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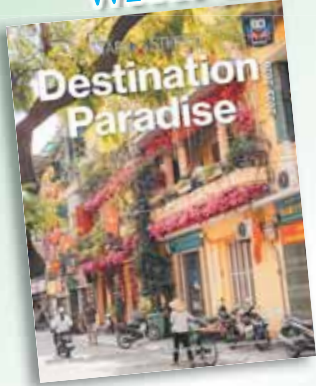
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**Celebrating
 Month of the
 Military Child**

I am a military kid. My dad is in the military. My dad is in the Navy.

– Janae D.C., Kindergarten, Andersen Elementary School

Kids' take on exploring the Pacific

PAGES 14-15



Read more military children stories inside!

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CELEBRATING MONTH OF THE MILITARY CHILD

Andersen Elementary School

Kindergarten • Mrs. Perez



Check out more military children stories at guam.stripes.com

SEE MORE ANDERSEN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL ON PAGE 4



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CELEBRATING MONTH OF THE MILITARY CHILD

Andersen Elementary School

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CONTINUED FROM PAGE 2



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CELEBRATING MONTH OF THE MILITARY CHILD

Andersen Elementary School

Kindergarten • Mr. Russo



BY: Liam P. Kindergarten-Andersen Elementary

I am a Military Child

I am special because I can ride a bike.

BY: Elijah J. Kindergarten-Andersen Elementary

I am a Military Child

I am special because my dad is military.

BY: Daniel P. Kindergarten-Andersen Elementary

I am a Military Child

I am special because I can roller skate.

BY: Alyana B. Kindergarten-Andersen Elementary

I am a Military Child

I AM SPECIAL because I can do a stik.

BY: Miya C. Kindergarten-Andersen Elementary

I am a Military Child

I am special because I can swim.

BY: Adrian A. Kindergarten-Andersen Elementary

I am a Military Child

I am special because I can ride my bike.

BY: Josiah G. Kindergarten-Andersen Elementary

I am a Military Child

I am special because I good at playing foot ball.

BY: Colton V. Kindergarten-Andersen Elementary

I am a Military Child

I am special because I can help.

BY: Chrisavion Q. Kindergarten-Andersen Elementary

I am a Military Child

I am special because I know my letters.

BY: Hana M. Kindergarten-Andersen Elementary

I am a Military Child

I am special because I can draw.

BY: Hanna H. Kindergarten-Andersen Elementary

I am a Military Child

I am special because I can write words.

BY: Nya J. Kindergarten-Andersen Elementary

I am a Military Child

I am special because I ride my bike with my sister.

BY: Adrian O. Kindergarten-Andersen Elementary

I am a Military Child

I am special because I can ride a bike with no training wheels.

BY: Charlotte P. Kindergarten-Andersen Elementary

I am a Military Child

I am special because I can plant.

BY: Kao H. Kindergarten-Andersen Elementary

I am a Military Child

I am special because I play video games.

BY: Amolya K. Kindergarten-Andersen Elementary

I am a Military Child

I am special I can learn my shapes.

BY: Cayden R. Kindergarten-Andersen Elementary

I am a Military Child

I am special because I help my mom.

BY: Lyric J. Kindergarten-Andersen Elementary

I am a Military Child

I am special because I am good.

BY: Omari D. Kindergarten-Andersen Elementary

I am a Military Child

I am special because I can bowl.

BY: John T. Kindergarten-Andersen Elementary

I am a Military Child

I am special because I am good at writing.

Check out more military children stories at guam.stripes.com



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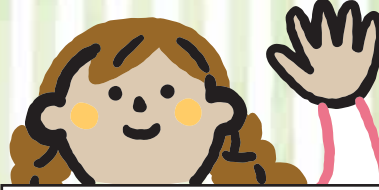
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CELEBRATING MONTH OF THE MILITARY CHILD

Andersen Elementary School

Kindergarten • Ms. Carden



Ernest P. • Kindergarten, Andersen Elementary School

MONTH OF THE MILITARY CHILD

I am a military kid.
I have a ton of friends
around the world.

Aire T. • Kindergarten, Andersen Elementary School

MONTH OF THE MILITARY CHILD

I am a military kid.
I see my friends at school.
I go to school with other
military kids.

R.E.H. • Kindergarten, Andersen Elementary School

MONTH OF THE MILITARY CHILD

I am a military kid.
I live at Andersen
base. My dad is in
the Navy.

Kalish S. • Kindergarten, Andersen Elementary School

MONTH OF THE MILITARY CHILD

I am a military kid.
I go to school and my dad
is in the army. I
love a lot.

Taryn K. • Kindergarten, Andersen Elementary School

MONTH OF THE MILITARY CHILD

I am a military kid. I live
on a military base. I am
strong when I'm hurt. My
dad is in the Air Force.

Breya M. • Kindergarten, Andersen Elementary School

MONTH OF THE MILITARY CHILD

I am a military kid. I
live on a military base. I
love to have my dad go
away.

Lara C. • Kindergarten, Andersen Elementary School

MONTH OF THE MILITARY CHILD

As a military child I
travel to new places. I
want to visit Korea
Guam Japan.

Jada D.C. • Kindergarten, Andersen Elementary School

MONTH OF THE MILITARY CHILD

I am a military kid. My
dad is in the military
and my dad is
in the Navy.

Alton W. • Kindergarten, Andersen Elementary School

MONTH OF THE MILITARY CHILD

I am a military kid.
I live on a military
base. My family
moves a lot. I like
to visit new places.

Kel C. • Kindergarten, Andersen Elementary School

MONTH OF THE MILITARY CHILD

I am a military kid.
I go to school at
military base and my dad
is in the army.

Liam M. • Kindergarten, Andersen Elementary School

MONTH OF THE MILITARY CHILD

As a military kid I
travel to new
places. I went to
Japan.

Ariel D. • Kindergarten, Andersen Elementary School

MONTH OF THE MILITARY CHILD

I am a military kid.
I live on a military base
on Guam.

Ryker S. • Kindergarten, Andersen Elementary School

MONTH OF THE MILITARY CHILD

I am a military kid. My Dad
goes to work to fix
planes.

Anake J. • Kindergarten, Andersen Elementary School

MONTH OF THE MILITARY CHILD

I am a military kid.
My Dad is in the
Army. I live on a military
base.

Danielle B. • Kindergarten, Andersen Elementary School

MONTH OF THE MILITARY CHILD

I am a military kid.
I go to different places and
I meet new friends.

Aryeh H. • Kindergarten, Andersen Elementary School

MONTH OF THE MILITARY CHILD

I am a military
kid. My dad is in the
Air Force.

Cairo A. • Kindergarten, Andersen Elementary School

MONTH OF THE MILITARY CHILD

I am a military kid. My
dad works in the military.
My friends move a
lot.

CELEBRATING MONTH OF THE MILITARY CHILD

Andersen Elementary School

Kindergarten • Mrs. Manglona



BY: Andreas N

MONTH OF THE MILITARY CHILD

I am special because
I help bring the
Kitchen when my Dad is gone.

BY: GALEOTT R.J

MONTH OF THE MILITARY CHILD

I am special because
my grandpa is in the military.

BY: Nathan I

MONTH OF THE MILITARY CHILD

I have many more
Go to the
stop and buy
supplies. At the
KORUMATA.

BY: LORENZO P.

MONTH OF THE MILITARY CHILD

I am special
because I help
MOM. My
Dad. When my
Dad is at work.

BY: KAYLA H

MONTH OF THE MILITARY CHILD

I am special
because I have
new friends. Family.

BY: LANYA N.B

MONTH OF THE MILITARY CHILD

I Chaval to know
what's do it with me
special.

BY: W Pastor J.

MONTH OF THE MILITARY CHILD

I like to play
I know what
because I know
how to play.

BY: ABXORROR C

MONTH OF THE MILITARY CHILD

I know what
I want to be
Dad on Guam.

BY: EIDWIN

MONTH OF THE MILITARY CHILD

I am special because I am
my best friend.

BY: ELI I

MONTH OF THE MILITARY CHILD

I am special because
I like my mom to
come to work my
dad at work.

BY: ANMAYAN H

MONTH OF THE MILITARY CHILD

I am special because
I know what
I know what
Dad.

BY: CHRISTIAN H

MONTH OF THE MILITARY CHILD

I am special because
I know what
I know what
Dad.

BY: Josiah C

MONTH OF THE MILITARY CHILD

I am special because
I'm going to
to a new place.

BY: OLIVA H

MONTH OF THE MILITARY CHILD

I chaval to know
what's do it with me
special.

BY: Kyle D.W

MONTH OF THE MILITARY CHILD

I am special because
I know what
I know what
Dad.

BY: LOQAN G

MONTH OF THE MILITARY CHILD

I AM special
because I met
And GAV A hug.

BY: THEODORE I

MONTH OF THE MILITARY CHILD

I am special because
I know what
I know what
Dad.

BY: Atlas P

MONTH OF THE MILITARY CHILD

I am special because
I know what
I know what
Dad.

BY: RICHARD Y

MONTH OF THE MILITARY CHILD

I am special because
I know what
I know what
Dad.

BY: KRISTEN B.

MONTH OF THE MILITARY CHILD

I am special because
I know what
I know what
Dad.

CELEBRATING MONTH OF

Andersen Elem

1st Grade •



4/18/26
I like being in the military. I like meeting teachers. I like wearing purple. I like tanks and military planes and military helicopters. Do you like the military?

- Wyatt E.

Aileen 4/18/26
Being a military child is great! I will be able to see the New World! I can live in a new house. I hope to move with my friends. I get to learn new things!

- Aileen T.

I was lucky to be a military child because I get to go to new places. I came from Spain and then I went to Hawaii. I really want to go to Texas so I can see Texas and Papa Sourd. I get to make new friends like Gabby, Avon, Wyatt Dan, and Lisa. It's amazing! Do you want to come? Yes or no? I would say yes.

