children around the world to track Santa. Volunteers will be answering the NORAD Tracks Santa toll-free number, 1-877-Hi-NORAD, on Dec. 24. Callers who cannot reach one of these volunteers will receive a recorded update on Santa’s current location. While NORAD understands the call center is an important tradition for many families around the world, we reduce the health risks posed by attempting to conduct a large indoor, in-person, call center during the pandemic. NORAD is committed to tracking Santa while keeping our military, their families, and our dedicated call center volunteers safe.

Santa trackers can visit http://www.noradsanta.org or use new mobile apps to get up-to-the-minute Santa statistics. These apps will soon be available on Google Play and the Apple App Store. Fans can also track Santa with a variety of other NORAD Tracks Santa partners, to include OnStar and Amazon Alexa.

Our online and social media experience will go live Dec. 1 and will provide information and games to get everyone ready for the big night. NORAD Tracks Santa will also provide daily updates to its 2.1 million social media followers across its Facebook, Twitter and Instagram platforms.

NORAD looks forward to bringing the 66th year of NORAD Tracks Santa to children and families around the world.

---

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

**Ashes** (short tricolor dog)

This beautiful female adult dog is estimated to be about 1 year old. She is a very friendly dog who loves being around people. She is very well behaved and knows basic commands. She loves going for walks, so walking her will be a breeze. Ashes is looking for her FUREVER home and family. She will make a great addition to any family.

Call G.A.I.N. Guam Animals In Need Animal Shelter in Yigo at 633-4246 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. Underwater World will donate one adult admission for every pet of the Week adopted.
**Boonie Stomps Guam**

**Upper Lonfit Waterfall Valley**  
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: www.facebook.com/  
GuamBoonieStompersInc  
or call 787-4230.

---

**Dec 11**  
**Agafayan Falls**  
Medium  
4 hours for 2.5 miles

We descend to the Agafayan River ledges for jumping, sliding, and swimming in personal infinity pools. We then hike up the picturesque middle falls, stop to enjoy the beautiful Agafayan Falls, continue to Cannonball Falls, and circle back to the start.

**Bring:** 3 quarts water, sturdy hiking shoes that can get wet, gloves, sun screen, sunglasses, insect repellent, lunch, a whistle, and a camera.

**Special conditions:** Sword grass, steep slopes, and walking in water.

---

**Dec 12**  
**Upper Lonfit Waterfall Valley**  
Very Difficult  
5 hours for 4 miles

Hike the upper reaches of the Lonfit River past an endless series of waterfalls, including swimming, jumping, a flume canyon, and a rope swing.

**Bring:** 3 liters water, sturdy hiking shoes that can get wet, gloves, sun screen, insect repellent, lunch, whistle, and a camera.

**Special conditions:** Extensive walking in water, slippery rocks, steep slopes, mud, sword grass.

---

**Dec 18**  
**Sella Bay**  
Medium  
3 hours for 2 mile

We hike down on an easy trail to Sella Bay, where we can enjoy swimming, snorkeling, and historical sites such as the photogenic Spanish Bridge. On the way back hikers can choose the slightly more difficult waterfall route. There are several shady spots to rest on the way out.

**Bring:** 2 quarts water, hiking shoes, gloves, snorkeling gear, sunscreen, lunch, and a camera.

**Special conditions:** Slippery trail, rocks, and steep slopes.

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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?

---

**Boonie Stomp Guams**

Complete **10** Boonie Stomp to earn a **Boonie Stomp** T-Shirt!