- Andrew P.

4/18/26
I like being a military child. I like moving and exploring new houses. I love making friends, exploring military, and having fun. Also, I like flying on airplanes a lot. It's just fun being a military child.

- Eli O.

4-21-26
Being the best military child is the best first, we can learn from our parents. Second, parents can help us with anything. Third, I get to make new friends.

- Inaya C.

I am a military child and that is great! First, I get to try different foods. Second, I get to visit new places. Third, but the fun part is making new friends. And that's all. I get to travel.

- Keanu W.

I am a military child. I can make friends. I go to different places. I was born in Tokyo, Japan. It was so fun there. Then we moved to Illinois. I was sad. Then I moved to Guam. Guam is the best place! I wonder where I'm moving next!

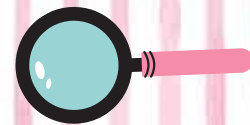
- Daniel G.

Being a military child is amazing. First, I can move to different places. Military children get to go to cool schools and meet new friends. Military children have military parents. Military children get to go to Guam. Do you like it?

- Oakley J.

Emma
If I was a military child I would go to new places. I will be responsible and respectful. I will help people protect the United States of America. Do you like the military?

- Emmaleigh S.



I like being a military child because I have fun. I can go to Hawaii. I love Hawaii and I like the color purple. I like decisions and I like being safe.

- Kaia G.

Being a military child is awesome. Why? I get to make new friends all over the world. Second, I came from Germany and soon I get to go to Alabama. Next, I get to go to a school all over the world. Last, I get to go all over the world!

- Mariluna V.



- Colton



Check ch gu

OF THE MILITARY CHILD Elementary School

Ms. Herrera



I love my life, but I think I should move. I don't want to leave my friends, but I kinda like moving. I want to try new things!

Abigail P.

Being a military child is amazing! First, I can get friends all around the world! Second, I get to experience a lot of houses! Next, I get to see new things! Last, I get to ride a lot of airplanes! Do you want to be a military child? I like it!

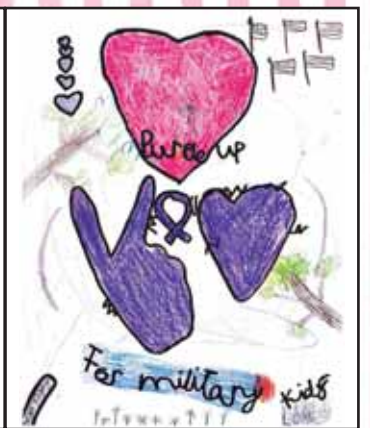
Isaac A.

I like being a military child because I get to move from Arkansas. I have a dad he's on deployment. Why? Military parents go on deployment. I'm lucky that I have a good military school. I like being a military child.

Addison Leon G.

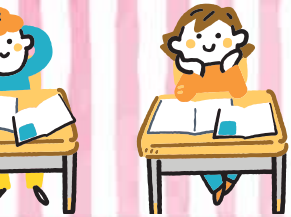
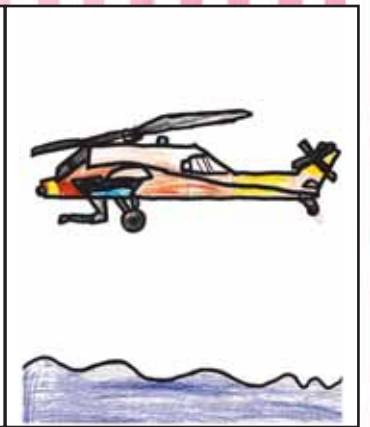
Hi my name is Abigail Prather. Being a military child is so fun! You get to go new places like Guam! Did you know that if you are a military child you need for 2 parents in the Air Force? Are you in the Air Force? Do you know what the Air Force is? Do you? Well if you are, good. Cool.

Abigail P.

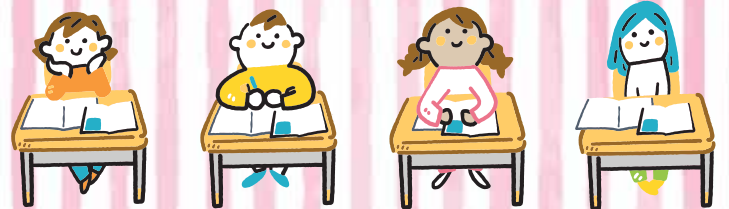


It is amazing to be a military child! First, you can travel to different places and have new friends. Second, you can try new foods like kebabs. Third, blowing dandelions for wishes is really fun! Last, the military helicopter can fly to the best waters.

Avinn Jude P.



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Celebrating Month of the Military Child

William McCool Elementary Middle School

2nd Grade • Mrs. Torres

I Am A Military Child
By: Amelia Cruz

My name is amelia.
I love my family.
Loving.
I love Jesus.
Terrific.
Amazing.
Raising and diaries
Young




Creative
Helpful
I like to go on airplanes
Loving
Dreamer

- Amelia C.

I Am A Military Child
By: Avery Pierce

My name Avery
I Love my mom and dad and sister.
Love My turtle.
I like my iPad.
Terrific
Amazing.
Realistic
Young.










Caring.
Helpful.
I like to bike.
Loving
Different.

- Avery P.

I Am A Military Child
By: Georgina Brotski

My name is Georgina.
I love my mom and dad.
Like steak
I am responsible.
Terrifying.
Awesome.
Respectful.
Young.










Caring
Helpful.
I like to read
Loving
Dreaming

- Georgina B.

I Am A Military Child
By: Hunter Maza

My name is Hunter
I love my plushies
Love to play
I am interested by fossils.
Trying new things
Amazing toys
Racing with other people.
You can travel.

Cool toys.
Happy times.
I am nice.
Love to play.
Dreams come true.

- Hunter M.

I Am A Military Child
By: Jaylon English.

Move to a new place
I love red rice
Learning.
I love different foods
Trying.
Athletic
Rough
Young





Crazy thing
Happy.
I Like running.
Love basketball.
Dreamer

- Jaylon E.

I Am A Military Child
By: Lauren Joyner

My name is Lauren
I like to spend time with my family
Live family
I love friends
Turtles are cute.
Apples are good
Ruff
Young






Cozy
Heat
I love to draw
Lions are bad
Dreamer

- Lauren J.

I Am A Military Child
By: Luke Helt

My dad is in the military
I 'm really smart
Lovable
I 'm really fun
Talented
A really nice kid
Respectful
Young




Courteous
Honest
I really like ice cream
Lovable
Delightful

- Luke H.

I Am A Military Child
By: Mckenzie

My name is Mckenzie
I love my family
Like steak
I like ice cream
Treat people like my teacher
Athletic
Rough
Young






Cute
Tug lover
I love cats
Loves my family
Dreamer

- Mckenzie F.

I Am A Military Child
By: Parker Vallo

My dad is in military.
I m happy to be a military child.
Love military People always.
I love that my dad is in the military.
The military is a cool job and they protects us.
A military person works hard to protect. people.
Really responsible To military people.
Young soldiers protect very little kids.





Courteous.
Happy kids are happy for the military people.
I like the military.
Lovable
Don't be mean to military people

- Parker V.

I Am A Military Child
By: Penny

My name is: penny
I Am kind and helpful, smart, sweet and cute.
Like candy and snacks
I Love God and my family.
Terrific.
Able to do things
Rocks at Recitals
Young in the age 7 to 19




Cooperate with other people.
Happy
I have 1 brother.
Lovable
Digs at dancing

- Penny C.

I Am A Military Child
By: Reagan

My name is Reagan
I Like To read.
Like ice cream
I m smart
Terrific
Athlete
Reliable
Young and the age of 8





Cooperate
Height 4 Feet
I have a sister named Beaux
Love my Mom and family
Digs at swimming

- Reagan C.

I Am A Military Child
By: Tucker Lynch

My name Tucker.
I like to have fun.
Loves to dance.
I want to be an astronaut.
Terrific.
Amazing
Running is fun.
Youngest child.



Can do a front flip.
Happy
I am brave.
Love my mom, dad, and Gibson.
Dreamer

- Tucker L.

I Am A Military Child
By: Isaiah Legaspi

My name is isalah
I Am a military kid
Love my dad
I like ice cream
Terrific
Amazing
Rock at dancing
Young at heart




Caring
Happy
I am fun
Like igloo's
Dancing is my favorite

- Isaiah L.

I Am A Military Child
By: LEO DIVENTI

My name is Leo
I love my Mom and Dad.
Loves dog and cats.
I love steak.
Try new things
Amazing
Running is my favorite thing to do.
Young and fun.




Caring
Helping everyone around me.
I love to travel to new places.
Love to play Roblox.
Diving at the pool is fun.

- Leo D.

I Am A Military Child
By: Zayne Reguindin

My dad is in the military
I am a military child
Like ice cream
I am a military child
Try more thing
Amazing
Running
Young







Cookie eater
Happy
I love math
Loving
Do my work

- Zayne R.

I Am A Military Child
By: Achilles

My name is Achilles.
I am smart
Like to learn
I love my family
Terrific
Amazing
Resident
Young






Caring
Helpful
I like to read
Loving
Dreamer

- Achilles K.

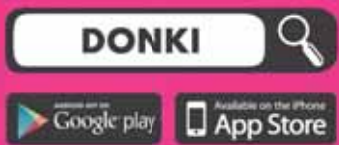


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Kids' take on Pacific travel

Tokyo Tower



Editor's Note: These stories are written by Andersen Elementary students and appeared in the school's Dolphin Star Newspaper.

Terrific Tokyo

STORY AND PHOTOS BY HADLEY MCGOLDRICK,
ANDERSEN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

There are a lot of fun things to do and explore in the big city of Tokyo, Japan! There are lots of parks including Disneyland and DisneySea to enjoy. They also have many cool and delicious foods to experience. Tourist spots can be found in many places to explore. There are so many places to enjoy while visiting Japan.

Among the parks in Japan, Disneyland and DisneySea are two that visitors especially enjoy. While there are many rides to enjoy at Disneyland, there are a few that a lot of people enjoy at DisneySea. Splash Mountain is a water ride that gets those riding it wet when they are going down the drops in the ride. There is also a space ride called Starters. It is so cool because there is a screen that takes people's pictures and the screen also looks like it is flying in space. There are also fun rides at DisneySea too. Indiana Jones is a little bumpy ride that takes people through a tunnel and they can share the excitement of Indiana Jones' Adventures. Another ride called Journey To The Center Of The Earth is a roller coaster that takes people through fire and goes around a huge volcano! Both Disneyland and DisneySea are really wonderful to visit.

The different types of foods in Japan are amazing! There are many seafood options like amazing sushi. Sushi is raw seafood like fish and it is usually served with rice. There is very good barbecue with chicken and fish and sometimes comes with soup or sauce to put on the meat. Japan is famous for their ramen too. Ramen is a bowl of cooked noodles and comes with toppings like vegetables, eggs, and meats, sometimes it comes with rice. These are some of the most amazing foods to try in Japan!!

Another fun thing to do in Tokyo is to go to the local destinations. One of the main destinations to visit is Japan's biggest mountain called Mt. Fuji. It is a ride from Tokyo by train, but worth the ride. There are some cabins that overlook Mt. Fuji and have a playground with a wonderful view of Mt. Fuji and can be booked or hotels if visitors plan to stay. Tokyo has a really big tower called the Tokyo Tower that is 1,092 ft. When looking down, there is a great view of the big city. Another destination is Tokyo Sky Tree which is a big large tower and it is 2,080 ft tall. It is great to go see at night because it has wonderful lights at the top of the tower that run all night and light up the city. These are some of the fun local destinations in Tokyo.

There are many reasons that people enjoy visiting Tokyo in Japan. Disneyland and DisneySea are both great parks for fun adventure. There are so many great foods to eat and enjoy while visiting. Last, there are many wonderful local destinations to explore. These reasons make Tokyo, Japan a great place to visit!

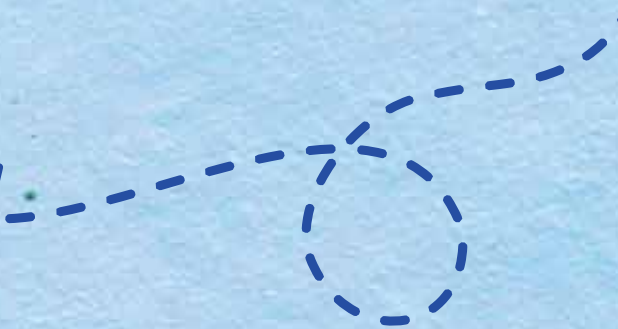
Ramen



DisneyLand



Mt. Fuji



Shibuya



Disney, Shibuya & 7-11

STORY AND PHOTOS BY INAYA CAMACHO,
ANDERSEN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

I visited Tokyo, Japan. I liked it because it was so much fun! I liked riding the train to get to all of the places we wanted to go. My family and I went to DisneyLand. We liked the roller coasters because they were scary and fun! In Shibuya, we visited the Hachiko dog statue. It is there because the dog waited there for his owner for a long time. We visited the 7-11 and ate yummy sushi. I got to get delicious dumplings, but it was candy! Tokyo, Japan, was cold, but it is fun to visit!

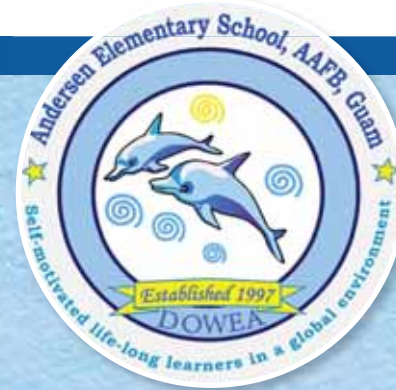
Fun at DisneySea

STORY AND PHOTO BY ADDISON LEON GUERRERO,
ANDERSEN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

I was lucky I got to visit Japan. One of my favorite places to visit was DisneySea! There were lots of fun rides, yummy snacks, and places to shop. My top favorite ride was Sinbad's Storybook since it was so funny! My other favorite ride was Rapunzel's Lantern Festival because there were so many nice details. My favorite snacks were Mickey shaped nuggets and the delicious white chocolate popcorn. There were also stores to shop in. They had key chains, stuffed animals, and colorful headbands in the shapes of the characters! I hope to go back again because I had so much fun at DisneySea! Others will enjoy it too and should try to visit!



DisneySea



A visit to Korea

STORY AND PHOTOS BY LAYLA JADE DANAQ, ANDERSEN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Korea is a destination with so many exciting places to visit and such great places to eat! There are many fun amusement parks to enjoy. There are also giant walls and beautiful temples to visit.

Everland, Lotte World, LEGOLAND and Seoul Land are great amusement parks. These places are cool to experience and have so much fun. Everland has a roller coaster called the T Express, a ride that has step drops that may feel a bit scary but it is so much fun to try. Lotte World has a ride called Gyro Drop, a ride with terror that goes so fast you should try counting to 10 and it's over. One of the most popular rides is Black Hole 2000. This ride is so high in the sky you might see stars.

In LEGOLAND, on the best rides is The Dragon. It is so cool because the ride is medieval-themed with castle and dinosaurs roaming around. These parks have all kinds of neat playgrounds, rides and roller coasters for everyone to enjoy.

Other places where visitors can go are malls and temples. The malls are massive. They have pretty buildings, with awesome entertainment and really good food. Some of the best malls are The Hyundai, Lotte World Mall and COEX Malls. The malls are so neat to go to because of the different activities they have. There's a library that has books that are never ending. There are aquariums with whales and sharks. There are many different items to shop for that cannot be found on Guam like K-pop merchandise, different flavored nuts and beauty products. Then there are temples

to visit. There are thousands of temples in Korea because of its 1,700 years of Buddhist history and practice. There are many activities that include opportunities for ceremonies, meditation and overnight temple stays. Koreans usually wear hanboks, which are traditional clothing in Korea. Women wear a jacket with a shirt and men wear a jacket with trousers. A couple of popular temples are Beongeunse Temple and Gainsa Temple. The malls and temples are a great experience to enjoy something new while there.

Korea has so many places to eat tasty food. Some Korean foods are Korean BBS, bulgogi and kimchi. These are so unique and good to eat. Street food is also very popular. Instead of sitting, customers have the unique experience of buying food from the street, then stand while enjoying their treats. There are japchae (glass noodles), tteokbokki (spicy rice cakes), mandu (dumplings) and kimbap (rolled meat). Don't miss the Korean corn dogs, cream bread and long 32-cm ice cream cone. It is highly recommended to try while visiting along with other delicious items.

The weather can get very hot to super cold. One of the recommended times to go is fall or spring because it is not too cold or too hot. In the fall, there will be red, green, yellow and orange leaves all around Korea. In the spring, there are pretty cherry blossoms everywhere. But whatever season visitors decide to go, they will be treated with awesome shopping, great experiences and delicious traditional food.



Taiwan's Moon Festival

STORY AND PHOTO BY ISAAC ABBET, ANDERSEN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

The Moon Festival in Taiwan is held in October. My family and I visited Taiwan for the Moon Festival and got to see the full moon. We had a nice lunch together at a Taiwanese restaurant at a big round table. We had delicious chicken and moon cakes that had egg yolk in the middle. We also visited the Taiwan Building. It had 101 floors, but we were only allowed to go to the 99th floor. There was also a Lego Store in the city to see Legos. We were very happy to visit Taiwan for the Moon Festival. I think other visitors will enjoy it too because it was so cool!



Vacation in Hawaii

STORY AND PHOTO BY AJ PANUSKA, ANDERSEN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

I visited a cool island called Hawaii with my family. We went to an amazing pineapple farm. There was pineapple ice cream. My cousin and I both had the pineapple ice cream covered in chocolate. It was so cold and tasty! We also went to the beautiful beach two times! I tried to dig a big hole in the sand at the beach to find treasure or shells. It was so fun! I also went to where the movie Jurassic Park was filmed. It had just rained, so it was muddy but had lots of green grass. There were fake dinosaurs to look at. Hawaii is a cool place to visit on vacation!

Don't take chances with challenge coins

I couldn't believe my eyes. Our 800-pound upright piano was being carried by two men down four flights of stairs from our Patch Barracks apartment to their truck. That German-Turkish moving crew displayed feats of superhuman strength like I'd never seen before.

It was 2010, and our family was PCSing to Florida after three years in Germany. We believed that hardy crew had safely packed our 18,000 pounds of worldly possessions for a successful trip back to the U.S. And they did. Every kitchen utensil, shoe, ballpoint pen, Lego block, refrigerator magnet, mattress, family photo and Band-Aid were sealed into crates.

Well, except for one small thing. A Ziploc bag containing coins. Not the pennies on the kitchen windowsill. Not the change from pants pockets that sat on our dryer. Not the lunch money stash on the hallway table.

The coins that didn't get packed were my husband's military challenge coins. He'd wrapped them in tissue paper before placing them into the Ziploc bag, then fitted the bag snugly inside his wooden humidor box.

Months later, the crates were unsealed and every item carried into our base house at Naval Station Mayport. Unlike other moves, nothing looked broken or lost. Our piano was unscathed and still in tune, my beloved ceramic Christmas trees hadn't suffered so much as a flea bite, and Lilly's Polly Pockets were still wearing their tiny shoes.

But when the last crate was emptied, my husband Francis searched for his humidor. He found it wrapped securely in paper, inside a sealed box marked "Office." The humidor felt strangely light.