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**SUDOKU**

**Difficulty: Easy**

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

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**Crossword**

**by Marjorie E. Burke**

```
ACROSS
   1 Sounds from the meadow
   6 Cry like a baby
   9 Word with “gift” or “thrill”
  13 Cattle breed
  16 “The Mod Squad” coif
  17 Fillet bread
  18 Everybody’s opposite
  19 Pasty-faced
  20 One who etches
  22 Solar’s skin
  24 Nile water
  25 Do museum
  26 Black currant liqueur
  29 Fourth-down player, often
  30 Up in the air
  32 Anger, with “up”
  35 Genetic letters
  36 Part of DWTS
  39 Atlantic fish food
  40 Fill beyond full
  42 Fixtures organ giver’s document
  44 Casual top
  47 Forge, PA
  48 Film material
  50 Gambling game
  51 Shells’ boxes
  52 One of the ancient Seven Wonders
  56 Chrome alternative
  57 Grade or green starter
  58 Reporter’s document
  59 Lily plant
  61 Quarterback’s protection
  62 Hole-boring tool
  63 Scout groups
  64 Crumby cheese
  65 Pear humophone

DOWN
   1 Source of misery
   2 Color for rubber
   3 Keyed up
   4 Eagles tune
   5 Makes a cake, say
   6 Way off
   7 Kind of humor
   8 Give some slack
   9 Splash in drops
   10 Like some fiction
   11 Survey choice
   12 Check cashier
   14 Pelican or puffin
   21 Scenic outlook
   23 Jersey’s time zone
   25 Alteration
   26 Cow’s mouthful
   27 Tastify heroine
   28 Double-barreled weapon
   29 Lace edging
```

**Answers to Previous Sudoku:**

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

**Answers to Previous Crossword:**

```
1 Agassi of tennis
31 In and of
34 Old stories
46 On the horizon
49 Core members
50 Where Hawkeyes served
53 'It's a long story
54 “Ruse” anagram
55 Dried up
56 Compote (for
```

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The 3 ‘R’s to good eating – Restaurants, Reviews & Recipes

4-page pullout
By Takamiro Takiguchi, STRIPES GUAM

White sands and swimsuits may replace snow and fur coats during the holiday season on Guam, but holiday foods are no less festive here than anywhere else.

Home to a unique blend of culinary cultures, Guamanians ring in Christmas and New Year’s with feasts ranging from seaside barbecues to high-end hotel restaurant banquets. But like all great feasts on island, it all starts at home.

“Guam’s holiday food is special because it brings family together,” says Geoffrey Perez, executive chef at the popular Chamorro eatery, PROA Restaurant. “The heart of the house here on the island is the kitchen. There will always be someone in this area of the home. Families come together during each holiday or celebration and create the food and drink that they love. During the holidays, freshly caught fish may be seasoned with different aromatic herbs and spices to infuse them with flavor. They’ll be accompanied by salads seasoned with different aromatic herbs and spices to enhance their favor. They’ll be accompanied by salads seasoned with different aromatic herbs and spices to enhance the flavor. They’ll be accompanied by salads seasoned with different aromatic herbs and spices to enhance the flavor.”

And what holiday season would be complete without those traditional sweats?

“Boñuelos dago is a special treat during the holiday season,” says Josh Tyquiengco, a Guam Visitors Bureau spokesman. “The yams used to make these fried donuts are usually harvested during the Christmas season.”

Just like on the Continental U.S., he adds, expect to see anything pumpkin related featured in eateries ranging from coffee shops to hotel restaurants during the holidays. This includes pumpkin shakes, pumpkin-spice coffee drinks and plentiful pumpkin-flavored pastries to choose from.

To be sure, there will be a lot of festive sweets adorning holiday tables. But first and foremost, according to barbecuing and fishing aficionado Rueben Olivas, are the meat dishes.

“The standard on all tables is white rice, red rice and homemade flour tortillas made with coconut milk,” says Olivas, author of the BBQ Guam blog. “Assorted barbecue meats such as chicken, beef and pork as well as fish are served, along with the island delicacies like ‘kadon fanhi’ (fruit bat soup) and turtle soup.”

Nothing says special holiday feast on Guam, however, like the “lechon,” or whole roast pig, which when prepared is the centerpiece of the holiday feast table. Once roasted over an open fire on a handmade spit with select

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**Recipes to ring in Guam’s holiday season**

**Boñuelos Dago aka (yam donut)**

*8 cups of grated local yam*
*1/2 -1 cup of sugar*
*1 1/2 cups of flour*
*2 3 tbsp of baking powder*
*Oil, enough to deep fry the donuts. It depends on the pan you use for frying*

1. Grate the dago very fine. It will turn into a goosy and slightly sticky type of pulp.
2. Mix in the flour until you get the consistency you like. If you have never made a donut before, it’s all up to the individual’s taste. Once you are satisfied with the taste of the donuts, try the rest.

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**Kadon Mannok (chicken soup)**

1 whole chicken cut into small pieces  
1/2 large white or yellow onion, diced  
4- 6 cloves of garlic, minced  
1 tsp of freshly ground black pepper  
3 tbsp of oil (in the old days coconut oil)  
12 cups of water or just enough to cover the chicken by 2 inches  
2 lbs. of fresh white taro cut, peeled and cut into 1 inch chunks  
1 lb. of pumpkin tips  
1 cup of green beans  
2-3 cups of freshly grated coconut milk or two 15 oz. cans

1. In a soup pot sauté the yellow onion, garlic and black pepper over medium heat.
2. Once the onions are translucent, add in the chicken. Sauté the chicken until slightly brown but no longer than about 5 minutes.
3. Add the water, change heat to high and bring to a boil.
4. Once the boiling has commenced, return heat to medium, add the taro and green beans and cook for about 20-30 minutes, covered, until the taro is cooked. Test with fork (doneness similar to potatoes though taro is denser).
5. Add the pumpkin tips and coconut milk, stir and cook covered for another 2 minutes and turn heat off.

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Chicken Kaleguen

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elagueen and Titiyas — both staples on a Chamorro fiesta table. But you don’t have to be invited to a fiesta in order to enjoy these tasty dishes — they are so easy to make that you can have it anytime you get the craving!

My two daughters (ages 11 and 15) prepared the dishes pictured in the photos below; if THEY can do it, so can you! Give my super easy recipes a try. I think you’ll like them! :)

1. Debone the chicken; shred or cut into small pieces (I used a food processor to roughly chop the chicken).
2. Thinly slice the green onions.
3. Add the lemon powder, water, salt and pepper to the bowl of chicken; mix to combine. Taste; adjust seasoning if required.
4. Stir in the grilled coconut (optional).
5. Serve with my super easy sweet flour titiyas and enjoy!

See recipe of sweet flour titiyas

www.annieschamorrokitchen.com

Red Brown Rice

M

y family is making a concerted effort to develop healthier eating habits. We’re making small changes in the foods we eat as well as how we prepare them. One change we definitely like is that we’ve made the switch from white to brown rice. I admit, it took some getting used to, but we actually like it. Of course, I have to season the brown rice whenever I cook it. I wanted to see if the classic Chamorro Red Rice would taste good using brown rice instead of the usual white medium or long grain rice we know and love. The result? Delicious! Granted, you can definitely tell you’re eating brown rice (it’s firmer and a bit nuttier than white), but delicious nonetheless.

Give my recipe a try. I think you’ll like it :)!

3 cups brown rice (use your rice cooker cup)
6 1/3 cups water (use your rice cooker cup) (*See note below)
1 packet achote powder (*See note below)
1 tablespoon olive oil
1 bunch green onions, sliced
1 tablespoon Dashida seasoning (or salt, to taste)

You can use achote water made with achote seeds instead of achote powder. Scrub the seeds in the water; strain out the seeds before using.

1. Rinse the rice then place into your rice cooker pot.
2. Add the water.
3. Add the achote powder.
4. Add the olive oil.
5. Add the green onions.
6. Add the Dashida seasoning.
7. Cover the pot then turn it on or place it on “cook.” After about 5 minutes, open up the lid and stir the rice, ensuring the achote powder and Dashida seasoning are dissolved and evenly distributed. Place the cover back on the pot and let it finish cooking. After your rice cooker turns from “cook” to “warm” (or the equivalent for your rice cooker model), be sure to keep the lid closed, letting the rice continue steaming for 10-15 minutes before serving.

8. We love red rice with fried chicken and cucumber salad. Serve with your favorite main dish(es) and enjoy!

www.annieschamorrokitchen.com
Happy Holidays, folks! Colonel Sanders here! KFC is here to help feed your holiday hunger with our six- OR twelve-piece family meals! Enjoy your favorite juicy fried chicken with friends and family this season paired with your choice of KFC’s zesty coleslaw, savory mashed potatoes, other delicious sides, and famous buttery biscuits. And, don’t forget, a commemorative glass food container as a special holiday gift straight from the Colonel. KFC Guam is here to help you with your holiday meals and we hope you have a safe, happy and tasty holiday season! It’s Finger Lick’n Good!