Sure enough, it was empty. His coins, every one of them, were gone.

"I'll file a claim," I'd said, trying to comfort him. But the coins were irreplaceable. Not only would he never find those same coins again, they weren't worth enough fair market value to justify the hassle of filing a claim.

Francis had to come to terms with losing the special coins he'd collected during three years at U.S. Africa Command and a year-long deployment to Djibouti. Coins

The Meat and Potatoes of Life

Lisa Smith Molinari



Francis had to come to terms with losing the special coins he'd collected during three years at U.S. Africa Command and a year-long deployment to Djibouti. Coins given to him from embassies and remote units in Botswana, Kenya, Uganda, Djibouti, Ethiopia, Nigeria and Yemen. Also, he'd never see the coins he'd acquired during duty in Iraq, Poland, Norway, Italy, Alaska and Virginia.

given to him from embassies and remote units in Botswana, Kenya, Uganda, Djibouti, Ethiopia, Nigeria and Yemen. Also, he'd never see the coins he'd acquired during duty in Iraq, Poland, Norway, Italy, Alaska and Virginia.

Most special to him was the first coin he'd ever received in 1996 while stationed at Joint Analysis Center, Molesworth, England. As a young intelligence officer,

Francis was placed in charge of 30 analysts assessing the military capabilities of other nations. One afternoon in a WWII windowless Royal Air Force hangar, Francis gave a presentation about his group's mission to visiting Lieutenant General Patrick M. Hughes, the highly decorated Director of the U.S. Defense Intelligence Agency.

As attendees dispersed after the presentation, General Hughes reached out to shake Francis' hand. Francis's palm met the general's, and he detected a cool circle of metal.

"Nice job today. Keep up the good work," the general said.

At home that night, Francis showed me his first challenge coin, explaining that the medals were a form of recognition for a job well done. As the years passed, he collected more coins, displaying them in a rack atop his rolltop desk. He cherished them as unique "memory chips" from moments in his military career.

For a time, Francis beat himself up for not carrying his challenge coins with him during that PCS move. But then, he got on with it. Today, he has another rack atop his rolltop desk, chock-full of more coins collected from duty in Chile, Colombia, Peru, Honduras, Texas, Japan, Korea and the Naval War College in Rhode Island.

Years after he retired from the Navy, Francis received an unexpected surprise. He'd forgotten that, early in his career, he sometimes had two of the same coin, so he sent the duplicates to his father. His brother found those coins while sorting out their mother's belongings after she'd passed, and sent them to Francis to restore at least some of his early collection.

We learned the hard way that while the Navy can move almost anything across the ocean, sometimes it's the smallest things that carry the most weight.

Read 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*
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- Daryl Talbot

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Yodi

Yodi is a 2-year-old female dog with a striking white and brown coat and adorably pointy ears that make her stand out in any crowd. She's got that young-adult energy—past the wild puppy phase, but still playful, curious, and ready for adventure. Yodi enjoys attention, walks, and being part of whatever's going on around her, especially if treats are involved. She'd make a loyal and fun companion for someone ready to give her the consistency and love she deserves.

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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INFORMATION PROVIDED BY
GUAM BOONIE STOMPERS





Nimitz Hills Caves

REMINDER! We no longer meet at Chamorro Village. We meet at the trailhead.

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 the trailhead on Saturdays at 9 a.m. unless otherwise indicated. Directions to the trailhead will be posted on the Guam Boonie Stompers Inc Facebook page. The cost is \$5.00 for hikers over 13. Children must be accompanied by a responsible adult. Hike fees for active military and veterans are covered by Adaptive Adventures. 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/GuamBoonieStompers



Guam Boonie Stompers is a non-profit Guam corporation composed of volunteer leaders committed to leading hikes to and protecting the unique natural destinations on our island.

SCHEDULE 2026

May 16 (Sat.)	HIKE CLEAN-UP /To'guan Bay to Humatak Bay (Easy)
May 23 (Sat.)	Nimitz Hills Caves (Medium)
May 30 (Sat.)	Ati'long Acho to Sella Bay (Difficult)
June 6 (Sat.)	Faha and Priest Pools (Easy/Medium)
June 13 (Sat.)	Togcha Cemetery to Asanite Cove (Medium)




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NOTE: Schedule subject to change, please check Boonie Stomps' Facebook in advance.

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Crossword

by Margie E. Burke

ACROSS

- 1 "Excuse me..."
- 5 And others, for short
- 9 Title of courtesy
- 14 Roberts of romance
- 15 Road ____
- 16 Disney's first Latina princess
- 17 Billy's barnyard mate
- 19 Fielders' needs
- 20 Stadium
- 21 Anger
- 23 Sad comment
- 25 Track divisions
- 26 Hoover, informally
- 29 Call from a coach
- 31 Water source
- 34 Line on a weather map
- 36 Add comments to
- 38 Peppy
- 39 Really, really want
- 41 Irving Bacheller novel, "____ Holden"
- 42 Awfully dull
- 44 Typeface type
- 46 Hotshot pilot
- 47 Hare ____ (religious sect)
- 49 U-turn from WSW
- 50 Arthur Murray moves
- 52 Malaria symptom
- 54 Authoritarian leader
- 57 They may have twists
- 61 Be a bad winner
- 62 Member of a Biblical people
- 64 Jousting weapon
- 65 Lena of "Nine Perfect Strangers"

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14				15				16				
17				18				19				
20					21			22				
			23		24			25				
26	27	28		29		30				31	32	33
34			35			36				37		
38					39	40				41		
42				43				44	45			
46				47				48			49	
			50	51				52		53		
54	55					56			57	58	59	60
61						62			63			
64						65				66		
67						68				69		

DOWN

- 1 Faris or Kendrick
- 2 Icy coating
- 3 Sea eagle
- 4 Food from the sky
- 5 Energy unit
- 6 Chinese philosophy
- 7 Biology lab supply
- 8 Not to mention
- 9 Keepsake
- 10 Like some skirts
- 11 Loathsome
- 12 Tiny colonists
- 13 Catholic service
- 18 WWII conference site
- 22 Insulting
- 24 Army branch, once
- 26 Tesla CEO Musk
- 27 Rear-____ collision
- 28 Exchange letters
- 29 Like a snoop
- 30 Big Apple force
- 32 Scenic outlook
- 33 Jellied garnish
- 34 Exchange letters
- 35 Windchime spot, often
- 36 Dined at home
- 37 British coins
- 38 "Gotta run!"
- 39 Sri Lanka export
- 40 Something left out
- 41 Bitty bitter, slangily
- 42 Brownish-gray
- 43 Trump's 2024 opponent
- 44 Small amount
- 45 Burstyn or Barkin
- 46 Give the eye
- 47 Scaled diagram
- 48 Norse capital
- 49 Way too suave
- 50 Sporty car roof
- 51 Outlook command
- 52 "____ takers?"

Answers to Previous Crossword:

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

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Stripes Sports Trivia

Which franchise drafted, and then traded, Kawhi Leonard to the San Antonio Spurs during the 2011 NBA Draft?

Answer

Indiana Pacers

SUDOKU

Difficulty: Easy

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

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.

Answer to Previous Sudoku:

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

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Photos courtesy of Agat Mayor's Office

Agat Mango Festival events

BY TAKAHIRO TAKIGUCHI,
STRIPES GUAM

Agat Village has got a lovely bunch of mangos – and they will be showcased in all their splendor at the 17th Agat Mango Festival on May 22-24.

We're talking about a variety of Guam's favorite fruit, ranging from piko mangos and banana mangos to Saipan mangos.

Mango season in Guam usually starts around March when mango trees begin bearing fruit, which starts off green and ripens into rich yellow, red or even golden orange colors by late May to early June.

To highlight the harvesting season of the juicy, red-gold fruit, Agat Village has held a three-day mango festival at the southern seaside during the last weekend of May since 2006.

Festivities actually kick off before the

■ **17th Mango Sunset 2k/5k Run/Walk**

LOCATION: Agat Mayor's Office
HOURS: May 16 (Sat.) Show at 4 p.m. and start at 5 p.m.
FEES: \$15 per runner and \$50 for a family of four (\$20/person on the day of the race)

■ **17th Agat Mango Festival**

LOCATION: Sagan Bisita (adjacent to Community Center, Agat Mayor's Office and Post Office)
HOURS: May 22 6-10 p.m., 23 and 24 10 a.m. – 10 p.m.
ADMISSION: Free



festival with the Mango Sunset 2k/5k Run/Walk on May 16. The signup fee is \$15 per runner and \$50 for a family of four if

you register before race day (\$20/person on day of the race). The first 200 finishers will receive a T-shirt, so don't miss this

fun competition.

Then, the following weekend brings three full days – from 6 p.m. to 10 p.m. on Friday and 10 a.m. to 10 p.m. on Saturday and Sunday – of live entertainment by local talent, along with various contests, giveaways, prizes, demonstrations and activities for young and old alike at Agat Village's Sagan Bisita.

The annual festival allows visitors to see and taste a wide variety of different mangos on the island, as well as different mango creations, including smoothies and doughnuts. You'll see booths with various mangos grown in the village and throughout the island. Agat farmers also produce a plethora of varieties: Hawaiian mangos, piko mangos, banana mangos, carabao mangos, apple mangos, Malaysian mangos, Saipan mangos and peach mangos, to name

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Ya Mon
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Mango Morsels



Mango Garden Salad

1 head hydroponically grown (on Guam!) head of lettuce (butter, red oak leaf, etc.) 2 mangos, peeled and sliced into one-inch pieces 1 cucumber, sliced
Wash and distribute lettuce into four individual salad bowls. Top with cucumber and mango slices. Serve with your favorite dressing or keep it local and try Calamansi Poppy Seed Vinaigrette.
Consider incorporating local foods into your dinner parties. Your guests will appreciate the extra flavor, and you'll get some new recipes under your belt!