Ladies and gentlemen, Sbarro presents the Official Pie of the Holidays! This season, enjoy your favorite toppings and classic sauce loaded on a cheesy crust made with Sbarro’s traditional New York Style Pizza dough. The Cheese Crust Pizza comes generously sprinkled with 100 percent real mozzarella cheese and after just one bite, you’ll be glad you chose this delicious pizza. Jingle all the way over to your nearest Sbarro Pizzeria and get yourself the Official Pie of the Holidays. Sbarro Official Pie of the Holidays is available at Micronesia Mall and GPO food courts or with Good to Go, GrabNGrub and UnoGo.
A still image from the U.S. Marine Corps' new recruiting commercial “Full Circle” which was released Nov. 11. The video shows the journey from one Marine generation to the next.
Marine campaign seeks to inspire old, new recruits

By Chad Garland
Stars and Stripes

A one-minute video released on Veterans Day is part of a new push to inspire not only would-be Marines, but also those who have already served, as the Corps looks for ways to bring more veterans back to active duty.

The recruiting spot, titled “Full Circle,” is the first part of a Marine Corps Recruiting Command campaign called “Operation Semper Fi.” Lt. Col. Rob Dolan, the command’s director of advertising, said it is “designed to rekindle the enthusiasm of our Marine veteran population for our Corps.”

The new ad begins at a small town parade where a young man watches a formation of Marines pass. It then follows that man through his military career and into civilian life, where he continues to serve his community.

The spot ends with the same man at another parade, this time older and grayer, before the camera pans to a young woman with a gleam in her eye as she watches Marines march past.

Part of the campaign’s goal is to “revitalize the pride and purpose of being Marine for those veterans whose guidance matters in the lives of the younger generation, Dolan said in an email.

The day before the video was released is traditionally when countless Marine veterans mark the service’s birthday at events or in social media posts, where they harken back to their time in the service.

Keeping those veterans “in the know” about the service helps keep that spirit alive, building a relationship that leads prospects to join up, Dolan said. Officials are now looking to attend more veterans’ organization meetings and host more events at recruiting events, he added.

A new landing page on Marines.com is also in the works to help veterans connect with their local recruiting stations, Dolan said. The new recruiting video is intended to show prospective Marines and their parents that “even just one enlistment, once can lead to a life of significance and that Marines are a breed apart,” he said.

The campaign also launched just days after Marine Corps Commandant Gen. David Berger released his plan for redesigning the service’s personnel system to focus less on recruiting fresh bodies and more on retaining mature Marines, to include bringing more veterans back into the fold.

Berger called for new options for those who’ve left active duty to return at their former rank or, if they’ve gained “critical career experience” in the civilian world, possibly at a much higher grade.

“I can envision a Marine who left active duty as a captain or corporal rejoining our ranks as a lieutenant colonel or Gunnery sergeant, respectively, after spending 5-7 years working in a cyber or IT field where the service currently lacks capacity,” Berger wrote in the plan, called “Talent Management 2030.”

The Corps has the highest turnover in the military, releasing 75% of Marines after their first enlistment each year, many of whom are targeted by recruiters from other services like the Army National Guard. The Corps hopes to change that.

“If we do our job right, they’ll never go to the Army or the National Guard to begin with,” said Maj. Gen. Jason Bohm, head of the service’s recruiting command, at a media event, the Marine Corps Times reported.

Dolan said the new ad “wasn’t myopically focused on recruiting veterans back to the Marine Corps,” but the recruiting command is “definitely interested in engaging Marine veterans with a desire to return to service.”

Army calls Iron Dome test on Guam a success

By Seth Robson
Stars and Stripes

A three-week test of the Iron Dome air defense system at Andersen Air Force Base on Guam was successful, according to the commander of the Army task force that conducted the trial.

Sixty soldiers assigned to 2nd Battalion, 43rd Air Defense Artillery Regiment, deployed to Guam in late September from Fort Bliss, Texas, along with the Iron Dome’s radar system, control center and launchers.

For the past few weeks, the Texas-based troops and 110 members of Task Force Talon, part of the 38th Air Defense Artillery Brigade, based at Sagamihara, Japan, have trained 24-hours-a-day to defend the island from simulated air attacks, task force commander Maj. Kyle Hermanson told Stars and Stripes by phone.

Iron Dome deployed to Guam with a full complement of training missiles, but it hasn’t been doing live fire, he said.

“We’ve been running multiple simulations between both units and the command-and-control element, forward deployed from Japan,” Hermanson said. “The main thing we were trying to get after was to test the deployment of the system and the ability to operate with a low and upper tier asset.”

During the simulation, Iron Dome focused on defending against cruise missiles. A Terminal High Altitude Area Defense battery stationed on Guam since 2013 and a theoretical Patriot air defense battery defended against longer-range threats, Hermanson said.

“We validated the ability to fight in a layered defense of Guam,” he said.

It’s the Army’s latest demonstration of its ability to move air defense systems around the Pacific.

A Patriot battery deployed to Japan’s southern island of Amai- mi during the annual Orient Shield exercise that ran June 24 to July 9. Also over the summer, 65 soldiers from the 38th Air Defense Artillery Brigade deployed to Australia with a pair of Patriot launchers, a radar, power plant, control station and brigade and battalion command posts during the biennial Talisman Sabre drills.

The Iron Dome battery on Guam is one of two the Army procured last year. The pair cost $737 million, part of $1.6 billion the U.S. has pumped into the program since 2011, according to a May report by Bloomberg news service.

Israel-based Rafael Advanced Defense Systems developed the system, which U.S. defense contractor Raytheon started co-producing in 2014, according to the report.

Congress required in the 2019 National Defense Authorization Act that the system be deployed to an operational theater before the end of 2021. Iron Dome has brought down more than 1,500 targets with a success rate exceeding 90%, according to the Raytheon Missiles & Defense website. Israel has used it successfully several times during conflicts in Gaza.

The Army live-fire tested the system for the first time in Au gust at White Sands Missile Range, N.M., where it “successfully engaged eight cruise missile surrogate targets,” the service announced on Aug. 23.

The Army hasn’t said whether Iron Dome might go somewhere else in the Indo-Pacific.

It can be transported by sea or air. Capt. Nicholas Chopp, a spokesman for 94th Army Air and Missile Defense Command at Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hick am, Hawaii, said in a Nov. 16 email.

“Iron Dome is a rapidly deployable system that can be used in a variety of locations throughout the Indo-Pacific theater,” he said. “During this exercise, we are focused on gathering the type of data that can inform those decisions.”
Report calls for more forces in Guam, Australia

BY CAITLIN DOORNBOSS
WASHINGTON — More American military resources should be dedicated to Guam and Australia as the United States tries to keep pace with the Chinese military in the Indo-Pacific region, the Pentagon announced after completing its monthslong study of U.S. forces around the world.

The report, known as the Global Posture Review, is designed to help the military decide where to position forces throughout the world and determine whether it “has the correct number of troops in the correct places,” Pentagon officials have said.

The report, which was announced in February, remains classified and was not released publicly. It supports the continued U.S. strategic shift toward the Indo-Pacific region to “deter Chinese military aggression and threats from North Korea,” a senior defense official told reporters at the Pentagon on Nov. 29 on condition of anonymity.

“Direction from the [review] will strengthen the Defense Department’s focus on China by reducing posture requirements in other theaters to enable improved warfighting readiness and increase activities in the Indo-Pacific,” the official said.

That concept, nicknamed the “Pacific Pivot” during former President Barack Obama’s administration, was supported in the 2018 National Defense Strategy, which listed China as the “strategic competitor” with the United States because of its rapidly growing military, operations to influence other nations and “predatory economics” used in an attempt to dominate the Indo-Pacific region.

The National Defense Strategy sets the nation’s military priorities and objectives. The Pentagon is now working on an updated version, which acting Deputy Undersecretary of Defense for Policy Mara Karlin said will be influenced by the posture review.

“The results of the Global Posture Review will serve as a disciplining framework for the department to match our posture to our strategy with benefits accruing for years to come,” Karlin told reporters at the Pentagon.

The report calls for “seeking greater regional access for military partnership activities, enhancing infrastructure in Guam and Australia and prioritizing military construction across the Pacific islands.”

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Temple bell, once a Marine Corps family's heirloom, returns to Okinawa after 75 years

BY MARI HIGA
Stars and Stripes

NAHA, Okinawa — A sign, “Welcome back to Okinawa,” stands next to a bronze temple bell at the entrance to the Okinawa Prefectural Museum & Art Museum. Visitors who pause to learn more about this bell come away knowing only that it spent 75 years in Florida after the end of World War II. It was one of many cultural items feared lost forever in 1945 during the Battle of Okinawa, the last major battle in the Pacific.

Its prewar story is a mystery.