- Chris Leon Guerrero
- Photo Source: InstantDaneTV

Calamansi Poppy Seed Vinaigrette

INGREDIENTS:
• 3 tablespoons fresh-squeezed calamansi juice (about 4 or 5)
• 2 tablespoons honey
• 3 tablespoons apple cider vinegar
• 1/4 cup coconut or olive oil
• 1/2 tsp. poppy seeds

DIRECTIONS:
Combine ingredients in a small bowl and whisk together. Drizzle the orangey goodness over a bed of locally grown lettuce, mango and cucumber for a delicious side salad. Add a piece of seared fresh ahi tuna on top and you've got dinner.
My next venture was a simple substitution of calamansi for lemon juice in one of my favorite dinner sides.

- Chris Leon Guerrero
- Photo Source: InstantDaneTV

Green Mango Salad – Island style

INGREDIENTS:
• 2 cups of shredded local green mango
• 2 cloves of peeled garlic (or to taste)
• 2 fresh donne' sali (or to taste)
• 2 tbsp sugar
• 4 locally grown cherry tomatoes (quartered)
• Juice of 1/2 (medium sized) Guam lime (or to taste)
• 2 tbsp Thai fish sauce (or to taste)
• 1/3 cup fresh local green string beans in 1 inch segments

DIRECTIONS:
1. Pour sugar into a mortar of sufficient size. Add the donne' sali and garlic cloves into the sugar.
2. Lightly pound the sugar, garlic and pepper with the pestle until they form a rough paste. In a bowl, combine the sliced string beans, shredded mango, sliced cherry tomatoes, and the sugar, garlic, and donne' paste together.
3. Add the juice of half a lime and the fish sauce. Mix the ingredients well so the sugar crystals dissolve. Taste and adjust to your liking. The key is to balance the sweet element with the salty element (sugar and



fish sauce), as well as retaining the perfect blend of hot and sour elements (donne' and lime juice).
4. Plate up and garnish as you like, then serve immediately.
This is a local twist to a classic SE Asian dish, showcasing Guam's seasonally ubiquitous green mangoes.

- Chris Leon Guerrero
- Photo Source: InstantDaneTV

Ginger Mango Salsa

INGREDIENTS:
• 1 large ripe local avocado, diced
• 2 sweet orange mangoes, diced
• Juice of 4 calamansi, or 1 lime
• 1 tbsp minced red onion
• 1-3 boonie peppers, seeded & minced
• Salt and pepper
• Ginger (grated or fresh)
• Cilantro (optional)

DIRECTIONS:
1. In a small bowl, season the diced avocado with salt and calamansi (or lime) juice. Lightly toss in the mangoes, onion, peppers.
2. Sprinkle with freshly ground pepper and ground ginger (or a 1" piece of minced fresh ginger).
3. Add chopped cilantro (if desired – I can't get it to grow here so mine isn't local). Serve as an appetizer with plantain chips or as a topping for fresh fish.



- Chris Leon Guerrero
- Photo Source: InstantDaneTV

Mango Salsa

This is a delicious and nutritious snack that is perfect with chips or crackers. I actually made this salsa to go with my delicious fish tacos.
Give my recipe a try. I think you'll like it.

INGREDIENTS:
• 2 ripe mangoes
• 1/2 red onion, chopped
• 2 tbsp chopped cilantro

• The juice of 1 lime
• 1 teaspoon sea salt
• Optional: 1 jalapeño, seeded and chopped

DIRECTIONS:
1. Cut the skin off the mango. Dice the mango into 1/4-inch cubes. Place into a small mixing bowl.
2. Add the red onions and the optional jalapeño to the bowl.
3. Add the cilantro.
4. Stir to combine the ingredients. Serve with your favorite chips, crackers, or as a condiment for fish, chicken or steak tacos. ENJOY!

- Annie's Chamorro Kitchen



Mango-Coconut Shortcakes

INGREDIENTS:
• 2 ripe mangoes, peeled and cut into 1/4 inch pieces
• 2 tsps dark rum (optional)
• 2 tsps fresh lime juice
• 2 tsps sugar

Combine mangoes, rum, lime juice and sugar. Set aside for several hours to allow flavors to develop.

• 2 cups sifted all-purpose flour
• 1 Tbs baking powder
• 1 1/2 tsps salt
• 1/3 cup unsalted butter, chilled
• 1/2 cup sweetened shredded coconut
• 3/4 cup canned unsweetened coconut milk

DIRECTIONS:
1. Heat oven to 450F. Sift together flour, baking powder and salt. With a pastry blender or fork, cut in the butter until mixture resembles coarse meal.
2. Stir in coconut. Add coconut milk, stir with a fork until dough just holds together. On a floured board, knead the dough 7 or 8 times.
3. Pat dough into a circle 1/2 inch thick. Using a 3 inch cutter, cut out 4 rounds of dough, using scraps of dough for the last one.
4. Place 1 1/2 inches apart on a baking sheet. Bake until golden brown, about 12 - 15 minutes.
5. 1 cup heavy cream, whipped with 1/2 teaspoon each sugar and dark rum (rum optional).
6. Prepare 4 dessert plates. Split shortcakes and place one bottom half on each plate. Spoon mango mixture over each and top with whipped cream. Replace the top of each shortcake.

Yield: 4 servings



Chili Mango Sauce

Recipe by Clayton Babas, Executive Chef, Guam Reef Hotel

INGREDIENTS:
• 1 cup sweet chili sauce (can be bought in a local supermarket)
• 1 Tbs yellow onion
• 3 Tbs fresh mango, chopped
• 1 tsp chopped parsley
• 1/4 tsp fish sauce

DIRECTIONS:
Heat ingredients together in a sauce pan, then let simmer for approximately 5 minutes. Set aside.
Yield: About 4 Servings

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➔ a few. That doesn't even include a near-infinite number of cross-breeds – many of which will be showcased, sold and/or available for sampling at the festival.

The official judging and declaration of the island's biggest, smallest, most beautiful and bizarre mango of the year takes place at the event, while other unique competitions will be offered for attendees. Why not participate in a pickled mango eating



competition, or a mango dessert contest with your cooked sweets that use mango and other ingredients?

During the event, raffle tickets are available for purchase at \$5 per booklet. Try your luck for a chance to win \$3,000. The drawing will be held May 24 at 8 p.m.

Besides these culinary and entertainment features, the festival is also a good chance

to get various wares and collectibles hand-made by local artisans, craftsmen, gardeners and hobbyists. Mango Festival T-shirts, mugs, teacups, fans and bags will also be available at the event site, according to the event provider.

Fireworks will be launched May 24 at 9 p.m. to light up the sky of Agat Village and wrap up the three-day event.

Mango season has ripened, so let's get a taste of it at this fun festival?
takiguchi.takahiro@stripes.com

For more about the Mango Festival, check out

• The Agat Mayor's Office Facebookpage (<https://www.facebook.com/HagatMayorsOffice/>)
or
• Call the office at 565-2524.



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Gazing into the future

Air Force, Navy, Marine
Corps planning for
sixth-generation fighters
Page 2

An artist's rendering depicts the Air Force's
sixth generation fighter, the F-47.

U.S. Air Force graphic

COVER STORY

Services eyeing sixth-generation fighters

Air Force, Navy ask for \$5.1B to develop aircraft

BY GARY WARNER
Stars and Stripes

The armed forces of the United States have competed among themselves for generations, so it would be surprising if they weren't already heating up over the future sixth-generation fighter.

"Future" is the operative word: Even the most aggressive timelines predict a first flight unlikely before 2028, with an entry to service in the early 2030s. The project demands relatively small fiscal resources for now — just over \$5.1 billion of the \$1.5 trillion defense budget rolled out last month.

The bigger headlines went to Pentagon plans to triple spending on unmanned vehicles to as much as \$75 billion, as well as pay \$30 billion to replenish stocks of missiles and anti-missile missiles used in the joint U.S.-Israeli attack on Iran.

But the budget also included seed money for projects that exist only on paper, such as the Trump-class battleship — as well as competing plans from the Air Force and Navy for a stealth long-range fighter they hope to put into service by the 2030s.

Out front is the Air Force, which already has a number on its plane: F-47. The budget includes \$5 billion to accelerate the development of the Boeing "air dominance" fighter, which is expected to replace the service's F-22.

It also has perhaps the most important fan — President Donald Trump. The Pentagon numbered the plane after Trump, the 47th president. The fighter's name is still to be announced.

The Navy has its own sixth-generation fighter in development, the F/A-XX. Until recently, the future of a carrier-launched new jet was uncertain.

When announcing Boeing as the builder of choice for the F-47 in March 2025, Trump told the Pentagon to go "all-in" on the project. He also suggested that building two sixth-generation fighters was problematic.

"Awarding the F/A-XX contract as written is likely to delay the higher priority F-47 program, with low likelihood of improving the timeline to field a Navy sixth-generation fighter," the White House said in a July 2025 statement to Congress.

But last month, Adm. Daryl Caudle, the chief of naval oper-



U.S. AIR FORCE

An artist rendering of the proposed F-47 Sixth-Generation fighter.

"Awarding the F/A-XX contract as written is likely to delay the higher priority F-47 program, with low likelihood of improving the timeline to field a Navy sixth-generation fighter."

ations, said the carrier-based sixth-generation fighter was on a faster track to development.

"The Navy will award a production contract for the F/A-XX sixth generation fighter in August," Caudle said.

The final decision comes down to two military industry heavyweights: Boeing and Northrop Grumman.

Boeing, builder of the Navy's F/A-18E/F Super Hornet and EA-18G Growler jets, has pitched a carrier version of its F-47 design, saying that having one contractor on both projects will lead to cost savings and technology sharing.