“You don’t know anything about the bell,” said Kyoko Sakihara, a museum curator.

She welcomed the bell’s return because it, like other artifacts, are the keys to uncovering Okinawa’s history. Now that the bell is back, scholars and curators can study when and where it was made and where it originally hung.

“Recovering cultural items means regaining our history and culture,” she said. In August, the descendants of Marine Gen. Roy Stanley Geiger, who commanded American forces during the Okinawa campaign, sent the bell back to the island from Pensacola, Fla. It was a postwar heirloom in Geiger’s family until his granddaughter, Melanie Lee Curtis, agreed to return it to her, it was part of her growing up in Florida.

“I can remember my grandmother, Mrs. Geiger, ringing the bell, when I was little, when I was playing on the beach,” Curtis told Stars and Stripes by phone Nov. 16. “And you heard the bell from a mile away when she rang it. That meant it’s time for me to come home.”

Mysterious origin

The bell stands 26 inches tall, weighs 88 pounds and is decorated with Buddhist symbols. Atop the bell is a double-headed dragon handle loop. The upper third of the bell is covered with dots, giving it the appearance of the Buddha’s head.

Horizontal bands run around the lower part of the bell. The striking point, where the bell is rung with a wooden beam, is in the motif of a lotus, the sacred flower in Buddhism.

Many of Okinawa’s temple bells were made in the late 15th century during the Ryukyu Kingdom period, Sakihara said. This bell could be from that period, but it lacks an inscription to tell its origin.

“We have a lot of work to do to find out,” she said.

Geiger’s heirs added a piece of their own history to the bell. Geiger led the lst Amphibious Corps and the 10th Army and was the first Marine to command a field army. He died in 1947, a year before Curtis was born.

‘The bell was passed down to Curtis’ parents, who passed it on to her when she bought her own home. She built a special place to hang the bell in her back garden. It was rung on special occasions for her children and grandchildren.

“We would ring the bell when there is a death in our family. And at birthdays when children were growing up,” Curtis said. “It was here for three quarters of a century. We loved the bell.”

Curtis said she grew curious about its origins but knew only that it came from a temple on Okinawa.

About 20 years ago, she asked her housekeeper, a native of Okinawa, to find out more about the bell when she returned to the island to visit her mother.

Later, Curtis was contacted by the Ryukyu America Historical Research Society, a Japanese organization that has been working for more than 35 years to recover lost cultural items from the United States. The society’s president, Shizuo “Alex” Kishaba, met Curtis in 2014 and expressed interest in getting the bell back to Okinawa, he told Stars and Stripes on Nov. 12.

‘Piece of history’

This temple bell at the Okinawa Prefectural Museum & Art Museum was one of many cultural items feared lost forever in 1945 during the Battle of Okinawa, the last major battle in the Pacific.

A sign that reads “Welcome back to Okinawa” stands next to a bronze temple bell at the entrance to the Okinawa Prefectural Museum & Art Museum in Naha, on Nov. 2.

At the time, Curtis and her family were not ready to give up the artifact. But two years ago, when Shuri Castle, the symbol of Okinawa, was destroyed by fire along with many important artifacts, Curtis decided the time had come to return the bell.

“I’ve enjoyed the bell and my family enjoyed the bell,” she said. “It needed to go back home.”

Curtis partnered with Kishaba and former U.S. Navy pilot Jeff Schneider to repatriate the bell, according to a June report in the News Journal of Pensacola, Fla.

“Okinawa lost a lot of its cultural heritage during the Battle of Okinawa,” he said. “Unless we bring them back, we are missing links to our history.”

His passion to recover Okinawa’s lost cultural items comes from his passion to nurture the future generation of the island, he said.

“Imagine growing up with no cultural heritage, with no history,” he said. “How sad is that for our children? We need to get cultural items back for our children.”

The bell was formally unveiled on Okinawa at a ceremony Nov. 2. Local children rang the bell, just like Curtis’ grandmother did for her and Curtis did for her children and grandchildren.

From Florida, she watched news covering the ceremony and said she found it “heartwarming” that Okinawan children enjoyed the bell.

“I am so glad that it has a new home. It can be enjoyed by many people. And that is wonderful,” she said. “Children have a piece of their history. And that is the most important thing.”