Northrop Grumman, the other finalist, has a long reputation with the Navy as the builder of the former F-14 Tomcat. The company has pitched a "clean sheet" design that wouldn't share major elements with the

White House statement to Congress

F-47. Supporters flip Boeing's argument on its head, saying that Northrop Grumman will be able to concentrate on the project instead of splitting its energy and manufacturing capacity on building two sixth-generation jets simultaneously.

Lockheed Martin, the builder of both the F-22 and F-35, was eliminated from the competition last year.

How much money is available for the F/A-XX project is a question for the 2028 budget, when the contractor will be decided and design work is further down the road. Once into Engineering and Manufacturing Development (EMD), the cost of the F/A-XX and its piece of the budget will come into focus.

The F/A-XX is budgeted to get \$140 million in fiscal 2027 — \$68 million from the baseline defense budget and \$72 million

from reconciliation funding that would need to be passed in separate legislation by Congress.

The Marine Corps has its own ideas — and they may not square with its parent department, the Navy.

Lt. Gen. William Swan, the Marine Corps' deputy commandant for aviation, told reporters at a meeting in Quantico, Va., that its concept for a sixth-generation fighter jet that would enter service around 2041 is one that will likely "look like" but not necessarily be the same as the Navy's choice for the F/A-XX.

"We're fast following with the Air Force, right?" Swan said, according to Breaking Defense. "They got the F-47, the Navy's looking at F/A-XX, and they're just starting on that. So, we are going to watch."

In the meantime, the services can look at their respective pieces of the Pentagon's \$21.4 billion buy of fifth-generation F-35 Lightning II fighters in the 2027 budget.

The Air Force will buy 38 F-35As, which take off and land at bases.

The Navy will receive 37 F-35Cs, which can be carrier-launched or operate from bases.

The Marines will receive 10 F-35Bs, which can take off and land vertically and operate from amphibious assault warships or unfinished airstrips on land.

The total buy of 85 F-35 Lightning II variants is up from 47 last year.

Mark Cancian, an analyst for the Center for Strategic and International Studies in Washington, said it is difficult to forecast the future for the sixth-generation fighters in a year when the Pentagon is asking for a record-shattering \$1.5 trillion in total spending.

Future administrations may be more financially constrained, have different priorities and also need to pay the bills for current conflicts like Operation Desert Fury against Iran.

Cancian said various priorities — such as the likelihood that the Marines would want a sixth-generation fighter with a vertical take-off and landing capability — could come up against a money crunch that might zero out one or more of the aircraft ideas.

"There's not much need to cut anything when talking about how to spend \$1.5 trillion," Cancian said.

MILITARY

Marines give update on shaving exemptions

Troops have 12 months to meet the standards for grooming

By LYDIA GORDON
Stars and Stripes

Marines with medical conditions requiring shaving exemptions will be evaluated for possible separation if they cannot meet grooming standards within 12 months, according to an updated message to the force.

The directive clarifies the timeline and counseling process for Marines with medical shaving waivers, including those for pseudofolliculitis barbae, a condition that can cause a person to experience painful inflammation after shaving.

Commonly known as razor bumps, the condition disproportionately affects Black men.

The one-year limit is intended to give commands time to monitor Marines' conditions and progress.

Those whose conditions are not resolved within that period "will be evaluated for administrative separation," the message states.

Interim changes were announced last year, when the service introduced the possibility of separating Marines who remain on shaving waivers for



ALYSSA CHULUDA/U.S. MARINE CORPS / 3d Marine Division

U.S. Marines shave during a field exercise at Camp Fuji, Japan, Nov. 26, 2023. A message to the force published Friday has updated timelines and policies for separating Marines who require medical shaving waivers.

more than a year.

The update issued April 24 sets requirements for commands to monitor a Marine's progress, including formal counseling at six months.

It also says no administrative separations under the policy will be approved before Oct. 1.

Failure to meet grooming standards within the period may

be considered adversely affecting good order and discipline, the message says, adding that such cases are not classified as disabilities.

The update aligns with a broader Pentagon effort to tighten enforcement of grooming standards across the services.

That effort follows guidance from Defense Secretary Pete

Hegseth, who in September directed service leaders to re-view grooming and physical fitness standards.

"No more beardos," Hegseth told senior military officials at a symposium last year. "The era of rampant and ridiculous shaving profiles is done. Simply put, if you ... don't want to shave and look professional, it's time for a

new position or a new profession."

The memo does not address whether additional exemptions to the policy will be granted.

Religious waivers for shaving are handled separately under existing policies.

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Pentagon seeks to codify Department of War title

By MATTHEW ADAMS
Stars and Stripes

WASHINGTON — The Pentagon is asking Congress to codify the Department of War name.

A Defense Department legislative proposal sent to Capitol Hill this month estimates the name change to date has cost about \$50 million, and the proposal would make roughly 7,600 conforming changes to federal law. Costs are being collected and will be available after the fiscal year 2026 is completed.

"The revision to the designation of the Department serves as a fundamental reminder of the importance and reverence of our core mission, to fight and win wars," the proposal reads. "It serves as a strategic objective in which to measure and prioritize all activities."

The Congressional Budget

Office in January estimated that implementing the renaming of DOD could cost as much as \$125 million or more depending on the scope of the change.

"CBO's estimate is uncertain because [the Defense Department] has not provided information about how it plans to implement the order," the budget office wrote in an 11-page letter. "Costs would be at least a few million dollars if [the Defense Department] phased in a minimal implementation, but they could be as large as \$125 million if the name change was implemented broadly and rapidly throughout the department. A statutory renaming could cost hundreds of millions of dollars depending on how Congress and [the Defense Department] chose to implement the change."

Codifying the name comes

after President Donald Trump in September signed an executive order instructing the Pentagon to begin using the name "Department of War" in official communications and to pursue actions that would permanently rename the Defense Department. The secondary title has not been approved by Congress.

A group of Senate Democrats in September called for a formal cost assessment of the president's order.

"Given the Trump administration's repeated emphasis on fiscal restraint ... this symbolic renaming is both wasteful and hypocritical," the senators wrote at the time. "It appears to prioritize political theater over responsible governance, while diverting resources from core national security functions."

Republican lawmakers at the



MADELYN KEECH/Office of the Secretary of War

Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth finishes the installation of a Department of War plaque at the River Entrance in front of the Pentagon in Arlington, Va., last year.

time of Trump's order — Rep. Greg Steube, of Florida, and Sens. Mike Lee, of Utah, and Rick Scott, of Florida — introduced legislation to redesignate the Defense Department as the Department of War and rename the position of Defense Secretary to Secretary of War.

The department's website,

social media accounts and some signage at the Pentagon have since been changed to reflect the renaming. In November, a new Department of War plaque was installed at the Pentagon's main entrance for visiting VIPs.

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MILITARY

Soldiers put handmade drones to test

Troops build craft for combat on jungle range in Philippines

By SETH ROBSON
Stars and Stripes

FORT MAGSAYSAY, Philippines — In a jungle training area north of Manila, American soldiers are assembling some of the military's newest drone aircraft by hand, fitting together parts in the field before sending them into the air.

The work is being done by members of the U.S. Army's 3rd Mobile Brigade, 25th Infantry Division, based in Hawaii, who are participating in Balikatan, the annual joint exercise between the United States and the Philippines.

Nearby, members of a small unit known as Lightning Lab — a 13-soldier team focused on modernizing the division — distribute components, some of them 3D-printed on site, and train soldiers to build the unmanned aircraft.

The approach reflects a shift in how the Army is thinking about drones, not just as specialized equipment issued from above but as tools that can be assembled, modified and deployed by units in the field.

The drone most often seen at Fort Magsaysay is a small quadcopter known as the Kestrel, a first-person-view aircraft developed by Lightning Lab, which focuses on innovation and transformation. Controlled by a soldier wearing goggles, the Kestrel can be flown individually or as part of a group.

Footage of recent testing in Hawaii shows the kamikaze drones — roughly the size of a Frisbee — striking wooden ground targets using small 3D-printed munitions attached to their frames.

Lighting Lab's director, Lt. Col. Nathan Whitney, said the drones can be configured to operate in coordinated groups.

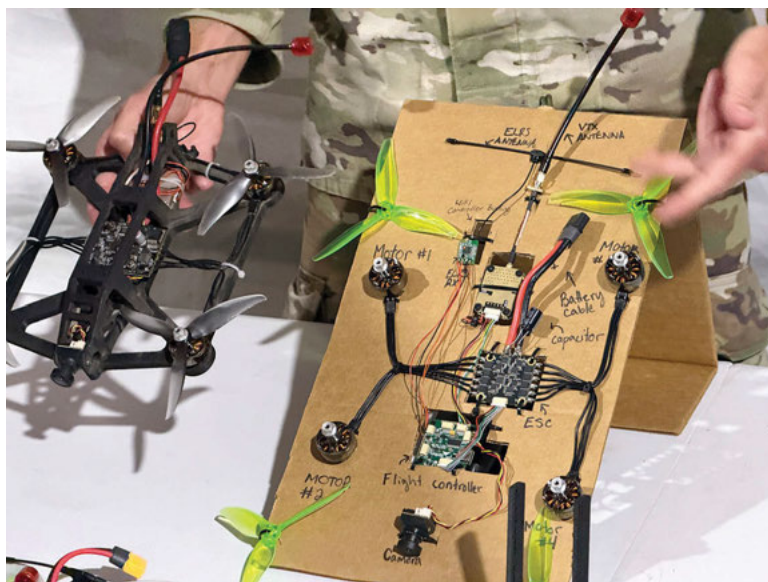
"One pilot controls multiple aircraft," he said on April 30 at Magsaysay, describing how the drones can fly in formation and be directed to swarm toward a shared target.

To help soldiers understand the system, troops have built their own training aid — an improvised display of motors, rotors and wiring mounted on an empty field ration box to show how the pieces fit together. Whitney said the cardboard box drone is capable of flight.



PHOTOS BY AARON KIDD/Stars and Stripes

A Filipino soldier watches a member of the U.S. Army's 25th Infantry Division fly a drone at Fort Magsaysay, Philippines.



A training aid built with a field ration box by 25th Infantry Division soldiers in the Philippines helps troops understand how drones work.

Company commanders select soldiers to receive drone training, Whitney said, as the Army works to expand the number of troops familiar with the technology.

The drone section of one unit, a multipurpose company within the brigade, uses a mix of aircraft, from small quadcopters to larger surveillance systems such as the Ghost X and the C-100.

Staff Sgt. Maciel Hay, who decides when, where and which drone to launch, said the aircraft have become part of routine operations, even as conventional methods remain in use.

"We still do traditional reconnaissance," she said after a drill at Magsaysay in which drones were used to knock out an enemy bunker.

One of the larger systems, the



Lighting Lab's director, Lt. Col. Nathan Whitney, said the training aid, a cardboard box drone, is capable of flight.

Ghost X, is stored in a box resembling a guitar case. Weighing about 54 pounds, it can fly more than an hour and reach speeds of about 37 mph, said Spc. Jose Madrigal, a member of the unit.

"We fly it with a laptop," he said.

The drone is equipped with thermal imaging and can be programmed to circle an area or follow designated waypoints,

Madrigal said. It requires a small team to launch and a clearing of about 33 feet.

Lightning Lab is sharing its work with other Army units, said Chief Warrant Officer 3 Aaron Dunson, the lab's operations officer.

"This Kestrel took us six to 12 months to develop," he said. "We want other divisions to have access to our knowledge so they can get to this level faster."

MILITARY

Navy Stingray drone makes initial flight

MQ-25A designed as an unmanned in-flight refueler for carrier aircraft

By GARY WARNER
Stars and Stripes

The Navy's unmanned MQ-25A Stingray made its first flight last month, an early step toward a future mix of manned and unmanned aircraft operating from carriers at sea.

The two-hour flight originated from the Boeing production plant at MidAmerica St. Louis Airport in Mascoutah, Ill., according to the Navy.

The Stingray is designed as an unmanned remote-controlled in-flight refueler.

It would take off from an aircraft carrier and fly up to 500 nautical miles with more than 14,000 pounds of fuel to transfer to F/A-18E/F Super Hornet aircraft.

The Stingray would then return to the carrier to be refueled for additional missions.

Aerial refueling from carriers is currently performed by crewed F/A-18E/F Super Hornets. The Stingray would free up more manned aircraft for combat and other roles during deployed operations.



JAMIE COSGROVE/Boeing

The Navy's Boeing MQ-25A Stingray unmanned aircraft made its first flight Saturday from the Boeing production plant at MidAmerica St. Louis Airport in Mascoutah, Ill.

"The MQ-25A is not just an aircraft: it's the first step in integrating unmanned aerial refueling onto the carrier deck, directly enabling our manned fighters to fly further and faster," said Rear Adm. Tony Rossi, who oversees the Program Executive Office for Unmanned Aviation and Strike Weapons.

Boeing said in a statement that the MQ-25A is the "Navy's gateway" to integrating unmanned aircraft on the carrier deck, enabling manned-un-

manned aircraft teaming in the future.

"The MQ-25A is the most complex autonomous system ever developed for the carrier environment, and this historic achievement advances us closer to safely integrating the Stingray into the carrier air wing," said Dan Gillian, vice president and general manager of Boeing Air Dominance.

Navy and Boeing "air vehicle pilots" flew the Stingray from a ground control station last

month, putting it through flight control, engine performance and handling tests.

Capt. Daniel Fucito, the Navy's Unmanned Carrier Aviation program manager, said the Stingray will now undergo more rigorous testing designed to expand the aircraft's "performance envelope" and ensure proper operation of all the systems required for aerial refueling missions.

After the additional testing at the Boeing facility, the Stingray

will go to Naval Air Station Patuxent River, Md., to prepare for carrier qualifications.

The Stingray flown last month is the first of four Engineering Development Model aircraft that will be delivered to the Navy under an \$805 million contract.

The Navy's 2027 budget proposal, released last month, includes a request for three MQ-25A Stingrays.

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Ingalls awarded \$283M contract for new FF(X) frigate

By ALEX WILSON
Stars and Stripes

The U.S. Navy awarded a nearly \$283 million contract to HII's Ingalls Shipbuilding to jumpstart work on a new frigate meant to recover from the delays and costs of the abandoned Constellation-class program.

The first \$80.6 million of the contract allows Ingalls' shipyard in Pascagoula, Miss., to begin pre-construction efforts, secure key materials and refine designs for the future FF(X) frigate, according to April 28 announcements from the company and the Pentagon.

No competing bids were sought for the contract due to "unusual and compelling urgency," the Pentagon said in its contract announcement.

Then-Navy Secretary John Phelan announced in November that the Navy would abandon

most of the \$22 billion Constellation-class guided-missile frigate program that was fraught with delays and inflated costs.

The program's first two ships, the USS Constellation and USS Congress, will still be completed, but construction of four additional ships was canceled.

Phelan, who was ousted last month, announced in December that the Navy would instead pursue the FF(X) program using the Coast Guard's Legend-class national security cutter as a framework to save on time and design costs.

Under the new contract, Ingalls will begin "cutting and shaping raw materials to support future phases of work on the main structure foundation and the overall construction sequencing plan of the first frigate," according to the company.

"We are excited to partner



U.S. Navy

A rendering of the Navy's planned FF(X) frigate shared by Jason Potter, assistant secretary of the Navy for research, development and acquisition.

with the Navy to bring these preproduction steps under contract to accelerate delivery of the frigates that our warfighters need," Brian Blanchette, Ingalls Shipbuilding president, said in the news release.

About 73% of the contract's initial \$80.6 million funding will be sourced from the Navy's fiscal 2026 shipbuilding and conversion funds, while the remaining 27% is funded through Navy research and development funds, according to the Pentagon.

The Pentagon's pursuit of a

new frigate is part of President Donald Trump's "Golden Fleet" initiative, which also aims to secure another new class, the BBG(X), also known as the Trump-class battleship.

The FF(X) and BBG(X) represent the Navy's attempt to secure "a new small surface combatant ship and a much larger surface combatant with significant fire power," according to the Defense Department's Budget Overview Book for fiscal year 2027.

The Navy's fiscal year 2026

budget request includes \$65.8 billion to buy 18 warships and 16 auxiliary ships, including three submarines, a destroyer and an amphibious assault ship.

Also included is the first FF(X) frigate, support for the design and development of the BBG(X) and continued incremental funding for the third and fourth Ford-class aircraft carriers, according to an April 21 news release from the Navy.

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MILITARY

Top admiral leans into shore-side upgrades

Caudle pushes life/work balance through 'Sailors First' initiative

By ROSE L. THAYER
Stars and Stripes

HOUSTON — The Navy's top officer has a problem — and he's pretty happy about it.

The service is seeing record retention and recruiting levels for a second year in a row, a "dream problem" for a chief of naval operations, said Adm. Daryl Caudle, who stepped into the role in August after leading Fleet Forces Command.

Nearly all ships are filled at about 90% or higher and nearly as many sailors are matched to their specific job on the ship, leaving him the breathing room to tackle other challenges within the service, Caudle said during an interview April 15 as the Navy hosted its first Fleet Week in a Texas city.

Caudle has leaned into keeping and incentivizing the best, most technically skilled sailors to remain in the service and is making sure their experience with the military is "world-class."

Now eight months into the job, Caudle has prioritized work-life balance through a "Sailors First" initiative. It is focused on life challenges that can be exacerbated by the nature of military service, such as access to affordable child care, a variety of healthy meals, reliable internet access and smartphone-compatible administrative systems and housing that is not on the ship where a sailor is assigned to duty.

That work begins with bringing in clear-eyed new recruits who know what the Navy is about, he said. Recruiting is about 1 to 2 percentage points ahead of where it was this time last year, which saw the service enlist 44,096 future sailors — a number not seen since the early 2000s.

"Our process illuminates [Navy service]. They like going to sea. They like going to different countries. They like the combat arms part of the job. I think we have a very appealing mission set for people who want to do that for a living," Caudle said.

The fact that about 90% of all enlistees make it to their first afloat unit shows that recruiters are finding the right folks for the job and the service's prep course and initial trainings are effective, he said.

One of the first things Caudle



PHOTOS BY JOHN BELLINO/U.S. Navy

Chief of Naval Operations Adm. Daryl Caudle provides remarks at Houston's City Hall during Fleet Week Houston on April 15.

"I want them to grow up a bit and be on their own, and I think they have the opportunity to do that more if they're not on the ship."

Adm. Daryl Caudle
chief of naval operations

focused on for those new, younger sailors is making sure they have a place to live off the ship when not underway. Dubbed "No Sailor Lives Afloat," the initiative has moved roughly 5,900 sailors into barracks instead of berthing, according to Navy Installation Command.

To do this, the service authorized more senior sailors to receive a housing allowance to live off base and free up space in the barracks, Caudle said.

The idea that the sailors deployed for more than 10 months now on the aircraft carrier USS Gerald R. Ford — a post-Vietnam War record for a carrier — could come home and keep living on the ship "is just not right," he said. It is small and restrictive and does not give



Caudle engages with sailors and Marines at Houston's City Hall.

them the reprieve from work needed to disconnect, socialize and learn independence.

"I want them to grow up a bit and be on their own, and I think they have the opportunity to do that more if they're not on the ship," he said.

Meeting that goal in some locations has proved more difficult because of low supplies of affordable housing near the base, such as in San Diego and Rota, Spain, and also across Japan, Caudle said.