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Holiday hit returns as military revs up Santa watch site

By Phillip Walter Wellman
Stars and Stripes

A joint U.S.-Canadian military organization that monitors potential threats from the air and sea is readying its beloved annual ritual of tracking Santa Claus’ journey around the world on Christmas Eve.

The North American Aerospace Defense Command on Dec. 1 launched its Santa-tracking website, which will provide live updates on his whereabouts beginning Dec. 24.

In the meantime, visitors to noradsanta.org can find a countdown to Christmas, festive games, a Christmas song playlist — including some performed by military musicians — and other features in several languages. A NORAD Tracks Santa app is also available in the Apple App Store and Google Play stores, while additional tracking opportunities can be found on various social media accounts run by the organization.

NORAD and its predecessor, the Continental Air Defense Command, CONAD, have been tracking Santa’s Christmas Eve whereabouts since 1955, when an advertisement by Sears Roebuck & Co. in Colorado Springs, Colo., misprinted a telephone number for children to call Santa.

The published number was actually the CONAD command-in-chief’s operations hotline. Recognizing the mistake, the director of operations at the time, Col. Harry Shoup, had his staff tell children who called that radar was being monitored for indications of Santa making his way south from the North Pole. CONAD personnel provided live updates on his location, and thus the tradition was born.

The phone line will be open this year, too. But callers to 877-466-6723 might get a recorded message instead of speaking to a live operator. “Due to COVID concerns, the NORAD Tracks Santa Operation Center will have fewer phone operators, so callers who do not reach a volunteer will hear a regularly updated recording as to Santa’s current location,” the NORAD statement said.

Millions of people around the world who want to know Santa’s whereabouts visit the NORAD Tracks Santa website every year, the organization said.

March of soldiers ends with piles of Christmas presents in S. Korea

Soldiers unload rucksacks filled with toys and other gifts at 2nd Infantry Division headquarters, Camp Humphreys, South Korea, on Dec. 2. The presents will be donated to South Korean orphans.

By David Choi
Stars and Stripes

CAMP HUMPHREYS, South Korea — U.S. soldiers of the 2nd Infantry Division marched with rucksacks filled with toys and other gifts to donate to South Korean orphans for Christmas.

The temperature Dec. 2 at 6:30 a.m. stood at 23 degrees Fahrenheit when about 60 soldiers and their family members began their 3-mile trek at Camp Humphreys, the largest U.S. military base overseas.

The marchers filled their rucksacks with the gifts they planned to donate, then shouldered their loads and hiked to 2nd ID headquarters. They left their gifts under a Christmas tree in the lobby.

Some participants wore the Army’s duty uniform during the march, while others wore festive hats and Christmas-themed outfits that included flashing lights. One person wore a sweatshirt that said, “Merry Christmas You Filthy Dog,” an apparent reference to a quote from the holiday movie “Home Alone 2” and the endearing moniker for troops who are not Airborne qualified.

Amanda Nguyen, an adviser for the 2nd ID Soldier and Family Readiness Group, reached out to local orphanages and organized the event. Nguyen, who grew up in a military family, said she was gifted toys during a similar event as a child because her family could not afford them.

“I love giving back this way,” she told Stars and Stripes. “I think it was great, especially for our first year of doing it here. I love how many people turned out; I love how hard that they worked. And I love how generous they were.”

Inside the rucksacks were toys, books, crayons and other items for children. The gifts are expected to be donated to local orphanages based on age groups, Nguyen said.

Army Capt. Shawn Droge, the battalion chaplain, brought two of his kids to the ruck march and said it “was a great way that we can all come together and celebrate the season.”

“With this being a [ruck] march for toys, this gives us an opportunity to bring some toys and give to the community just to show our appreciation and our love,” Droge said. “This was a great opportunity for high morale and do something different, kind of loosen up for a bit.”

Army Pfc. Sigourney Guermell of the 2nd ID Headquarters Support Company, said she was glad she made the march, despite the morning’s freezing temperatures.

“It’s really good for the community; it shows that we’re not just here,” she said. “We actually care about the people around here and we really enjoy that.”

U.S. military units throughout South Korea have sponsored similar events to give back to communities outside their gates. U.S. Forces Korea, the command responsible for roughly 28,500 troops in the country, partnered with the Korean National Red Cross to donate blood during a time of need amid the COVID-19 pandemic. About 65 people stationed at Humphreys donated their blood during a drive in July.
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