Once sailors are settled on a base, Caudle has reimagined galley facilities to be more like those feeding athletes on college campuses across the United States. Unlike the Army, which is outsourcing a similar effort through private contracts, the Navy is sending its cooks to the Culinary Institute of America in

Hyde Park, N.Y.

There, Navy cooks are training with professional chefs on a 35-day menu with different stations, said Rear Adm. John Hewitt, commander of Navy Region Southeast. The first transformed galley will open in his region next month at Naval Construction Battalion Center Gulfport, in Mississippi.

"I saw some pictures of them being trained by the chef and the dishes they are putting out, it was like we've never seen in our galleys before," said Hewitt, who oversees 18 bases. He answered questions during a tour of the littoral combat ship the USS St. Louis in Houston.

The move to fresh, made-to-order meals is answering a call from sailors for more healthy options and more variety, Hewitt said.

Another quick fix that began in 2024 was for all gyms to stay open 24/7. It's done, Hewitt said.

"You have to register, but once you're registered, anytime, you can walk into any fitness center and gym. That's huge," he said. "That was a huge demand signal from the fleet, from our sailors, and they love it."

An ongoing initiative to get free wireless internet to all bases is at about 85%, and Caudle said he's now working toward smartphone-based applications for paperwork related to moving, pay and searching for a new assignment — not just a PDF that people fill out just as they would on paper.

"We're really trying to flush all that out and give people a good experience where they can do most transactions they need to be successful via their phone. It's just the way we do business today," Caudle said.

He did acknowledge that there are facilities on Navy bases that have fallen into disrepair because of an underinvestment on infrastructure — something that plagued all the services.

For years, the Navy funded its facility needs at about 60% to 70%, leaving some of them "brittle." That includes hangars, roads, piers and service infrastructure for air, oil, water and power.

"You can do that for a short period of time and then prioritize and hide the fact that you're not getting all the resources you need to sustain your facilities, but eventually it catches up, and we're there," Caudle said.

"I don't want our sailors to be in a classroom with a bucket beside them because the roof leaks," he said. "I want them to feel like they're in a world-class environment."

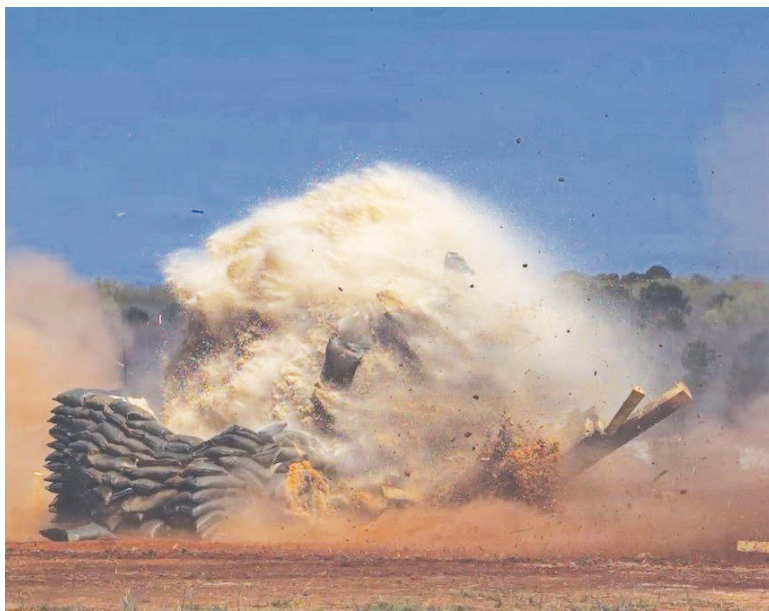
Hewitt said turning the tide in the southeast region is going to take time and the order of repair prioritizes the requirements of the fleet.

"We have to be in sync with the fleet. You can think of wharfs, piers, dry docks, airfields, unaccompanied housing, all of those things are really, really high on the list," he said.

Though people get distracted and zero in on the technology and weapons it takes to win wars, Caudle said it is his job to watch out for the sailors behind each piece of equipment.

"It's important for us to remember that," he said. "You build a bunch of ships, but you don't have all the resources to man, train and equip all of that, you hollow yourself out."

MILITARY



U.S. Army

A drone delivers a Bunker Rupture and Kinetic Explosive Round during a demonstration at Redstone Arsenal, Ala.

Small drone busts bunker in test of Army warhead

By JOHN VANDIVER
Stars and Stripes

Small drones armed with bunker-busting firepower could be added to the arsenal of front-line troops, giving them a new battlefield option for cracking hardened targets without the help of outside air support.

A new warhead, developed in just two weeks, was successfully deployed during a live-fire demonstration at an Army training grounds in Alabama, the service said in a statement.

The March 26 detonation “demonstrates a new and potent capability for the modern warfighter and illustrates how engineers can quickly design, fabricate and integrate hardware to meet urgent and compelling needs,” the Army statement said.

The so-called Bunker Rupture and Kinetic Explosive Round, or BRAKER, is a lightweight warhead designed to be carried on agile one-way attack drones, the Army said.

The effort reflects a broader push by the Army to incorporate drones and more strike options at the small ground unit level. The

project, led by a team of Army developers at Picatinny Arsenal, N.J., used 3D printing technology to go from concept to live fire in two weeks, said Col. Vincent Morris, the project manager. A dozen bombs were created during the initiative.

The team is now creating a plan to help industry scale “this critical warfighter advantage,” Morris said.

The Army didn’t say how soon the BRAKER could be fielded, but the program encapsulates how the Army is prioritizing the types of capabilities that have proven effective for Ukrainian forces in their war with Russia.

Army Secretary Dan Driscoll, who has been dubbed the “drone guy” by President Donald Trump, recently told lawmakers the service was capitalizing on lessons learned from the Russia-Ukraine war.

The Ukrainian military has “fundamentally changed the approach to warfare,” Driscoll said during a recent hearing.

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New munition could extend Navy aircraft strike range

By JOHN VANDIVER
Stars and Stripes

The U.S. Navy succeeded in its test launch of a new long-range version of the Joint Direct Attack Munition, marking a milestone for a weapon that could allow carrier-based aircraft to strike targets from greater range.

The early April demonstration of the JDAM long-range variant involved two Navy F/A-18 fighters, which carried the munitions during two test events, the Navy said. The weapon safely separated from the aircraft each time and used existing interfaces and navigation, the Navy said.

Each demonstration covered 200 nautical miles while maintaining consistent guidance to its target, it added.

“The program recognizes a critical need to provide the fleet with greater standoff range,” Capt. Sarah Abbott, precision strike weapons program manager, said in a statement. “This new capability allows pilots to engage targets from significantly safer distances, maintaining a



Naval Air Warfare Center

A Navy F/A-18 fighter aircraft carries the new long-range variant of the Joint Direct Attack Munition during a test event off the coast of California in early April.

tactical advantage in contested environments.”

Existing JDAM systems have been put to heavy use during the American bombing campaign in Iran so far, adding pressure on U.S. supplies of precision-guided weapons.

With the successful demonstrations, the new JDAM variant now moves on to the next qualification phase, with a focus

on shipboard integration, the Navy said.

The timeline for fielding the munition has not been publicly detailed, but the Navy has continued to stress the priority of the weapon as it seeks to expand its options for striking targets at farther distances.

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Marines release concept video for planned Medium Landing Ship

By GARY WARNER
Stars and Stripes

The Marine Corps has released a video showing the design concept for its McClung-class Medium Landing Ships, designed to deliver 800 tons of troops, weapons, supplies and other equipment directly to beachheads.

Based on the LST-100 design from Dutch shipbuilder Damen Shipyards Group, the new ships would be part of President Donald Trump’s “Golden Fleet” naval modernization program. The lead ship, USS McClung, would be built at the Bollinger Shipyards of Pascagoula, Miss.



U.S. Marine Corps

The Marines released a video showing the design concept for its McClung-class Medium Landing Ships.

“By selecting a mature, in-service platform, the Navy can build these ships at speed, adding critical capacity to the fleet quickly and affordably,” the video says.

The lead ship is named after Marine Maj. Megan M.L. McClung, who was killed in combat in Iraq in 2006. McClung was the first female graduate of the U.S. Naval Academy to be killed in action in any conflict.

The approximately 325-foot-long McClung-class ships will have a displacement of about 4,000 tons. They would include a flight deck capable of accommodating helicopters, vertical take-off and landing aircraft, and drones. The video lists NMESIS and HIMARS missile systems as among the weapons that could

be deployed from the ships.

The Marines touts the LSM as a “shore-to-shore” asset capable of beaching itself and then disengaging and returning to sea.

Then-U.S. Navy Secretary John Phelan said in December that the service plans to buy between 18 and 35 of the LSMs.

The video casts the ship’s role as between that of larger ships, which require port facilities to disembark troops and supplies, and smaller vessels that can operate along coastlines.

The video specifically mentions the Indo-Pacific theater, where combat could be on contested coastlines. China is seen as a “near-peer” military adversary in the region.

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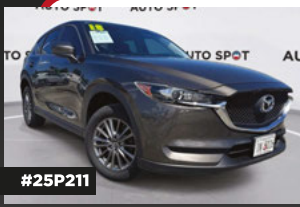
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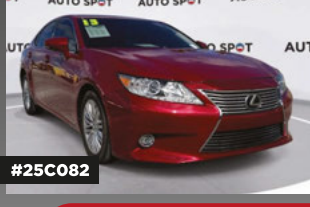
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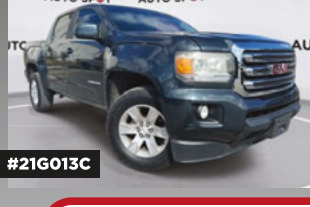
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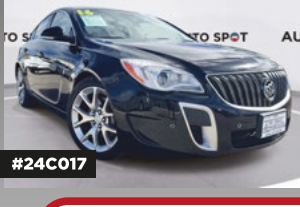
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